

# Political philosophy and national integration

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1. Central Quotation “ National integration is partly a by-product of other social and economic developments, partly the result of deliberate government policies.” (Birch, 36)

2. Argument In this text Birch gives a historical overview of national integration process. He discusses different attitudes towards assimilation of minorities that existed in North America and Europe. Before 1960s that it was current believe that national integration could be challenged by the existence of different ethnic groups within the borders of the country and assimilation was desirable. After 1960 however, this attitudes has changed in favour of social pluralism. Birch also presents patterns, which describes common practices of national integration.

3. Question The question raised in this text is “ Whether the process of national integration must be accompanied by wholly or partial assimilation of minorities?” Birch describes both negative and positive effects, which social, economic and political integration of minor ethnic and cultural groups could have on building a sense of nationhood. His argumentation is based on contradictory assertions. One argument is in favour of social homogeneity i. e. stresses the importance of common language and feeling of unity among people for development of democratic institutions. In the same time author mention several scientific works that question the assumption that further integration is required for establishment of representative democracy.

4. Experiential Connection Even thou I grew up in Sweden, I have a lot of friends with different ethnic origin who lives there, mostly 1st or 2nd generation immigrants. All of them had a chance, upon their own will to learn Swedish free of charge as soon as they arrived. That was the part of <https://assignbuster.com/political-philosophy-and-national-integration/>

integration programme established by government in order to facilitate immigration process. That makes it easier for immigrants to interact with local citizens, get the jobs and thus contribute to social, political and economic development of the country.

5. Textual Connection Birch's argumentation is quite similar to Will Kymlicka's argument in the text "Western political theory and ethnic relations in eastern Europe". As well as Birch, Kymlicka stresses that attitudes toward ethnic minorities among democratic liberals in West had changed since 1960 and multiculturalism become more acceptable (Kymlicka, s. 33). Kymlicka focuses on different ethnic groups and describes assimilation attempts made by governments towards these groups. He also emphasizes the importance of different governmental policies that determines integration process (Kymlicka, s. 42).

6. Implications This text analyses the different ways in which minor groups can be merged into national societies and poses the question of whether national integration is a positive or a negative process. This question must be answered by citizens and representative governments in every country before there will be taken any further action toward national integration or disintegration. I think government have to consider prior experience of integration of minorities in different countries to choose appropriated policies for the particular county. This can be done throughout case studies and with help of patterns of integration drawn up by theorists and scientists.