

## **In-migration, power and community cohesion**

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In-migration, whether it concerns in-migrants from national or international backgrounds, diversifies the geographical, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of inhabitants of rural areas with vast impacts on the cohesion of rural communities. The purpose of this paper is to elaborate on the dynamics of these impacts of in-migration on the cohesion of rural communities.

Previous research by the researcher focused on the social integration of in-migrants in Dutch rural areas. Social integration is not only about socialisation, i.e. becoming acquainted with and subsequently acting according to the rules and norms for social interaction in the locality, but also identification. This identification is a process that is dialectic in character. Whether in-migrants consider themselves part of the community-of-place and whether they are perceived as such by that community influence each other mutually. Social integration is not an uni-directional process. Some in-migrations choose not to integrate socially, communities-of-place might exclude in-migrants from their community through not accepting them, and social integration can be reversed due to e.g. conflict. This research on social integration thus points at the contribution of in-migration to the co-existence of multiple communities within one locality as well as the fluidity of the cohesion of such communities.

The present paper elaborates on this research by further developing the role of power relationships on the dynamics of community cohesion as they are influenced by in-migration. In line with Foucault, power is considered relational. This paper will draw on Bourdieu's capital theory to explore how community cohesion is socially constructed through power relationships in fields (localities) with both people who are born and raised in the locality and in-migrants. Geographical, economic and cultural factors are likely to result in differences in people's financial, social, cultural and symbolic capital. This theoretical elaboration will draw upon semi-structured interviews in a Scottish rural locality (to be carried out summer 2006).