



Centre for Local Economic Strategies



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

***'Managing' ethnic diversity:
A comparison of UK and Danish
local authority approaches***

A presentation of interim findings
CLEES Summit: 13 July 2010

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Outline of this presentation

- About me
- An introduction to the research
- Research aims
- Emerging findings
- Next steps

About me...

- Employed by CLES as a Policy Researcher since November 2007
- September 2008 returned to academia to undertake a part time Masters degree in Human Geography at the University of Sheffield
- This research is primarily being undertaken for Masters dissertation project, but is also supported by CLES

An introduction to the research

- A comparison of UK and Danish local authority approaches to 'managing' ethnic diversity
- Examining two case studies:



Manchester
City Council

Copenhagen
City Council

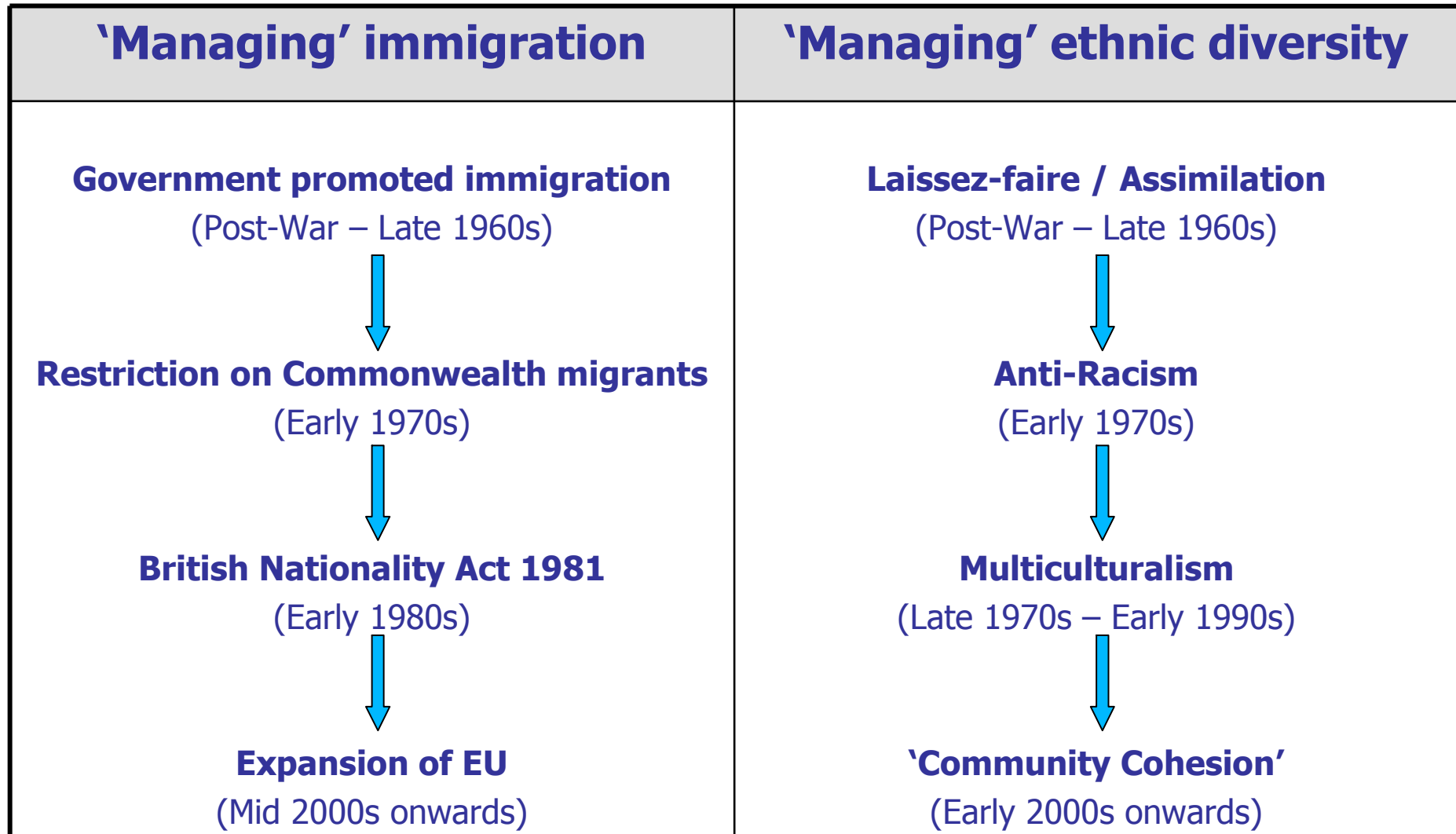


An introduction to the research

UK political context

- Recent general election
- An opportune time to reflect on 'New' Labour policy around 'race' and immigration...
- And to consider early signs of the Coalition Government's approach to this policy field

Policy context: UK

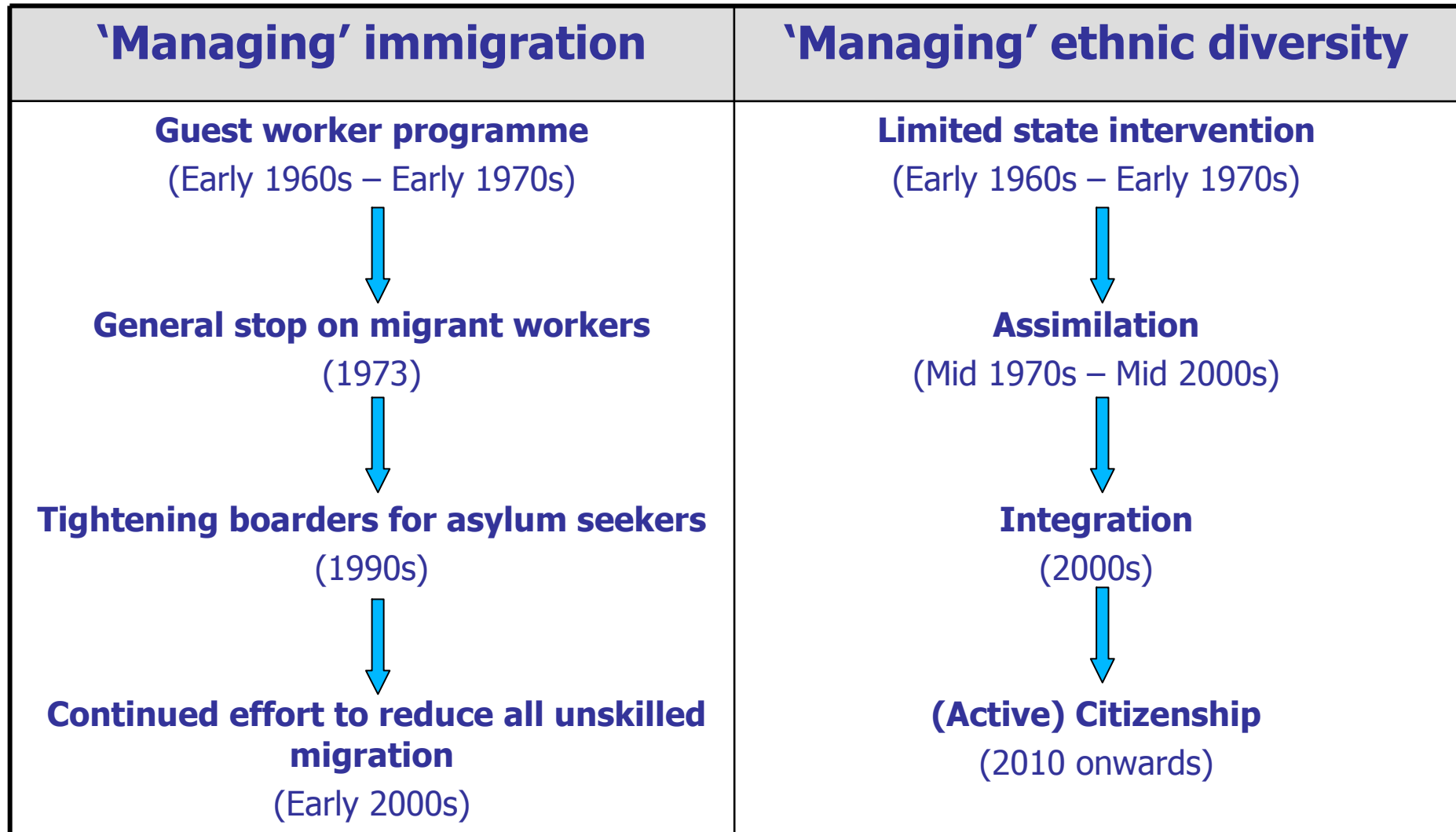


An introduction to the research

Danish political context

- Multi-party government structure
- Current government is a coalition of two centre-right parties, Venstre and the Conservative People's Party
- Parliamentary support from the right-wing the Danish People's Party

Policy context: Denmark



An introduction to the research

Why is this research important?

- Both countries are likely to become increasingly ethnically diverse
- Appetite for far-right ideologies in both countries
- Pressure for local government to do more with less

Research aims

To understand:

- How central govt. policy around 'race' and immigration is negotiated at local govt. level
- How ethnic diversity is 'managed' by local authorities, comparing UK and Danish approaches
- What 'managing' ethnic diversity means to local authority practitioners in the UK and Denmark

Emerging findings

- Theme 1:

How is national policy and rhetoric negotiated at local level?

- Theme 2:

What policies and approaches has local govt developed to 'manage' diversity?

Emerging findings

Theme 1: How is national policy and rhetoric negotiated at local level?

- On a practical level, local govt is responsible for:
 - Housing refugees
 - Introduction programmes for newcomers
 - Danish language courses
 - Administration of 'Induction Allowance'

Emerging findings

Theme 1: How is national policy and rhetoric negotiated at local level?

- Evidence that Copenhagen City Council has the freedom and intention to deviate from national (anti-immigration) rhetoric

"[the policy makers] don't take it seriously, the right-wing way of thinking...they look down on it, as if people aren't very well educated, or it's just stupid people saying stupid things"

Employee, Copenhagen City Council

Emerging findings

Theme 1: How is national policy and rhetoric negotiated at local level?

- However, national rhetoric has shaped local policy, especially anxiety about 'segregation' and 'polarisation'

"[the City Council] do tend to use government and media rhetorics about a lot of things... for example, polarisation. It's a buzz word... there are policy papers saying we're getting more polarised, and I'd just say, are we really?"

Employee, Copenhagen City Council

Emerging findings

Theme 1: How is national policy and rhetoric negotiated at local level?

- Sustaining the Danish welfare model whilst promoting inclusion: a double role?

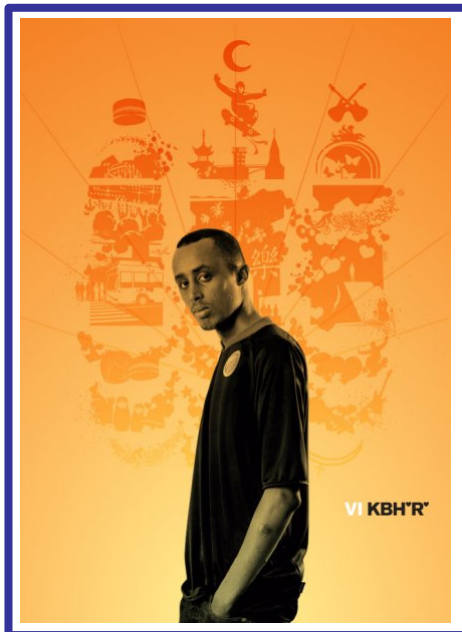
"[the City Council] has a double role. At one time it has to control the citizens – do they apply for a job, do they do what they have to to be subsidised – and on the other hand it's working for good integration and inclusion"

Employee, Copenhagen City Council

Emerging findings

Theme 2: What policies and approaches has local government developed to 'manage' diversity?

- Promoting positive messages: VI KBH 'R'



"it's one of the big tasks of the municipality... to highlight all the good stories, highlight all the diversity and ethnic holidays and parties and whatever"

Employee, Copenhagen City Council

Emerging findings

Theme 2: What policies and approaches has local government developed to 'manage' diversity?

- Increasing the representativeness of the City Council's work force: 'Integration and Training Posts'
 - 20% of employees' time spent learning Danish
 - All participants assigned a mentor
 - Aim is to provide skilled job opportunities, allowing immigrants to maintain / develop skills

Emerging findings

Theme 2: What policies and approaches has local government developed to 'manage' diversity?

- Tackling ethnic 'segregation'
 - Mixed neighbourhoods: *"the political dream"*
 - Social housing allocated by employment status in an effort to promote *"good role models"* and develop residents' networks
 - A contested approach...

Emerging findings

Theme 2: What policies and approaches has local government developed to 'manage' diversity?

- Refreshing the Integration Policy
 - From 'Structural Integration' to 'Active Citizenship' and 'engaging the city'

Emerging findings

Theme 2: What policies and approaches has local government developed to 'manage' diversity?

- 'Active Citizenship' problematic: Who defines what it means to be active?

"the immigrants we see here are in such a poor state they just can't be extremely active. I think, maybe, there's a risk of forgetting these people"

Project Coordinator, VCS organisation

Next steps

- Phase two, Manchester City Council: What similarities and differences can be drawn?
- Dissertation submission in early September
- CLES to publish key findings in autumn

Thank you

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