

Summary of the study's findings

Integration: Mixed performance record for Europe's number one immigration country

Germany is currently home to some 15 million immigrants and their offspring born in the country. What this means is that close to 20 percent of the population has what is known as a migration background, and it makes Germany the European nation with the largest migrant population. Since migrants tend to have more children than the native population, their percentage share of the population will continue to grow – and would continue to grow even without any further immigration. There is widespread popular and political concern in Germany that a large share of the migrants living there are insufficiently integrated – a concern borne out by the present study. **Immigrants tend on average to be more poorly educated and more frequently unemployed and to participate less in public life than the native population.**

A number of studies have been published on immigration problems, but also on success stories encountered in the field of immigration, although most such studies focus on the group of foreigners in Germany, i.e. on the seven million persons living in Germany without German citizenship. At present, however, Germany has an equally large group of migrants with German citizenship – a development that has not necessarily spelled the end of this group's integration problems. The data recently generated by the German microcensus, an annual sample survey that covers one percent of all households in the country and since 2005 has elicited the national background of respondents, make it possible to come up with specific statements on the socioeconomic characteristics of the overall group of migrants.

The Berlin Institute for Population and Development has, for the first time, analysed these data for eight individual migrant groups, since migrants from different countries of origin and waves of immigration are known to have found themselves faced with very different starting conditions in Germany: Whether these persons have come as guest workers or asylum seekers, as ethnic German immigrants (so-called Aussiedler) or as highly qualified economic migrants, is a crucial factor involved in defining their social status and in part their level of education. These conditions in turn have massive effects on the quality of integration.

In addition to the analysis based on groups of origin, integration successes were also broken down regionally – for individual federal states and larger municipalities – with a view to learning more about the impacts that regional economic and political structures have on integration.

The roughly four million ethnic German immigrants in Germany – most of them from countries of the former Soviet Union – **are by far the largest group of persons with migration background living there.** Germany's second-largest migrant group is made up of ethnic Turks, a community numbering some three million persons, and one that is very often perceived publicly as Germany's largest non-native population group. These are followed by migrant

groups stemming from the other EU-25 countries (without the southern European nations that have supplied many of Germany's guest workers), from southern Europe (Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain), from the former Yugoslavia, from the Far East and the Middle East, and, finally, from Africa, the smallest of the groups analysed.

The demographically youngest migrant groups found in Germany are those with Turkish and African backgrounds – the groups with the highest birth rates. In addition, most African immigrants are relatively young when they reach Germany. Unlike the other migrant groups under consideration, these two groups continue to grow solely on the basis of their high fertility rates, while the native population has been shrinking for decades now. **Roughly one half of the 2.8 million ethnic Turks presently living in Germany were born in the country** – a percentage higher than that reported for any other group. Viewed in terms of this criterion, the group of ethnic Turks bears the closest resemblance to the native population.

With a view to analyzing and comparing the specific integration situations of the eight migrant groups concerned, the Berlin Institute for Population and Development has developed, on the basis of microcensus data, an Integration Measurement Index (IMI). Based on 20 indicators designed to measure the performance of the eight groups when it comes to assimilation, education, working life, and social security, the IMI describes the situation of migrants as compared with the majority German population. Another factor given consideration was how the integration situation of persons with migration background born in Germany develops in relation to that of persons who have themselves immigrated to the country. In the present context, successful integration means that the living conditions of people with migration background grow more and more similar to those enjoyed by the native German population, in particular as regards equal opportunities and participation on equal terms.

It is origin that decides on the success in integration

Generally speaking, each group contains of a broad spectrum of well- to poorly integrated persons. However, both median values and distribution vary sharply, with some groups tending to show better results for integration and others lagging far behind.

The group found to be best integrated is – unsurprisingly – that made up of persons from other EU-25 countries (without southern Europe). Most of these people are members of a Europe-wide group of elite migrants who are very well educated – indeed often better than the average native population – and have no trouble finding jobs.

Another group with good integration results – a fact that serves in part to disprove a perception widely held in Germany – is the group of ethnic German immigrants. Little was known about this group because its members are entitled to immediate German citizenship and have thus been impossible to identify using statistical methods. The present study is the first to investigate these persons as a group. As a rule, ethnic Germans tend to have relatively good educational levels when they come to Germany. They have little trouble finding jobs in

the labour market, and a good number of factors indicate that they actively seek integration into German society. To cite an example, the generation of ethnic Germans with migration background born in Germany clearly outperforms its parental generation in every relevant respect.

The group with southern European migration background, which tends to be made up of former guest workers and their offspring, continues to show, on average, low educational qualification levels. The – relatively small, and better-educated – subgroup of ethnic Spaniards constitutes the only exception in this group. But despite this deficit, the southern Europeans have found an economic and social niche of their own in Germany – their employment figures are good, and today they no longer have to contend with reservations on the part of the native population. Another reason why the integration results of migrants from southern European countries have improved is that a good number of students and highly qualified persons from these countries, and in particular from Spain, continue to come to Germany in connection with normal internal European migration.

The migrant groups from the Middle and Far East tend to be very mixed. One reason for this must be seen in the different conditions under which these persons immigrate to Germany. Some come as education migrants or highly qualified job seekers, others as asylum seekers. Their ranks include both highly qualified and low-skilled persons, and their integration performance tends to differ accordingly. On the whole, though, these migrants achieve better results in terms of education than in the labour market.

Major to alarming integration deficits have been observed for the groups with migration background from the former Yugoslavia, Africa, and Turkey. Measured in terms of nearly all criteria, these persons tend to be far removed from any equal participation in the life of German society. While some migrants with a Yugoslavian background have come to Germany as guest workers, others have come as refugees fleeing civil conflict and turmoil in their home region. In other words, their starting conditions have been difficult from the very outset. As in the case of the migrant groups from the Far and Middle East, the members of the heterogeneous African group tend to include both highly qualified and low-skilled persons. However, since even the better-qualified members of this group tend to have finding employment – in part because their educational qualifications are not recognised, in part because they are not permitted to work as asylum seekers, in part because of prejudices in society – they often find themselves faced with additional obstacles to integration.

Migrants with a Turkish background tend by far to be the most poorly integrated group in Germany. While most ethnic Turkish migrants have long lived in Germany, their origins, often underdeveloped areas in eastern Turkey, continue to work against them: as former guest workers, they have often come to Germany without any formal education or training, and even the younger generation appears to lack the educational motivation it would need for successful integration. While ethnic Turks born in Germany tend twice as often as direct immigrants to have earned an *Abitur* – the school diploma needed to attend an institution of

higher learning in Germany – this seemingly promising result is 50 percent lower than the average figure reported for native Germans. The high rate of unemployment reported for the immigrant generation continues to be observed for the younger generation growing up in Germany. One disadvantage faced by this group is its very size. The large number of Turkish migrants found in particular in German urban areas may encourage persons with a Turkish background to prefer to associate mainly with persons from the same background. This makes it difficult for newly immigrated Turkish women, who are often not employed, to learn the German language. And this in turn deprives their children of an important precondition for successful integration. Another problem is that – unlike the case noted for the other groups under consideration - persons with a Turkish background are making very little headway in mixing with the majority German population: 93 percent of persons with a Turkish background who marry in Germany select a partner with the same background. The consequence is the emergence of parallel societies, a development highly uncondusive to integration.

One positive factor that should be noted here is that nearly all groups of persons with migration background born in Germany tend to outperform their parents in close to all areas, with the groups of ethnic Germans and southeastern European migrants showing the most progress. In several decades the generations following them are likely to have assimilated in large measure to the culture and society they find in Germany. Persons with a Far East background born in Germany also tend to improve on the relatively good educational levels of their parents. This, though, gives all the more reason for concern that no change has been noted between the – on the whole inadequate – educational levels of the first and second generations of migrants with an African background. The progress made by persons with a Turkish migration background likewise leaves much to be desired. Even if they continue to improve their situation, it will be generations before the educational levels of these persons begin to converge with those of the native population.

Generally speaking, nationalized German citizens tend to make better progress with integration than non-Germans. An exception must be made here for persons from the EU, who are in any case free to decide where they wish to live or work in the Union. Migrants with a Turkish background tend to improve their integration performance when they are given a German passport. Cause and effect, though, remains an open question here: It is also conceivable that better-integrated persons tend to undertake greater efforts to attain German citizenship.

Regional disparities

In order to better assess the effects of regional living conditions on integration, the study furthermore compared the integration findings for the German federal states and the 20 largest cities. **The states of Hesse and Hamburg show relatively good values for integration, while the results found for the Saarland are particularly poor.** Looking at German cities, we find that Munich, Frankfurt/Main, Bonn, and Düsseldorf do quite well, while the most adverse

conditions for migrants are found in Ruhr region cities like Duisburg or Dortmund as well as in Nuremberg.

Integration tends generally to work out better in places where there is demand in the labour market for large numbers of workers. Cities and regions with a modern service economy, with banks, administrative centres, research institutions, and media, tend on the one hand to attract qualified migrants and on the other to create jobs for low-skilled workers. Conversely, integration problems tend to occur in places that are home to large numbers of low-skilled workers with migration background. The latter situation is mostly given in regions hard hit by the process of structural economic change, which has mainly led to job losses for workers from the guest worker generation. Since the better-qualified workers from this generation have often either returned home or moved to more economically strong regions, and low-skilled workers generally tend to be less mobile, problem cases involving poorly integrated migrants tend to occur on a large scale in economically weak regions.

On the other hand, though, situations involving mixed immigrant populations appear to be conducive to integration. And cities like Frankfurt, Dresden, Leipzig, or Munich, all of which are home to the major immigrant population groups typically found in Germany, show the best results for integration. On the whole, however, it is evident that the progress being made on integration is insufficient just about everywhere in Germany. Even the German states with the best results report unemployment rates for migrants more than twice as high as those noted for native Germans, and these persons are also more than two times more likely than German natives to be dependent on public social transfers. In other words, nowhere has anywhere near sufficient progress been made in bringing about an assimilation between the living conditions and lifestyles of the migrant and native populations in Germany.

What now?

Without sufficient education, integration is virtually ruled out. However, education itself need not automatically prove to be the key to successful integration either, for society continues to set up obstacles for migrants: Self-employed migrants have difficulty in asserting their right of establishment, their educational and training qualifications may not be recognised, they often lack opportunities to make up for missing qualifications. Generally speaking, given equal qualifications, migrants tend to be faced with higher rates of unemployment than native Germans. And they tend to encounter difficulties in securing jobs in line with their qualifications. In addition, job seekers without a German passport are more difficult to place in the labour market. When it comes to each and every one of these points, the majority society is called upon to engage migrants more openly with a view to making better use of their potentials for society.

In view of the fact that the migrant groups under consideration have been and continue to be faced with different starting conditions and tend to differ in terms of their educational qualifications, it would be essential to set up differentiated programmes keyed to individual

group needs. Those who come to Germany without any educational qualifications will have to start to catch up at that point. Those who have qualifications are in need of simplified access to the labour market. It may be necessary to explain more clearly to migrants with a Turkish background how important and useful a qualification may prove to be, to seek to whet the educational motivation of younger people from this group. And when it comes to groups with value systems that seek to restrict the free development of men and women, it is just as important to stimulate a discussion on gender roles.

If all migrant children, i.e. the all-important young generation now growing up in Germany, are to be assured equal opportunities despite the fact that their upbringing in an underprivileged parental home may often place them at a disadvantage, Germany will need to adopt a mandatory preschool year and free-of-charge childcare facilities staffed with educational personnel trained in remedial language instruction. In addition, educating native and migrant children together is conducive to mixing – a development needed to prevent the emergence of parallel societies.

It would also be important to give schools the form of open, all-day integration centres that, on top of normal instruction, offer project-based work as well as counselling and educational opportunities for parents and have an integration representative tasked with identifying social deficits.

One good way to facilitate identification with Germany would be to nationalize children born here on the basis of the *ius soli* practised e.g. in France or the US. The point of a policy of this kind would be to give migrants, from the very start, a signal that they are welcome and needed.

These are all measures necessary to improve the situation of people with migration background. The latter, though, should also be reasonably expected to accept these offers and to meet their obligation to actively work for integration. Germany's demographic development will mean that the country will need migrants in the future as well – indeed that it will need more and better-qualified migrants. And Germany will get these people only if it takes steps to appreciably improve the situation of migrants already living in the country – if, that is, people in Germany are both able and expected, no matter where they come from, to participate actively in shaping the country's future.

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You can order the German version of the study for a nominal fee of €6. Please send an e-mail with information about the copies needed to [info\(at\)berlin-institut.org](mailto:info(at)berlin-institut.org).