

2 Is It Really Ethnic Voting? Ethnic Minorities in Local Elections in Brussels¹

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Given the important numbers of non-European Union (EU) foreigners who have acquired Belgian citizenship over the last two decades, combined with demographic developments in the major cities, ethnic minorities have become a significant electoral group. This is especially the case in Brussels, the capital of Belgium and of the EU. In the Brussels-Capital Region, 26 per cent of the population is non-Belgian. According to our estimates, about 42 per cent of the population (of 1.1 million inhabitants) is of foreign descent.² It is interesting that newcomers of EU origin (who make up half of the foreign population of Brussels) are almost invisible in local politics, whereas immigrants of non-EU origin have recently acquired considerable political clout.

Numerous studies have been undertaken during the last couple of years in Belgium on the link between immigrant associational life and political participation (Jacobs, Phalet, and Swyngedouw 2004; Bousetta, Gsir, and Jacobs 2005) and on the profiles of politicians of immigrant origin (Jacobs et al. 2006), but not yet on party choice or voting patterns among ethnic-minority groups. In this chapter, we present an analysis of voting patterns of ethnic-minority groups in Belgium, making use of exit poll data from the local elections for three municipalities in the Brussels-Capital Region. It investigates whether voters of non-EU immigrant origin have a particular voting pattern. It also examines the issue of ethnic voting. It thus evaluates whether the same patterns can be found in Belgium as those that have been observed in the neighbouring country, the Netherlands (see Chapter 1). This has often been assumed based on scant comparisons, but they can now be empirically assessed for the first time. The comparison with the Netherlands is interesting because that country has a comparable immigration history, political structure, and electoral system.

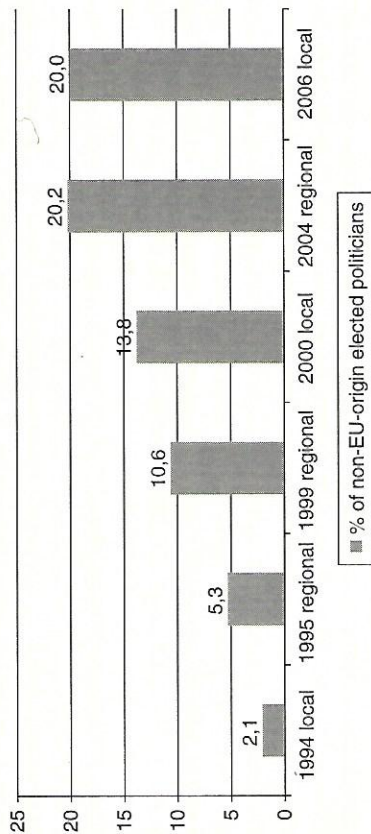
The broader relevance of the outcome of this Belgian case study for political science theory is situated at the intersection of two debates. First, it contributes to the debate on the voting behaviour of immigrant populations. We know that socio-economic status (SES) is a primary determinant of individual political participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995), and it is readily assumed that this applies equally to ethnic-minority group members. Leighley (2001), however, stressed that contextual characteristics such as candidate and group mobilization are equally important in understanding ethnic-minority political participation. Indeed, individuals of lower social status rely on collective mobilization more heavily than individuals of higher social status. Mobilization by immigrants around their ethnicity as a group characteristic is therefore to be expected as a cost-reduction strategy (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978).

Second, this case study contributes to the debate about the impact of political-opportunity structure on immigrant mobilization. Koopmans et al. (2005) have shown that political-opportunity structures – including discursive-opportunity structures stemming from citizenship models and immigration regimes – shape claims of immigrants, their public representations, and even their mobilization strategies. Given the dominance of the French-inspired republican-assimilationist model in Brussels (Bousetta, Gsir, and Jacobs 2005), in which political mobilization along ethnic lines is largely criticized as leading to segregation and posing a threat to social cohesion, ethnic electoral mobilization is not actively stimulated, but at best condoned. The situation is quite different in urban areas of the Netherlands, where, as discussed in the preceding chapter, immigrant political mobilization has – at least until the end of the 1990s – been actively applauded and stimulated. In line with the literature on discursive- and political-opportunity structures, one can expect that ethnic voting and ethnic mobilization, over and beyond class mobilization, will be less important in the Brussels case than in the Dutch case.

The Advance of Immigrant-Origin Politicians

As a result of their demographic weight, the increased attention focused on the immigrant-origin electorate, and the preferential voting system used in Belgian elections, immigrant politicians of non-EU origin are becoming more and more successful. Since the mid-1990s, the immigrant-origin population (that is, coming from outside the current EU) has been rapidly acquiring Belgian state citizenship (and thus voting rights on all levels) and has been paid increasing attention by political parties in

Figure 2.1. Elected Politicians of Non-EU Origin in Local and Regional Elections in the Brussels-Capital Region



Brussels. In neighbourhoods with high concentrations of immigrants – which tend to overlap with the less desirable parts of the city – parties have waged very lively and intense campaigns. It is interesting that the processes of co-opting immigrant-origin politicians and targeting immigrant voters have taken place in a discursive context, which have, at the same time, condemned *le communautarisme*³ and depicted ethnic voting as a phenomenon to be avoided (Bousetta, Gsir, and Jacobs 2005).

Figure 2.1 above depicts the steady increase in the percentage of elected politicians of non-EU origin in the local and regional assemblies in the Brussels-Capital Region from 1994 to 2006. The October 2000 elections constituted a landmark in the political participation of immigrant-origin citizens, at least in the Brussels-Capital Region, and there was a remarkable increase in elected Belgian politicians of non-EU origin (Jacobs, Martiniello, and Rea 2002). In the 1994 local elections, of 650 elected councillors, a relatively small number (14) were of non-EU origin (or 2.1 per cent). In the 2000 local elections, however, that number rose to 90 (of 653 elected councillors); most were of Maghreb origin (Jacobs, Martiniello, and Rea 2002). This amounts to a representation rate of 13.8 per cent.

Although the 2000 elections were a landmark in the political participation of immigrant-origin citizens, the results of the regional elections in Brussels in the second half of the 1990s had already signalled the growing importance of immigrant-origin politicians at the local level. Regional elections are now held every five years, but they used to coincide with federal elections, which are held every four years. In the regional elections of 1995, four of the 75 candidates elected to Parliament (or 5.3 per cent) were

of foreign origin (three from Morocco and one from Tunisia). After the 1999 regional elections, no less than eight members of Parliament (MPs) were of foreign origin (or 10.6 per cent). All were actually of Belgian-Maghreb origin (seven from Morocco and one from Tunisia).

In the 2004 regional elections, Belgians of non-EU immigrant background once again played a prominent role in electoral campaigns and had some considerable electoral success. Of the 72 francophones elected to the Brussels Parliament, 17 were of non-EU origin. Among them, 12 were of Moroccan origin, two of Turkish origin, one of Tunisian origin, one of Congolese origin, and one of Guinean origin. Of the 17 Flemish members elected, one was of Moroccan origin. In total, 20.2 per cent of the 89 MPs were of non-EU immigrant origin.

In addition, the growing success of politicians of immigrant origin translated into executive power. On the local level, following the 2000 local elections, 12 politicians of immigrant origin (Moroccan, Turkish, and Congolese) became councillors. In 2004, a francophone politician of Turkish origin (Mr Emir Kir) was appointed secretary of state in the Brussels government. At the same time, a woman from Brussels of Moroccan origin (Mrs Fadila Laanan) was appointed minister of French culture, youth and public broadcasting in the government of the French Community of Belgium, while a Brussels politician of Congolese origin was appointed secretary of state for family affairs at the federal level (Mrs Gisèle Mandaila).⁴

In the October 2006 municipal elections, the remarkable success of immigrant-origin politicians – mainly Moroccan – was confirmed in Brussels. Of the 663 local councillors elected, 138 (20 per cent) were of foreign origin, most of whom were of Moroccan descent, followed by politicians of Turkish and Congolese origin. These elections introduced a change in the electoral law, allowing non-Belgians of non-EU origin to cast their vote for the first time (although they could not stand as a candidate). However, we assume that this enfranchisement of non-Belgians was not the main explanatory factor in the ongoing success of immigrant-origin politicians. Of the 42,298 potential voters among “third-country nationals” (i.e., foreigners who were not EU citizens), only 6,622 registered as voters, thus representing only 1.12 per cent of the total electorate.

Ethnic Minorities as a New Electoral Force?

During the debates about the local enfranchisement of non-nationals in Belgium, one recurring topic was which political parties would reap the greatest benefit. It was widely assumed that these would be the left-wing

parties, mainly the Socialist Party (PS) and Ecolo (*écologiste*, or environmentalist). Given the increasing demographic – and hence electoral – importance of Belgians of foreign origin in the major cities, almost all parties were already vying for candidates of immigrant background long before third-country nationals were enfranchised. They had apparently all – at least on the francophone side – made the assessment that they could gain from the increase in immigrant-origin voters. For example, by examining the profiles of candidates running in the 2004 regional elections and 2006 local elections in Brussels, one can see a pattern emerging: political parties were carving out a particular ethnic niche for themselves (Jacobs et al. 2006).

Today, the PS clearly has the greatest diversity, even outperforming the environmentalist party, which was the first to put immigrant-origin politicians into prominent positions; the Christian Democratic Party (CDH) is trying to play catch-up and seems to be increasingly focusing on the sub-Saharan African community. The Mouvement réformateur (MR), a francophone right-liberal party, has invested less in attracting immigrant-origin candidates, but it too has competed for immigrant voters. Undoubtedly, this competition explains some of the remarkable success – in terms of descriptive representation – of ethnic-minority politicians in Brussels. The reader needs to keep in mind that this inclusion of immigrant-origin politicians has taken place in a discursive context, one in which all political parties have – rather hypocritically – presented political mobilization on an ethnic ticket as something undesirable. Ethnic-minority voters are supposedly just ordinary voters, just as there is nothing particular about ethnic-minority candidates.

In the remainder of this chapter, we focus on the voting behaviour of voters of non-EU immigrant origin in three municipalities in Brussels during the October 2006 local elections. We want to assess whether ethnic minorities vote for a particular party, but, what is more important, we want to verify to what extent ethnic origin as such is an explanatory variable for voting behaviour. Indeed, voters of immigrant origin might very well be just ordinary voters. Perhaps ethnic origin or migration history has no particular, additional explanatory importance once we take into account structural socio-demographic factors in party choice, such as gender, level of education, and SES. Furthermore, we want to assess to what extent ethnic voting takes place – by which we mean preferential voting for immigrant candidates of the same ethnic origin. To answer these questions, we will make use of exit poll data gathered by the Centre d'étude de la vie politique (CEVIPOL) of the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) during these elections.

The CEVIPOL Exit Polls in the 2006 Local Elections

On 8 October 2006, local election day in Belgium, CEVIPOL-ULB organized exit polls in three municipalities of the Brussels-Capital Region: Forest, Schaerbeek, and Molenbeek. During the entire day, voters were polled at random at several polling stations after casting their vote. In a short questionnaire, the CEVIPOL team asked voters about their voting behaviour, a limited number of socio-demographic questions, and a small set of questions on political topics. In total, 533 voters participated in Forest, 427 in Molenbeek, and 592 in Schaerbeek.⁵

Schaerbeek is a municipality with a large, visible Turkish and Moroccan community, whereas Molenbeek is a municipality with a large, visible Moroccan community. Forest has a more mixed ethnic composition (although with an important Moroccan presence) and a larger Belgian population without immigrant background. Taken together, these three municipalities are representative of the northwestern part of the Brussels-Capital Region (often called the Lower Town as it is situated mainly down the slope from the city centre), in which mainly working-class and middle-class neighbourhoods are located and where most non-EU-origin immigrants live.⁶ It cannot be claimed that our three municipalities are representative of the entire Brussels-Capital Region, but they do give a good assessment of the electoral patterns in the Lower Town.

We cannot pool the data for the three municipalities to analyse party choice because the main francophone political parties did not participate independently, or in the same combinations, in the three local elections. In Forest, for example, both the MR and the CDH presented a joint list of candidates headed by the incumbent mayor, while they participated separately in Schaerbeek. Moreover, in Molenbeek, the CDH presented a joint list of candidates headed by the incumbent mayor (a member of the PS).

However, our analysis does focus attention on parties linked to one of the four main political positions in the francophone political landscape: the environmentalists, the PS, the MR, and the CDH. Their lists of candidates often (but not always) included politicians from “sister” Flemish parties. After explaining patterns in voting behaviour, we will group all other – often small – parties together for each municipality.

Party Choice by Ethnic Minority

In each of the municipalities, over 90 per cent of the polled individuals have Belgian citizenship (which corresponds to their representation

in the overall electorate). Given the small absolute numbers of non-Belgians who were polled, we refrain from discussing in detail the party preferences of non-Belgian voters compared to those of Belgians. We simply note that there is no statistically significant relationship between citizenship type (EU, non-EU, or Belgian) and party preference.

We can, however, examine the voting behaviour of people of foreign origin (but often holding Belgian citizenship) as their numbers are sufficiently large in our samples. This fact in itself attests to the importance of ethnic diversity in the electorate in the three Brussels municipalities under study. We used the citizenship of the mother (at her time of birth) as a proxy for the foreign origin of the voters. Using this indicator, we can identify both the first generation and the second generation of immigrants in our sample.⁷

In the Schaerbeek sample, 56.2 per cent of voters had a Belgian mother, 12.6 per cent had a Moroccan mother (74 cases), and 10.7 per cent had a Turkish mother (63 cases). In the Forest sample, 62.6 per cent of voters had a Belgian mother, 14.7 per cent had a Moroccan mother (78 cases), 3.4 per cent had a French mother (18 cases), and 3 per cent had a Congolese mother (16 cases). In the Molenbeek sample, 51.8 per cent had a Belgian mother, 21.9 per cent had a Moroccan mother (93 cases), and 5.4 per cent had a Congolese mother (23 cases). In the three municipalities, no other origins among the electorate passed the 3 per cent mark. In the discussion that follows, we opt to look at the results only for those groups that have at least 30 cases, and we group the results for the rest into two generic categories (EU origin and non-EU origin).

We see in Table 2.1 below for Schaerbeek that among Belgian voters without immigrant background, the mayoral list (fielded by the MR) was the most popular, followed by the environmentalist party. The MR scores far lower among voters of EU origin, but still achieves the best score. Strikingly, the PS is the leading party among voters of Moroccan origin, while the MR comes a close second. The PS scores equally well among those of Turkish origin, but the MR scores even higher. Among voters of other non-EU origins, the MR is still the largest party, followed closely by the PS. The overall conclusion for Schaerbeek is that ethnic-majority and ethnic-minority groups have somewhat different voting patterns. Ethnic-minority groups tend to support the PS far more than the ethnic-majority group does. The mayoral list scores well in all ethnic groups but highest among Belgians without a migration history and among Turks. Clearly, voters in Schaerbeek of immigrant origin do not vote overwhelmingly for the left.

Table 2.1. Party Preferences According to Origin in Schaerbeek (%)

	Belgian (N = 327)	EU (N = 72)	Moroccan (N = 73)	Turkish (N = 67)	Other non-EU (N = 48)
PS	11.6	15.3	38.4	36.1	29.2
Ecolo	25.1	30.6	5.5	3.3	14.6
CDH	8.0	15.3	17.8	9.8	14.6
Mayoral list (MR)	46.2	34.7	35.6	47.5	31.2
Other parties or void	9.2	4.2	2.7	3.3	10.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Chi-square: 79.461; df = 16; $p < 0.001$; Cramer's V: 0.185 (N = 587 valid cases)

Table 2.2. Party Preferences According to Origin in Forest (%)

	Belgian (N = 324)	EU (N = 87)	Moroccan (N = 78)	Other non-EU (N = 32)
PS	25	26.4	42.3	43.8
Ecolo	28.7	25.3	6.4	15.6
Mayoral list (MR-CDH)	36.4	39.1	33.3	31.2
Other parties or void	9.9	9.2	17.9	9.4
Total	100	100	100	100

Chi-square: 30.376; df = 12; $p < 0.001$; Cramer's V: 0.139 (N = 522 valid cases)

Table 2.2 above gives the results for Forest. We observe that the mayoral list (a coalition between the MR and the CDH) scores well in all groups. The PS achieves better scores among voters of Moroccan origin and voters of non-EU origin than among voters of the ethnic-majority group and voters of EU origin. We can once again conclude that different ethnic groups have somewhat different voting behaviour. Voters of immigrant origin do not vote solely for the left; an important proportion supports the centre-right list of the incumbent mayor. Compared to the situation in Schaerbeek, the PS needs to lean less heavily on the support of ethnic-minority voters for its overall score, although that support remains crucial.

Table 2.3 below presents the results for Molenbeek, where there seems to be a rather large variation in voting patterns across groups. The mayoral list (the PS in coalition with the CDH) receives overwhelming support from non-EU-origin voters, notably those of Moroccan origin. Support is much weaker among Belgians without a migration background, who tend to support the MR; our exit poll finds that all

Table 2.4. Multinomial Logistic Model for Voting Behaviour during the 2006 Local Elections

	L ²	Df	Significance	L ² /df
Schaerbeek				
Gender	3.64	4	0.46	0.90
Education	37.01	12	< 0.001	3.08
SES	39.54	20	0.01	1.98
Origin (nationality of mother)	67.19	16	< 0.001	4.20
Likelihood ratio chi-square (L ²) = 169,007; df = 52; p < 0.001				
Forest				
Gender	1.90	3	0.59	0.63
Education	19.48	9	0.02	2.16
SES	29.91	15	0.01	1.99
Origin (nationality of mother)	20.32	9	0.02	2.26
Likelihood ratio chi-square (L ²) = 85,490; df = 36; p < 0.001				
Molenbeek				
Gender	2.57	3	0.46	0.86
Education	8.97	9	0.44	1.00
SES	14.29	15	0.50	0.95
Origin (nationality of mother)	70.44	9	< 0.001	7.83
Likelihood ratio chi-square (L ²) = 122,915; df = 36; p < 0.001				

Table 2.5. Net Effects of Socio-demographic Variables on Voting Behaviour in Schaerbeek

	PS	Ecolo	CDH	Mayoral List (MR)	Other or void
Average score (%)	19.6	20.1	10.9	42.1	7.3
Origin (significant)					
Belgian mother	-6.21	+5.03	-2.57	+1.11	+2.64
EU mother	-3.58	+12.76	-4.97	-3.98	-0.23
Non-EU mother	+10.66	-5.26	+8.69	-12.14	-1.94
Moroccan mother	+14.51	-15.28	+7.96	-1.48	-5.72
Turkish mother	+9.08	-16.82	+0.99	+12.18	-5.43
N = 577					

Note: Multinomial logistic regression analyses controlled for gender, level of education, and employment and professional status.

Table 2.6. Net Effects of Socio-demographic Variables on Voting Behaviour in Forest

	PS	Ecolo	Mayoral List (MR-CDH)	Other or void
Average score (%)	28.6	24.1	36.4	10.9
Origin (significant)				
Belgian mother	-3.21	+4.25	-0.68	-0.40
EU mother	-1.64	+2.00	+1.50	-1.86
Non-EU mother	+14.38	-6.44	-5.58	-2.36
Moroccan mother	+9.31	-17.28	+3.21	+4.76
N = 574				

Note: Multinomial logistic regression analyses controlled for gender, level of education, and employment and professional status.

education or SES. They do not, however, vote overwhelmingly for the left. The MR's list is able to attract significant support from voters of non-EU origin (as it does from Belgian voters with no immigrant background). In contrast, the PS is heavily dependent on the immigrant vote. The environmentalists seem to be unable to be an attractive option for the non-EU-immigrant voter, although it was one of the first parties to open up its lists to candidates of foreign origin. Compared to the environmentalists, the CDH has more appeal among immigrant voters.

The existence of a typical immigrant vote is confirmed in the data for Forest (see Table 2.6 above). Once again, controlling for level of education and SES, ethnic origin has a significant effect on party preference. The PS profits most from the non-EU-origin immigrant vote, while the environmentalists once again fail to attract the immigrant vote. The list of the incumbent mayor, fielded by both the MR and the CDH, holds its ground among Moroccan-origin voters (gaining 39 per cent of the votes in that category). It is noteworthy that the number of candidates of Maghreb origin was significantly higher on the list of the incumbent mayor (six candidates) than on the environmentalists' list (two candidates), a fact that might have had some impact.

The importance of the ethnic vote is, however, most remarkable in Molenbeek (see Table 2.7 below), where it takes on an entirely different form. The list of the incumbent mayor (PS and CDH) receives overwhelming support from non-EU-origin voters, particularly those of Moroccan origin (33 per cent, on top of an average of 40 per cent), when controlling for level of education and SES. In contrast, the MR has

Table 2.7. Net Effects of Socio-demographic Variables on Voting Behaviour in Molenbeek

	MR	Ecolo	Mayoral List (PS-CDH)	Other or void
Average score (%)	32.5	10.4	40.8	16.3
Origin (significant)				
<i>Belgian mother</i>	+12.47	+0.90	-17.27	+3.90
<i>EU mother</i>	+3.70	-1.15	-1.77	-0.79
<i>Non-EU mother</i>	-18.75	+3.42	+16.34	-1.00
<i>Moroccan mother</i>	-22.75	-2.95	+33.63	-7.93
<i>N = 422</i>				

Note: Multinomial logistic regression analyses controlled for gender, level of education, and employment and professional status.

severe difficulty in appealing to immigrant-origin voters (receiving a mere 10 per cent score). However, it scores quite well among voters with no immigrant background (44 per cent compared to "only" 23 per cent for the PS). The environmentalist party is able to hold ground in all groups, but has to settle for a low overall result.

In all three municipalities, immigrant origin has a significant explanatory importance over and above other socio-demographic factors such as level of education and SES. Although ethnic-minority voters display diversified voting behaviour (they potentially support all parties), they seem to be systematically over-represented among the supporters of some parties (mainly the PS) and under-represented among the supporters of others (mainly the environmentalist party). Therefore, it is clear that particular patterns of ethnic-minority voting are just as present in the Belgian case as in the Dutch case (Tillie 2000; van Heelsum and Tillie 2006), despite the unfavourable discursive-opportunity structures for ethnic mobilization in Brussels.

Another striking finding is the fact that the local context can result in quite divergent patterns. In our three municipalities, the incumbent coalition (or at least the list of the incumbent mayor) does particularly well among voters of immigrant origin. Given that we have carried out the analysis for only three municipalities, we cannot claim that this is a general effect, one that is typical of the immigrant vote. Further research that includes more municipalities (or, if the analysis were to be done for elections other than local elections, more electoral districts) would have to investigate this more closely. What we can safely conclude from our

Table 2.8. Votes for a Candidate of Foreign Origin by Birthplace of Mother (%)

	Belgium (N = 859)	EU (N = 213)	Turkey (N = 71)	Morocco (N = 240)	Other non-EU (N = 124)	Total (N = 1,507)
No	75.7	64.8	21.1	41.7	54.0	64.4
Yes	24.3	35.2	78.9	58.3	46.0	35.6

analysis, however, is that there is indeed a phenomenon of ethnic voting to be observed in the Brussels-Capital Region.

Who Votes for Ethnic-Minority Candidates?

Of all of the participants in our exit polls in all three municipalities, 35.6 per cent cast a preferential vote for an ethnic-minority candidate. As we can see in Table 2.8 above, voters both with and without an immigrant background vote for candidates of foreign origin. It would therefore be a mistake to assume that candidates with a foreign background are only or mainly elected owing to the support of voters who are equally of foreign descent. Of the 537 voters who reported casting a preferential vote for an immigrant-origin candidate, 209 have no immigrant background (38.9 per cent) themselves. Nevertheless, it is true that voters who are of immigrant origin vote significantly more often for a candidate of foreign origin than voters with no immigrant background.⁸

In Table 2.9 below, we present the results of a logistic regression model in which we try to predict who votes for a candidate of foreign origin. Level of education has no significant effect; neither has SES. Younger-generation (18 to 34 years old) and middle-aged (34 to 54) voters are more than twice as likely to cast a preferential vote for a candidate of foreign origin compared to the older generation (55 and older). Controlling for the effect of other variables, those who cast a preferential vote for a female candidate are almost four times as likely to vote equally for a candidate of foreign origin compared to someone who did not vote for a woman. This seems to show that there is a group of voters who deliberately cast a "symbolic" vote with which they want to show that diversity in elected bodies is important (Swyngedouw and Jacobs 2006). Controlling for the other variables in the model, people of foreign origin are still significantly more likely to cast a preferential vote for a candidate of foreign origin than people with no immigrant background. People with a Moroccan mother are 4.4 times more likely, and

financial assistance in organizing the exit polls. We also thank *Acta Politica* for permission to reprint.

- 2 There are currently no official ethnic statistics available in Belgium, only figures distinguishing nationals and non-nationals (see Jacobs and Rea 2009).
- 3 In French public discourse, *le communautarisme* refers to the valorization of cultural difference and the process of mobilizing around an ethnic identity. It has a negative connotation among French political elites.
- 4 We will not discuss the presence of immigrant-origin politicians at the federal level, but it is worth mentioning that several MPs of Moroccan and Turkish origin have sat in both the federal and the European parliaments since 1999.
- 5 The results of the exit polls corresponded fairly well to the official voting results. These results are not presented; see the original article for more information (referred to in note 1 above). Nevertheless, the exit poll results do contain a bias in that voters for extreme-right-wing parties are under-represented, whereas environmentalist voters are over-represented. Voters for small Flemish parties also tend to be under-represented. It is impossible to assess to what extent our samples correspond to the actual ethnic composition of the three municipalities as no census or other official population data on ethnicity is publicly available in Belgium (see Jacobs and Rea 2009). However, the characteristics of our samples correspond to what we might expect based on local knowledge.
- 6 We did not organize an exit poll in the southeastern part of the Brussels-Capital Region (often called the Upper Town as it is situated mainly up the slope from the city centre), where mostly upper-class neighbourhoods are located and non-EU-origin immigrants are under-represented.
- 7 There is a large overlap between the citizenship of the mother and the citizenship of the father, and we therefore opted to limit our attention to the citizenship of the mother. Cramer's V for Schaarbeek: 0.800 ($p < 0.001$), for Forest 0.831 ($p < 0.001$), and for Molenbeek 0.869 ($p < 0.001$).
- 8 Cramer's V: 0.331 ($p < 0.001$).

3 British Citizens like Any Others? Ethnic Minorities and Elections in the United Kingdom

SHAMIT SAGGAR

The United Kingdom, in common with many other Western democracies, has witnessed significant immigration during the past half-century. The bulk of this migration was linked to post-war reconstruction and economic labour shortages, attracting a swell of former Commonwealth workers from South Asian, African, and Caribbean sources, in particular. Further chain migration and family reunification, and significant internal demographic growth, have had a significant impact on the ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity of the United Kingdom. Whereas countries such as Canada have followed a model that focuses on *visible minorities* (see Chapter 8), in the United Kingdom the nearest equivalent has been a long-standing policy, media, and political concentration on *ethnic minorities*. Broadly speaking, this refers to immigrants and their offspring from New Commonwealth sources; and from the perspective of data enumeration, the term is an umbrella descriptor of five key, self-defined ethnic categories: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, black African, and black Caribbean.¹ These ethnic minorities have, in turn, been the subject of considerable debate over race and racialization of British society in a manner comparable to familiar racialization arguments in the United States. Table 3.1 below effectively tracks population change among these ethnic-minority groups going back two decades. The proportion of ethnic minorities in the United Kingdom increased from 8.8 per cent to 14.1 per cent in 10 years, a 60 per cent increase.

These ethnic minorities are, on average, more likely to experience social and economic disadvantage. Their educational qualifications and skills tend to deliver fewer outcomes in labour markets; their residential housing patterns tend to be in less affluent places associated with poorer public services and economic infrastructure; their health experiences