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Identifying City Differences in Perceived Group Discrimination among Second-generation Turks and Moroccans in Belgium

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This study investigates the effects of city context on the levels and predictors of perceived group discrimination (GD) among Turkish and Moroccan second-generation immigrants in Belgium. Based on the Integration of the European Second-generation (TIES) data, we address two main questions: (1) Are there significant differences in the levels of perceived GD between the two cities in Belgium (Antwerp and Brussels) within each immigrant group? (2) Who perceives more GD within each city? To answer these questions, possible composition effects should be controlled. Accordingly, we use propensity-score matching to make second-generation immigrant samples from the two cities reasonably comparable with respect to socio-demographic characteristics. Concerning the first research question, we find that after propensity-score matching, the Turkish second-generation perceive more GD in Antwerp than in Brussels. For the Moroccan group, however, the city differences in perceived GD are no longer significant after matching. With regards to the second research question, we find that those who are more socio-economically integrated and those who perceive more threat in their city are more likely to perceive GD.

Keywords: Perceived Discrimination; Integration Context; Propensity-score Matching

Ahu Alanya is a Ph.D. student at the Centre for Sociological Research, Institute for Social and Political Opinion Research, University of Leuven, Leuven, Belgium. Correspondence to: Centre for Sociological Research, Institute for Social and Political Opinion Research, University of Leuven, Parkstraat 45 – Box 3601, 3000 Leuven, Belgium. E-mail: ahu.alanya@soc.kuleuven.be. Gülseli Baysu is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Psychology, Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey. Correspondence to: Department of Psychology, Kadir Has University, Kadir Has Caddesi Cibali, 34083 Istanbul, Turkey. E-mail: gulseli.baysu@khas.edu.tr. Marc Swyngedouw is a Professor at the Centre for Sociological Research, Institute for Social and Political Opinion Research, University of Leuven, Leuven, Belgium. Correspondence to: Centre for Sociological Research, Institute for Social and Political Opinion Research, University of Leuven, Parkstraat 45 – Box 3601, 3000 Leuven, Belgium. E-mail: marc.swyngedouw@soc.kuleuven.be

Introduction

In European migration contexts, children of immigrants show notable upward mobility in education and labour markets compared to their parents (e.g., Algan et al. 2010; Heath, Rethon, and Kilpi 2008). High integration in socio-economic realms may not protect them, however, from discrimination in daily intergroup encounters in school, at work, on the street or on public transport. The quality of such encounters and immigrant perceptions of discrimination are to an extent shaped by the city they live in (Waldinger 1996; Reitz 1998; Brettell 2003; Crul and Mollenkopf 2012). This was recently brought to the forefront in Belgium by a Congolese second-generation immigrant from Antwerp who wrote in an op-ed article to a popular Flemish newspaper that he decided to move out of town (to Brussels) because exclusion and discrimination by the host majority in Antwerp made second-generation immigrants feel like 'suspicious strangers or even invaders of the town with their lifestyles and lack of integration despite their diplomas and socio-economic achievements' (*De Morgen*, April 18, 2013).

Previous research on integration has recognised the value of comparative studies about the role of local and/or national context in understanding integration processes (e.g., Favell 2001; Crul et al. 2012). Some of these studies focused specifically on the city context, highlighting the variation across integration contexts within countries (e.g., Bean et al. 2012; Ellis and Almgren 2009). However, this line of research has been set back by the problem of composition effects. In other words, immigrants living in one city might differ from those living in another on a number of observed and unobserved characteristics. Most studies of comparative integration context have ignored this fact or took limited measures. Thus, going beyond previous research, the current study uses propensity-score matching to make second-generation immigrant samples from the two cities comparable with respect to socio-demographic characteristics. This method provides a significant improvement over previous research by controlling composition effects.

Once controlling for socio-economic composition, our analysis addresses two specific research aims. The first one is comparative. We investigate in which city the second-generation immigrants perceive more group discrimination (GD). Specifically, we compare levels of GD among Moroccan and Turkish second-generation immigrants across two cities in Belgium: Brussels (predominantly Francophone) and Antwerp (Flemish). We suggest that (i) levels of ethnic diversity, (ii) differences in political environment and (iii) differences in majority group attitudes between these cities may lead to different levels of perceived GD. Previous studies suggest that welcoming city contexts are more conducive to integration of second-generation immigrants in socio-economic as well as in other spheres of life compared to less welcoming cities (e.g., Bean et al. 2012). We expect Turkish and Moroccan second-generation immigrants to perceive less GD in Brussels as a relatively more welcoming city compared to Antwerp. We propose Brussels to be more welcoming because (i) in Brussels both the majority and the immigrant populations are composed of different

ethnic groups and thus more diverse, (ii) immigrant integration is less negatively framed by media and by political parties, and (iii) majority group attitudes are more positive. Importantly, we focus on these differences as analytical tools to understand the city differences in GD.

Our second aim is explanatory. We aim to investigate who feels more GD within each city. To this end, we test second-generation immigrants' socio-demographic background (e.g., education, employment status and marital status) and perceptions of the local context as predictors of GD. With regards to the perceptions of the local context, we focus on perceived threat and hostility of intergroup relations.

Perceived Group Discrimination

Prior research on integration has focused almost exclusively on education and on labour market participation as sound measures of integration to the host society. Today, however, there is near consensus that immigrant integration is a more complex and multidimensional phenomenon (e.g., Phalet and Swyngedouw 1999; Bean and Stevens 2003; Hochschild and Mollenkopf 2009; Bean et al. 2012). While immigrants advance socio-economically, they may still feel socially excluded and not recognised as fellow citizens by the host society due to discrimination in different domains of life such as in the street, in their neighbourhood, in cafes or encounters with public and private authorities. That is, social inclusion and a sense of belonging, i.e., civic integration, do not seem to follow directly from socio-economic integration (Phinney and Devich-Navarro 1997). Immigrant youth who are employed or highly educated may even feel more socially excluded, which is known as the *integration paradox*. Consequently, as the second-generation immigrants become more socio-economically integrated, what determines social inclusion (i.e., recognition, engagement and belonging) has become the next big question in today's multicultural cities. This foregrounding of social inclusion in the studies of integration has put *perceived GD*, a major obstacle to civic integration, in the academic spotlight.

GD is defined in this study as perceptions of hostility or unfair treatment as a group due to origin or due to background. Probing more deeply into perceptions of GD is important for several reasons. First, perceptions of discrimination may evoke feelings of not belonging which may in turn disturb social cohesion (Maxwell 2014) and lead to social exclusion and radicalisation of immigrant youth. As such, immigrant youth may react to discrimination with frustration and anger, as witnessed in the urban riots that took place in several European capitals including Brussels (Vandezande, Phalet, and Swyngedouw 2011). In addition, immigrant minorities may withdraw into their ethnic enclaves (Skrobanek 2009; Van Oudenhoven, Ward, and Masgoret 2006; Branscombe, Schmitt, and Harvey 1999) or develop hostile attitudes towards the host majority when they face discrimination (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, and Solheim 2009). Majority group members, on the other hand, may perceive these reactions groundless and dismiss them as illegitimate demands failing to see the underlying problem (Kinder 1996). This may in turn lead to recursive cycles of threat ('reverse discrimination') and result in conflictual intergroup relations in

multicultural cities (Alanya et al. 2013). Moreover, there is near-consensus in the field that discrimination is a major barrier to socio-economic as well as civic integration. Thus, understanding discrimination perceptions of immigrant youth is crucial to evaluating long-term integration prospects of respective ethnic minority groups.

Finally, perceived GD is pertinent particularly for native-born children of immigrants (Heath 2014). For example, the Moroccan and the Turkish immigrant second-generation immigrants, who have been raised in Brussels and in Antwerp, are more likely to speak the host country languages fluently, acquire citizenship and receive their education in the host country as compared to their parents. Therefore, they are more likely to compare themselves to their peers in the majority group and be more aware of and vulnerable to unfair treatment. Put differently, while they are socio-economically more integrated, research shows that children of immigrants perceive more GD than their parents (Abouguendia and Noels 2001; Hall and Carter 2006). Furthermore, perceived GD influences how immigrant youth see their group and the opportunity structure in their multicultural city.¹

GD in Socio-economic and Civic Spheres

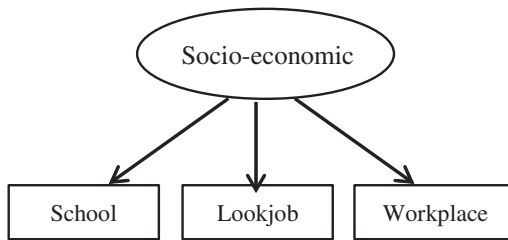
Previous research differentiates between integration in *socio-economic* and *civic spheres* (Phalet and Swyngedouw 1999). Accordingly, we distinguish two dimensions of GD in our analysis: GD in *socio-economic* and *civic spheres*. GD in a *socio-economic sphere* is measured by immigrants' perceptions of GD at school, at work and while looking for a job (Figure 1a). These three domains are generally highly correlated, and they relate to immigrants' perceptions about opportunity structures. In other words, GD in a *socio-economic sphere* refers to the structural side of discrimination. The second dimension, GD in *civic sphere*, on the other hand, refers to GD perceptions arising from immigrants' negative encounters with majority group members in the street, in their neighbourhood or while going out. It also refers to negative encounters with the police or security guards while going out to nightclubs (Figure 1b).

GD and City Context: Antwerp vs. Brussels

Our research centres on a comparison between two cities in Belgium. Since Belgium is a federal state, Brussels and Antwerp share certain structural qualities (e.g., a common social security system, voting and citizenship rights and juridical system), yet at the same time have enough variation (e.g., integration policies, host majority attitudes and political environment; see Adam 2013). Thus, this gives us a unique opportunity to look at the city effects in GD while keeping the national context constant.

Immigrants should perceive more GD in Antwerp as a less welcoming, i.e., less immigrant-friendly, context. We propose that Antwerp presents a less favourable context for immigrants than Brussels for three reasons: (i) lower levels of ethnic diversity, i.e., the presence of a more homogeneous host majority and immigrant population in Antwerp than in Brussels, (ii) a more polarised political environment, i.e., the politicisation of immigrant integration due to anti-immigrant discursive

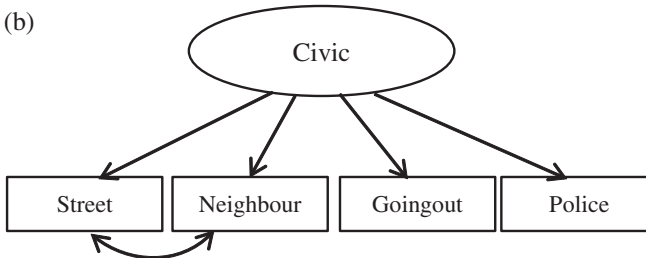
(a)



Turks: $\chi^2 = 14.142$, p -value = 0.05; RMSEA = 0.059; CFI = 0.995

Moroccans: $\chi^2 = 7.010$, p -value = 0.428; RMSEA = 0; CFI = 1

(b)



Turks: $\chi^2 = 11.884$, p -value = 0.5371; RMSEA = 0; CFI = 1

Moroccans: $\chi^2 = 15.417$, p -value = 0.2194; RMSEA = 0.032; CFI = 0.996

The thresholds for police are allowed to be different between the cities.

Figure 1. (a) Factor model for GD in socio-economic sphere; (b) Factor model for GD in civic sphere.

practices of right-wing political parties and (iii) negative majority group attitudes, i.e., more nationalistic and exclusive public discourse which may stem from immigration unfriendly forms of sub-state nationalism in Flanders. Consequently, we expect Turkish and Moroccan second-generation immigrants to perceive more GD in Antwerp than in Brussels (Hypothesis 1).

First, the level of ethnic diversity is important as it may help protect immigrant minorities from feelings of GD. As opposed to Antwerp, the predominantly Francophone Brussels is a hybrid region where there is no uniform host majority. Immigrant-host majority distinction is further blurred by the presence of a considerable European expatriate population working in the European institutions. Actually, the number of foreign nationals in the Brussels Capital Region is higher than the Dutch-speaking minority (Lesthaeghe, Deboosere, and Willaert 2001; Deboosere et al. 2009). While native Belgian residents make up about 73% of the total population in Antwerp (Buurtmonitor 2007), the corresponding number of native Belgian residents (Dutch and Francophone together) for Brussels was around 61% in 2000 (Timmerman, Vanderwaeren, and Crul 2003),² and native Francophone or Dutch-speaking Belgians no longer make up the majority of inhabitants in Brussels. Perhaps this diversity of population and seemingly higher degree of mixing

of cultures are major reasons why Brussels is placed among more inclusive cities (i.e., conducive to immigrant integration on multiple dimensions) along with Stockholm, Amsterdam and Paris, as opposed to less inclusive cities, such as Berlin and Vienna (Crul and Mollenkopf 2012).

With regards to political environment, the immigrant integration debate has been more politicised in Antwerp. Antwerp, the biggest Flemish-speaking city, has become the stronghold of the anti-immigrant party *Vlaams Belang*, which successfully exploited the anti-immigrant sentiments of the host majority (Swyngedouw and Van Craen 2001/2002). The discursive practices of *Vlaams Belang* and the negative representation of immigrants in the news media have led to higher levels of politicisation of the intergroup relations on both majority and minority sides in Antwerp. In addition, previous studies show that news reports about crime and social problems involving ethnic minorities can lead to negative attitudes against immigrant groups (Lubbers, Scheepers, and Vergeer 2000; Meeussen et al. 2013). In a similar vein, we suggest that anti-immigrant messages disseminated through party slogans, banners and the news media affect the majority group attitudes towards immigrant minorities (Boomgaarden and Vliegthart 2009; Ellinas 2010), as well as immigrants' attitudes towards the host majority.

This brings us to our third point. In addition to an anti-immigrant political environment, sub-state nationalism in Flanders has reinforced the idea of 'us', while immigrant minorities have become the 'others' leading to what is called 'Flemish exclusionism' (Phalet and Swyngedouw 2003). We suggest that this is reflected in the negative and exclusive majority group attitudes in Antwerp, which may increase immigrants' perceptions of negative experiences in daily encounters.

Although across these three dimensions Antwerp presents a less favourable city context, the differences between the cities are not always clear-cut when more structural elements are taken into account. For instance, some studies show that educational attainment and labour force outcomes of immigrant minorities are more promising in Antwerp than in Brussels (e.g., Neels 1999). This is in line with the integration paradox, the concept that socio-economic integration does not guarantee civic integration. Thus, we suggest that Antwerp presents a less favourable context where immigrants might perceive more GD.

Importantly, in addition to contextual differences (i.e., levels of ethnic diversity, political environment and majority group attitudes), immigrant population compositions also vary between the two cities. Moroccan and Turkish second-generation in the TIES survey all share a common background as children of labour migrants. However, there are some notable city differences on their individual and parental background. For example, Fleischmann (2011) shows that there is more positive selectivity of parents in Brussels compared to Antwerp; parents of second-generation migrants in Brussels are more likely to be higher educated, have higher occupational status and labour market participation (also see Lessard-Phillips and Ross 2012, for a review of the city differences on the second-generation Turks and Moroccans and their parents in the TIES survey). Similar to their parents, the second-generation

migrants in Brussels also differ from those in Antwerp. For example, those in Brussels are more likely to be students or to be single (not married) compared to Antwerp (see Table 1). Given these differences in population compositions, we first need to control the composition effects in order to obtain net effects of context on GD. To this end, in our empirical analysis, we apply propensity-score matching to make the immigrant samples from the two cities reasonably comparable on certain background variables (such as education, employment status and marital status).

Table 1. Background characteristics of second-generation immigrants in Antwerp and in Brussels, before and after matching (18–35 years), TIES 2007.

Variables	Mean		%bias	χ^2 (<i>p</i> value)	<i>N</i>
	Antwerp	Brussels			
<i>Turkish</i>					
Female					
Unmatched	0.5	0.36	29.9	12.858 (<0.001)	608
Matched	0.5	0.5	0.3	0 (1)	574
Married					
Unmatched	0.55	0.39	32.5	15.043 (<0.001)	605
Matched	0.55	0.56	−0.7	0 (1)	574
Koran lessons					
Unmatched	0.74	0.3	99.1	117.76 (<0.001)	607
Matched	0.74	0.74	0.9	0 (1)	574
Parental education (primary school or less)					
Unmatched	0.48	0.32	33.5	15.235 (<0.001)	584
Matched	0.48	0.48	−0.5	0 (1)	574
Current religion Islam					
Unmatched	0.91	0.71	51.7	39.942 (<0.001)	607
Matched	0.91	0.93	−3	0 (1)	574
<i>Moroccan</i>					
Female					
Unmatched	0.62	0.49	25.9	9.336 (0.002)	569
Matched	0.62	0.62	1.2	0 (1)	512
Married					
Unmatched	0.45	0.29	33.4	15.00 (<0.001)	564
Matched	0.45	0.43	4.2		512
Koran lessons					
Unmatched	0.7	0.54	34.8	16.718 (<0.001)	568
Matched	0.70	0.70	1	0 (1)	512
Parental education (primary school or less)					
Unmatched	0.48	0.32	33	23.565 (<0.001)	517
Matched	0.48	0.49	−1.7	0 (1)	512
Full-time student					
Unmatched	0.16	0.33	−40	22.095 (<0.001)	564
Matched	0.16	0.16	0	0 (1)	512
Tertiary education (university)					
Unmatched	0.29	0.38	−20.9	6.094 (0.014)	565
Matched	0.29	0.26	6.4	0 (1)	512

City Effects and the Necessity of Propensity-Score Matching

Perceived GD is a function of both individual and city-level characteristics. Therefore, an empirical study of city effects on GD is essentially plagued by composition effects —individual-level differences between the city populations. In this case, manipulation of the data is required to ensure that the immigrant samples from each city are comparable in their ‘potential exposure’ to GD. That is, they have similar chances of being subject to GD, given their individual background. To do that, we consult a method that originated from observational studies in clinical research and is frequently used in counterfactual studies in sociology: propensity-score matching (e.g., Brannstrom 2004; Harding 2003).

Previous studies of integration context effects in empirical studies on immigrants have not used propensity-score methods to control for socio-demographic composition (e.g., Brüß 2008; André, Dronkers, and Fleischmann 2008; Ersanilli and Koopmans 2011; Crul et al. 2012). Alternatively, Ersanilli and Koopmans (2011) limited their target population to Turkish immigrants who arrived before 1975 and came from specific regions to overcome composition effects in the cross-country comparison of the impact of integration policies. Similarly, Crul et al. (2012) recognised possible composition effects due to variation in fathers’ education level in a cross-country comparison of educational outcomes of Turkish immigrants and carried out their analysis within selected levels of fathers’ education. This was simply matching country samples on one variable. Compared to these approaches, the advantage of propensity-score matching is that it allows matching between country or city samples based on a number of characteristics such as age, gender, religiosity and education simultaneously.

Overall, using propensity-score matching (Rosenbaum and Rubin 1983) provides a significant improvement over previous studies to control for composition effects. To the extent that the city differences in perceived GD remain significant after propensity-score matching, we can attribute those differences to the effects of city context. We then investigate who perceived more GD within each city, controlling for these composition effects.

Who Perceives more GD within Each City?

Beyond looking at the city differences in perceived GD, we aim to explain perceptions of GD within each city. In other words, we investigate who perceives more GD in each city. To this end, we first look at second-generation immigrants’ socio-demographic background, such as education levels and employment status. According to the *integration paradox hypothesis*, second-generation immigrants who are more socio-economically integrated (i.e., those who are more educated and who have better jobs) are more likely to perceive discrimination or unfair treatment in the host society (Dixon et al. 2010; Tolsma, Lubbers, and Gijsberts 2012; Van Doorn, Scheepers, and Dagevos 2013). For example, Gijsberts and Vervoort (2009) showed that immigrants with higher educational achievement perceive more GD. Van Doorn,

Scheepers, and Dagevos (2013) suggested the theory of exposure to explain the association between educational achievement and perceived discrimination. Accordingly, immigrant minorities who are highly educated, who follow local media and who participate in the labour market and local organisations are more exposed to the majority group and that can make them more vulnerable to discrimination. Therefore, we expect second-generation immigrants who are more socio-economically integrated, i.e., those who have higher education, are employed and follow local news, to perceive more GD (Hypothesis 2).

How immigrants perceive the local context is also related to their perceptions of GD. Specifically, we look at whether they perceive economic threats (i.e., the fear of losing their job), safety threat (i.e., the fear of violence in the city) or hostility between immigrants and the host majority. To the extent that Turkish and Moroccan second-generation immigrants perceive more threat and hostility, they are likely to perceive more GD.³ There are two lines of research which lend support to this reasoning. First, intergroup threat theory (for a review, see Riek, Mania, and Gaertner 2006; Stephan, Ybarra, and Morrison 2009) distinguishes between two forms of threat as important predictors of negative intergroup outcomes such as prejudice and discrimination: realistic threat (when one's welfare, economic conditions or safety is threatened) and symbolic threat (one's way of life and identity is threatened). In this framework, while economic and safety threats can be considered realistic forms of threat, hostility (vs. friendliness) of intergroup relations can be considered a type of symbolic threat which signals to immigrants that their identity is not valued. The second line of evidence comes from realistic group conflict theory (Blumer 1958; Bobo and Hutchings 1996). This theory proposes that competition over scarce resources, whether perceived or real, could lead to prejudice and discrimination. Thus, more threats should lead to more discrimination. Most research on these theories, however, focus on the host majority and consequences of perceived threat on their attitudes towards immigrants. For instance, in Belgium, Van Acker and Vanbeselaere (2011) showed that Flemish majority group members reported mostly symbolic threat when they perceived that Turkish immigrants wanted to maintain their heritage culture and had limited interest in the host majority's culture. In this study, we shift focus to immigrants as intergroup relations is a two-way process shaped by the mutual perceptions of the host majority and the immigrant minority group. We expect that the more threat and hostility Turkish and Moroccan second-generation perceive in the city, the more GD they are likely to perceive (Hypothesis 3).

Data and Measures

We made use of the Integration of the European Second Generation (TIES) survey of Antwerp and Brussels (Swyngedouw et al. 2008). The TIES project was conducted using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) in 2007–2008. Target populations were residents of the city of Antwerp and the Brussels Capital Region between the ages of 18 and 35, who were born in Belgium and have at least one

parent born in Turkey or in Morocco. In Antwerp, a simple random sample from the entire sample frame was used. The response rate was 58%. The completed interviews consisted of 358 people with at least one parent born in Turkey and 311 people with at least one parent born in Morocco. As the sample frame was not available in the Brussels Capital Region, a different method of random sampling was used. Street segments were first randomly selected for each of the target groups separately according to the percentage of target group respondents living in each street segment. A simple random sample of addresses within these street segments was drawn based on information about age, nationality and name identification. Later on, interviewers switched to a semi-quota sample due to difficulties in fieldwork (for more details, see Vandezande, Phaet, and Swyngedouw 2011).

Perceived GD was operationalised with the following series of variables: 'I am going to read a number of situations aloud. Can you say for each situation how often people of <Turkish/Moroccan> origin experience hostility or unfair treatment as a group in Belgium due to their origin or background? At school, at work, when looking for a job, when going out to nightclubs, cafes or restaurants, in the street or when taking public transport, in the neighbourhood where they live and in their contact with the police.' Answers were given on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = 'never', 2 = 'rarely', 3 = 'sometimes', 4 = 'regularly', 5 = 'often'.

Matching Variables

The central idea in propensity-score matching, which is primarily used in observational studies, is to make the outcome of interest (e.g., risk of heart disease) independent from the pre-treatment differences on a set of background variables (e.g., age and health histories). These background variables may confound the treatment effect if they are related to both treatment and the outcome of interest. Applying the matching methods in a sociological study, we looked at a number of background variables that differ between the two cities and that could be associated with perceived GD. For each immigrant group, we selected background variables that significantly differed between the cities. All of these variables are dummy coded and discussed in detail in the results section (for selection of matching variables, see also Caliendo and Kopeinig 2008). In the final propensity-score model for Turks, we used marital status, gender, current religion, parental education and attendance to Quran lessons. Parental education indicates the highest educational level attained by one of the parents (primary school or less vs. secondary education or higher). In the model for Moroccans, we used marital status, gender, parental education, participant's education, being a student and attendance to Quran lessons.⁴

Predictors of Perceived GD

After matching, we examined the effect of socio-demographic variables and perceptions about the local context on GD, using the following measures. Work status was measured by four categories, and three of these variables were included in

the analysis as dummy-coded variables (unemployed, inactive:student, inactive:other, reference category: employed). Gender was also a dummy-coded variable: 1 = 'woman', 0 = 'man'. *Educational achievement* was a dummy coded variable: 1 = 'tertiary degree or higher', 0 = 'secondary education or lower'.

Following the local news was measured with one item on a 5-point scale: 'Do you sometimes follow the topics listed below in the newspapers, television, radio or on the Internet?' The news about Antwerp local politics (1 = 'never', 2 = 'rarely', 3 = 'occasionally', 4 = 'regularly', 5 = 'frequently').

Both *economic threat* and *safety threat* were each measured with one item: 'I am afraid that my living conditions, such as my income and work, will become worse in the near future' and 'I am afraid that in the near future violence and vandalism will increase in our society', respectively. Answers were given on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = 'totally disagree', 2 = 'disagree', 3 = 'neither agree nor disagree', 4 = 'agree' to 5 = 'totally agree'.

Lastly, *hostility of intergroup relations* was measured by asking participants to evaluate, in general, to what extent they would describe the relationship between people of Belgian origin and people of [Turkish/Moroccan] origin in [Antwerp/Brussels] as friendly. The answer scale ranged from 1 = 'very friendly', 2 = 'friendly', 3 = 'indifferent', 4 = 'not so friendly', to 5 = 'not friendly at all'.

Analysis

Composition of Turkish and Moroccan Second-Generation in Antwerp and in Brussels (Aged 18–35 Years)

Table 1 shows substantive differences between backgrounds of immigrants in Antwerp and Brussels. Those who lived in Brussels were more likely to be educated, have a higher employment rate and parental education. Immigrant youth in Antwerp, on the other hand, were more likely to be married and to be devout Muslims (70% of Moroccans in Antwerp vs. 54% in Brussels participated in a Quran course; corresponding percentages were 74% vs. 30% for Turks).

Overall, Table 1 indicates that the immigrant samples in Antwerp and in Brussels differed on a number of background characteristics. These background variables could be associated with the outcome variable of interest i.e., perceptions of GD in different life domains. For instance, some studies showed that religiosity is significantly associated with perceived personal discrimination (Fleischmann, Phalet, and Klein 2011). Similarly, other studies have pointed out that immigrants with higher educational achievement perceive more discrimination (Van Doorn, Scheepers, and Dagevos 2013; Dixon et al. 2010). Thus, to obtain net city effects on GD, it was necessary to balance the immigrant samples from the two cities with respect to individual backgrounds.

All variables which differed significantly between Antwerp and Brussels were included in matching. Since Turks and Moroccans differed on different covariates, we balanced the sample compositions of the two ethnic groups separately. That is, we

matched Brussels and Antwerp exactly on ethnicity and estimated propensity scores for Turks and Moroccans independently, using different sets of background variables. Since the TIES sample from Antwerp is more representative demographically (Swyngedouw et al. 2008), we used Antwerp as a reference sample and gave cases in this city a weight of 1 while matching them with immigrants from Brussels, who were assigned different weights. Stata's user written command `cem` for coarsened exact matching was used to produce a matched sample for each ethnic group based on the propensity score estimated by the logistic regression model (Heckman, Ichimura, and Todd 1998). The coarsened exact matching written by Blackwell et al. (2009) was preferred in this study because it requires fewer assumptions and automatically restricts data to common support. That is, it removes the participants from each city for which we need to make 'difficult-to-justify' extrapolations in the analysis stage. See [Appendix](#) for the number of cases excluded from the analysis for each group and city.

Importantly, to make a stronger case for the effects of propensity-score matching, we ran analyses both at the indicator level and at the latent level. Although the former approach requires multiple testing for each discrimination indicator (e.g., at work and at school) and thus is more prone to measurement error, it may be of interest to see if the matching results in changes for each indicator of GD separately. It provides more detailed information for perceived GD in different life domains (e.g., in encounters with the police). The latter approach (i.e., estimating city differences on a latent variable) is statistically more robust as it controls for measurement error.

Results

Are There Differences in Perceived GD between the Cities? Before and after Matching

At the Indicator Level

To start with, [Table 2](#) shows initial differences between Antwerp and Brussels on levels of perceived GD for various life domains and for each ethnic group. First, we distinguished between immigrants with systematic (regular), incidental (less frequent) and no perceived discrimination in a specific domain. Next, to identify significant differences between cities on levels of GD, we ran a multinomial logistic regression where the dependent variable was three levels of perceived GD and the predictor was the city indicator without any control variables. Incidental GD was set as the reference category. The unmatched estimates from [Table 2](#) are reported as relative risk ratios (RRR). RRR compare immigrants from Antwerp to those in Brussels for 'no GD' or 'systematic GD' relative to incidental discrimination.

For example, for Turks, living in Antwerp increased the risk of systematic GD relative to incidental GD while looking for a job by a factor of 1.59 relative to Brussels. Similarly, the risk of incidental discrimination compared to no discrimination (the first column in [Table 2](#)) shows that Turks were more likely to perceive

Table 2. Risk of perceived GD in Antwerp vs. Brussels across life domains.

Domain of GD	Turkish		Moroccan	
	Never (vs. incidental)	Systematic (vs. incidental)	Never (vs. incidental)	Systematic (vs. incidental)
<i>Unmatched raw estimates</i>				
School	0.85	1.15	0.95	1.09
Workplace	0.52**	0.86	1.04	0.77
Looking for a job	0.95	1.59**	0.87	1.37
Going out	0.46**	1.36	1.14	1.46*
Street	0.55**	1.38	0.87	1.72**
Neighbourhood	0.48**	1.64	0.74	1.34
Police	0.85	1.15	0.95	1.09
<i>Matched estimates</i>				
School	0.73	0.88	1.13	0.9
Workplace	0.5*	1.1	1.61	0.69
Looking for a job	1.55	2.18**	1.26	1.04
Going out	0.40**	2.07**	1.62	1.23
Street	0.38**	1.19	0.84	1.36
Neighbourhood	0.40**	2.12	1.06	1.14
Police	0.46*	0.62	1.14	0.56*

* $p = 0.05$; ** $p = 0.01$.

Note: Relative risk ratios are from a multinomial logistic regression where reference category is 'incidental'.

incidental discrimination in Antwerp compared to Brussels in the domains of 'workplace', 'going out', 'street' and 'neighbourhood'.

Notably, before matching, we also found a few significant city effects for Moroccans on the levels of perceived GD (see Table 2). Second-generation Moroccans had a higher risk of systematic compared to incidental GD in Antwerp while going out or in the street than in Brussels.

In the next step, we applied matching weights to see how city effects changed if the second-generation immigrants with similar individual backgrounds were compared. After matching, only one initial city effect persisted for Moroccans. Moroccans perceived that their group was more systematically discriminated in Brussels in encounters with the police (Table 2). This is not surprising given the urban riots of the past and dire police-immigrant youth relations in Brussels. Immigrant youth riots in Brussels was the landmark event that raised questions about the integration policies nationwide (Phalet and Krekels 1999; Vandezande, Phalet, and Swyngedouw 2011). For Turks, on the other hand, most of the city effects persisted after matching. It appears from Table 2 that, in general, living in Antwerp leads to a higher risk of systematic relative to incidental GD for Turks, particularly while looking for a job and going out. The risk of systematic vs. incidental GD while looking for a job and going out was about 2 times higher in Antwerp compared to Brussels for Turks after matching. Other city differences for the second-generation Turks were found in perceived GD while going out, at workplace, in the street, in the neighbourhood and in encounters with the police; the risk of incidental GD (relative to 'never'—the

inverse of the one published in Table 2) in those domains was about two times higher in Antwerp compared to Brussels.

In summary, city effects remained significant after matching for the second-generation Turks in the expected direction: the risk of perceived GD (systematic and incidental) was higher in Antwerp than in Brussels. Conversely, significant city effects for second-generation Moroccans disappeared after matching except for the perceived GD in encounters with the police—for which the risk of systematic discrimination was higher in Brussels. That is, overall, for Moroccans the risk of perceived GD was not higher in Antwerp than in Brussels. Therefore, Hypothesis 1, which stated that GD would be higher in Antwerp than in Brussels, was only confirmed for the second-generation Turks. In the next section, in order to decrease measurement error due to multiple testing with several dependent variables, we used latent factor modelling. We tested the mean differences between the cities on two latent factors: GD in *socio-economic* and *civic spheres*.

At the Latent Level

We used confirmatory factor analysis to test the hypothesised two-factor model of GD: GD in *socio-economic* and *civic spheres*. The model with two latent factors should be invariant across cities and ethnic groups. Accordingly, the model with the best fit, in line with our expectations, distinguished between two latent factors: GD in *socio-economic* and *civic spheres* (see Figure 1a and b). The following analyses were carried out with Mplus using weighted least squares estimation for categorical variables due to the ordinal nature of our indicators (Muthén 1984).

Comparison of the latent means for GD for second-generation Moroccans showed that while the mean level of perceived GD in the *civic sphere* was significantly lower in Brussels (standardised mean difference, $SMD = -.351$, $p = 0.002$) before matching, in the matched analysis, there was no significant city difference ($SMD = -0.17$, $p = 0.268$). Thus similar to the results of the indicator-level analysis, Hypothesis 1 was not confirmed for Moroccans. Latent factor analysis for second-generation Turks, on the other hand, showed that they perceived significantly higher levels of GD in Antwerp compared to Brussels in the *civic sphere* even after matching. This finding was also in line with the results of the indicator-level analysis. Moreover, matching increased the size of the city effect for the *civic sphere*, (unmatched: $SMD = -0.452$, $p < 0.001$ vs. matched: $SMD = -0.619$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was confirmed for Turks in the *civic sphere*. However, the city difference in the *socio-economic sphere* was marginally significant after matching (unmatched: $SMD = -0.199$, $p = 0.02$ vs. matched: $SMD = -0.166$, $p = 0.07$).

One possible explanation for the lack of city effects on GD for Moroccans is that second-generation Moroccans occupy the bottom of the ethnic hierarchy in Belgium, and on average, they have the highest perceived personal and GD (Vandezande, Phalet, and Swyngedouw 2011). Thus, the absence of city effects for Moroccans can be related to their group position as the most devalued ethnic minority in the

Belgian society, be it in the Francophone or in the Flemish regions, independent of the context.

Who Perceives More GD within Each City?

In further analyses, we explored how perceived GD varied within ethnic groups with regard to a set of covariates including socio-demographic characteristics and perceptions about the local context. Results from the multigroup structural equation models are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

First of all, we found some support for Hypothesis 2: second-generation immigrants who were more socio-economically integrated perceived more GD. However, the positive relationship between socio-economic integration and GD was not consistent across the cities, minority groups or the spheres of discrimination. Tables 3 and 4 show that second-generation with higher socio-economic achievement (e.g., those in the workforce, with higher educational attainment and those following local news) perceived higher levels of GD. Those who were not active (e.g., disabled and housewife), on the other hand, perceived lower levels of GD. Notably, for both immigrant minority groups, we found a significant effect of being unemployed on GD. Those in the workforce were more likely to perceive GD than those who were unemployed. This may be explained by the theory of group contact/exposure (e.g., Van Doorn, Scheepers, and Dagevos 2013) or the integration paradox (e.g., Ten Teije, Coenders, and Verkuyten 2013); those employed are more likely to have interethnic contact, and consequently, their vulnerability for discrimination is expected to be

Table 3. Predicting perceived discrimination in socio-economic and civic spheres, second-generation TURKS in Antwerp and in Brussels (matched standardised model estimates).

	Antwerp		Brussels	
	Socio-economic	Civic	Socio-economic	Civic
<i>Socio-demographic background</i>				
Woman	0.143*	0.045	-0.025	-0.076
Tertiary education	0.153*	0.133*	0.027	-0.097
Student	0.033	-0.012	-0.134	-0.306**
Unemployed	0.059	0.048	-0.119	-0.341**
Inactive other	-0.1	-0.091	0.247	-0.094
Local news	0.166**	0.190**	-0.012	0.066
<i>Perceived local context</i>				
Safety threat	0.038	0.024	0.08	0.336*
Economic threat	0.040	-0.043	0.046	-0.086
Hostility	0.227**	0.235**	0.149	0.77

* $p = 0.05$; ** $p = 0.01$.

Fit measures of multigroup model for socio-economic sphere: $\chi^2 = 46.831$, p value = 0.4382, RMSEA = 0, CFI = 0.99.

Fit measures of multigroup model for civic sphere: $\chi^2 = 79.802$, p value = 0.1023, RMSEA = 0.028, CFI = 0.985.

Table 4. Predicting perceived discrimination in socio-economic and civic spheres, second-generation MOROCCANS in Antwerp and in Brussels (matched standardised model estimates).

	Antwerp		Brussels	
	Socio-economic	Civic	Socio-economic	Civic
<i>Socio-demographic background</i>				
Woman	0.059	0.254***	0.199**	-0.115
Tertiary education	0.087	0.086	0.256***	0.199
Student	-0.038	-0.013	-0.019	-0.099
Unemployed	-0.14**	-0.129**	0.026	-0.054
Inactive other	-0.071	-0.146**	-0.003	-0.017
Local news	0.093	0.034	0.157	0.105
<i>Perceived local context</i>				
Safety threat	0.081	0.169***	0.16*	0.216*
Economic threat	0.047	0.011	0.169*	0.320**
Hostility	0.105	0.207***	0.263**	0.346***

* $p = 0.1$; ** $p = 0.05$; *** $p = 0.01$.

Fit measures of multigroup model for socio-economic sphere: $\chi^2 = 34.964$, p value = 0.8431, RMSEA = 0; CFI = 1.

Fit measures of multi-group model for civic sphere: $\chi^2 = 76.569$, p value = 0.1170, RMSEA = 0.03, CFI = 0.983.

higher. Additionally, second-generation immigrants with a university degree or higher were more likely to perceive GD.

Media is an important factor that shapes attitudes of both the host majority and immigrant minorities. Accordingly, we originally expected to find an effect for local news followership on perceived GD among second-generation immigrants, especially in Antwerp where discursive practices of political parties and media are more negative than Brussels regarding immigrants. Table 3 shows that local media followership increased perceived GD significantly for Turks living in Antwerp, but not for Moroccans. This may be in part due to the same reasons responsible for the absence of city difference on GD for Moroccans. They are the most devalued and criminalised ethnic minority in Belgian society, and independent of the city context, they perceive high levels of discrimination.

We also hypothesised that perceptions about the local context (i.e., economic threat, safety threat and hostility of intergroup relations) to be important predictors of GD. Overall, we found support for this hypothesis, particularly for Moroccans. Both forms of threat and hostility were associated with increased feelings of GD in both cities for Moroccans. For Turks, on the other hand, we found two significant effects: safety threat in Brussels and hostility of the intergroup relations.

Moreover in both groups, we found that the safety threat was a strong correlate of perceived GD in Brussels. This is probably due to the tensions between immigrant youth and the police in Brussels. Reports of uprisings of immigrant youth and their clash with the police are often featured as news headlines in Brussels.⁵

Discussion and Conclusion

A number of studies have underscored the important role that the context of reception plays in integration outcomes of immigrant minorities (Crul and Schneider 2010; Bean et al. 2012), and that discrimination against immigrants, be it real or perceived, implies unfavourable integration contexts (Phalet and Swyngedouw 2003). However, research on integration context using survey data has been set back by the problem of composition effects. Immigrants living in one city differ from those living in another on a number of observed and unobserved characteristics. Most studies of comparative integration context have ignored this fact or have only taken limited measures. An important contribution of this paper is that unlike other comparative integration context studies, it controls for composition effects using propensity-score matching. We show that matching adjustments make substantial differences in our conclusions. Some effects get stronger, while others disappear after matching. This implies that it is crucial for future comparative studies of integration context to adopt methods that can effectively control for composition effects.

On the substantive front, the aim of this paper was twofold. Our first research aim was to reveal the effect of city context on perceived GD controlling for composition effects. On the observed variable level, we showed that the second-generation Turks perceive more systematic GD in Antwerp compared to Brussels when looking for a job and when going out. On all other observed indicators, the second-generation Turks also had higher levels of incidental GD in Antwerp than in Brussels. On the latent variable level—correcting as much as possible for measurement errors—we observed that Turks perceive more GD in Antwerp than in Brussels. City difference on GD in the *civic sphere* (and to an extent in the *socio-economic sphere*) persists after controlling for composition effects. We explained this in terms of the less welcoming city context in Antwerp compared to Brussels. It is also worth noting that the city differences may be partly explained by the group context within the cities. The Turkish community in Brussels is better organised, has stronger social support networks and is subject to higher residential segregation, particularly in employment opportunities compared to those in the Turkish community in Antwerp (Fleischmann, Phalet, and Klein 2011). These may protect them against discrimination in Brussels.

Conversely, our analysis showed that Moroccans perceive high levels of GD in both cities, but there is no significant difference between the two cities on the latent variables after controlling for the composition effects. We explained this in terms of group positions: Moroccans are at the bottom of group hierarchy in both Flemish and Francophone regions; hence, the city context does not make a difference.

Our second aim was to examine who perceived more GD in each city by looking at second-generation immigrants' socio-demographic backgrounds and perceptions about the local context. In general, those who were more socio-economically integrated (employed, highly educated and following local news) and those with a negative view of the local context were more likely to perceive GD. Particularly,

among the second-generation Turks, GD is highly correlated with education, local news followership and hostility of intergroup relations in Antwerp. The findings for Turks are in line with our expectation that more politicised host-immigrant minority relations and strong sub-state nationalism leads to higher perceived GD. Among the second-generation Moroccans, especially those who had a negative view of group relations, those who perceived more economic and safety threats were more likely to perceive more GD.

There are also limitations, however. Hypothesised contextual differences between the two cities are used as analytical tools to derive conclusions about the observed city differences in GD. However, it is not possible to derive conclusions about the extent and the nature of the context effects, since our study design does not contain direct measures of contextual variables. Moreover, while the use of propensity-score matching in comparative analysis provides an improvement as it controls compositional effects, we could not control for all 'origin' effects. In other words, the differences between the immigrant populations across the two cities might be due to their differences in the sending country. For example, while immigration to Antwerp has been largely restricted to unskilled Turkish and Moroccan 'guest workers' coming from small towns in the sending countries, Brussels tends to have a more diverse group including political refugees. Furthermore, Moroccans from the Rif (the least-developed region) are overrepresented in Antwerp (Reniers 1999).⁶ We were limited by the sample size (which does not allow rigorous matching) and the set of background variables that were available in our data-set to balance socio-economic compositions of ethnic minority groups. This problem is related to the core assumption in the propensity-score matching method: strong *ignorability of treatment assignment* (Rosenbaum and Rubin 1983). That is to say, the two cities may differ beyond the factors that are discussed here and not taking into account such variables in the matching could weaken our conclusions. Yet, we believe that our matching variables capture most of the variation between the cities that is relevant to GD and that the finding concerning the city difference found for Turks is compelling.

As for the overall implications of this study, our findings provide partial support for the idea that when there is no clear host majority group in a city, and when cities can allow/promote superordinate identities beyond the exclusionary discourse of political parties, sub-state nationalism and prejudices against immigrants, there may be higher levels of tolerance and a lower risk of GD. Conversely, cities where the host society is less diverse, immigration is more politicised, and majority group attitudes are negative and offer less favourable integration contexts. Consequently, children of immigrants living in such cities are likely to perceive higher levels of GD. However, this effect is not equal for each ethnic minority group and seems to depend on relative group positions of the ethnic minorities involved.

Notes

- [1] In addition, we suggest that group (vs. personal) discrimination is more directly tied to city context differences (group size, hierarchy, social learning, economic threat, etc.), therefore, we chose to focus on GD in this paper instead of personal experiences of discrimination, a measure of which is also available in the TIES data-set. That said, we reran the analysis for *experienced personal discrimination* using the TIES data. However, at the latent variable level, we did not find any significant city differences on the levels of *experienced personal discrimination* after matching, neither for Turks nor for Moroccans.
- [2] Second-generation population was expectedly higher in 2007 during the TIES fieldwork, but statistics for the second-generation immigrants were rarely reported for Brussels in the following years.
- [3] We want to remark that the predictors are not ‘purely’ exogenous causes of GD but can also be endogenous, since they can (partially) be the result of past experiences of GD.
- [4] Note that *current religion* also differed significantly between the cities for Moroccans. However, given the high correlation between the two variables, it was sufficient to include Quran lessons to balance the distribution of *current religion* between the city samples. Consequently, we did not include *current religion* in the matching model.
- [5] It is also worth noting that we added direct effects between gender and GD in *civic sphere* due the differential associations between gender and GD. Specifically, in encounters with the police and while going out, women perceived less GD. Conversely, women perceived more GD in the street and in the neighbourhood. This is in line with the understanding that Muslim women have less contact with the police and less likely to go out to clubs and to cafes compared to men.
- [6] Although these variables were available in the TIES data (father’s motive for migration and region), once we included them in the analysis, the number of the unmatched cases increased to a great extent especially for Moroccans. In order not to lose a substantial number of cases from the analysis, we preferred to exclude these variables from the matching analysis.

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Appendix. Matching Summary by Ethnic Group

	Antwerp	Brussels
<i>Turkish second-generation</i>		
All	358	250
Matched	345	229
Unmatched	13	21
<i>Moroccan second-generation</i>		
All	312	257
Matched	294	218
Unmatched	18	39