

# [Policy on cultural diversity case study example](https://assignbuster.com/policy-on-cultural-diversity-case-study-example/)

[Parts of the World](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/parts-of-the-world/), [European Union](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/parts-of-the-world/european-union/)

\n[toc title="Table of Contents"]\n

\n \t

1. [Need for cultural diversity policies](#need-for-cultural-diversity-policies) \n \t
2. [Conclusion](#conclusion) \n \t
3. [References](#references) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

In today’s global community, the issue of cultural diversity is something that all countries (and all social units within every country) would have to deal with. Cultural diversity refers to almost anything that pertains to differences in people’s ethical codes, ethnicity, heritage, identities, language, philosophy, practices, religious beliefs, traditions, among many other things. Such differences need to be managed so people can avoid any miscommunications and misunderstandings. In addition, individual rights need to be protected at the same time as the community’s welfare should be protected. (UNESCO, 2009, pp. 6–8)
UNESCO identifies four key areas of concern about cultural diversity that need to be managed well. These are: “ the future of languages, education, communication and cultural content, and creativity and the marketplace”. Another issue that needs addressing is the matter of cultural erosion and preservation. (UNESCO, 2009, p. 11)
UNESCO has thus come out with a guide for all member countries to follow: Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. Leaders will have to manage the relationships of people within their country and manage how the country as a nation relates to other cultures in the world. Ultimately, any policy related on managing cultural diversity should lead to peace, harmony and economic growth while protecting the rights of every individual in the community. (UNESCO 2001)
Any country or community would have written or unwritten rules on how to manage cultural diversity. Those rules may be continually be evolving. Policies after all are processes at the same time responding to the needs of the community as it develops. Cultural diversity can lead to disorder. Policies—and their implementation through various laws—are thus needed to maintain order in the community. (Atlas) People should follow certain norms of behavior. They can exercise their freedoms and rights without infringing on others’ freedoms and rights. There should be some balance between the two. As UNESCO (2009) has mentioned, policies should guide the development of the four key areas of cultural diversity as mentioned earlier.

## Need for cultural diversity policies

A cultural diversity policy can take any of two courses: one is in the direction of homogeneity; the other, in the direction of heterogeneity. Given the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2009), the direction of homogeneity mean the assimilation of many different cultures of into one. It does not mean the oppression of the people to abandon their native culture and adapt to a new one. Inevitably, the government will have to impose certain things to ensure a cultural unity in spite of the diversity. In the US, foremost among this is the English language—one unifying factor of the US culture and identity. Every citizen of the country of whatever cultural background should have to adapt to this. That is the first step for anyone to become a true member of the country. Meanwhile, the government should exercise as much tolerance as possible to different cultural groups provided of course that the tolerated practices do not violate other people’s rights in general. As UNESCO (2009) stated: “ Cultures are not self-enclosed or static entities” (p. 9).
American culture is an accumulation, assimilation and homogenizing of many cultures and identities into one. That is the history of the US. That is what led to the US culture into what it is today. It is the result of both written and unwritten policies. Education played a key role in this. Through education, the unacceptable aspects of foreign culture were sifted out; while the positive ones were accepted. That has been the process all along that is the process that should be followed into the future. (Center for Arts and Culture) After all, in spite of the diversity, US culture is one integrated, homogeneous whole.
The homogeneity of the US culture can be better understood when tries to see how cultural diversity policies in the European Union (EU) is being attempted. Here, it is clearly an attempt to retain the heterogeneity of its culture. The EU is after all a union of not just countries with long histories and distinct cultures but actually of civilizations. Thus the effort is more related to the preservation of cultures within borders and tolerance of others that enter those borders. (European Union, 2010)
The extent of how such tolerance can be limited may be seen in how France approached the matter of Muslim women wearing veils in public places. The French government claims that it disallowed such a cultural practice for security reasons. (Goldman, 2011) However, some analysts and Muslim women groups think otherwise. They believe it is an attempt at preserving French culture and heritage while limiting the rights of certain cultural groups. (Kramer, 2004) At the level of international relations, this issue seems to be a matter of reciprocity. The question of why Western countries cannot impose such laws on Muslim women when Muslim countries implicitly impose similar laws on Western or non-Muslim women arises. (Siddiqui, 2012 and British Embassy, 2012)
While there is a general agreement among nations of what to uphold with matters regarding cultural diversity policy (UNESCO, 2001), local laws protecting local culture and economy would still prevail over it as long as there are no human rights abuses. Almost all countries—including the US—can take certain actions, even those that would individual rights, to protect the safety of its citizens and its sovereignty.

## Conclusion

For US culture to develop, it must continue to pursue policies that would encourage assimilation and homogenization of its cultural diversity. Unlike countries, it does not have a very long tradition of a singular culture prevailing in the country. On the contrary, its present culture was built on the accumulation and integration of all the different cultures and influences that came into it. As to what color and shape the US culture will take on in the future, one may not really be able to say.

## References

Association of International Educators [NAFSA] and Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange [AIECA] (2007, October). An international education policy for US leadership, competitiveness, and security leadership, competitiveness, and security. NAFSA. Association of International Educators. Retrieved on 22 Dec 2012 from
Atlas, Caron. Cultural policy: What is it, who makes it, why does it matter? New York Foundation for the Arts. Retrieved cMarch 2012 from
British Embassy in Riyadh (2012). Living in Saudi Arabia. UK in Saudi Arabia. Retrieved on 22 Dec 2012 from
European Union (2010, Dec). United in diversity: Cultural policy in the European Union. EUinsight. European Union. Retrieved on 22 Dec 2012 from
Goldman, Russel (2011, April 11). Muslim women arrested for defying France’s ban on wearing veils. ABC News. Retrieved on 22 Dec 2012 from
Kramer, Jane (2004, Nov 22). Taking the veil: How France’s public schools became the battleground in a culture war. The New Yorker. Retrieved on 22 Dec 2012 from
Siddiqui, Muna (2012, May 30). Shafilea Ahmed and the issue of how a Pakistani woman should dress. The Express Tribune. Retrieved on 22 Dec 2012 from
UNESCO (2001, Nov 2). Universal declaration on cultural diversity. Legal instruments. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Retrieved on 22 Dec 2012 from
UNESCO (2009). UNSECO world report: Investing in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue (PDF). United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Retrieved on 22 Dec 2012 from
Wiley, David (2007, Aug 22). Rome halts mosque conversion work. BBC News. Retrieved on 22 Dec 2012 from