



# Building a support base for superdiversity

Didier Vanderslycke, Orbit

Nicola Salusso, Diaconia Valdese

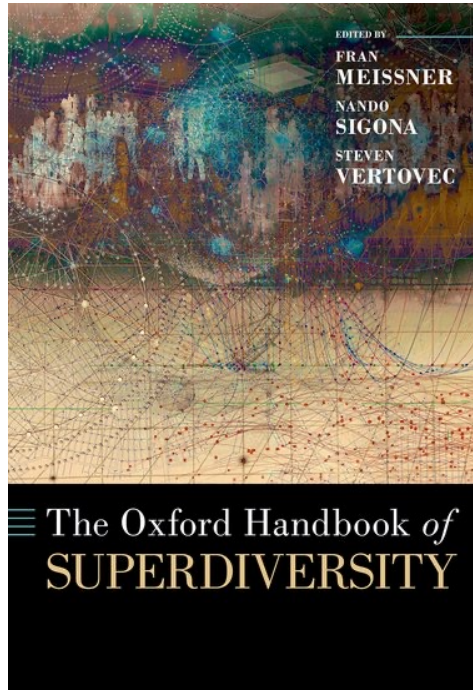
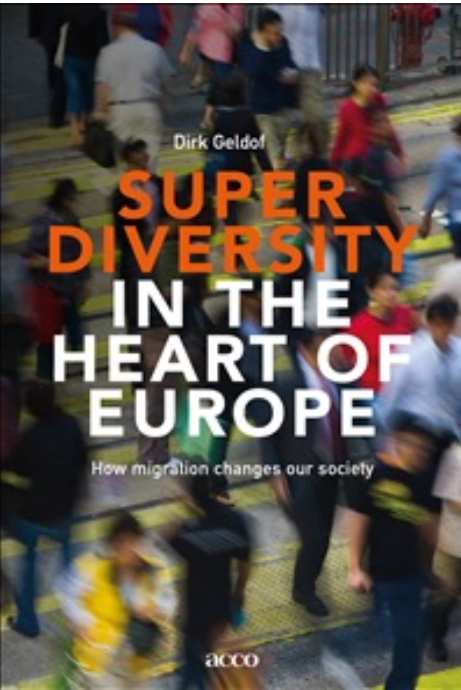
Prof. Dr. Dirk Geldof, University of Antwerp & Centre for Family Studies Odisee

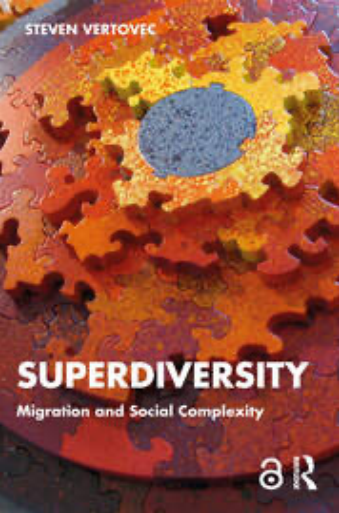
**Workshop ESWC Bruges, 26th April 2024**

strong  
social  
work

# Superdiversity: a short introduction

- ▶ Prof. Dr. Dirk Geldof, University of Antwerp & Centre for Family Studies Odisee





# The superdiversity of the 21st century

- ▶ **Superdiversity is a new concept**

- Coined by Steven Vertovec 2005/2007

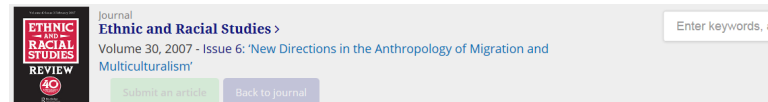
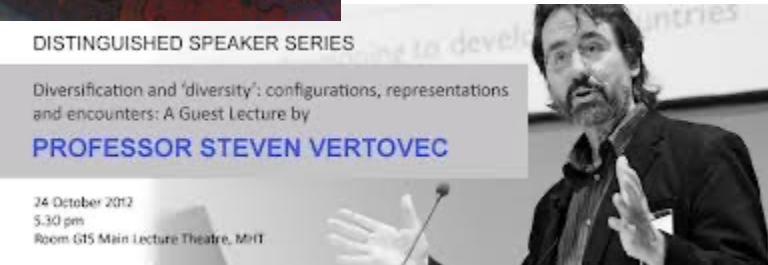
- ▶ **To describe & analyse the complexity of & diversity in London**

- Beyond previous concepts as multiculturalism

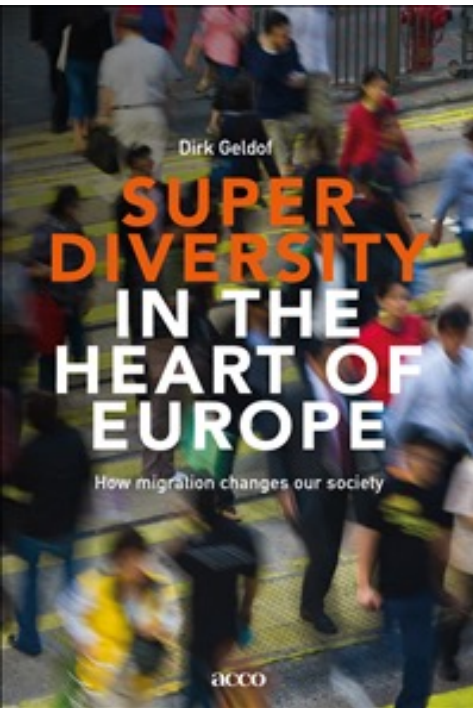
- As the result of a new period in migration

- × & profound demographic & social transitions

- A lens to better understand processes of migration driven diversification & complexification



# The concept of superdiversity: work in progress



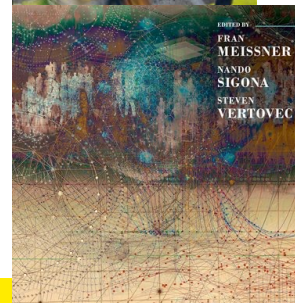
- ▶ **A new concept with a broad range of interpretations**
- ▶ **Superdiversity has (at least) three dimensions**
  - **Quantitative transition/context**
    - × Increasing diversity & majority-minority cities
  - **Qualitative transition**
    - × Processes of (migration driven) diversification
  - **(contested) normalisation of diversity**
    - × Demographic normalisation, commonplace diversity & conviviality

Exploring the **spatial impact** of superdiversity:  
**spread, speed & scale** (Meisner & Vertovec, 2014)

Developing a **typology** of cities-municipalities  
&/or neighborhoods **on the 'type' of**  
**superdiversity or superdiversification**

**Consequences for policy & social work**

**Research for the Flemish authorities**



# 1. Quantitative transition: migration driven diversity increases in Western-Europe, the most in urban areas

## Key figures on foreign-born people and their descendants in the EU (2021)

People aged 15-74 years old residing in private households in the EU were:

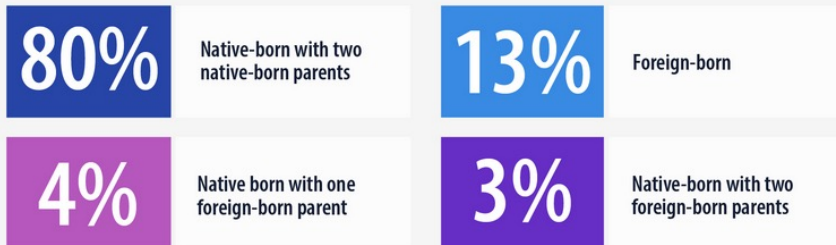
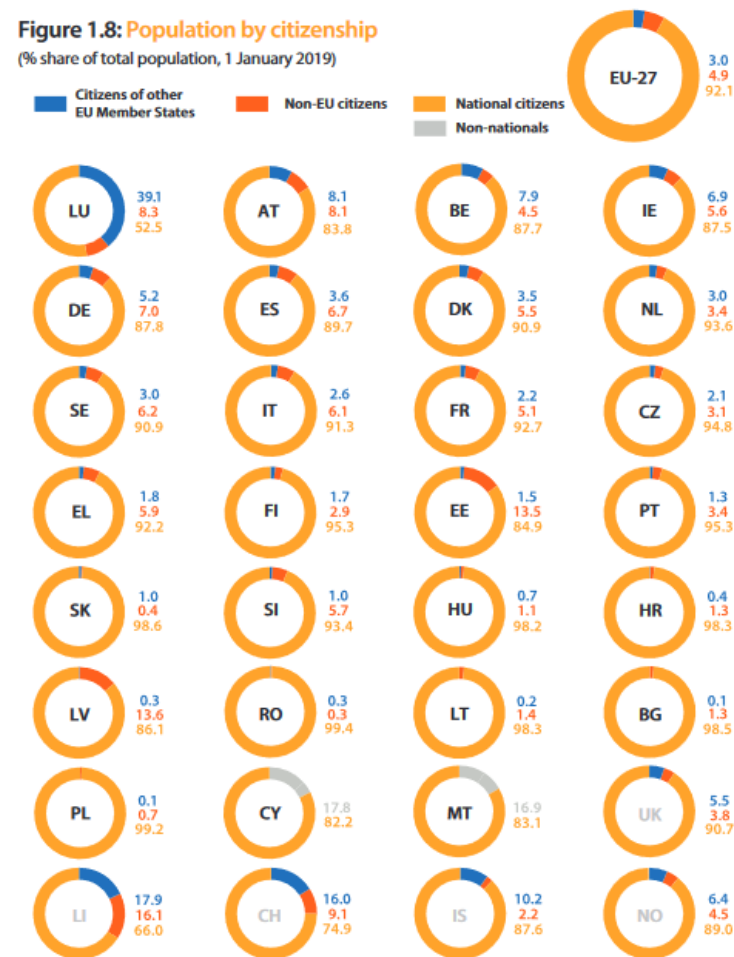


**Figure 1.8: Population by citizenship**

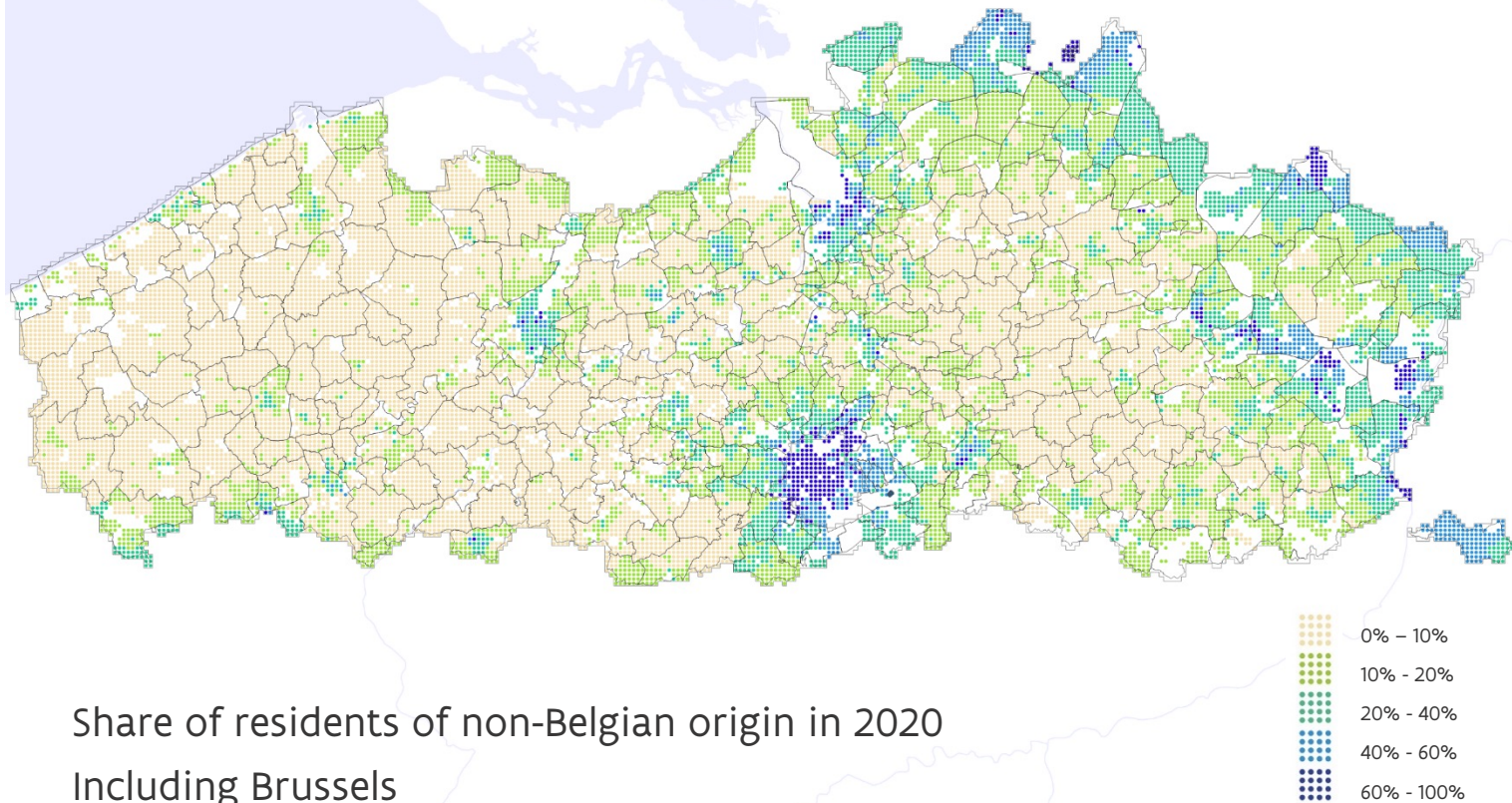
(% share of total population, 1 January 2019)



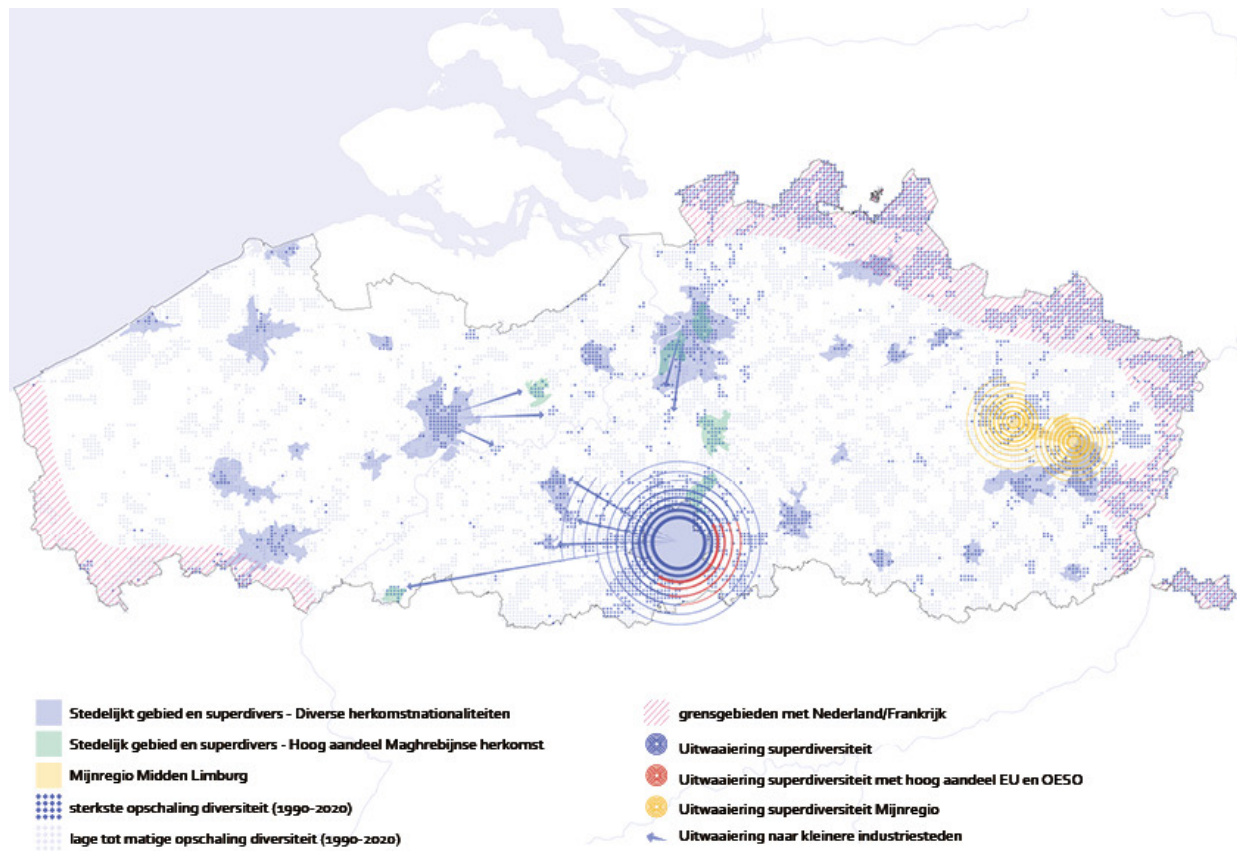
Note: due to rounding, some totals may not sum to 100.0 %. Non-EU citizens category includes stateless and unknown categories. CY and MT: no detailed data by country of citizenship available, thus only a share of total non-national population is displayed. EU-27 does not include data for CY and MT.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr\_pop1ct2)

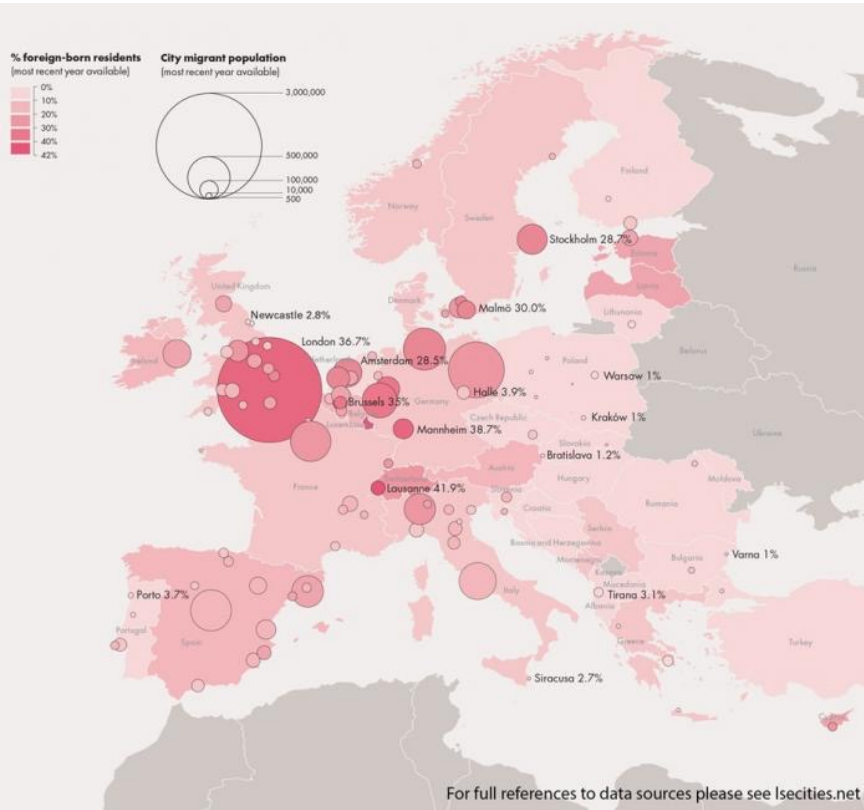
# Visualization of the current situation Belgium



# 21<sup>st</sup> century: gradual spread and upscaling of superdiversity + suburbanisation



# Part of the quantitative transition is the transition towards majority-minority cities



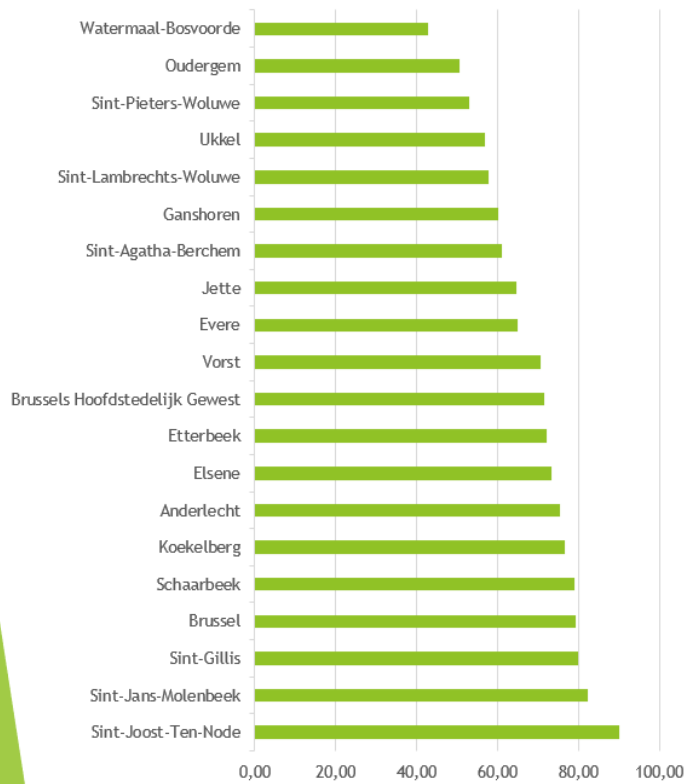
## ► ***'majority-minority cities'***: Cities with a majority of different minorities

- In global cities such as New York, Sao Paulo, Toronto or Sydney
- Recently in European cities as well:
  - × Brussels, Antwerp, Genk & Vilvoorde
  - × Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Den Hague
  - × Frankfurt, Birmingham, Malmö
  - × and in the next decade many other (larger) European cities

# Superdiversity, a quantitative transition.

## Brussel metropolitan region as a case.

### one of the world's most diverse cities



#### ► **75% of all citizens of Brussels of foreign origin**

→ Non-Belgian nationality

→ Non-Belgian nationality at the moment of birth

→ Father or mother having another nationality at the moment of birth

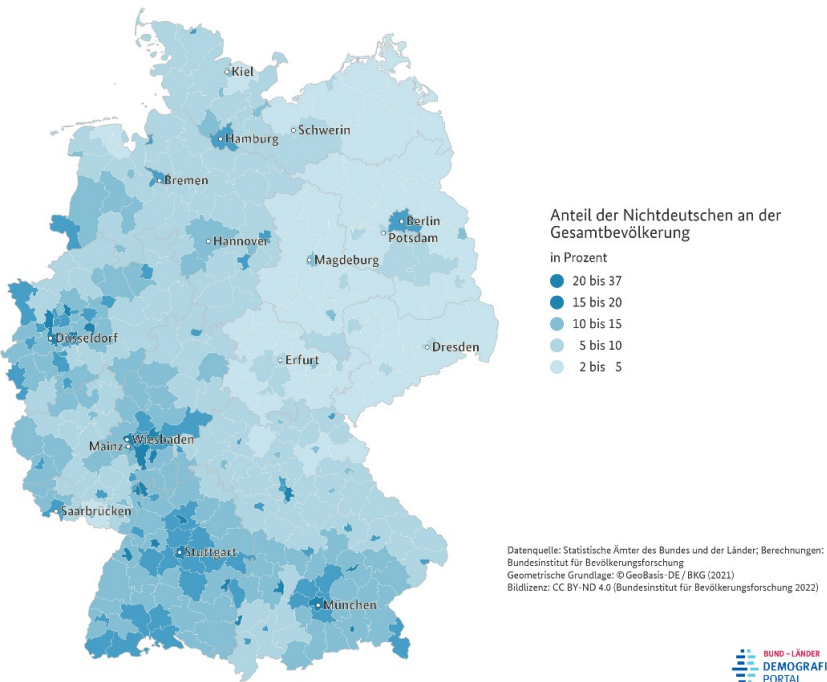
#### ► **Find out more at**

→ <https://brussels-diversity.jetpack.ai/>

# Demographic dynamics are crucial: less diversity among elderly citizens.

Majority of kids & youngsters in many larger Western-European cities have migration backgrounds.

Ausländeranteil, 2020



# Concluding: the scale of superdiversity increases in many Western European countries.

Figuur 1: Illustratie van een typologieopbouw in Engeland (links) en Nederland (rechts). (Lymeropoulou K., 2020; Jenissen et al, 2018)

**Local Authority Classification**

- Superdiverse London
- Cosmopolitan London and Periphery
- London Suburbs and Satellite Towns
- Diverse Conurbation Centres
- High Turnover Provincial and Student Towns
- Asylum Dispersal Areas
- Migrant Worker Towns and Countryside
- Rural and Coastal Retirement Areas
- New Large, Free-standing and Commuter Towns
- Prosperous Small Towns
- Industrial and Manufacturing Towns
- Low Migration Small Towns and Rural Areas

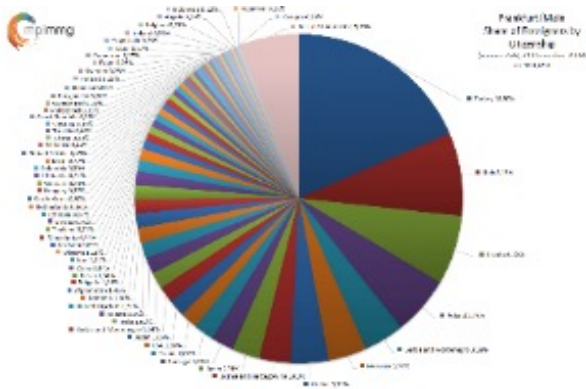
Figuur 6. Voorbeelden van verschillende typen gemeenten

- Meerderheid-minderheid steden
- Voorsteden
- Grootstedelijke provinciegemeenten
- Gemeenten met een specifieke grote minderheidsgroep
- Expatgemeenten
- Tuinbouwgemeenten
- Grensgemeenten
- Homogene gemeenten

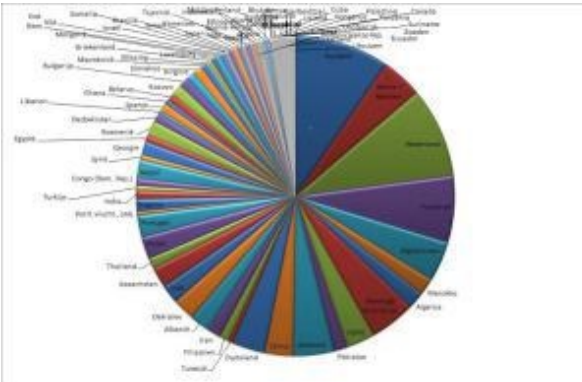
► **But with large differences in the speed & spread of superdiversification**

- Cases UK & the Netherlands
- (Lymeropoulou K., 2020; Jenissen et al, 2018)

## 2. Superdiversity as a qualitative transition: increasing diversity within diversity

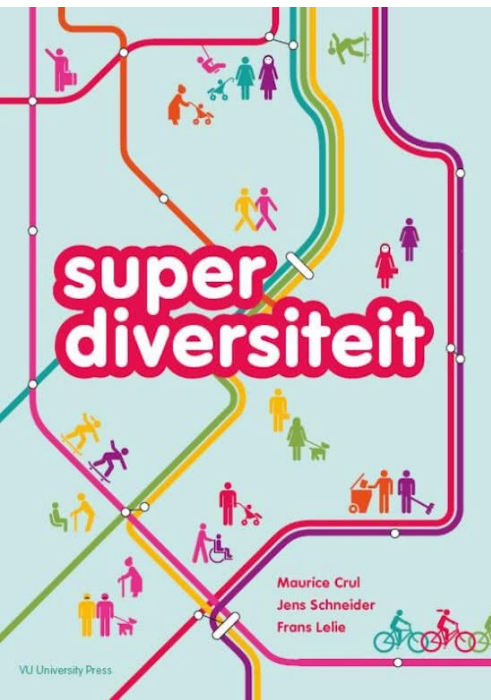


- ▶ 'the diversification of diversity',
  - ▶ 'the dynamic interplay of [...] new, small & scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated & legally stratified immigrants'
- (Steven Vertovec)



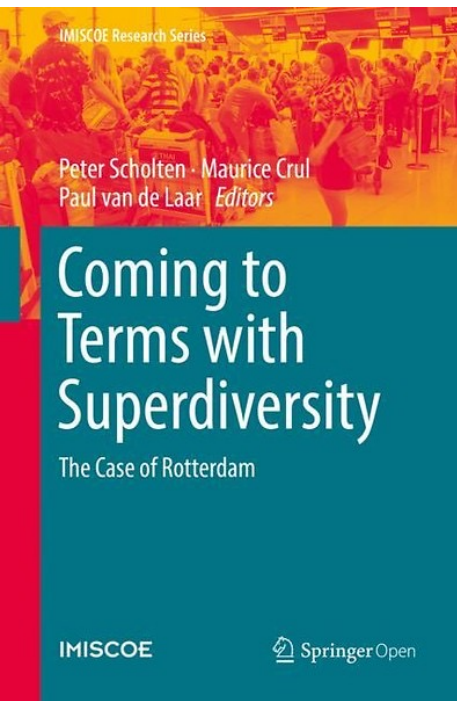
- ▶ **Graphs: number of different nationalities living in Frankfurt (Germany) & Ostend (Belgium)**

# Diversity within diversity



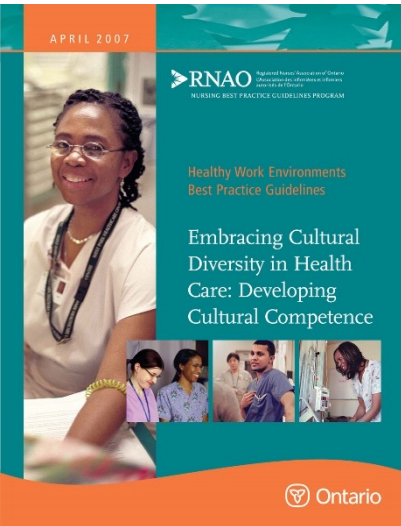
- ▶ An increasing hybridity & complexity of our society, especially in cities
- ▶ Superdiversity is the interaction between
  - ⇒ More different nationalities
  - ⇒ More different languages
  - ⇒ Increasing religious diversity
  - ⇒ Diversity in motivations to migrate
  - ⇒ Diversity in legal statuses
  - ⇒ Diversity in socio-economic positions
  - ⇒ Diversity in & between different communities
  - ⇒ Increasing transnational lifestyles and transmigration
- ▶ Crucial impact on social work

### 3. Superdiversity as a (contested) process of normalisation of diversity



- ▶ Beyond dominant majority-thinking
- ▶ Beyond the minority as an exception
- ▶ Superdiversity becomes the 'new normal'
  - Susanne Wessendorf: 'Commonplace diversity'
  - Also in professional settings: health care, social work, education, policy, public administration, business, ...
- ▶ However, not without conflicts or tensions
  - A politically contested process
  - with steps forward & backward
  - driven by demography
- ▶ **Building a support base is crucial**

# Towards diverse-sensitive social work: recognising diversification of diversity in superdiverse contexts

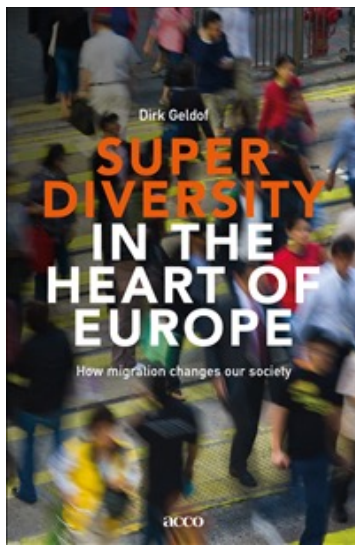
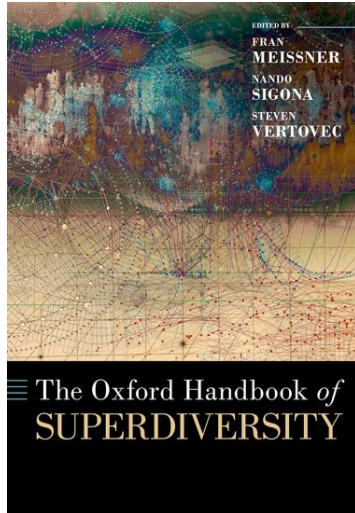
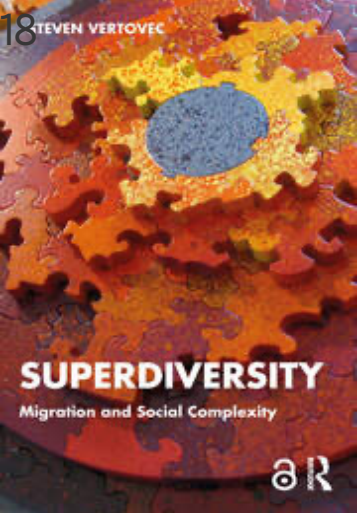


- ▶ Urgent need for interculturalisation in front-line professions
- ▶ Developing empowering & divers-sensitive skills
- ▶ By divers-sensitive social work, we mean that staff has
  - competences to bridge differences in frames of reference.
  - methodologies and tools that include diversity aspects.
  - & that organisational preconditions are present that enable to offer appropriate care to all clients with a wide variety of backgrounds
  - × Such preconditions include a diverse workforce, sufficient flexibility, language facilities, cooperation with informal networks in superdivers neighbourhoods
  - Awareness for inequality, racism, (white) privileges, ...

# Superdiversity is politically contested



- ▶ Us & them thinking dominant
- ▶ Need to build a support base
- ▶ In times of polarisation, distrust & populism
- ▶ Crucial role for social work
- ▶ Two inspiring projects today
  - Didier Vanderslycke, Orbit
  - Nicola Salusso, Diaconia Valdese



## Further reading

- ▶ Steven Vertovec, 2022. Superdiversity. Migration and Social Complexity. (open access)  
→ <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/oa-mono/10.4324/9780203503577/superdiversity-steven-vertovec>
- ▶ Fran Meissner, Nando Sigona & Steven Vertovec, 2023. The Oxford Handbook of Superdiversity.  
→ <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-oxford-handbook-of-superdiversity-9780197544938?cc=be&lang=en&>
- ▶ Dirk Geldof, 2016. Superdiversity in the heart of Europe. How migration changes our society.  
→ <https://shop.acco.be/en/items/9789462924284>
- ▶ Dirk Geldof, 2019. Superdiversiteit. Hoe migratie onze samenleving verandert. Acco.  
→ <https://shop.acco.be/en/items/9789463448451/Superdiversiteit>



<https://www.aspeditions.be/en/book/superdivers-vlaanderen/19510>

[Dirk.Geldof@uantwerpen.be](mailto:Dirk.Geldof@uantwerpen.be)

strong  
social  
work



be  
EU  
belgium24.eu



**ORBIT** VZW

BONDGENOOT IN  
SUPERDIVERSITEIT  
EN MIGRATIE

**Didier Vanderslycke**

# **ORBIT is a socio-cultural organization**

**With initiatives seeking impact in:**

- ▶ **effectively addressing racism**
- ▶ **strengthening interfaith competences**
- ▶ **the Muslim-Christian dialogue**
- ▶ **housing for recognized refugees and temporary protected persons from Ukraine**
- ▶ **the Reception with Perspective on Future for people without legal residence**
- ▶ **strengthening trust and participation in super-diverse migration society**
- ▶ **In summary: connecting commitment to fundamental rights**

# Mission

**ORBIT strives towards a society that welcomes everyone to fully participate.**

**People with a 'migration history' and people who want to live their religion or faith, should have equal rights and opportunities and be able to help shape that society.**

**This is what we strive to accomplish and why we work to create a climate of solidarity. We want to help build an inclusive society in which everyone's fundamental rights are fulfilled.**

# Three strategic goals

## **1. We are committed to the fundamental right "dignified living" by**

- enabling dignified living for new status holders
- giving people without legal residence space to explore and pursue decent long-term prospects.
- promoting a humane migration policy.

## **2. We are committed to the fundamental right 'non-discrimination' by providing tools to act in a non-discriminatory manner and thereby realize a more inclusive society.**

## **3. We focus on the fundamental right ' religion and philosophy of life' so that people can fully live out their philosophy of life and religion in the perspective of the common good of society, so that they have leverage to address crucial societal challenges in interfaith partnerships.**

# Three target groups

## Citizens

- **People seeking legal status and those who are targets of discrimination and unequal treatment**
- **bystanders and fellow citizens**
- **media and communication professionals**

## Organizations

- **local associations, the non-governmental organizations,...**
- **social institutions: education, health care, welfare work,...**

## Governments (and their administrations).

- **Municipalities and provinces**
- **Regional and community governments**
- **Federal government**
- **European institutions**

# With an alliance strategy

- ▶ **We choose to ally with all those who are willing to join us for a while - or longer - on the road to a workable super-diverse society and a humane migration policy.**
- ▶ **We start from the possibility of a shared "we". A "we" that stems from justice, solidarity, connectedness, equal opportunities and outcomes for all, respect for the inspiration and philosophies of each citizen.**
- ▶ **In summary, the core of the ally strategy is:**
- ▶ **approaching people, organizations and governments not first and foremost as adversaries, but - looking for complementary or common interests - working change in partnership as much as possible.**

# **A critical, objective and nuanced approach from these three perspectives**

## **Human rights added value**

- ▶ **Inspired by International and European human rights declarations, treaties, conventions, persons and movements and by Christian and philosophical sources, persons and movements.**

## **Social-economic added value.**

- ▶ **Both for those targeted by disadvantage and exclusion and for society**

## **Increased security**

- ▶ **Both for those involved who are targets of disadvantage and exclusion, and for society**

# ORBIT in practice

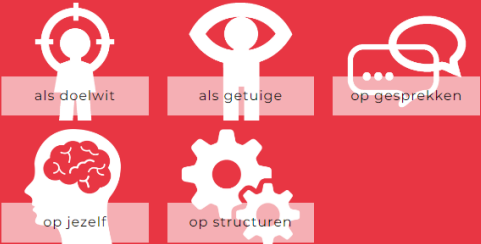
- Ally with targets experiencing racism by developing an approach in socio-cultural work
- Ally to bystanders who want to address racism
- Ally to organizations that want to address racism structurally

[www.reacttoracism.be](http://www.reacttoracism.be) [www.napar.be](http://www.napar.be)

[www.oostaziateninkleur.be](http://www.oostaziateninkleur.be)

**REAGEER.**

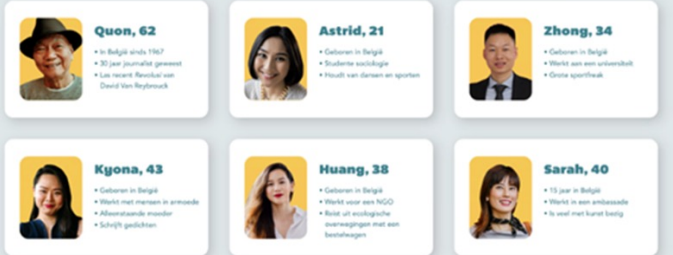
Ben je getuige van racisme of maak je het zelf mee? Daar sta je dan. Met je mond vol tanden? Of sterk in je schoenen? **Jouw tussenkomst telt!** Het is niet evident om te reageren op racisme. Toch maken we zo het verschil.



- als doelwit
- als getuige
- op gesprekken
- op jezelf
- op structuren



**DOE DE TEST**  
*Maak kennis met onze hooftpersoonages*



| Quon, 62                                                                                                                                                           | Astrid, 21                                                                                                                                                    | Zhong, 34                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In België sinds 1962</li><li>• 30 jaar journalist geweest</li><li>• Leest recent Revolut van David van Reybrouck</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Geboren in België</li><li>• Studente sociologie</li><li>• Houdt van dansen en sporten</li></ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Geboren in België</li><li>• Werkt aan een universiteit</li><li>• Grote sportfreak</li></ul>    |
| Kyona, 43                                                                                                                                                          | Huang, 38                                                                                                                                                     | Sarah, 40                                                                                                                              |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Geboren in België</li><li>• Werkt met mensen in armoede</li><li>• Afkomstige moeder</li><li>• Schrijft gedichten</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Geboren in België</li><li>• Werkt voor een NGO</li><li>• Reist uit ecologische overwegingen met een bus/van</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 15 jaar in België</li><li>• Werkt in een ambassade</li><li>• Is veel met kunst bezig</li></ul> |