

## Peace through Domestic Tourism and Tourism Rights: Inclusion of Muslim Ethnic Minorities in the Context of Social Tourism

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### Abstract

It has been argued that leisure/tourism activities may play a crucial role in reducing prejudice and thus the incidence of discrimination. A number of existing theories including discrimination theory offer explanations for the low representation of ethnic minorities in specific leisure settings including those dependent on domestic tourism. This paper discusses tourism constraints of ethnic minorities, highlights the benefits of participation in domestic tourism, and proposes social tourism as a leisure integration strategy concerning majority-minority relationships. In a multi-cultural society where the tensions of immigration-integration are critical, promoting the benefits of domestic tourism to both groups and encouraging participation by minorities may play a crucial role in facilitating a two-way integration process.

*Keywords: social tourism, social policy, integration, domestic tourism, leisure constraints, minorities*

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### Introduction

*Madam President, we are losing our country. We are losing our Netherlands. We are losing it to mass immigration. We are losing it to the inflow which is no longer in control. We are losing it to a culture of backwardness and violence. We are losing it to the Moroccan thugs who go through life scoffing and spitting and beating up innocent people. They make the schoolyards and streets unsafe. They stick up their middle finger to funeral processions, threaten and abuse ambulance staff and beat up gay people and hiss 'whore' to women. They happily accept our benefits, our homes, our doctors. But not our standards and values. (From a speech by Geert Wilders to the Dutch parliament, September 2008)*

*All who are committed to Europe's future, and to human dignity, should therefore take a stand against the tendency to make immigrants the scapegoats for social problems. The vast majority of immigrants are industrious, courageous, and determined. They don't want a free ride. They want a fair opportunity for themselves and their families. They are not criminals or terrorists. They are law-abiding. They don't want to live apart. They want to integrate, while retaining their identity. (Kofi Annan, January 2004)*

These two quotations epitomize divergent views regarding the effects of immigration on host societies. This climate of controversy presents integration challenges for policymakers, and minority and majority groups. The roots and effects of, as well as protest against discrimination are well documented (e.g., Mansbridge & Morris, 2001). Discrimination can

be linked to exclusion, inequality, oppression, injustice, subordination, domination, subjugation, hatred, xenophobia, intolerance and other social ills that contribute to 'peacelessness' in the world. Discrimination against members of ethnic and racial minorities has been a subject of psychological and sociological research for over seventy-years and a number of studies have identified widespread discrimination in areas such as housing, job market, school system, political representation, and leisure (Stodolska & Livengood, 2006). The perception of ethnic minority groups as trouble makers and 'culture polluters' (Stephenson & Hughes, 2005) is not new, and these perceptions, as messages, also have an impact on perceived discrimination in tourism contexts (Stephenson, 2004). Despite the importance of discrimination in the study of tourism, this issue has not received the attention of tourism academics. The subject of this paper is on the participation of Muslim ethnic minorities in domestic tourism, and tourism rights. By linking tourism constraints to tourism rights and benefits I propose social tourism as a strategy for social harmonization. After the study background, I will discuss, to the extent possible, immigration-integration issues (with a small focus on the Netherlands), discrimination theory, elements of social tourism, domestic tourism and social capital, and conclude with suggestions for further research. In addition to the literature, being an 'immigrant citizen' myself, I reflect on my own perceptions to construct meaning from what I have read, experienced and understood.

"Reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgment of the impossibility of remaining 'outside of' one's subject matter while conducting research. Reflexivity then, urges us "to explore the ways in which a researcher's involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such research." (Nightingale & Cromby, 1999, p. 228).

### ***Background***

Over the past two decades an extensive body of research has focused on understanding constraints to leisure (Shinew et al., 2004). Tsai and Coleman (1999, p. 243) noted, "Throughout the process of leisure engagement, people are exposed to various constraints which can affect their leisure preferences, inhibit their desire to undertake new activities, reduce their enjoyment in leisure, and limit their full involvement in leisure". Leisure constraints have been studied in relation to lifecycle (e.g., Godbey et al., 1994), gender (e.g., Henderson et al., 1996; Jackson & Henderson, 1995; Shaw, 1994), and to a certain extent ethnic minorities (e.g., Floyd, 1998; Stodolska & Jackson, 1998, Shinew et al., 2004; Henderson & Ainsworth, 2001; Philipp, 1995), including those of Muslim origin (Stodolska, 2005). The leisure constraints literature seeks to identify barriers inhibiting participation, with the objective of facilitating access to leisure, or enhancing levels of leisure enjoyment. More recently, social tourism has developed as an area of research focusing primarily on identifying and alleviating constraints to tourism participation. Social tourism is concerned with initiatives for making tourism accessible to disadvantaged groups in society. Hunziker (1951) described it as "the relationships and phenomena in the field of tourism resulting from participation in travel by economically weak or otherwise disadvantaged elements in society" (in Minnaert et al., 2009, p. 316). As Goodale commented: "... virtually all studies of women ... of the elderly, of those who have disabilities [and] of various races and ethnic groups are mainly studies of constraints" (in Jackson & Scott, 1999, p. 301).

It is submitted here that the study of constraints is relevant to issues associated with social tourism. Participation in leisure and tourism inevitably involves overcoming certain

constraints but for some groups the constraints are more substantial than for others. Factors such as economic and social disadvantage, race, ethnicity, age, gender prejudice, and mental and physical disabilities mean that some sections of the community experience discrimination and greater difficulty in accessing leisure programs. Borrowing from the leisure and tourism constraints literature (e.g., Jackson & Henderson, 1995; Jackson & Scott, 1999; Freysinger, 1996; Shaw, 1994; Stodolska & Jackson, 1998; Shinew et al., 2004; Goodall, 2006; Stephenson, 2004; Stephenson & Hughes, 2005), social tourism becomes concerned not only with tourism participation in general, but also with physical access, intellectual access, and levels of enjoyment of tourism experience by disadvantaged groups. A disadvantaged group that has been overlooked in the mainstream leisure literature (e.g., Stodolska, 2005) and tourism literature (Klemm, 2002) is ethnic minorities. The question is why are ethnic minorities not visible in some leisure and tourism settings?

The “socio-cultural and economic reasons as to why individuals may be either unable or unwilling to travel to particular destinations have not been fully explored in mainstream tourism studies” (Stephenson & Hughes, 2005: 137), nor have they found representation in social tourism research. Theories concerned with ethnicity, marginality (e.g., Washbourne, 1978), acculturation (e.g., Keefe & Padilla, 1987; Floyd, 1998; Gomez, 2002; Stodolska, 2005), and discrimination (e.g., McDonald & McAvoy, 1997; Stodolska & Jackson, 1998; Stephenson 2004; Stephenson & Hughes, 2005) provide explanations for the relatively low participation of minorities in certain leisure and tourism settings. For example the fact that non-white minorities, visiting or considering visiting rural environments, often anticipate or encounter racial prejudice (Stephenson & Hughes, 2005) suggests that exclusion from or non-participation in rural area tourism does not exist in a vacuum; it is learned and conditioned. The challenge for leisure and tourism professionals and policymakers is to promote visits to the countryside and other non-visited destinations not only as a right but also because of the benefits these visits entail. There is a need to facilitate enjoyment of the benefits of tourism without prejudice or discrimination, as asserted in the Manila Declaration on World Tourism (1980):

*The right to use leisure, and in particular the right of access to holiday and freedom of travel and tourism, a natural consequence of the right to work, is recognized as an aspect of the fulfillment of the human being by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as by the legislation of many states. It entails for society the duty of providing for its citizens the best practical, effective and non-discriminatory access to this type of activity (Edgell, 1990, p. 164).*

The focus of social tourism includes low-income sectors of the population, individuals with physical or mental disability, disadvantaged children and the elderly, but no attention has been given to ethnic minority groups. The purpose of this paper is to argue for the inclusion of (Muslim) ethnic minorities in the study and practice of social tourism, introducing social tourism as an integration strategy to be supported and facilitated by European institutions, local governments and NGOs whose social policy task is to bridge immigration-integration gaps and make cultural diversity work.

### **Immigration-integration issues**

Minority groups of Islamic background constitute a large community in European countries including Germany, The Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland and the UK (Eurostat, 2008). “The rights and interests of ethnic minority citizens, living within the geographical

boundaries of the European Union (EU), have become increasingly problematic” (Stephenson & Hughes, 2005, p. 142). They give rise to concerns about social inclusion, integration and harmonization, not only because of their different cultural and religious backgrounds and associated lifestyles, but also because of failed integration policies and questioning of the claimed economic and social benefits related to immigration and ethnic diversity. On one hand integration is acknowledged as a labor issue:

*The integration of new minorities into the labor market largely failed. This failure is seen in that unemployment among immigrants is significantly higher than that of long-term citizens across most of Western Europe (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2004, p. 8)*

On the other hand, most Western European countries were unprepared for the culture conflict that evolved between some in the new Muslim minority and the majority population. Attempts to facilitate or force integration have been controversial, as with the French legislation to ban the wearing of religious symbols in schools. Negative consequences of failed minority integration have received much attention in the media (Klausen, 2005).

Generally, political parties gain votes by focusing on one or a combination of issues based on economic concerns, political disillusionment and immigration grievances (Luedtke, 2005). Luedtke tested the impact on national identity of European integration and public opinion policy and found that seven populist right political parties were successful in 2002 and 2003 mainly by focusing on the grievances attributed to immigration.

For example, in the Netherlands news reports have incited fear and unease within the native Dutch community. Journalists, politicians and researchers routinely confirm each other's convictions about the seriousness of this problem (Müller, 2009). Member of Dutch Parliament Geert Wilders, leader of the right wing Freedom Party (PVV), stated in a debate about Muslims struggling to integrate that he would not hesitate to deport Muslims who commit crimes or fail to integrate into Dutch society, and his party is increasing its popularity (Blass, 2009). Research following this claim was conducted to see if the Dutch population agrees with Geert Wilders' desire for a Moroccan-free Netherlands. People were asked: “What do you think of the idea of Moroccans leaving the Netherlands?” Of a total of more than 13,500 respondents, 71% responded “Good, I can't wait!”, 23% said “Bad, Moroccans belong here, full stop!”, and 6% had no opinion about it (Blass, 2009). Another survey commissioned by the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad (CCME) found Moroccan immigrants in the Netherlands to feel more often rejected than their counterparts in Spain, France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy (Dibi, 2009). According to Dibi, the reality is far better than the media and politicians are projecting, especially among the second generation. In any case:

*Managing migration is not only a matter of opening doors and joining hands internationally. It also requires each country to do more to integrate [old and] new arrivals. Immigrants must adjust to their new societies – and societies need to adjust too. Only with an imaginative strategy for integrating immigrants can countries ensure that they enrich the host society more than they unsettle it (Kofi Annan, 2004).*

Several integration policies and strategies have been introduced in The Netherlands, including the *inburgering* or Civic Integration Act. The objective of this strategy is to

familiarize immigrants with knowledge of the Dutch society – its norms and values, state structure, education, mobility, health, etc – and provide help in the acquisition of necessary Dutch language skills. The program is intended for old and new immigrants and counselors. The Act stipulates that everyone who immigrates to the Netherlands and lives in the Netherlands must learn the Dutch language and have an understanding of the workings of Dutch society (Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment).

Most European countries use labor market integration, educational attainment, language acquisition, housing and safety as indicators of integration. Social integration indicators and practical strategies for social orientation seem to be neglected. The two policy ideas put before the Dutch parliament have been to implement stricter rules, and to demand greater engagement of immigrants in Dutch society (Krouwel et al., 2006). It is hoped that increasing levels of engagement - as proposed by Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis- will lead to greater mutual understanding and socio-cultural integration of minorities. Recreational sport has been proposed as an opportunity to mix and interact, and a human activity that involves tolerance and acceptance of differences (Krouwel et al., 2006; EU Sports Forum, 2003). In this paper, we would like to introduce social tourism as an imaginative and practical strategy for an integration policy. It is submitted that disadvantage among ethnic minorities in the present context relates less to their economic conditions than to their perception of discrimination in leisure and tourism settings. Discrimination is the primary concern of this paper. "Discrimination is discrimination is discrimination" (Henderson, 2005, p. 47). Regardless of the type, whether perceived or actual discrimination has a negative effect on people's quality of life.

### **Ethnic minorities (and leisure) and tourism constraints**

Jackson and Henderson (1995, p. 31-32) defined a leisure constraint as "anything that inhibits people's ability to participate in leisure activities, to spend more time doing so, or to take advantage of leisure service, or to achieve a desired level of satisfaction". Jackson (1993) identified six dimensions of constraint: social isolation, accessibility, personal reasons, cost, time, and facility. These are related to three types of constraint: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural (Crawford et al., 1991). "The leisure life of ethnic/racial minorities is not a phenomenon that occurs in isolation from the mainstream society or from the rest of a person's life" (Stodolska, 2005), and leisure theorists have advanced four interconnected explanations for ethno-racially differentiated park, recreation and tourism use: (1) marginality; (2) race/ethnicity; (3) assimilation and acculturation; and (4) discrimination (see Byrne & Wolch, 2009).

### ***Discrimination theory***

West (1989) criticized recreation research for neglecting the issue of discrimination in the study of recreation behavior and attitudes of ethnic groups. "Discrimination theory then became a probable explanation for the underrepresentation of minority groups in public recreation settings" (Gomez, 2006, p. 246). Perceived discrimination was found to affect tourism attitudes, behaviors, and satisfaction of ethnic minorities, especially with regards to domestic tourism (e.g., Philipp, 1993; Gobster, 1998; Stephenson, 2004; Stephenson & Hughes; 2005; Floyd et al, 2004). Linked to the concept of discrimination, perceptual borders (e.g., psychological barriers that relate discrimination to stereotypes, perceptions and misconceptions) also play a major role in the tourism experience of ethnic minorities,

especially with regards to domestic tourism (Stephenson, 2004; Stephenson & Hughes, 2005). Stephenson (2004) explains that barriers to tourism participation for minority groups are perceptual rather than structural. In his study of the UK Afro Caribbean population he found that: “what is very apparent is the way in which threatening experiences and fearful encounters and the incursive nature of the ‘white gaze’ are counter-effective to productive experiences” (p. 71). Concerns about prejudice and discrimination, shaped by the media and perpetuated by negative stereotypes and misconceptions (Moufakkir, 2008), add to the ‘classic’ economic conditions and realities to make of ethnic minorities from Asian or Muslim origins a disadvantaged group in society (Wazir, 2001), with extreme vulnerability, especially when travel and tourism is concerned. “These concerns arguably influence how ethnic minorities perceive and encounter spaces and places in Europe” (Stephenson & Hughes, 2005, p. 142). Perceptual barriers constrain certain groups not only from participating in tourism but also from fully appreciating their tourism experience (Woodward, 1988; Stephenson, 2004). Woodward observed that African-Americans were constrained in their leisure by fear of discrimination and racial prejudice. Discrimination and the perception of discrimination are thus central to perceptual barriers and barriers to participation and enjoyment (Stephenson, 2004; Klemm, 2002; Shaw, 1999; Stodolska, 2005; Gomez, 2006; Jackson & Henderson, 2005).

Discriminatory attitudes have made minority groups less motivated to engage in travel and leisure activities while in their ‘host’ country. In a tourism study, focusing on Afro-Caribbean minorities in the UK, Stephenson and Hughes (2005) identified several factors prohibiting this group from visiting certain places and enjoying the benefits of participation. For example, they found Afro-Caribbean minority groups to be reluctant to visit the British countryside because it was not accessible to them for the following reasons:

1. Minorities predominantly live in distinct areas of the inner city, and that is the norm;
2. Venturing outside the city represents a venture into the unknown, and an encounter with the known. The unknown is the unfamiliar territory. The known is the perception of the ‘other’ - the “white gaze” that is predominantly “piercing”, “judgmental”, “prejudiced” and “generalizing” (p. 147);
3. The constitution of village life, which militates against inclusion of “foreigners”;
4. Media representation and romanticization of rurality as a white (only) middle class heritage domain;
5. The selling, branding and promotion of the countryside as white story, history, and nostalgia;
6. Perceptions of and encounters with racial hostility based on negative stereotypes.

These six factors are captured by Stephenson and Hughes (p. 146): “It may be the case that ‘black others’ are viewed as a source of ‘social and cultural pollution’ in rural areas, threatening daily life and endangering local culture systems and institution”. Access to the countryside or to other ‘non-indigenous’ places by minorities may not only constitute a threat of criminality, but more importantly it may represent a danger of what can be termed “pollution of authenticity of culture”. The notions of the rural English tradition can result in a process of exclusion of perceived outsiders, white or a visible minority, from village communities. However, while the ‘white gaze’ is often applied to any village newcomers, those who look visibly different feel it the most (Garland & Chakraborti, 2006).

While perceptions of ‘unwelcomeness’ may lead to negotiation to remove constraints, they may also limit access to desired participation. In the tourism context minorities prefer to visit places that are perceived to be secure. For them, the “desire to take risk may be a lower priority than the need for secure and safe experience”, and sometimes, traveling in large groups may provide them with a sense of security and comfort (Stephenson & Hughes, 2005, p. 150).

In a more recent study Moufakkir (in progress) found that, besides favouring trips to the country of ethnic origin over trips inside the country of residence, people of Turkish origin who reside in Germany had little inclination to visit the countryside or the beach, showing greater preference for cities and towns regarding domestic tourism (Table 1). For example, the percentage of those who have never visited rural destinations inside Germany for pleasure trips is very high -villages (83.2%) and countryside (72.0%). Considering that visible minorities are rarely seen in rural village communities (Garland & Chakraborti, 2006) and that minorities who live in rural villages may be seen as “communities at risk of racist victimization on a daily basis”, these results are not surprising. They make ethnic minority tourists or potential tourists to rural destinations communities of “shared risks” (Garland & Chakraborti, 2006, p. 173), if not targets of the rural ‘white gaze’. Besides, Stephenson and Hughes (2005) noted that racial observations “carry greater poignancy since the 11 September 2001 attacks in America, which seriously aggravated the difficulties experienced by ethnic minority travelers. Due to ‘terrorist concerns’, Asian and Muslim travelers have been subjected to hostile treatment from immigration officials, aviation authorities and other passengers” (p. 152). It is no exaggeration to suspect that home-grown terrorism may have made participation in domestic tourism for visible minorities even more difficult for the same reasons, including the metaperception that minorities feel they are being perceived negatively by the natives. In addition, the rising popularity of fascist political parties even in some immigration-friendly countries attests to the unpopularity of ethnic groups, which in turn may accentuate the feeling of the presence of a ‘piercing white gaze’.

Table 1. Destination preference inside the country of residence. (Preference items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = not at all to 5 = very much.)

Mean	Cities	Towns	Countryside	Villages	Beach
<b>Turks-Dutch (N=120)</b>	3.79	3.27	2.31	2.44	2.46
<b>Turks-German (N=111)</b>	3.27	1.98	1.50	1.24	1.62

According to Stodolska (2005) and other authors (e.g., Johnson et al., 1998; McDonald & McAvoy, 1997; Stodolska & Jackson, 1998), minorities sometimes isolate themselves from the mainstream population during their leisure time as a means of avoiding discrimination. The feeling of discrimination or discomfort, whether intentional or not, needs to be acknowledged as a policy priority (Garland & Chakraborti, 2006). A role for the leisure/tourism professional is to decrease the incidence of discrimination and deter potential discrimination, thereby encouraging and facilitating participation and the level of enjoyment, an implementation of social tourism.

### *The elements of social tourism*

There are many views on what constitutes social tourism (EESC, 2006), and formulating a definition is difficult (Minnaert, et al., 2006). Most attempts, nevertheless, include the right to

rest and access to tourism for every individual in society, with a particular emphasis on those who are least privileged. It is also a term used to describe a wide variety of holiday types facilitated by an organization for a group of individuals who otherwise would not be able to participate because of existing constraining factors (Minnaert et al., 2009). A definition provided by the International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS, p. 1) refers to social tourism as “all the concepts and phenomena resulting from the participation in tourism of low-income sectors of the population, made possible through well defined social measures”. Definitions of social tourism also refer to “programs, events, and activities that enable all population groups – and particularly young people, families, individuals with modest income, and individuals with restricted physical capacity – to enjoy tourism, while also attending to the quality of relations between visitors and host communities” (BITS). What is important to emphasize is the common idea that all initiatives of social tourism bring a moral dimension to tourism (Minnaert, et al., 2009).

For this paper social tourism is defined as *measures to overcome barriers constraining a disadvantaged group in society from participating in tourism or achieving a desired level of tourism enjoyment*. It incorporates tailored tourism programs or initiatives developed specifically for disadvantaged target groups to facilitate access to tourism, promote tourism participation, and enhance levels of tourism enjoyment.

Discrimination (perceived or actual) as a barrier to tourism participation, or to access and enjoyment, denies the right to tourism. In the present context, discrimination limits access to national cultural settings which could raise awareness about national identity and heritage – a heritage that ethnic groups can also feel proud to be living in, contributing to and being part of. Enjoyment of a shared heritage can bridge cultural gaps between minority and majority groups, and thereby contribute to harmonization in cultural diversity.

Article 22 of the Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay”. Related to this right is also the right to enjoyment of cultural heritage. Article 27(1) reads: “Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits”. Everyone has the right to use leisure opportunities for personal and societal development and to develop every aspect of their personality and their social integration (EESC, 2006). The right to tourism is concretely manifest in this general right to leisure, and “social tourism is underpinned by the desire to ensure that it is universally accessible in practice” (EESC, 2006, p.3). This right is also manifest in Article 7(1) of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism:

*The prospect of direct and personal access to the discovery and enjoyment of the planet’s resources constitutes a right equally open to all the world’s inhabitants; the increasingly extensive participation in national and international tourism should be regarded as one of the best possible expressions of the sustained growth of free time, and obstacles should not be placed in its way.*

Social tourism is specifically mentioned in Article 7(3). This Article stresses the role of social tourism as facilitating “widespread access” to tourism, and also emphasizes the responsibility of public authorities to support, encourage and facilitate it. Thus, as a part of the general right to tourism, social tourism works as a “way of putting into practice this universal right to participate in tourism ...” (EESC, 2006, p.3). Acknowledging the benefits of tourism, some European governments provide funding for social tourism activities. However,

evaluations of the outcomes of these initiatives is lacking (EESC, 2006; Minnaert et al., 2009).

### ***Domestic tourism and social capital***

Encouraging participation in domestic tourism by minimizing constraints to access and enjoyment may help bridge cultural gaps and enhance respect for cultures between and within communities (Stephenson, 2004). “Domestic travel can raise people’s appreciation of different cultural, linguistic and religious groups and of common interests of the people of a country, thus helping to foster national integration” (Scheyvens, 2007, p. 313). Similarly, Erb (2003, p. 131) submits that “domestic tourism is often more concerned with nation-building (instead of looking for the ‘exotic’)”. It can expand people’s knowledge and understanding of their home country, with a subsequent increase in national pride (Scheyvens, 2007). Generally, mobility helps people to know and be reflexive about both self and places (Urry, 2006, p. vii).

Tourism researchers (e.g., Bruner, 1995; Haldrup & Larsen, 2003; Kyle & Chick, 2004; Redfoot, 1984; Ross, 2005; Ryan, 1997; Small, 2002; Stokowski, 1992; Trauer & Ryan, 2005; Urry, 2003; Wang, 1999, 2000; Heimtun, 2007) have acknowledged the importance of putting the social into tourism. Most social networks develop in the context of leisure (Blackshaw & Long, 2005). It is the social aspects of domestic tourism that are of particular interest in the present context as domestic tourism has the greatest potential for connecting people (Heimtun, 2007). Heimtun (p. 272) sees domestic tourism as an important factor in social integration, linking it to Putnam’s concepts of bonding and bridging social capital. Domestic tourism creates space for social contact and “everyday belonging and feelings of social integration” (p. 287). Social networks that characterize social capital are related to leisure participation activities (Hemingway, 1999a), and directly or indirectly occur in leisure contexts (Glover, 2002). “Leisure, whether sport, arts or socialising [or doing tourism] ... brings people together” (Blackshaw & Long, 2005, p. 144). Based on several studies, Scheyvens (2007, p.326) offers a range of ways whereby domestic tourism can contribute to social development:

- Raising appreciation of different cultural, linguistic and religious groups and of common interest of people of a country;
- Helping to foster national integration;
- Providing opportunities for sharing knowledge and skills between people from ‘outside’ and those remaining in their home community; and
- Revitalizing social and cultural ties between extended family and community groups.

Interaction between minority groups and the mainstream majority in leisure settings can have significant and long lasting effects on attitudes toward minorities. “Leisure engagements provide an opportunity for informal and enjoyable interactions between members of different ethnic and racial groups and thus can facilitate mutual understanding” (Stodolska, 2005, p. 72). Leisure opportunities bring people together and facilitate relationship building, a fundamental function in the production of social capital (Hemingway, 1999b). Relationship building, social networks, and trust are at the core of social capital. Putnam's (1997, p. 31) widely invoked definition of social capital relates the concept to “features of social life - networks, norms and trust - that facilitate cooperation and coordination for mutual benefit”. Social capital has been studied in relation to social relationships, the family, democracy, empowerment, economic development (e.g., World Bank), participation in voluntary

associations (Wollebaek & Selle, 2002), social networking of community gardeners (Glover, 2004b), citizenship participation (Glover, 2004a), leisure and democratic citizenship (Hemingway, 1999a), and wellbeing in later life (Maynard & Kleiber, 2005).

Social capital makes the community prosper in many ways. Putnam (2000, p. 22) draws a crucial distinction between “bonding” and “bridging” social capital. Bonding activities are “inward looking and tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups,” whereas bridging activities are “outward looking and encompass people across diverse social cleavages”. In this sense, domestic tourism has the potential for bonding members of a minority group (intra-group relationships), as well as establishing bridges with other minority groups and with the rest of the community (inter-group relationships). Social capital encompasses the element of trust. As argued by Putnam (2000, p. 21): “Trustworthiness lubricates social life. Frequent interaction among a diverse set of people tends to produce a norm of generalized reciprocity”. Supporters of social capital believe that it can lead to reduced crime rates (e.g., Putnam, 2000; McCarthy et al., 2002; Rosenfeld et al., 2001), lower levels of poverty, lower levels of income inequality, higher median family incomes and better indicators of public health (Lyson et al., 2001; 1998; Lee & Ousey, 2001; Lyson & Tolbert, 2003; Tolbert et al., 1998). Bridging and bonding social capital is, therefore, of particular importance to the study of minority groups. Social tourism facilitates interaction in the community (Mainnaert et al., 2009) and the principles of social tourism are linked to inclusion and hence to social integration. Social (domestic) tourism initiatives can bring nationals together to appreciate heritage commonalities and differences. Social domestic tourism has the potential to celebrate cultural diversity (Figure 2).

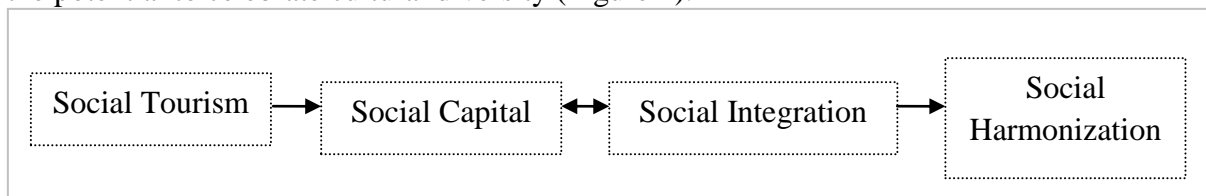


Figure 1. Conceptualizing social harmonization in the study of social tourism.

### Conclusion

The face of immigration has mutated from that of a guest and temporary worker to that of generations of citizens. This mutation may be appreciated by some but not by others. Some may see it as progress of the human race and humanity, others, however, will perceive it as a threat to their race and livelihood. Regardless of the feeling, the mutation is there and it is there to remain simply because of the effects of globalization. Today, an immigration-free bubble is hard to find, and the future will make of it just an illusion. To make this mutation work for all citizens *with no exception*, a strong complicity between the native citizen and the ethnic minority citizen is necessary in all societal spheres including that of domestic tourism. The role of domestic tourism in social inclusion of ethnic minorities through the appreciation of the heritage of their country of residence (ethnic minority groups vis-à-vis native majority group) has not received the attention of researchers. Generally, the role of domestic tourism in contributing to the appreciation of ethnic diversity (native majority group vis-à-vis ethnic minority groups) has also been neglected. The low participation of ethnic minorities in domestic tourism in general and in certain tourism spaces in particular does not result in a vacuum. Social tourism has been proposed as a strategy to facilitate and encourage

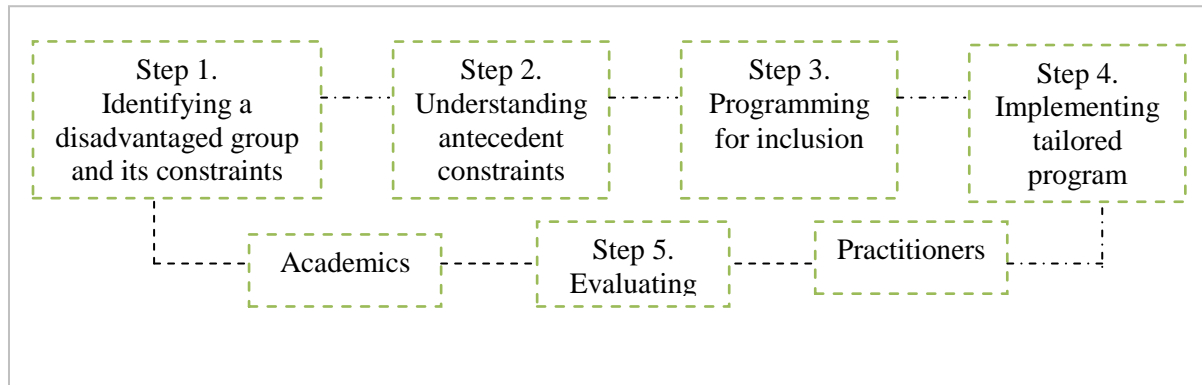
participation. Social tourism will certainly not solve all immigration-integration problems, but it could play an essential role in social integration (EESC, 2006). This paper proposes that Muslim ethnic minority groups are deserving of attention in the implementation of social tourism. Cultural exchange and shared enjoyment of leisure time is an important contribution to personal development for tourists and those who receive them in their local environment. The cultural exchange generated by tourism is especially valuable for young people, enhancing their intellectual development and enriching their view of the world. Generally tourism may have an increasing impact on citizenship in Europe, in that travel within European nations can lead to greater knowledge, understanding and tolerance. In the context of immigration-integration environments, social tourism can provide not only access and enjoyment but also offer an opportunity to counter social exclusion and eliminate the socio-cultural constraints (Minnaert et al., 2009) which minorities are facing (Stephenson & Hughes, 2005; Moufakkir, 2008).

*Tourism signifies welcome, exchange, the enhancement of local assets, friendship and communication between people, as opposed to war, which represents aggression, invasion and the destruction of nature. If one only loves what one knows, then tourism can encourage people to become closer and learn about each other, thus promoting peace, harmony and development. Social tourism can and should be reinforced, and should help to promote the conditions of equality, justice, democracy and well-being that enable the mutually-supportive development of all peoples around the world. (EESC, 2006, p. 6)*

In an increasingly multicultural society, insight into factors inhibiting ethnic minority participation in domestic tourism “is important not only for furthering our knowledge of access, choice, and enjoyment of leisure [and tourism] pursuits, but also for gaining greater insight into broader societal issues surrounding race [and ethnicity]” (Stephenson & Hughes, 2005, p.138). It is clear that there is not much empirical research to support claims relating to the benefits of social tourism initiatives for special groups. However, the study by Minnaert et al. (2009) found improvement in family relationships; personal development resulting in acquiring or recovering a sense of confidence; social contact by strengthening existing relationships and forging new ones; and changing perspectives. These outcomes are encouraging and invite more research in this area.

Lastly, one may ask about the link between leisure constraints and social tourism, and it is suggested that the latter takes up where the former stops. That is, as an area of study social tourism is about identifying and understanding constraints that inhibit disenfranchised groups in society from successful tourism participation. As an initiative, it is about using the understanding of constraints impacting these groups to develop strategies and programs to enhance inclusion and successful participation. In this sense, social tourism sounds like the ideal partner that Jackson and Scott (1999) were alluding to during their review of two decades of leisure constraints. They argued: “Leisure constraints research cannot impact professional practice until academics develop more potent partnerships with practitioners and leisure service agencies. This is a formidable task ...” (p. 310-11). Social tourism seems able to take up this formidable challenge by bridging the gap between theory and practice, providing practical applications of constraints research, and bringing academics and practitioners together (Figure 2) to advance a moral right. This Figure also proposes steps for

studying social tourism. The importance of social tourism relates to its moral value, research focus, and practicality.



sufficiently clear indications as to what specific strategies, within managers' power and jurisdictions, might potentially alleviate leisure constraints" (p. 311). It is still the case today. However, the steps proposed above may contribute to successful tourism programming for disadvantaged elements in society.

### ***Suggestions for further research***

General information about tourism attitudes and behaviors of minorities at risk (Arabs, Muslims or other visible ethnic groups) in European contexts is not visible. Existing theories guide our understanding of their reluctance to visit certain leisure and tourism settings and negotiation over constraints, however, because of new world challenges, threats and opportunities, more research is warranted to document and understand their 'new' tourism behaviors and aspirations. It is never too much to re-emphasize the importance of contextualizing their tourism behaviors. With new societal challenges and opportunities new theories *must* emerge. Furthermore, empirical research is needed to examine the role of domestic tourism in promoting integration. The following propositions are advanced as an example for policy development and further research:

Proposition 1: That members of (Islamic) minority ethnic groups who participate in domestic tourism are more integrated into mainstream society than those who do not.

Proposition 2: That members of (Islamic) minority ethnic group who participate in organized domestic intragroup tours are more likely to show respect for native tourism resources than those who do not participate.

Proposition 3: That individuals who participate in organized domestic mixed-group tours are more likely to show respect for each other than those who do not participate.

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