
APPLYING BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS TO SUPPORT IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION AND SOCIAL COHESION

Integration Futures Working Group



By Meghan Benton, Antonio Silva, and Will Somerville

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For more on the Integration Futures Working Group, visit: www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/integration-futures-working-group.

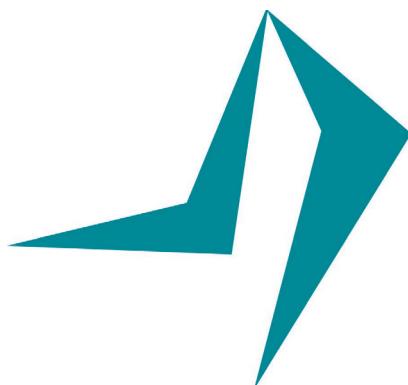
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Policymakers are looking for ways to help newcomers settle in quickly and bridge social divides by fostering connections among diverse groups, both because immigration is increasing and because of concerns over anti-immigrant sentiment. Among the most promising new tools to reinvigorate integration policy is behavioural insights, an interdisciplinary, evidence-based approach that draws on findings and methods from behavioural economics, psychology, anthropology, and other fields. This approach aims to design policies and interventions based on a more realistic model of human behaviour to encourage people to make better choices for themselves and the societies in which they live.

While behavioural insights have been adopted in a wide range of policy areas ... there has been no systematic effort to explore the potential benefits of such an approach for immigrant integration.

In recent years, governments in an expanding range of countries have turned to behavioural insights to ground policy decisions in a more nuanced understanding of human behaviour and how people make decisions. But while behavioural insights have been adopted in a wide range of policy areas, such as health, tax, and education, there has been no systematic effort to explore the potential benefits of such an approach for immigrant integration. Behavioural interventions could be adapted to improve integration and social cohesion outcomes in three main areas:

- **Community cohesion.** As societies experience increased levels of immigration, including in smaller and medium-sized localities, it is important to foster the character skills that people need to live in diverse societies and to improve social interaction. Studies have shown that it is possible to help young people develop open mindedness and a belief that people can change (a ‘growth mindset’), characteristics that can reduce prejudices. Encouraging them to understand others’ perspectives, for instance by thinking about a time they themselves were judged negatively for being different, can build empathy and recognition of similar experiences. Other experiments have shown promise in reducing segregation and improving social mixing, for instance by nudging people to interact with others from different backgrounds or encouraging cooperative learning (where small groups of students teach and learn from each other).
- **Narrowing inequalities between immigrant groups and the broader population.** In many countries, immigrants experience outcomes in key spheres of life (such as employment, health, housing, and education) that fall substantially below the average. Taking a behavioural approach could, for example, improve employment outcomes by addressing the diverse motivations and far-reaching barriers that jobseekers face. Similarly, interventions in the field of education—from peer support and mentoring, to more user-friendly applications—aim to tackle the aspirational barriers that prevent disadvantaged students from applying for university.
- **Addressing low take-up of public services, voter registration, and citizenship.** Access to and use of services is a key lever in improving integration outcomes. A behavioural approach could be used to, among other things, improve application rates among individuals eligible for certain benefits. To do so, behavioural insights may guide efforts to make services as user friendly as possible, for instance by creating electronic forms that automatically fill in information about applicants that is already on file, sharing information across services, or ensuring that application forms are easy to understand for individuals with different linguistic and educational backgrounds. Studies have also explored ways to use text messages and other reminders to improve usage of services. Because citizenship acquisition marks an important milestone in civic integration, policymakers may wish to consider encouraging volunteering and buddy systems as a way to boost application rates among eligible immigrants.

The application of behavioural insights to policy or programme design is normally rigorously empirical: new interventions are tested, often using randomised controlled trials, before those that work are scaled up. Future work in this area should pilot and evaluate behavioural interventions based on existing research or aim to replicate experiments that have thus far only been tested in controlled settings in real-world environments, such as multiethnic schools. Governments could consider working together by pooling a small portion of their integration budgets to fund such experimental work, thus achieving economies of scale and mitigating political and financial costs.

In the meantime, it is possible to draw some early lessons for integration policymakers from the existing research on behavioural approaches:

- ***Focus on developing the skills that everyone needs to live in diverse societies.*** Traits such as empathy and altruism are sometimes described as innate, but there is much to suggest they can be taught in the classroom. With many European countries updating citizenship curriculum to foster common values or even guard against extremism, there are opportunities to revisit the role schools play in nurturing the citizens of tomorrow. There are also numerous tools and techniques that can be used to promote intergroup social connections and reduce segregation in schools, workplaces, and communities. Government and civil society can both play key roles in helping residents develop such skills.
- ***Understand how aspirations, motivations, and behaviour can create gaps between minority groups and the broader population.*** Currently, government integration efforts tend to focus on language barriers, but other less tangible barriers are also important. Behavioural approaches encourage policymakers to explore how complex barriers such as stereotypes or limited social capital can hold people back in areas such as employment and education—they also help explain the limitations of approaches that focus on economic incentives and sanctions alone.
- ***Design programmes and policies around understanding of the user experience.*** Improving access to services, application rates for citizenship, or likelihood to vote may depend on how easy to navigate these processes are. A behavioural lens can help government agencies and service providers reduce the time and mental costs of engaging with public services, which is especially important for people who have experienced trauma, such as refugees.
- ***Leverage policy to encourage social mixing, positive interactions, and emphasis on similarities.*** There are numerous policy levers—in schools, workplaces, and in the media, for example—to encourage contact and emphasise commonalities, all of which experiments have shown to increase integration outcomes.

To address the integration challenges of today and tomorrow, governments will need to expand their toolbox. Behavioural insights, which are generally low cost, have substantial potential for effecting real change.

I. INTRODUCTION

Integration policy needs a reboot. Many countries, especially in Europe, are facing widening, or at the least, deeply entrenched socioeconomic gaps between newcomers and their native-born peers.¹ Anxiety about immigration has risen, alongside growing support for far-right populist parties. And even in countries that have not seen this transformation of the political landscape, communities are becoming increasingly polarised and

¹ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015: Settling In* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2015), www.oecd.org/publications/indicators-of-immigrant-integration-2015-settling-in-9789264234024-en.htm.

fragmented.² At the same time, many public services have not sufficiently adapted to accommodate the growing diversity of European societies.³

One of the primary reasons for this lag is that the assumptions guiding service design are often outdated and lack empirical evidence. As a result, education, employment, housing, and health services tend to be designed for a ‘typical’ service user, instead of being rigorously tested with different groups and then adapted to ensure that they can deliver real impact to users with varying characteristics and needs.

Importantly, these are often low-cost, common-sense adjustments that are relatively easy to implement but have the potential for significant impact.

Behavioural insights—an interdisciplinary, research-based approach to public policy that is based on understanding how people make choices in practice—could provide valuable tools for integration policymakers searching for new ways to help newcomers settle into a new society and to foster social cohesion within the broader population. These insights can improve understanding of how people interact with one another and with public services, and lead to evidence-based solutions that are mindful of the cognitive biases that may hinder social and economic integration. Importantly, these are often low-cost, common-sense adjustments that are relatively easy to implement but have the potential for significant impact. For instance, many of the ‘nudges’ such an approach would recommend are small tweaks to programme or service design that aim to change behaviour by making a certain course of action easy to take.

This report identifies a range of promising ways behavioural insights could be applied to integration policymaking to help create more cohesive societies. While much of the existing evidence from relevant disciplines draws on lab-based research, this study recommends steps policymakers can take to trial these approaches by applying them to real-world integration challenges. The report begins by outlining the case for a behavioural approach to integration. Next, it describes a range of interventions—some already tested and others newly proposed—in three main areas: community cohesion, narrowing socioeconomic gaps between groups, and civic integration. The report concludes by assessing where the greatest opportunities lie and setting out a roadmap for policymakers interested in implementing interventions informed by behavioural insights.

II. WHY BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS?

Behavioural insights draw on findings and methods from a range of disciplines, including behavioural economics, psychology, and anthropology to improve understanding of how individuals make decisions and behave in the real world. By recognising that human behaviour is shaped by a wide array of factors—some of which may result in decisions that, viewed objectively, are not the most rational—this approach aims to design policies and interventions that encourage people to make better choices for themselves and society. The approach is rigorously empirical: interventions are tested in a real-world context, often using randomised controlled trials (RCTs), so that informed decisions can be made to scale up what works.

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- 2 Demetrios G. Papademetriou and Meghan Benton, *Towards a Whole-of-Society Approach to Receiving and Settling Newcomers in Europe* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/towards-whole-society-approach-receiving-and-settling-newcomers-europe.
 - 3 For an overview of—largely fledgling—efforts among several European countries to update services for diverse populations, see Meghan Benton, Helen McCarthy, and Elizabeth Collett, *Into the Mainstream: Rethinking Public Services for Diverse and Mobile Populations* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2015), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/mainstream-rethinking-public-services-diverse-and-mobile-populations.

The Behavioural Insights Team (BIT), which began in the United Kingdom in 2010 as the world's first government institution dedicated to applying behavioural sciences to policy-making,⁴ uses the mnemonic EAST to summarise the essence of behaviourally informed interventions: easy, attractive, social, and timely. Using these guiding principles, BIT have designed effective interventions in a wide range of areas, including tax compliance, health, employment, and crime. For example, BIT harnessed the tendency for people to follow social norms to increase tax payments by informing late-payers that most people had already paid their taxes on time, bringing forward £210 million in tax revenue in 2012/13 alone.⁵ In another intervention, this one aimed at tackling dangerous driving, BIT simplified a letter and leaflet accompanying speeding fines issued by West Midlands Police and included messages to explain the importance and legitimacy of speed limits, changes that reduced speeding reoffences in the next six months by 20 per cent.⁶

Behavioural approaches hold great potential in the areas of immigrant integration and social cohesion. Behavioural insights could be used to inform both the development of new integration policies, such as community or neighbourhood cohesion efforts, and the design of more user-focused mainstream public services that improve outcomes for the whole population (e.g., job centres) as well as specific groups of newcomers. Interventions are emerging in these areas—including efforts to increase the diversity of the public-sector workforce⁷ and to raise levels of social trust by highlighting similarities between people⁸—but this is only a beginning. An expanded toolkit of evidence-base behavioural interventions could boost social cohesion and promote integration.

Behavioural insights could be used to inform both the development of new integration policies ... and the design of more user-focused mainstream public services that improve outcomes for the whole population.

As policymakers weigh the potential of these tools, it is important to understand the limitations of behavioural insights, particularly with a view to promoting long-term and sustained change. Critics of behavioural-change efforts argue that they may displace more fundamental interventions aimed at addressing structural inequalities and that their effects may be weak and/or temporary.⁹ When choosing from among potential interventions, there will be times when traditional policy levers remain the best tools for the job, such as when legislating school admissions criteria to reduce educational segregation. In other cases, however, policy elements informed by behavioural insights can be used to supplement or make more efficient these longstanding approaches.

4 The Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) is a social purpose company. In 2014, BIT was mutualised, and it is now part owned by the Cabinet Office, Nesta (the innovation charity), and its employees.

5 BIT, *Applying Behavioural Insights to Reduce Fraud, Error, and Debt* (London: BIT, 2012), www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/publications/fraud-error-and-debt-behavioural-insights-team-paper/; OECD Observatory of Public Sector Innovation, 'Applying Behavioural Theory to Collecting Tax Debts', accessed 13 September 2018, www.oecd.org/governance/observatory-public-sector-innovation/innovations/page/applyingbehaviouraltheorytocollectingtaxdebts.htm.

6 Simon Ruda, Monica Wills Silva, and Handan Wiesemann, 'Improving Road Safety: New Results', BIT, 25 October 2017, www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/trial-results/improving-road-safety-new-results/.

7 Simon Ruda, 'Promoting Diversity in the Police', BIT, 24 July 2015, www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/trial-results/behavioural-insights-and-home-affairs/; Behavioural Insights Unit, *Behavioural Approaches to Increasing Workforce Diversity* (Sydney: New South Wales Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2016), <https://bi.dpc.nsw.gov.au/assets/dpc-nsw-gov-au/publications/Behavioural-Insights-Unit/9452178898/Behavioural-Approaches-to-Increasing-Workforce-Diversity.pdf>.

8 BIT, *The Behavioural Insights Team Update Report 2016-17* (London: BIT, 2017), www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/publications/the-behavioural-insights-team-update-report-2016-17/.

9 For a concise review, see Peter John, *How Far to Nudge: Assessing Behavioural Public Policy* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2018), 88–107.

Conceptualising behavioural insights in integration

Ultimately, improving integration outcomes depends on identifying and agreeing on what outcomes are important. While there is vigorous and ongoing debate about how best to prioritise government objectives regarding social and economic integration,¹⁰ most liberal democracies now seek a society where having a particular ethnic or religious background does not determine an individual's life chances, and where such an attitude is widely shared as a normative value in society. In Europe, this has led to the development of a common set¹¹ of integration goals that include:

- **Improving community cohesion and social integration.** One of the primary objectives of integration policy is to build inclusive communities where all members feel a sense of belonging. Governments may, for example, aim to ensure community safety or improve perceptions of neighbourhood belonging among residents. Efforts to do so may include addressing residential and education segregation, or fostering social interaction between different groups through community projects. Governments may also seek to manage risks and address the causes of conflict, including through mediation or counter-radicalisation interventions.
- **Reducing socioeconomic gaps and inequalities.** Another important goal is to improve the outcomes of groups that are underperforming compared to the societal average.¹² For example, Bangladeshi and Pakistani women in the United Kingdom have unemployment rates of 15 per cent, more than three times the rate for White women, and policies may aim to close this gap.¹³ While countries may care about a wide range of socioeconomic disparities between groups, outcomes related to employment, education, and skills (often assessed through employment rates, quality of employment, educational performance, and language skills) are the most readily measurable.¹⁴ Recently, however, some governments have begun to show interest in measuring less quantifiable outcomes, such as social capital, that are shown to have positive effects on economic growth.¹⁵

10 See, for example, Papademetriou and Benton, *Towards a Whole-of-Society Approach*.

11 The European Council agreed these integration goals in 2004, but they have not been subject to rigorous scrutiny or updated since then. See Council of the European Union, Justice and Home Affairs Council, 'Main Results of the Council' (press release, Council of the European Union, Brussels, 19 November 2004), Annex: Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union, www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/82745.pdf.

12 Certain immigrant groups may underperform on one goal and overperform on another. Most countries do not have separate public services for different immigrant groups, geographic regions, or neighbourhoods based on 'difference' for instance. Where governments do take different approaches, they are typically based on income; for instance, governments often target action in poorer neighbourhoods. See Elizabeth Collett and Milica Petrovic, *The Future of Immigrant Integration in Europe: Mainstreaming Approaches for Inclusion* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2014), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/future-immigrant-integration-europe-mainstreaming-approaches-inclusion.

13 The Casey Review, *The Casey Review: A Review into Opportunity and Integration* (London: UK Department for Communities and Local Government, 2016), www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-casey-review-a-review-into-opportunity-and-integration.

14 For a comprehensive overview of integration indicators, see OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015*. While this report focuses on education and employment, it also considers other measurable indicators, such as housing and health.

15 For a review of social capital and its implications for growth, see Stephen Aldridge and David Halpern with Sarah Fitzpatrick, 'Social Capital' (discussion paper, UK Government, Performance Innovation Unit, London, April 2002), www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/_assets/BCC/Social_Capital_PIU_Discussion_Paper.pdf. A more concrete example is that the UK government is trying to track the interactions between a variety of socioeconomic dimensions. Such data could help answer, for instance, the questions of whether children make more progress than their parents and under what conditions. To do this, the government will identify a set of benchmarks that take into account the characteristics of different groups, such as the specific vulnerabilities of refugees, when considering whether children achieve their predicted grades (instead of comparing their educational attainment to that of other groups). See Ed Pitchforth, 'Successful Refugee Integration: What Does this Look Like?' (comments during panel discussion at the Annual Tripartite Consultations and Working Group on Resettlement, Auckland, 15 February 2017).

- **Ensuring equal access to the public realm.** Levelling the playing field in terms of outcomes often involves ensuring that people with different characteristics and needs (such as limited language proficiency) have equitable access to public services. Many countries also seek to combat discrimination against minority groups, including immigrants, which persists in job markets¹⁶ and criminal justice systems¹⁷ despite extensive antidiscrimination legal frameworks.

At the heart of these goals is the fundamental question of how members of multiethnic societies can best live together. Efforts to respond to this question inevitably span multiple policy areas, as will be described in more detail in the next section.

III. PROMISING AREAS FOR INTERVENTION

The common integration policy goals outlined above lend themselves to a variety of interventions informed by behavioural insights. Efforts to improve community cohesion stand to benefit from interventions that foster character and noncognitive skills or promote social mixing. Those that seek to reduce socioeconomic gaps can profit from behavioural interventions that support employment and education or increasing social capital. And finally, the goal of reducing barriers to the public realm may be well served by behavioural interventions that focus on improving access to public services and other public goods associated with membership of a liberal democratic society, such as citizenship and voting.

Notably, some of these interventions naturally apply across goals and policy areas. For instance, interventions to reduce gaps in educational attainment can also reduce the risk of extremism, and policies to foster social connections can also help get people into work by improving their social capital.

A. *Community cohesion and social integration*

Two of the most promising avenues to foster greater community cohesion relate to building specific character or noncognitive skills, and to reducing prejudice and discrimination by increasing meaningful social interactions between members of different groups. Young people are the audience for many such efforts as initiatives conducted in schools generally reach a wider cohort than those in other settings, such as voluntary associations, which tend to suffer from selection bias (e.g., the people who have the most to gain from these interventions may not be reached). In both types of initiatives, the focus should be on growing the skills that everyone needs to live in diverse societies and emphasising similarities between people, rather than targeting newcomers or specific ethnic groups.

¹⁶ Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan, 'Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination' (working paper no. 9873, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, July 2003), <https://doi.org/10.3386/w9873>.

¹⁷ The Lammy Review, *The Lammy Review: An Independent Review into the Treatment of, and Outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Individuals in the Criminal Justice System* (London: UK Ministry of Justice, 2017), www.gov.uk/government/publications/lammy-review-final-report.

1. Character and noncognitive skills

Character or noncognitive skills have attracted considerable attention in recent years, as experts and policymakers have come to realise that gaps in educational and life success cannot be explained by cognitive skills alone.¹⁸ While character skills—from empathy and self-affirmation to a sense of social belonging—are thought to be important predictors of positive life outcomes, they may also help people live together in multicultural societies.

a. *Changing mindsets*

Studies have found that people who view themselves and others as fixed entities (i.e., they cannot change their intelligence, abilities, or personality) become discouraged more easily when they encounter difficult situations or setbacks, as compared with those who believe that people can change and develop. The latter group is said to have a ‘growth mindset’ and, when faced with challenges, is more likely to persist and find alternative solutions.¹⁹ Evidence in this area suggests that teaching this approach to young people may foster less rigid views about other groups and help reduce prejudices. For instance, one RCT explored the impact of teaching students to think of human intelligence and characteristics as malleable and capable of change (incremental theory) versus teaching them general strategies for coping with provocation or exclusion by peers.²⁰ A month after the intervention, those who learned about incremental theory showed reduced aggression and retaliation after being provoked or excluded compared to students who learned coping skills or who received no instruction.²¹

People who view themselves and others as fixed entities ... become discouraged more easily when they encounter difficult situations or setbacks, as compared with those who believe that people can change and develop.

In another study, Israeli and Palestinian young people were taught a growth-mindset approach through lessons about brain plasticity and about leaders who were able to change a group’s trajectory, such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Gerry Adams. They were then asked to complete a cooperative task involving building a tower. In addition to the growth-mindset class participants reporting less prejudice towards the other groups, their towers were on average 59 per cent taller than those constructed by the control groups, demonstrating the impact a growth mindset can have on increasing cooperation between groups.²²

18 Jeffrey A. Rosen et al., *Noncognitive Skills in the Classroom: New Perspectives on Education Research* (Research Triangle Park, NC: RTI International, 2010), www.rti.org/sites/default/files/resources/bk-0004-1009-rosen.pdf.

19 The term ‘growth mindset’ is often contrasted with ‘fixed mindset’ and used to describe an underlying belief that people can change. See David Scott Yeager and Carol S. Dweck, ‘Mindsets That Promote Resilience: When Students Believe That Personal Characteristics Can Be Developed’, *Educational Psychologist* 47, no. 4 (October 2012): 302–14.

20 In this study, students were randomly split into three groups: a control group; a group that learned about incremental theory; and a group that learned about coping strategies. See David Scott Yeager, Kali H. Trzesniewski, and Carol S. Dweck, ‘An Implicit Theories of Personality Intervention Reduces Adolescent Aggression in Response to Victimization and Exclusion’, *Child Development* 84, no. 3 (May 2013): 970–88, <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12003>.

21 The reduction in aggression and retaliation was almost 40 per cent, with more than a 300 per cent increase in ‘prosocial behaviour’ (actions designed to help others). See *ibid*. In 2011, a similar study involving U.S. and Finnish students showed that those who believe that people cannot change harbour desires to ‘get back at’ peers who insult or exclude them, and dream of ways of giving these peers ‘what they deserve’. See David Scott Yeager et al., ‘Adolescents’ Implicit Theories Predict Desire for Vengeance after Peer Conflicts: Correlational and Experimental Evidence’, *Developmental Psychology* 47, no. 4 (July 2011): 1090–107.

22 Amit Goldenberg et al., ‘Making Intergroup Contact More Fruitful: Enhancing Cooperation between Palestinian and Jewish-Israeli Adolescents by Fostering Beliefs about Group Malleability’, *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 8, no. 1 (January 2017): 3–10, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550616672851>.

Initiatives that aim to foster a growth mindset in connection with diversity and immigration could include exercises focusing on how different communities have changed over time (e.g., how Indian immigrants to the United Kingdom, who were traditionally shopkeepers, are now often doctors and lawyers).

b. *Perspective-taking and empathy*

The ability to consider someone else's experiences and feelings has been shown to help break down barriers between groups. In studies where individuals were explicitly prompted to empathise with someone from a different group, they then displayed more positive attitudes towards that group in general, expressed fewer stereotypes, and were less likely to favour members of their own social group over people of other backgrounds.²³ This type of perspective-taking activity has also been found to increase awareness of discrimination against minority groups and to increase support for policies to reduce it.²⁴

Similarly, a U.S.-based field study involving door-to-door canvassing and perspective-taking substantially reduced levels of transphobia and increased support for nondiscriminatory laws, with this effect persisting over time.²⁵ One of the key components of this study was the use of analogic perspective-taking: participants were asked to talk about a time when they themselves had been judged negatively for being different and then to use their own experience as a window into another groups' negative experiences.

A more engaging approach might involve the use of virtual reality to introduce students to other people's lives or semi-structured conversations between people from different backgrounds.

In the realm of immigrant integration and social cohesion, this approach could be introduced through workshops in which participants (such as school children) are encouraged to imagine both how they themselves and others might feel in response to discrimination on the basis of group membership. This could be achieved through writing exercises, such as describing 'a day in the life' of someone different from the writer²⁶ or reflecting on a time when the writer felt discriminated against.²⁷ Alternatively, a more engaging approach might involve the use of virtual reality to introduce students to other people's lives or semi-structured conversations between people from different backgrounds describing their own perspectives to each other.²⁸

23 John F. Dovidio et al., 'Empathy and Intergroup Relations', in *Prosocial Motives, Emotions, and Behavior: The Better Angels of Our Nature*, eds. Mario Mikulincer and Phillip R. Shaver (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010); Adam D. Galinsky and Gordon B. Moskowitz, 'Perspective-Taking: Decreasing Stereotype Expression, Stereotype Accessibility, and In-Group Favoritism', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 78, no. 4 (April 2000): 708–24.

24 Andrew R. Todd, Galen V. Bodenhausen, and Adam D. Galinsky, 'Perspective Taking Combats the Denial of Intergroup Discrimination', *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 48, no. 3 (May 2012): 738–45.

25 David Broockman and Joshua Kalla, 'Durably Reducing Transphobia: A Field Experiment on Door-to-Door Canvassing', *Science* 352, no. 6282 (8 April 2016): 220–24.

26 Galinsky and Moskowitz, 'Perspective-Taking'.

27 Broockman and Kalla, 'Durably Reducing Transphobia'.

28 For instance, an experiment in the United States found that students who played a simulation game that allowed them to inhabit the lives of others supported empathy. See Christine M. Bachen, Pedro F. Hernández-Ramos, and Chad Raphael, 'Simulating REAL LIVES: Promoting Global Empathy and Interest in Learning through Simulation Games', *Simulation and Gaming* 43, no. 4 (August 2012): 437–60.

c. Cooperation and competition

Strong evidence, both theoretical and empirical, indicates that competition between groups can strengthen bonds *within* groups and promote cooperation.²⁹ And while people tend to prefer to interact with others of a similar background, ‘in-groups’ can be built around an endless array of characteristics. Several studies have even shown that setting up a competitive environment based on random characteristics, such as wearing red or green shirts, can shift in-group and out-group biases.³⁰

These insights could be harnessed to develop interventions that use competition between newly assigned groups and cooperation within them to change existing in-group biases and blur group boundaries in segregated environments. In a school context, for example, students could be grouped into teams for games and competitions based on random characteristics (e.g., red or green t-shirts) to promote cooperation and bonding within the newly formed, multiethnic groups, in the process attenuating previous in-group biases.

d. Self-affirmation

Multiple studies have found that people are more willing to accept challenges to their worldview when they have a strong sense of who they are and feel proud of their identity and values.³¹ Research also suggests that affirming pride in one’s group makes it easier for group members to acknowledge responsibility for collective moral transgressions—an important part of conflict resolution.³² Activities that encourage individuals to reaffirm their sense of self, therefore, appear to reduce the defensiveness that can result from perceived threats to self-esteem, such as acknowledging individual or group flaws.³³

In addition to its benefits on a personal level, there is some evidence to suggest that self-affirmation may reduce prejudice.³⁴ One such study ties negative attitudes and behaviours towards other groups back to a motivation to maintain one’s feelings of self-worth. Participants who first affirmed their self-image by writing about their values or who received positive feedback about their intelligence displayed less prejudice towards a fictitious individual with a different background (in this case, Jewish).³⁵ Conversely, participants whose self-image had been threatened via negative feedback displayed increased prejudice. These results suggest that encouraging people to be comfortable with and proud of their individual and group identities could reduce intergroup prejudice.

Social interventions to reduce prejudice could integrate some of these lessons by having participants identify their most cherished values and explain why they are important. This exercise would improve participant’s self-image and, as a result, reduce both defensiveness and prejudice towards other groups. Programme designers may choose to build on this exercise by pairing it with a similarities exercise in which participants are matched into groups according to values they share.

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- 29 Mikael Puurtinen and Tapio Mappes, ‘Between-Group Competition and Human Cooperation’, *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences* 276, no. 1655 (22 January 2009): 355–60, <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2008.1060>; Michal Bauer et al., ‘Can War Foster Cooperation?’ (working paper no. 22312, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, June 2016), <https://doi.org/10.3386/w22312>.
- 30 Henri Tajfel, M.G. Billig, R.P. Bundy, and Claude Flament, ‘Social Categorization and Intergroup Behaviour’, *European Journal of Social Psychology* 1, no. 2 (April 1971): 149–78.
- 31 Geoffrey L. Cohen, Julio Garcia, Nancy Apfel, and Allison Master, ‘Reducing the Racial Achievement Gap: A Social-Psychological Intervention’, *Science* 313, no. 5791 (1 September 2006): 1307–10.
- 32 Noa Schori-Eyal, Michal Reifen Tagar, Tamar Saguy, and Eran Halperin, ‘The Benefits of Group-Based Pride: Pride Can Motivate Guilt in Intergroup Conflicts among High Glorifiers’, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 61 (November 2015): 79–83.
- 33 Jennifer Crocker, Yu Niiya, and Dominik Mischkowski, ‘Why Does Writing about Important Values Reduce Defensiveness? Self-Affirmation and the Role of Positive Other-Directed Feelings’, *Psychological Science* 19, no. 7 (July 2008): 740–47.
- 34 Steven Fein and Steven J. Spencer, ‘Prejudice as Self-Image Maintenance: Affirming the Self through Derogating Others’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 73, no. 1 (1997): 31–44.
- 35 Ibid.

Alternatively, activities could aim to enhance participants' self-image by providing historical accounts of certain groups' roles in fighting prejudice or injustice. This approach could be done, for example, by presenting positive stories of Muslims contributing to the fight against extremism—such as that of the Muslim Kurds fighting ISIS—to reaffirm the pride felt by members of that community and reduce prejudice towards others.

2. Social mixing

In addition to activities that foster character-building, people's attitudes towards one another can also be influenced by those that encourage social contact, build social trust, and reduce segregation in institutional and educational settings. Beyond increased social cohesion, such interventions may promote a range of other positive socioeconomic outcomes by reducing the segregation that can limit access to jobs; increase prejudice, intolerance, and mistrust; and restrict access to 'bridging' social capital (relationships between members of different groups).³⁶

a. Similarities

In studies, people have been found to rate others whom they perceive as similar to them more highly—and be more open and trusting of them—compared with those they see as dissimilar.³⁷ In the labour market, this tendency to like people similar to oneself may explain some discrimination against under-represented groups, such as non-White or female applicants. For example, in one well-known study, job applicants with 'White sounding' names or male names were much more likely to be called for interview than others, despite their otherwise identical applications.³⁸

Behavioural science literature on social norms also supports this hypothesis. For instance, a study found that describing the norms of socially closer reference groups has a greater impact on behaviour; for example, telling residents of Medway in southern England that '9 out of 10 people in Medway pay their taxes on time' had a significantly greater effect on tax compliance than the more general message that '9 out of 10 people in the United Kingdom pay their taxes on time'.³⁹ This suggests that people may be more likely to conform to the behaviour of a smaller, more specific group to which they belong than to that of a larger but more distant group.

Drawing on these findings, initiatives could be developed to improve social cohesion by having individuals and groups discuss their similarities. This could enable participants to form bonds based on shared traits or experiences, and reduce the focus on their differences. BIT has demonstrated how this approach could work in practice by organising a four-week summer programme for 15- and 16-year-olds with the National Citizen Service. Teams that completed a 10-minute ice-breaker activity focused on discussing their similarities reported significantly higher levels of trust at the end of the programme, compared to participants who completed

³⁶ Social Integration Commission, *How Integrated Is Modern Britain?* (London: Social Integration Commission, 2014), http://socialintegrationcommission.org.uk/SIC_Report_WEB.pdf.

³⁷ BIT, *EAST: Four Simple Ways to Apply Behavioural Insights* (London: BIT, 2014), www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/publications/east-four-simple-ways-to-apply-behavioural-insights/; Cedric Herring, 'Does Diversity Pay?: Race, Gender, and the Business Case for Diversity', *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 2 (1 April 2009): 208–24.

³⁸ Bertrand and Mullainathan, 'Are Emily and Greg More Employable?'. However, a 2016 employment study by Deming, Yuchtman, Abulafi, Goldin, and Katz failed to replicate this finding, indicating that race discrimination may be confounded by discrimination based on socioeconomic status. For a discussion, see Uri Simonsohn, 'Greg vs. Jamal: Why Didn't Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) Replicate?', Data Colada, 6 September 2016, <http://datacolada.org/51>.

³⁹ Chris Larkin, Michael Sanders, Isabelle Andresen, and Felicity Algate, *Testing Local Descriptive Norms and Salience of Enforcement Action: A Field Experiment to Increase Tax Collection* (London: BIT, 2018); BIT, *EAST: Four Simple Ways to Apply Behavioural Insights*.

ice-breakers based on discussing the team members' differences or their strengths and weaknesses. Notably, the positive impact on trust was stronger among individuals with lower initial levels of trust.⁴⁰

There may also be opportunities to use nudges that emphasise similarity (rather than difference or diversity) to reduce majority withdrawal from diverse situations (sometimes referred to as 'White avoidance'). For example, some analysts have suggested that small policy changes, such as publishing more accurate data on school diversity, may reduce the aversion among majority-group parents to enrolling their children in diverse schools if the data presented include a focus on characteristics that are shared across ethnic boundaries, such as home neighbourhoods.⁴¹

b. Deactivation

A substantial body of work has shown that increased support for far-right and radical-right parties as well as for street-based movements (both violent and nonviolent) that promote exclusionary or discriminatory positions is caused by the 'activation' of authoritarian personalities.⁴² These studies have suggested that this personality type is activated by perceptions that one's group identity is under threat and that the social hierarchy is in disorder and chaos.

A related area of behavioural interventions, informed by this research, posits ideas and approaches on how to respond to people with personalities pre-disposed to authoritarianism. Karen Stenner's work⁴³ proposes behavioural approaches to shift human behaviour at scale through media and strategic communications efforts that emphasise similarities between different groups and working together against a common opponent. The techniques she recommends aim to 'deactivate' authoritarian tendencies and reduce expressions of discrimination.

c. Interaction and social contact nudges

A robust body of research⁴⁴ has shown that increased contact between groups (i.e., increasing the quality and quantity of relationships and interactions between people from different backgrounds) has a variety of positive effects, including reducing conflict and improving integration outcomes. Yet certain conditions must be met for the contact to be positive. For example, the individuals involved must be of broadly equal standing and the contact should be meaningful rather than cursory. Importantly, while direct contact (real-life interactions) is the most impactful, indirect social contact has been shown to have positive effects as well. Indirect experience may include observation, imagination, or immersion exercises (activities that ask participants to 'walk in others' shoes') that can be conducted using broadcast media, interaction through social media, and immersive

40 Michael Sanders et al., *Increasing Social Trust with an Ice-Breaking Exercise: An RCT Carried out with NCS participants* (London: BIT, 2017), <http://38r8om2xjhh125mw24492dir-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Increasing-social-trust.pdf>.

41 Eric Kaufmann, 'Majority Avoidance: One of the Few Holes in Casey's Strong Report', Integration Hub, 5 December 2016, www.integrationhub.net/majority-avoidance-one-of-the-few-holes-in-caseys-strong-report/.

42 See, for example, Philip T. Dunwoody and Sam G. McFarland, 'Support for Anti-Muslim Policies: The Role of Political Traits and Threat Perception', *Political Psychology* 39, no. 1 (2018): 89–106, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/pops.12405>; Pavlos Vasilopoulos, George E. Marcus, and Martial Foucault, 'Emotional Responses to the *Charlie Hebdo* Attacks: Addressing the Authoritarianism Puzzle', *Political Psychology* 39, no. 3 (2018): 557–75.

43 Karen Stenner, *The Authoritarian Dynamic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

44 The work of Miles Hewstone is key in this area. See, for example, Ananthi Al Ramiah and Miles Hewstone, 'Intergroup Contact as a Tool for Reducing, Resolving, and Preventing Intergroup Conflict: Evidence, Limitations, and Potential', *American Psychologist* 68, no. 7 (October 2013): 527–42. For a large metastudy on the topic, see Thomas F. Pettigrew and Linda R. Tropp, 'A Meta-Analytic Test of Intergroup Contact Theory', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90, no. 5 (May 2006): 751–83. The findings of a more recent study of intergroup contact also support the central hypothesis that social contact reduces prejudice, though the authors note that it is important to understand the moderating conditions as the effects of contact vary. See Elizabeth Levy Paluck, Seth A. Green, and Donald P. Green, 'The Contact Hypothesis Re-Evaluated', *Behavioural Public Policy* (10 July 2018), www.cambridge.org/core/journals/behavioural-public-policy/article/contact-hypothesis-reevaluated/142C913E7FA9E121277B29E994124FC5.

experiences such as active theatre or virtual reality. Various metastudies have confirmed the positive impact of such interventions in prejudice reduction.⁴⁵

Evidence on the most effective contact-based behavioural interventions are found in educational settings where there is direct contact. A 2014 study in UK schools provides a particularly stark example of the persistence of racial segregation: even in ethnically diverse schools, White and Asian secondary school students were found to cluster together in the lunchtime cafeteria.⁴⁶ In general, young people tend to socialise much more with peers who are similar to them in terms of racial and ethnic background. Awareness of the factors behind segregation in schools can help overcome these patterns. The authors of the cafeteria study argue that some segregation may stem from apathy rather than overt hostility; if students have even a mild preference for engaging with others who are like them, it is easier to continue with this ‘default’ approach than to engage with someone new.

Finding ways to encourage students of different backgrounds to interact more at lunch and playtime could be a powerful way to encourage more crossgroup friendships and reduce discrimination. For example, a social-mixing initiative might, for a limited period, incentivise students (e.g., with free food, drinks, or snacks) to sit in different seats at lunchtime, with the hope that this would reduce inertia. After the incentives are removed, programme designers could assess the intervention’s impact on students’ seating choices and intergroup friendships. This idea could also be extended in various ways, for example by asking students to obtain specific information (highlighting similarities) from students they have not spoken with before to encourage more in-depth interactions.

In general, young people tend to socialise much more with peers who are similar to them in terms of racial and ethnic background.

While meaningful contact over an extended period of time generates the greatest returns in terms of prejudice reduction, some research has shown that even light-touch intergroup contact can affect perceptions. One experiment found that reading stories to children that featured intergroup friendships (between refugees and nonrefugees) improved the children’s attitudes towards refugees.⁴⁷ Other studies have shown that activities as simple as imagining positive intergroup contact can significantly improve intergroup relations, with a 2013 meta-analysis of more than 70 studies of ‘imagined contact’ finding a strong and consistent positive effect on interactions between groups.⁴⁸

d. Moral elevation and compassion

Another set of research, drawing mainly on positive psychology, has shown that people have the potential to change their behaviour and contribute to the common good. This may occur after what some studies describe as ‘moral elevation’—the state of mind after witnessing an act of virtue, such as compassion, forgiveness, or

45 Rupert Brown and Jenny Paterson, ‘Indirect Contact and Prejudice Reduction: Limits and Possibilities’, *Current Opinion in Psychology* 11 (2016): 20–4, http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/61532/1/_smhhome.uscs.susx.ac.uk_lh89/Desktop_Late%20Research%20activity%20sheets_Rupert%20Brown_CurrentopinionRBJPFINAL.revisedaccepted.pdf.

46 Ananthi Al Ramiah, Katharina Schmid, Miles Hewstone, and Christina Floe, ‘Why Are All the White (Asian) Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? Resegregation and the Role of Intergroup Attributions and Norms’, *British Journal of Social Psychology* 54, no. 1 (March 2015): 100–24.

47 Lindsey Cameron, Adam Rutland, Rupert Brown, and Rebecca Douch, ‘Changing Children’s Intergroup Attitudes toward Refugees: Testing Different Models of Extended Contact’, *Child Development* 77, no. 5 (September/October 2006): 1208–19.

48 Eleanor Miles and Richard J. Crisp, ‘A Meta-Analytic Test of the Imagined Contact Hypothesis’, *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 17, no. 1 (2014): 3–26.

altruism.⁴⁹ This state of mind has been found to increase the likelihood of individuals acting in an altruistic manner themselves.⁵⁰

In the integration field, there is potential to use this idea of moral elevation to increase altruistic behaviour and tolerance. Experiments have shown that inducing the state of moral elevation can lead individuals to increase their charitable giving and the amount of time they spend volunteering.⁵¹ Interventions that involve acts of compassion and altruism towards newcomers (either in person or in film) may lead to equivalent behaviours. In a similar way, the work of Tania Singer and colleagues has shown that particular forms of meditation can increase social connectedness.⁵²

e. Cooperative learning

One of the most effective approaches to reducing prejudice between groups is cooperative learning, where small groups of students from different backgrounds teach and learn from each other. This approach incorporates the key aspects of successful intergroup contact described in previous sections, and it has proved to be effective in promoting positive interethnic attitudes,⁵³ fostering intergroup friendships,⁵⁴ and reducing prejudice and discrimination.⁵⁵ Educators may choose to implement this type of initiative by setting up group projects in classes composed of students from a variety of backgrounds to ensure they have opportunities to work together.

Cooperative learning programmes are a promising means of reducing racial segregation *within* schools, but in many areas the problem is that the schools themselves are segregated. Shared education programmes—such as one established in Northern Ireland in 2007 that offered shared classes and activities to pupils from different religious schools—may be an effective means of addressing this challenge. Evaluation of the Northern Irish programme suggests that it has been effective at promoting social cohesion: students reported significantly higher proportions of crossgroup friendships, more positive attitudes, increased trust, and reduced anxiety towards people different from them compared to nonparticipants.⁵⁶

Similar programmes could be trialled elsewhere by bringing together students from segregated schools close to one another to undertake joint projects. These activities could focus on promoting the factors known to

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- 49 The concept of ‘moral elevation’ grew out of research on moral disgust, the opposite state of mind. See Jonathan Haidt, ‘Elevation and the Positive Psychology of Morality’ in *Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-Lived*, eds. Corey L. M. Keyes and Jonathan Haidt (Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 2003), 275–89.
- 50 Ibid. Haidt and colleagues posit that moral elevation is a third dimension of social cognition (the others being closeness and hierarchy) and have noted the potential for contributions to the common good alongside others involved in positive psychology. See, for example, Martin E. P. Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Positive Psychology: An Introduction* (New York: Springer, 2014); Christopher Peterson, *A Primer in Positive Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
- 51 Simone Schnall, Jean Roper, and Daniel M. T. Fessler, ‘Elevation Leads to Altruistic Behavior’, *Psychological Science* 21, no. 3 (2010): 315–20.
- 52 Bethany E. Kok and Tania Singer, ‘Effects of Contemplative Dyads on Engagement and Perceived Social Connectedness over 9 Months of Mental Training’, *JAMA Psychiatry* 74, no. 2 (February 2017): 126.
- 53 Marika Ginsburg-Block, Cynthia Rohrbeck, and John W. Fantuzzo, ‘A Meta-Analytic Review of Social, Self-Concept, and Behavioral Outcomes of Peer-Assisted Learning’, *Journal of Educational Psychology* 98, no. 4 (November 2006): 732–49.
- 54 David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson, *Cooperation and Competition: Theory and Research* (Edina, MN: Interaction Book Company, 1989).
- 55 Robert Cooper and Robert E. Slavin, ‘Cooperative Learning: An Instructional Strategy to Improve Intergroup Relations’, in *Education Programs for Improving Intergroup Relations*, eds. Walter G. Stephan and W. Paul Vogt (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004); Cary J. Roseth, David W. Johnson, and Roger T. Johnson, ‘Promoting Early Adolescents’ Achievement and Peer Relationships: The Effects of Cooperative, Competitive, and Individualistic Goal Structures’, *Psychological Bulletin* 134, no. 2 (March 2008): 223–46.
- 56 Joanne Hughes et al., ‘Sharing Classes between Separate Schools: A Mechanism for Improving Inter-Group Relations in Northern Ireland?’, *Policy Futures in Education* 10, no. 5 (October 2012): 528–39.

encourage successful intergroup interaction: shared goals, feeling of equality of status, and encouragement to interact communicated by authority figures.⁵⁷

B. Socioeconomic integration

Persistent socioeconomic gaps between newcomers, longstanding minority groups, and the broader population are common in many societies. A review of the literature suggests that behavioural insights can be most readily applied to employment and education initiatives, though future work could extend to health, housing, and other public policy areas where similar gaps exist.

1. Work

Two particular approaches to improving labour-market integration can benefit from behavioural insights: 1) helping newcomers or employers overcome decision-making biases (such as a short-term mindset), and 2) promoting more inclusive recruitment processes. Existing evidence points to the limitations of policies and programmes that solely focus on creating incentives to work—such as sanctions for not fulfilling job-search requirements—and to the need to understand individual motivations more broadly.⁵⁸ A range of behavioural approaches with a solid evidence base could be applied to this challenge, including techniques for overcoming stereotype threat and improving the user experience during application processes.

a. Cognitive load

Faced with the challenge of meeting urgent day-to-day needs, individuals with limited income, formal education, or host-language proficiency may be cognitively exhausted and struggle to effectively navigate large amounts of information and engage with difficult, long-term decisions. This ‘cognitive depletion’ can force people to rely on intuitive or superficial (rather than reflective or rational) judgements.⁵⁹ Suboptimal decision-making when it comes to employment and related financial matters could lead individuals to become trapped in a cycle of poverty.⁶⁰

In many countries, the foreign born are more likely to suffer from poverty and disadvantage, especially in their first few years after arrival.⁶¹ Moreover, those who have experienced trauma, arduous journeys, and

57 Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge and Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1954). The Citizenship Foundation’s Giving Nation project is an interesting example that could be adapted for this type of intervention. In this project, groups of students are given £50 to develop ideas based on social enterprises, volunteering, or charity fundraising with the view to making some type of positive impact on the community. This project has been delivered across the United Kingdom with positive results in terms of the levels of fundraising and sense of belonging. If connected to an integration programme, this type of initiative could potentially be a powerful catalyst for positive intergroup interactions.

58 Julia Griggs and Martin Evans, *A Review of Benefit Sanctions* (York, UK: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2010), www.jrf.org.uk/report/review-benefit-sanctions.

59 This phenomenon has been well reported. See, for example, Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, 1st ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2013).

60 Cara Feinberg, ‘The Science of Scarcity’, *Harvard Magazine*, May 2015, <https://harvardmagazine.com/2015/05/the-science-of-scarcity>.

61 For instance, according to the most recent estimates from 2014, which predate the migration crisis, 22 per cent of first-generation immigrants in work are in the lowest-skilled jobs (‘elementary occupations’) compared to 8 per cent of the native born (calculation based on 21 of 28 EU Member States as the others lacked complete data). See Eurostat, ‘Employees by Migration Status, Educational Attainment Level, Occupation and Working Time [lfsa_14leeow]’, updated 3 June 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/lfsa_14leeow.

considerable stress upon arrival, as many refugees have, may have a particularly heavy ‘cognitive load’.⁶² Understanding which of a complex array of entitlements one may qualify for or absorbing a flood of new information can be overwhelming. This could make it difficult to make optimal decisions about job-seeking, investing in education or training, or spending the time and money to get prior work experience and foreign qualifications recognised in a new country.

There is strong evidence that creating ‘implementation intentions’—concrete if-then plans for how an action will be completed—increases follow-through on a desired action, such as applying for a job.⁶³ Such actions are also generally completed more rapidly and tend to be less affected by the individual’s present cognitive load, suggesting the action has become more instinctive.⁶⁴ Implementation intentions are particularly effective when the individual is strongly motivated by the potential outcomes of the action. Often, these exercises are preceded by ‘mental contrasting’ exercises, in which participants visualise the positive aspects of achieving their goal and how it will feel, as a way to create attachment to the outcome.⁶⁵

Interventions might involve simplifying written communication or removing any ‘friction’ that could make a task require more effort than is necessary.

Drawing on these concepts, BIT designed interventions to support people back to work in the United Kingdom by redesigning the benefits and job-search process. Previously, jobseekers coming to the Jobcentre (the UK public employment service) were asked to describe what they had done in the past two weeks to find a job. The reimagined process inverted this approach by prompting jobseekers to instead describe what will they do in the future. One intervention involved creating a commitment device to aid in overcoming procrastination, in which jobseekers were asked to write down pledges for the coming week that specify exactly when (e.g., after breakfast on Monday) and how many jobs they would search for. The results of this experiment included a five-percentage-point increase in jobseekers finding employment and leaving benefits, and improvements in staff happiness. Another, larger-scale trial found smaller but nonetheless positive effects.⁶⁶

One of the lessons that emerges most strongly from the behavioural literature is the importance of making a task as easy as possible to complete.⁶⁷ Depending on the context, interventions might involve simplifying written communication or removing any ‘friction’ that could make a task require more effort than is necessary. Given the information overload and decision-making paralysis many people experience when contemplating important career choices, relevant intervention could include simplifying the processes of accessing employment or training.

b. *Addressing bias*

Another common barrier to accessing work is bias—whether on the part of individual employers or baked into hiring processes. Experiments that concealed the gender of musicians from a panel evaluating orchestra applicants found that these blind auditions increased the likelihood that women would be selected by 25

62 For an overview of how poverty and disadvantage can affect decision-making by restricting access to social and financial capital, see Kizzy Gandy et al., *Poverty and Decision-Making: How Behavioural Science Can Improve Opportunity in the UK* (London: BIT, 2016), <http://38r80m2xjhhl25mw24492dirwpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/JRF-poverty-and-decision-making.pdf>.

63 Peter M. Gollwitzer, ‘Implementation Intentions: Strong Effects of Simple Plans’, *American Psychologist* 54, no. 7 (1999): 493–503.

64 Ibid.

65 Gabriele Oettingen and Peter Gollwitzer, ‘Strategies of Setting and Implementing Goals: Mental Contrasting and Implementation Intentions’, in *Social Psychological Foundations of Clinical Psychology*, eds. James E. Maddux and June Price Tangney (New York: Guilford, 2010), 114–35.

66 BIT, *Update Report 2013–2015* (London: BIT, 2015), www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/BIT_Update-Report-Final-2013-2015.pdf.

67 BIT, *EAST: Four Simple Ways to Apply Behavioural Insights*.

to 40 per cent.⁶⁸ This finding is similar to one already noted, that applicants with ‘White sounding’ or male names were more likely to be called for an interview than others.⁶⁹ These insights suggest bias is a potentially significant barrier to employment for refugees and immigrants. Behavioural interventions⁷⁰ seek to address bias by making application processes fairer and more focused on a candidate’s skills than their race, gender, or socioeconomic background. These include anonymising applications, breaking applications into different sections to prevent biased marking, and detecting and removing gendered language in job postings.

c. *Complex barriers and social capital*

Immigrants often rely on social capital—networks and relationships within communities—as an important resource for finding employment, as well as for managing periods of job loss and unemployment.⁷¹ Newcomers generally have more limited bridging social capital (i.e., ties to people from different backgrounds) than other types of jobseekers; however, minority groups, including many immigrants, often have strong bonding social capital (i.e., ties between people from the same background).⁷² While bonding social capital can be helpful in the short term, if an immigrant’s social and professional networks remain limited to ingroup connections, this may limit upward mobility or result in underemployment in the long term.⁷³ By contrast, bridging social capital may allow jobseekers to tap into diverse sources of information and advance their careers.⁷⁴

Some behavioural interventions have tested methods to expand jobseekers’ social capital, for instance by encouraging them to take part in role-play exercises in which they introduce themselves to others.⁷⁵ Future research on how labour-market interventions could help jobseekers build social capital may include a focus on addressing financial and time scarcity, or on measures of self-efficacy and motivation.⁷⁶ In many countries, this would represent a fairly seismic shift away from the benefits-and-sanctions approach to promoting employment that assumes a universal and purely rational model of jobseeker decision-making.

d. *Quality of work*

Successful labour-market integration goes beyond simply finding work—jobs are not all created equal. People with lower and/or fluctuating incomes may be more susceptible to a spiral of low pay if they make decisions about work ‘one day at a time’. For instance, a study of taxi drivers in New York City found that on days when the drivers earned more (e.g., because it was raining or because it was a public holiday), they frequently

68 Claudia Goldin and Cecilia Rouse, ‘Orchestrating Impartiality: The Impact of “Blind” Auditions on Female Musicians’, *American Economic Review* 90, no. 4 (September 2000): 715–41.

69 Bertrand and Mullainathan, ‘Are Emily and Greg More Employable’.

70 See, for example, BIT’s Be Applied, ‘About Applied’, accessed 8 August 2018, www.beapplied.com/about.

71 Karon Gush, James Scott, and Heather Laurie, ‘Job Loss and Social Capital: The Role of Family, Friends and Wider Support Networks’ (ISER Working Paper no. 2015–7, University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research, April 2015), www.iseressex.ac.uk/research/publications/working-papers/iser/2015-07.pdf.

72 Migrants and refugees may forego a certain amount of social capital as they move to a new country, which makes bonding capital especially important. See, for instance, Navjot K. Lamba and Harvey Krahn, ‘Social Capital and Refugee Resettlement: The Social Networks of Refugees in Canada’, *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 4, no. 3 (September 2003): 335–60. Religious identities that transcend national or ethnic groups can provide an important source of bridging social capital for some. See Terence Lovat et al., ‘Australian Muslim Jobseekers and Social Capital’, *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 47, no. 2 (June 2015): 165–85.

73 For instance, because jobseekers’ language proficiency limits the pool of jobs they can take, this may concentrate immigrant workers in jobs where they do not need to be able to speak the host-country language well, which in turn further constrains their ability to learn that language or build ties with other groups. See Nii Djan Tackey et al., *Barriers to Employment for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Britain and Constraints* (London: UK Department for Work and Pensions, 2006), http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130125093835/http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report_abstracts/rr_abstracts/rfa_360.asp.

74 Mark Granovetter, ‘The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited’, *Sociological Theory* 1 (1983): 201–33.

75 Gandy et al., *Poverty and Decision-Making*.

76 For a discussion of potential research avenues, see *ibid*.

went home earlier despite the chance to earn even more if they continued to work.⁷⁷ This example points to an opportunity for behavioural interventions to help people think more strategically and long term to maximise their economic interests.

One implication of this insight for integration policy is that the sanctions some European countries have introduced for newcomers who fail to participate in introduction programmes or in welfare-to-work programmes may have unintended consequences. Blanket requirements such as these may force people to rush to take up any work, even if of poor quality, to avoid sanctions rather than pursuing employment opportunities that may be more advantageous both to them and their host country. For example, newcomers may have skills and work experience valued in the host-country labour market but lack the language proficiency to immediately take up the type of work for which they were trained; taking a low-skilled job to avoid sanctions may do little to help advance their language proficiency and further delay their return to higher-skilled work. Requirements to either participate in training or job searching could result in a similarly perverse incentive for jobseekers to remain in training even after it ceases to add value to their employability.

As European labour markets evolve—with traditional employer-employee relationships becoming less entrenched, many sectors facing job losses from automation and digitisation, and new forms of online work emerging—training that helps people to navigate increasingly unstable job markets may become a crucial aspect of integration programming. Emerging evidence suggests that immigrants are overrepresented in gig-economy jobs, such as driving for Uber and completing other piecework through digital platforms.⁷⁸ France's Personal Activity Account, which enables workers to access training regardless of the kind of employment contract (if any) they currently hold, aims to help people survive precarious employment situations.⁷⁹ Behavioural insights could provide tools to help increase the take-up of programmes such as this by improving their user-friendliness or automatically signing people up instead of requiring action on their part.

As European labour markets evolve ... training that helps people to navigate increasingly unstable job markets may become a crucial aspect of integration programming.

e. Stereotype threat

Stereotypes—whether based on ethnicity, religion, gender, or other traits—can have a profound effect on how people view their own strengths and limitations, and the life choices they make as a result. When this type of ‘stereotype threat’ is at play, negative stereotypes about one’s own group⁸⁰ can lead to poor academic or job performance and lower self-confidence.⁸¹ The salience of group identity can be activated by identity-identifying questions (e.g., ‘What is your ethnicity?’) and is especially powerful in diagnostic situations, such as tests and interviews.

Stereotype threats can arise in environments where a particular stereotype is presumed to be relevant. Early work in this field found that African American students performed better on an IQ test if the assessment was described to them as a hand–eye coordination test, a label that did not activate negative stereotype about the

77 Colin Camerer, Linda Babcock, George Loewenstein, and Richard Thaler, ‘Labor Supply of New York City Cabdrivers: One Day at a Time’, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112, no. 2 (May 1997): 407–41.

78 Annette Bernhardt and Sarah Thomason, *What Do We Know about Gig Work in California? An Analysis of Independent Contracting* (Berkeley, CA: UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education, 2017), <http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/pdf/2017/What-Do-We-Know-About-Gig-Work-in-California.pdf>.

79 Meghan Benton and Liam Patuzzi, *Jobs in 2028: How Will Changing Labour Markets Affect Immigrant Integration in Europe?* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2018), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/jobs-2028-changing-labour-markets-immigrant-integration-europe.

80 Claude Steele and Joshua Aronson, ‘Stereotype Threat and the Intellectual Test Performance of African Americans’, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 69, no. 5 (November 1995): 797–811.

81 Laurie T. O’Brien and Christian S. Crandall, ‘Stereotype Threat and Arousal: Effects on Women’s Math Performance’, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 29, no. 6 (June 2003): 782–89.

intelligence of African Americans.⁸² Subsequent research on stereotype threat has found that this effect may not be as strong and widespread as the initial research suggested,⁸³ but it is nonetheless important that the design of public services take into account the subtle ways that internalised stereotypes can affect performance and decision-making.

There is evidence to suggest that prompting values affirmation can reduce the negative effects of stereotype threat.⁸⁴ Building on this insight, BIT has successfully used this approach to attract a more diverse pool of candidates in a recruitment campaign for a UK police force.⁸⁵ Candidates who identified as a member of a minority or ethnic group were more likely to drop out of the process when asked to take a test to assess their situational judgement. By rewording the reminder email to applicants before the test to make it more welcoming and adding a line asking candidates to consider what becoming a police officer would mean to them and their community, the intervention increased both the raw scores and the pass rate for minority applicants (the latter, a 50 per cent increase). The intervention had no impact on the pass rate of White candidates, effectively closing the gap between the two groups.

Governments could easily (and relatively cheaply) test whether similar prompts might have the same effect in different public institutions. If that proves to be the case, such light-touch adjustments could become important tools to help improve the diversity of the public-sector workforce. This approach could also be applied to boost naturalisation applications among eligible immigrants by countering origin-country-based stereotype threat, or to increase uptake of services among immigrant communities that might otherwise shy away to avoid reinforcing negative stereotypes about immigrants as a drain on public coffers.

2. Education

In most European countries, children with immigrant parents are less likely than those with native-born parents to go to university.⁸⁶ There is a body of evidence showing that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to apply for university, and when they do, they apply to less selective institutions (even when selective ones offer more generous funding).⁸⁷ In fact, results from one British study suggest the gap in university attendance could mostly be attributed to application decisions.⁸⁸

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to apply for university, and when they do, they apply to less selective institutions.

While some academic gaps can be explained by lower grades at early educational stages that have a long-term effect on achievement, or by students not having taken the right subjects, aspiration and attitudes also play a considerable role. Some minority students are sceptical that university is right for them. Moreover, disadvan-

⁸² Irwin Katz, Edgar G. Epps, and Leland J. Axelson, 'Effect upon Negro Digit-Symbol Performance of Anticipated Comparison with Whites and with Other Negroes', *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 69, no. 1 (1964): 77–83.

⁸³ Colleen M. Ganley et al., 'An Examination of Stereotype Threat Effects on Girls' Mathematics Performance', *Developmental Psychology* 49, no. 10 (January 2013): 1886–1897; Lawrence J. Stricker and William C. Ward, 'Stereotype Threat, Inquiring about Test Takers' Ethnicity and Gender, and Standardized Test Performance', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 34, no. 4 (April 2004): 665–93.

⁸⁴ Jeff Stone, Christian I. Lynch, Mike Sjomeling, and John M. Darley, 'Stereotype Threat Effects on Black and White Athletic Performance', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 77, no. 6 (1999): 1213–27.

⁸⁵ Elizabeth Linos, Joanne Reinhard, and Simon Ruda, 'Levelling the Playing Field in Police Recruitment: Evidence from a Field Experiment on Test Performance', *Public Administration Review* 95, no. 4 (December 2017): 943–56.

⁸⁶ One exception is the United Kingdom. See OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015*.

⁸⁷ Michael Sanders, Raj Chande, and Eliza Selley, *Encouraging People into University* (London: UK Department for Education, 2017), http://38r8om2xjhhl25mw24492dir.wengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Encouraging_people_into_university.pdf.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

taged students may be more susceptible to ‘hyperbolic discounting’, the tendency to choose smaller rewards that materialise sooner over larger rewards later on.⁸⁹

Another factor at play appears to be whether young people in immigrant communities have role models like them to look up to. Research has shown that immigrants living in ethnic enclaves perform better at school when they live alongside high-performing neighbours of the same ethnicity.⁹⁰ The subsections that follow look at these twin forces of personal aspiration and social belonging, and how behavioural insights could be used to improve educational outcomes for immigrant-background students.

a. *Aspirations*

Interventions to encourage young people to go to university and select higher-quality institutions have been implemented in a variety of settings. Often, these include tailored messaging, peer support and mentoring, and incentives such as reduced or waived application fees. Immigrant families have been shown to have particularly strong educational aspirations for their children, which may make such interventions particularly effective.⁹¹ In one BIT study, letters were sent to high-achieving disadvantaged students that emphasised the value of attending a top university. The campaign increased the likelihood that an individual would receive and accept an offer at a selective university (although not of applying to a university in general).⁹² The letters were sent to about 8,500 students, at a cost of 87p each, which meant that the average investment needed for each additional student who accepted a place at a selective university was around £45.⁹³

Other trials have explored the positive impact on young people applying to university of hearing inspirational talks from people from a similar background⁹⁴ or of having application fees waived.⁹⁵ One study of college coaching in New Hampshire found that peer mentorship increased the likelihood that ‘students at the margin’ would apply for university. This approach was especially effective among women (yielding a 13-percentage-point increase). Offering cash bonuses for signing up for the mentoring programme also improved take-up.⁹⁶

Thus far, these types of educational interventions have not been tested among the children of immigrants specifically. While it seems likely that the same dynamics would apply, trials that focus on first- and second-generation immigrants would help policymakers understand how to narrow tertiary education gaps. In countries

⁸⁹ Ariel Rubinstein, “Economics and Psychology”? The Case of Hyperbolic Discounting’, *International Economic Review* 44, no. 4 (November 2003): 1207–16. Studies have found that as people have greater material resources, they are more likely to assess the long-term consequences of their behaviour and value long-term payoffs. See Keiko Ishii, Charis Eisen, and Hidefumi Hitokoto, ‘The Effects of Social Status and Culture on Delay Discounting’, *Japanese Psychological Research* 59, no. 3 (July 2017): 230–37. Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds may be more attuned to information about fees instead of information about support for students from low-income backgrounds. See Xavier Gabaix and David Laibson, ‘Shrouded Attributes, Consumer Myopia, and Information Suppression in Competitive Markets’ (working paper no. 11755, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, November 2005), www.nber.org/papers/w11755.

⁹⁰ Olof Åslund, Per-Anders Edin, Peter Fredriksson, and Hans Grönqvist, ‘Peers, Neighborhoods and Immigrant Student Achievement: Evidence from a Placement Policy’ (working paper no. 4521, Institute for the Study of Labour, Bonn, Germany, October 2009), <http://ftp.iza.org/dp4521.pdf>.

⁹¹ Philip Kasinitz, John H. Mollenkopf, Mary C. Waters, and Jennifer Holdaway. *Inheriting the City: The Children of Immigrants Come of Age* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008).

⁹² Sanders, Chande, and Selle, *Encouraging People into University*.

⁹³ A total of 11,489 letters were sent, and an additional 222 young people accepted a place at a selective university as a result of the trial. See *Ibid*.

⁹⁴ Antonio Silva, Michael Sanders, and Aisling Ni Chonaire, *Does the Heart Rule the Head? Economic and Emotional Incentives for University Attendance*, Vol. 1 (London: BIT, 2016), <http://38r8om2xjhhl25mw24492dir-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Raising-Aspiration-%E2%80%93-Changing-the-perceived-costs-and-benefits-of-going-to-university-May-16.pdf>.

⁹⁵ Caroline M. Hoxby and Sarah Turner, ‘What High-Achieving Low-Income Students Know about College’, *American Economic Review* 105, no. 5 (May 2015): 514–17.

⁹⁶ This study found that sending letters and emails made no difference. See Scott E. Carrell and Bruce Sacerdote, ‘Why Do College Going Interventions Work?’ (working paper no. 19031, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, May 2013), www.nber.org/papers/w19031.

such as France, Denmark, and Spain, where both the children of immigrants and people who arrived as children themselves are underrepresented at university, such initiatives hold particular promise.⁹⁷

b. *Social belonging*

'Belonging' describes the sense of personal relatedness individuals feel towards others in a group, creating a sense of community and attachment.⁹⁸ Many experts view belonging as the foundation of learning at school,⁹⁹ and research indicates that social belonging is significantly related to many elements of academic success, including general motivation, effort, perceptions of the value of school work, and students' expectations about success.¹⁰⁰

Evidence suggests that interventions that aim to increase feelings of belonging can support better academic and broader life outcomes, such as health and wellbeing. An RCT conducted in the United States involved university students in their first year reading the results of a survey in which other students expressed their worries about fitting in at university.¹⁰¹ Participants then wrote and read aloud a brief essay on how their own university experiences mirrored or contrasted those summarised in the survey, with the aim of helping students view discomfort in a new social setting as a common experience rather than as an indicator that they did not belong.¹⁰² This simple exercise narrowed the school attainment gap between African American and White students by 79 per cent in the three years after the intervention took place. Additionally, African American students who participated in this exercise visited the doctor less frequently, and reported being healthier and happier than those in the control group.

Interventions centred around strengthening a sense of belonging could also improve community cohesion by encouraging residents of different backgrounds to conceive of themselves as part of a superordinate group. This might be done, for example, by increasing the salience of shared identities (e.g., in a school, neighbourhood, or country) or factors perceived to be shared by different groups (e.g., common goals or challenges).¹⁰³

When designing interventions in this area, it is important to be aware that high levels of belonging do not always produce desirable outcomes. Communities with high levels of bonding capital (social capital within a group) can sometimes engage in exclusionary practices based on distrust and intolerance of individuals perceived to not be part of the same group.¹⁰⁴ For example, a study found that Black people in the United States who had high levels of bonding capital were less likely to form interethnic friendships.¹⁰⁵

Nonetheless, there is promise in bringing feelings of belonging to the forefront of students' minds and reassuring them that they are valued members of an educational community and the wider society. Well designed, this type of intervention may both improve their long-term educational aspirations and outcomes, and reduce the appeal of antisocial views and actions.

97 OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015*.

98 Karen F. Osterman, 'Students' Need for Belonging in the School Community', *Review of Educational Research* 70, no. 2 (September 2000): 323–67.

99 Richard M. Ryan and Cynthia L. Powelson, 'Autonomy and Relatedness as Fundamental to Motivation and Education', *The Journal of Experimental Education* 60 (April 2014): 49–66.

100 Carol Goodenow and Kathleen E. Grady, 'The Relationship of School Belonging and Friends' Values to Academic Motivation Among Urban Adolescent Students', *The Journal of Experimental Education* 62, no. 1 (1993): 60–71.

101 Gregory M. Walton and Geoffrey L. Cohen, 'A Brief Social-Belonging Intervention Improves Academic and Health Outcomes of Minority Students', *Science* 331, no. 6023 (March 2011): 1447–51.

102 Participants in a control group did a similar exercise on the topic of changes in sociopolitical attitudes.

103 Muzafer Sherif et al., *Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation: The Robbers Cave Experiment*, Vol. 10 (Norman, OK: University Book Exchange, 1961); Dovidio et al., 'Empathy and Intergroup Relations'.

104 Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of America Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000); Francis Fukuyama, 'Social Development and Capital: The Coming Agenda', *The SAIS Review* 22, no. 1 (2002): 22–37.

105 Timothy Bledsoe, Susan Welch, Lee Sigelman, and Michael Combs, 'Residential Context and Racial Solidarity among African Americans', *American Journal of Political Science* 39, no. 2 (1995): 434–58.

C. Access to the public realm

The final key area where behavioural insights could be harnessed to inform integration policy is in understanding why take-up of public services and social entitlements is lower among immigrant and minority groups.

1. Public services

There are numerous barriers to accessing public services, especially for disadvantaged groups and newly arrived migrants. For an individual or family, even determining whether they are eligible for a programme or benefit can be hugely complex.¹⁰⁶ People living in difficult financial circumstances might also be focused on short-term survival, instead of on maximising their family's welfare over the long run. Additionally, people from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to rely more heavily on information from acquaintances than from official sources, stymying some government outreach efforts. In the case of newly arrived refugees, this may be compounded by distrust of official actors due to prior experience with government persecution or harassment in their origin countries or while in transit.

a. Reducing cognitive load

As previously discussed, disadvantaged groups and newly arrived migrants can experience a heavy cognitive load when faced with high-impact decisions because of the stresses of adapting to a new society or of living hand to mouth. Choices about whether and how to access public benefits is one area affected by these decision-making hurdles.

Take-up of public services can be improved by making application processes as user friendly as possible. This can be as simple as creating electronic forms that autofill information about applicants that is already on file to minimise the amount of new information they need to provide, or enabling service providers to share information about participants so that they do not have to constantly repeat their story. For instance, Code for America, a U.S. nonprofit organisation that designs technological solutions to make government services more efficient, has worked with the California CalFresh food stamps programme to identify several barriers to the application process: among them, applicants were required to complete an electronic form within a certain amount of time or all of their information would be lost, the website could only be accessed during certain hours of the day, and it required that documentary evidence be submitted in an obscure file format.¹⁰⁷ The revised webform includes a prescreen to test potential applicants' eligibility before they invest time in applying, allows applicants to file documents in the form of pictures taken with a smartphone camera, and promises the process will take ten minutes to complete.

A ‘cognitive load stress test’ to evaluate suspected blockages in service pipelines offers a diagnostic tool for policymakers.¹⁰⁸ This may include asking how long it takes the average user to complete an application, how long the wait is between completing the application and gaining access to the service, whether it is easy to use, and if any elements of the process could be streamlined. A more comprehensive test to explore the factors that affect entitlement take-up, such as issues around transport or child care, could supplement this analysis. For newcomers, other barriers, such as legal status or limited language proficiency, may also be at play. Only by understanding the context and user experience will such barriers come to light and be addressed.

¹⁰⁶ While the benefits of public programmes are often large enough that people are willing to jump through the necessary hoops, there are always some who are unable or unwilling to take on the bureaucratic burden. See BIT, *Behavioral Insights for Cities* (New York: BIT, 2016), www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/publications/behavioral-insights-for-making-cities-better/.

¹⁰⁷ Alan Joseph Williams, ‘User-Centred Design and Food Stamps: Delivering a 21st Century Government Service’, User Experience, November 2015, <http://uxpamagazine.org/user-centered-design-and-food-stamps/>.

¹⁰⁸ Gandy et al., *Poverty and Decision-Making*.

b. *Encouraging take-up of preventative services*

Some interventions seek to encourage take-up of preventative services, such as health check-ups, that can save both individuals and societies money in the long run. For instance, one intervention in the United States involved texting low-income individuals who had not seen a primary care physician in more than two years to suggest they access a free health service. A general message advised the recipients that they were entitled to a check-up, while another promoted ‘take care of yourself so you can take care of the ones you love’, and a third drew on research into the motivating effects of making people feel unique by saying that they had ‘been selected’ to receive a free check-up. Telling people they had been selected increased the number agreeing to schedule an appointment by 40 per cent; recipients of the first, purely informational text resulted in the next highest rate of appointment scheduling, and the ‘take care yourself’ message had the least effect of all three strategies.¹⁰⁹

Personalisation can also make a difference in other situations. Sending personalised text messages about job fairs to jobseekers in the United Kingdom more than doubled attendance rates.¹¹⁰ The rationale for investing in improving take-up of such services is that they will result in savings in the long run. This principle could be applied to many integration services—for instance, encouraging newcomers to participate in language training programmes that they are entitled to but not required to complete.¹¹¹

2. Citizenship and civic inclusion

Studies have found that acquiring the citizenship of the country in which an immigrant lives often results in an income boost. Although naturalisation also tends to be associated with characteristics linked with successful integration (e.g., higher levels of education and better language skills), even after controlling for these differences, naturalised citizens have higher employment rates and earn more than noncitizens.¹¹² There is also evidence that political integration (e.g., commitment to a society and voting) increases with citizenship, and that the link is stronger among those who naturalise as soon they qualify than among those who wait.¹¹³ This indicates that governments should seek to promote citizenship, where possible. Behavioural approaches may offer important tools in this regard, especially active or ‘educative’ nudges that give people the opportunity and resources to make changes to their lives.¹¹⁴

109 BIT, *Behavioral Insights for Cities*.

110 Michael Sanders and Elspeth Kirkman, ‘I’ve Booked You a Place. Good Luck: A Field Experiment Applying Behavioural Science to Improve Attendance at High-Impact Recruitment Events’ (working paper no. 13/334, University of Bristol, Centre for Market and Public Organisation, Bristol, December 2014), www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/cmpo/documents/WebVersion.pdf.

111 One specific application of this in the European Union could relate to mobile EU nationals, who cannot be compelled to participate in integration programmes (such as language training) because of the EU legal principle of nondiscrimination with nationals, but who would in many cases benefit from improved host-country language skills. The Dutch government has historically expressed interest in making integration programmes that are currently mandatory for third-country nationals compulsory for EU nationals too. In cases where making a programme compulsory is not an option, nudges to improve compliance could provide an alternative.

112 Madeleine Sumption and Sarah Flamm, *The Economic Value of Citizenship for Immigrants in the United States* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2012), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/economic-value-citizenship.

113 Jens Hainmueller, Dominik Hangartner, and Giuseppe Pietrantuono, ‘Naturalization Fosters the Long-Term Political Integration of Immigrants’, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112, no. 41 (October 2015): 12651–65, www.pnas.org/content/112/41/12651?sid=64f0c9f9-63e4-4006-91a2-4e5c94fda96b.

114 See Peter John and Gerry Stoker, ‘From Nudge to Nudge Plus: The Future of Behavioural Policy’ (unpublished draft, University of Canberra, Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, 2017), www.governanceinstitute.edu.au/magma/media/upload/ckeditor/files/From%20nudge%20to%20nudge%20plus%20behavioural%20public%20policy%20for%20a%20self-guiding%20society.pdf.

For countries that require people to register before they can vote, such as the United Kingdom and the United States, nudges such as offering a chance at a lottery prize to people who register before a certain date have proven highly effective.¹¹⁵ Registration in such societies is a precondition of political participation, but it can also have ancillary benefits, such as increasing registrants' credit scores and enabling individuals to get mortgages, that may be of particular value to eligible immigrants.¹¹⁶

a. Nudging citizenship

Given the evidence showing the cost effectiveness of citizenship acquisition as an integration tool, countries could examine ways to improve application rates among eligible immigrants. New York State's Office for New Americans launched a trial lottery in which participants can win vouchers to cover the cost of filing a citizenship application.¹¹⁷ The trial will follow those selected and those who were not to see how powerful financial barriers are in discouraging people from acquiring citizenship. The office is also piloting nudges to encourage low-income immigrants who qualify for the federal government's fee waiver (for whom cost may not be the primary barrier) to receive support from immigrant service providers in how to navigate the application process.

Countries could examine ways to improve application rates among eligible immigrants.

Studies such as this one may help improve understanding of the causal relationship behind the 'citizenship premium' that has been noted by other research.¹¹⁸ In short, they may help answer the question of whether immigrants with higher incomes, education, and political engagement more likely to become citizens, or whether citizenship makes people more likely to enter high-quality work, pursue higher education, and become politically active.

b. Promoting shared understanding

A behavioural approach could also be used to promote civic behaviour more broadly—both among newcomers and the wider population. Evidence suggests that speaking in a way consistent with people's moral foundations (the intuitive moral rules that guide an individual's decision-making) can help facilitate positive engagement with people from different backgrounds and shift perceptions of others by highlighting shared values.

Studies have found that moral decisions are generally made rapidly and intuitively.¹¹⁹ Work on cultural cognition has highlighted the importance of framing information in a way that is consistent with someone's worldview

115 Michael Sanders, 'Using a Lottery to Incentivise Voter Registration', BIT, 28 September 2015, www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/trial-results/using-a-lottery-to-incentivise-voter-registration/; Martin Sweeney, Stephanie Service, Lucy Makinson, and Hazel Northcott, *Increasing Responses to the Annual Canvass in Hackney and Hull* (London: BIT, 2018), www.behaviouralinsights.co.uk/publications/increasing-responses-to-the-annual-canvass-in-hackney-and-hull/.

116 Sumption and Flamm, *The Economic Value of Citizenship*.

117 Immigration Policy Lab, 'Lifting Barriers to Citizenship', accessed 8 August 2018, www.immigrationlab.org/project/equal-access-citizenship/. There have been some attempts to understand this, such as a study of Swiss municipalities in which referendums were used to decide on naturalisation applicants. See Jens Hainmueller, Dominik Hangartner, and Giuseppe Pietrantonio, 'Catalyst or Crown: Does Naturalization Promote the Long-Term Social Integration of Immigrants?', *American Political Science Review* 111, no. 2 (May 2017): 256–76, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055416000745>.

118 Sumption and Flamm, *The Economic Value of Citizenship*.

119 Evidence shows that people react based on intuitive moral rules and the relative importance they place on the rules. Haidt's Moral Foundations Theory seeks to identify the principles underpinning these rules, pinpointing six core moral foundations that individuals hold: care, fairness, loyalty, authority, purity, and liberty. The weight that an individual places on each foundation can be identified using the related Moral Foundations Questionnaire, and these weights have been shown to predict individual's perceptions of justice and reactions to moral dilemmas. See Spassena P. Koleva et al., 'Tracing the Threads: How Five Moral Concerns (Especially Purity) Help Explain Culture War Attitudes', *Journal of Research in Personality* 46, no. 2 (2012): 184–94; Laura Niemi and Liane Young, 'When and Why We See Victims as Responsible: The Impact of Ideology on Attitudes toward Victims', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 42, no. 9 (2016): 1227–42; Sven Joeckel, Nicholas David Bowman, and Leyla Dogruel, 'Gut or Game? The Influence of Moral Intuitions on Decisions in Video Games', *Media Psychology* 15, no. 4 (2012): 460–85.

and values. For example, in a 2010 U.S.-based study, Republicans were much more likely to accept an otherwise identical policy change when framed as a ‘carbon offset’ rather than as a ‘tax’.¹²⁰ In order to shift perceptions and therefore behaviours, interventions must therefore speak to people’s emotions in a way that reflects their moral foundations.¹²¹

The Greater London Authority is piloting several interventions involving citizenship ceremonies that use behavioural approaches to promote shared understanding. This includes encouraging people who attend citizenship ceremonies to increase their levels of local volunteering.¹²² The region is also experimenting with ways to encourage more citizens to attend naturalisation ceremonies—a potentially powerful experience that could promote tolerance and shared understanding as attendees would witness the value and loyalty that newly naturalised immigrants attach to citizenship.

Thus the naturalisation process is not only amenable to behavioural interventions to improve application rates; it could also be an important forum for interventions that further other integration objectives, such as signalling inclusiveness, encouraging citizens to feel they have a stake in newcomers’ integration success, and fostering civic behaviour. In Canada, for example, new citizens are given a cultural access pass that gives them free entry to cultural institutions such as museums for a year. They also receive a Welcome Pack Gift Box that includes positive stories of other new Canadians, discounts, and opportunities to win tailored gifts (such as flowers sent to loved ones abroad). While the effects of these packages on integration outcomes have not been tested, similar models could be used to explore how such interventions affect citizenship application rates, positive civic behaviour (such as volunteering), and newcomers’ sense of belonging.

IV. NEXT STEPS

Behavioural insights such as those discussed in this report offer huge potential to improve social cohesion and help public services better serve diverse populations, all for a relatively low cost. While governments’ economic and social integration objectives are varied and often somewhat nebulous, a host of interventions drawing on behavioural science could be piloted and tested in areas ranging from education and access to public services to citizenship acquisition.

The dearth of evidence on what works in immigrant integration efforts is a widely recognised challenge for policymakers in this area.¹²³ While studies have identified a host of baselines and indicators for assessing the progress of particular immigrant groups, specific government integration interventions have rarely been rigorously evaluated.¹²⁴ Thus, even when an integration goal is clear (for example, boosting employment or countering extremism), the data on what constitutes a solid investment of public funds is poor relative to what is available in other policy disciplines. The promise of a behavioural insights approach to integration programming is that, in addition to offering a new toolkit to improve outcomes, it also promotes rigorous evaluations and testing of what works.

¹²⁰ David J. Hardisty, Eric J. Johnson, and Elke U. Weber, ‘A Dirty Word or a Dirty World?’, *Psychological Science* 21, no. 1 (2010): 86–92.

¹²¹ Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion* (London: Allen Lane, 2012).

¹²² Greater London Authority, *All of Us: The Mayor’s Strategy for Social Integration* (London: Greater London Authority, 2018), 44, www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/social_integration_strategy.pdf.

¹²³ See, for example, Meghan Benton and Paul Diegert, *A Needed Evidence Revolution: Using Cost-Benefit Analysis to Improve Refugee Integration Programming* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2018), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/cost-benefit-analysis-refugee-integration-programming.

¹²⁴ OECD reviews on interventions to improve education, employment, and health outcomes for immigrant groups are limited (generally the object of the intervention is broader). Interventions ranging from improving neighbours’ interactions or combating radicalisation may have been trialled, but little is known about their efficacy.

A. Where should policymakers intervene?

With evidence scarce and immigration a top concern in many countries, policymakers face intense pressure to target investments effectively. In reflecting on where to prioritise, it is worth distinguishing between upstream interventions (involving policy design) and downstream interventions (involving policy implementation). Upstream interventions relate to broad, top-down policy interventions that involve central government, co-ordinating bodies, arms-length bodies and quangos, or local government. Examples would include the design of public-health campaigns or reforms to the education system. Within integration policy, most social and economic integration objectives require a whole-of-government approach, even if integration is often formally allocated to a particular division or government department.

The potential application of behavioural insights at the policy-design level is considerable. For instance, a behavioural approach could create new policy defaults, such as making voter registration an automatic part of the naturalisation process (with an opt-out option), rather than the current default in some countries of waiting for citizens to register themselves. Another application could involve identifying more effective ways to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups, such as rating government departments on inclusiveness of hiring and promoting good practices. Some studies have explored how best to nudge policymakers and bureaucrats to make similar improvements.¹²⁵

Most social and economic integration objectives require a whole-of-government approach, even if integration is often formally allocated to a particular division or government department.

Downstream behavioural interventions—those focused on policy implementation—may involve testing and rethinking how users experience public services or programmes. One example would be improving how schools communicate with immigrant parents to improve the education outcomes of their children. Implementation interventions can also include redesigning the ‘user journey’—how users discover and access services—to make them work better for disadvantaged and diverse groups. When testing group-based goals (e.g., integration targets for newly arrived immigrants or refugees), experiment designers must decide whether to test wholly new interventions (such as ways to address refugee-specific labour-market barriers) or to simply assess whether already-tested interventions work for these specific target groups (such as nudges to encourage jobseekers to take up existing services). Since most experiments focus on understanding aspects of or impacts on average members of a population, instead of specific groups, questions have been raised about how applicable the evidence produced is to unique groups such as refugees; recent innovations such as the use of machine learning to improve segmentation may provide new ways to improve understanding of groups whose needs differ from the norm.¹²⁶

Because there is limited evidence of what works in integration programming, a primary role for policymakers in this field is to commission and rigorously test behavioural approaches using experimental methods. While there is pressure to act quickly to ensure newcomers find their footing, this should be done before moving ahead with any redesign of public services as established ideas about what works for the population at large may not apply equally (or at all) to migrant groups.

¹²⁵ For a concise review, see John, *How Far to Nudge*, 136–8.

¹²⁶ Alex Gyani and Simon Raadsma, ‘Segmenting: What Works for Whom’, Behavioural Insights Unit, 15 May 2017, <http://bi.dpc.nsw.gov.au/blog/segmenting-what-works-for-whom/>.

B. Key questions before adopting a behavioural approach

For policymakers interested in adopting a behavioural approach, the first question is where to start. As this report has outlined, there are a host of potential areas policymakers could explore using this new lens. Some of the most promising opportunities lie in education, especially where interventions are designed to have an impact on the whole student population, not immigrants and minorities specifically. Future work in this area could replicate small-scale experiments conducted in highly controlled environments in real-world settings, such as multiethnic schools, to strengthen evidence of their effects. This may be easier in some countries than others. For instance, there may be some concerns about unequal outcomes (giving an intervention to some groups but not others), especially in countries where RCTs are discouraged (e.g., Germany) or where there is less of a tradition of piloting and testing. In such places, a more creative approach will be needed to gathering high-quality evidence. This may entail drawing on quasi-experimental methods, such as propensity score matching and difference-in-differences.¹²⁷

The question of where to start also contains a challenge regarding how integration is linked with other outcomes. High social capital is a good predictor of economic growth, for instance, while high employment rates in well-paid work correlate with a range of positive outcomes in other areas of integration or community cohesion. Integration is a diffuse sphere of public policy, and policymakers should consider choosing interventions in areas (even if small) that can generate gains in others. For example, nudging intergroup friendships not only results in a more cohesive society, it can also lead to improved educational and economic outcomes for members of under-represented groups.¹²⁸

Another question is who should lead the process of bringing behavioural insights into the policy-making arena. Where behavioural interventions have been taken up at scale, this tends to be because of political buy-in at the highest levels. For instance, the Behavioural Insights Team in the United Kingdom was introduced by then Prime Minister David Cameron, thus lending it weight and signalling commitment to following through on its findings. Moreover, behavioural approaches have tended to be introduced and implemented through independent teams rather than ordinary governance structures. For a crosscutting policy area such as integration, having an independent unit with relationships across government lead this process could be especially fruitful as such an actor may more easily draw links between policy areas or pursue multiple goals.

A final question is who pays. Integration policy has historically been poorly resourced and somewhat peripheral, but the 2015–16 migration crisis saw governments across Europe substantial raise investments, especially in labour-market integration.¹²⁹ A small slice of these budgets alone, if allocated to behavioural interventions, could have a significant impact. However, investing in programmes for newcomers, especially in countries still suffering from the aftereffects of the economic crisis, may be politically sensitive. One promising approach would be to invest on interventions that benefit both newcomers and longstanding residents, such as buddyng programmes and school-based interventions.

In order to achieve economies of scale and mitigate the political and financial risk, governments could consider pooling some of their integration budgets to support behavioural insights experiments. If countries are members of the European Union, an alternative approach would be to work together to apply for European funding (e.g., through the EU Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund) or for foundation funding given the high interest in integration.

¹²⁷ Used in the analysis of observational data, propensity score matching is a technique for estimating the effect of a policy or other intervention while taking into account the factors that may predict which individuals receive the intervention. Difference in differences is a technique employed in studies that use observational data as the basis for a natural experiment, mimicking a more controlled experiment; for example, this might involve observing the outcomes of people affected by the passage of a new law (a treatment group) versus a population unaffected by the change (a control group).

¹²⁸ Justine Burns, Lucia Corno, and Eliana la Ferrara, 'Interaction, Prejudice, and Performance: Evidence from South Africa' (working paper, February 2015), www.nesuse/polopoly_fs/1.226646.1425460291!/menu/standard/file/BurnsCornoLaFerrara_BREAD.pdf.

¹²⁹ Benton and Diegert, *A Needed Evidence Revolution*.

C. Recommendations

As policymakers contemplate these fundamental questions, it is important that they acknowledge the potential limitations of a behavioural insights approach. One such challenge is that it generally focuses on fine-tuning an existing system rather than wholesale change. This may set a natural ceiling on what behavioural interventions can do within the field of integration, where many commentators emphasise the need for structural and organisational changes in the face of deep-seated inequalities. Behavioural approaches also tend to put the onus on individuals, and applying this to integration may prove particularly challenging when working with vulnerable groups of newcomers such as refugees.

Nonetheless, behavioural approaches offer potentially significant benefits as countries work to tackle pressing challenges that affect immigrants, disadvantaged native-born groups, and wider communities—from the reduction of segregation, prejudice, and conflict to increased positive educational and employment outcomes for traditionally underperforming groups. In short, behavioural interventions may not create major structural change in and of themselves, but they can be powerful tools to make existing systems work better and to buttress change efforts.

Policymakers interested in investing in behavioural approaches to integration should consider the following lessons:

- **Rigorously pilot and test.** The behavioural approach provides a roadmap for improving the culture of evaluation across government. It suggests that governments should resist the urge to introduce wholesale, top-down change without first testing and evaluating what works on a smaller scale. This is particularly salient given the pressure on integration policymakers in European countries to act, and act fast. Equally important, governments should be prepared to stop investing in programmes that evaluations show to be ineffective, and to share those findings so other policymakers can learn from them.
- **Be realistic about potential impacts and prepared to scale up effective interventions.** Most successful behavioural approaches might be expected to increase uptake or interactions by 5 to 7 per cent; indeed, this would be considered highly successful for many.¹³⁰ This may seem insubstantial, but it is important to understand the impact that even small effects can have if made at scale and across populations, especially if the cost is reasonably low. Furthermore, if multiple interventions are introduced to build social capital and increase cohesion, they are likely to result in complementary effects.
- **Take steps to understand the user experience.** An effective behavioural approach requires a deep qualitative understanding of the context in which decisions and actions take place. Taking steps to understand how individuals experience policies and systems can facilitate understanding of why, for example, disadvantaged groups may be less inclined to take up services to which they are entitled (e.g., health check-ups), even after receiving information about the problems this could lead to further down the line. By understanding user experience, policymakers can begin to explore more innovative nudging approaches to improve take-up of services. While reducing the cognitive load involved in accessing services is good practice across the board, minimising the time and mental costs of engaging with public services is especially important for newcomers adjusting to life in a new society and for those who have experienced considerable trauma, as in the case of refugees.

While the segment of the behavioural-science field focused on integration remains nascent, its early findings have substantial promise. Among the lessons they recommend are:

- **Focus on developing the skills that everyone needs to live in diverse societies.** Skills such as empathy are often described as innate, but studies show they can be developed, particularly in classrooms. With many European countries updating citizenship curricula to foster common values or even guard

¹³⁰ John, *How Far to Nudge*.

against extremism, there are opportunities to revisit the role that schools play in nurturing the citizens of tomorrow. Teaching a growth mindset or encouraging perspective-taking can help young people develop less rigid views about others and ultimately reduce prejudice. A host of simple initiatives could also be trialled to blur the lines between in- and outgroups, with the aim of promoting a sense of cohesion and belonging.

- **Explore ways to engineer social connections.** Segregation is not an intractable problem, though it persists in many societies and aspects of life. There are numerous (and relatively low-cost) tools and techniques to encourage young people to build social connections with peers of different backgrounds. Again, educational settings represent promising venues, whether through in-class activities or cooperative learning programmes across schools. Beyond schools, there is promise in inclusive neighbourhood events and citizenship processes that encourage more active engagement between immigrants and other members of local communities. Behavioural approaches could also be implemented in workplaces and other areas of public life, such as residential planning, with positive impacts.
- **Indirect contact can be effective and scalable.** Research has shown that indirect contact (via broadcast media, social media, or virtual reality) can have important effects on reducing prejudice. There is also promise in programmes designed to build empathy or showcase altruism (moral elevation) as tools for encouraging behaviours that support integration. Government and civil society both have important roles to play in encouraging direct and indirect contact between groups that may not otherwise interact.
- **Increase aspirations and motivations in order to reduce barriers.** Traditional government integration efforts tend to focus on tangible barriers, such as language. But beyond this, newcomers encounter other complex barriers, such as low bridging social capital, limited aspirations, or a heavy cognitive load, that can hold people back in areas such as employment and education.¹³¹ Traditional policy approaches to reshaping motivations and aspirations that rely on financial incentives and sanctions may not have the desired effect; immigrants and other underserved groups may benefit from more sophisticated tools that take into consideration group-specific behavioural insights. Governments have a relatively high-impact (and low-cost) lever at their disposal: public-sector hiring. Testing how different messages can help or hinder jobseekers overcome barriers such as stereotype threat could help individuals find high-quality employment while helping governments improve the diversity of the public-sector workforce.

Addressing the integration challenges of today and tomorrow will require a radical expansion of the policy toolbox. To enable this integration-policy reboot, policymakers would do well to attend to the potential of behavioural insights. At low cost, and with a strong evidence base, these type of policy interventions are likely to increase cohesion and narrow socioeconomic gaps, while also increasing civic integration.

To enable this integration-policy reboot, policymakers would do well to attend to the potential of behavioural insights.

¹³¹ A survey of health practitioners in the United Kingdom, for example, describes how varying attitudes towards immunisations in refugee's origin countries played a role in uptake in the United Kingdom, independent of language ability. See Tania Fisher, *Meeting the Healthcare Needs of Refugees and Asylum Seekers: A Survey of General Practitioners* (London: British Medical Association, Health Policy, and Economic Research Unit, 2004), www.childrenssociety.org.uk/sites/default/files/meeting-the-needs-of-asylum-seekers.pdf.

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Migration Policy Institute Europe, established in Brussels in 2011, is a non-profit, independent research institute that aims to provide a better understanding of migration in Europe and thus promote effective policymaking. Building upon the experience and resources of the Migration Policy Institute, which operates internationally, MPI Europe provides authoritative research and practical policy design to governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders who seek more effective management of immigration, immigrant integration, and asylum systems as well as successful outcomes for newcomers, families of immigrant background, and receiving communities throughout Europe. MPI Europe also provides a forum for the exchange of information on migration and immigrant integration practices within the European Union and Europe more generally.

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