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Integration, social and ethnic



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Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Conceptual approaches to integration
- 3 The places of integration
- 4 Integration via the labour market, the housing market, education, and participation

References

Additional literature

‘Integration’ is a collective term indicating the position of the individual or a group of individuals – normally a minority – in relation to a spatial, social, economic, political, or cultural whole. There is no uniform definition. This term is usually used in differentiation from other terms, and emphasises either the process by which an integrity is to be achieved or the result of this process.

1 Introduction

'*Integration*' is a collective term indicating the position of the individual or a group of individuals – normally a minority – in relation to a spatial, social, economic, political, or cultural whole. Derived from the Latin root *integrare*, which means to *renew*, *take up again*, *begin anew*, but also to *make whole*, the emphasis is on changing an existing state with the goal of reattaining a form of integrity.

The term *integration* frequently appears as one of a pair of terms, such as *integration and disintegration*, *integration and assimilation*, *integration and segregation*, and *integration and inclusion* or *participation/diversity* (see Table 1). There is no generally valid definition. Instead, there are a number of definitions referring to different aspects of integration. Such aspects include the labour market, ▷ *Housing*, education, political and cultural participation, and free time pursuits. Implicit within almost all definitions is the idea of the objective of integration. It is also customary to distinguish between ethnic and social integration. Unlike assimilation, which implies aligning oneself with what already exists in society, and unlike participation, which has been recently discussed and which focuses on an open-ended process, integration inhabits the area between those concepts.

The debate over integration has developed in Germany since the 2000s; today, the term is of central importance to the entire debate over ▷ *Migration* – and to the current issue of refugees within municipalities as well.

This article will first present a historical outline of the various conceptual approaches to the term *integration*. It then addresses the preferred places in which and through which integration normally occurs, examines the most important areas of everyday life that serve as a barometer for integration and discusses the indicators for measuring integration.

2 Conceptual approaches to integration

The term *integration* was originally introduced in sociology by the 19th-century evolutionists (Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer) (Schäfers 2003: 152 et seq.). In the US, it was invoked in the migration debate at the beginning of the 20th century through the term *amalgamation*, which became the foundation for notions of integration in human society as well. Analogous to biology, with its descriptions of invasion, succession, and competition in the animal kingdom, scientists assumed that human beings integrated into certain groups or areas.

In Germany, which had been a country based around a work force, imports, and emigration (foreign worker vs. emigrant) since the German Empire, the debate over the best way to proceed with integrating immigrants, which raged in the US, was irrelevant for a long time. In the latter country, the best possible way of adjusting to the American way of life ('assimilation' or *Americanisation*) had been intensely discussed from the 1920s into the 1960s. Immigrants were seen as part of the political self-image of the US. In Germany, on the other hand, the view of immigrants remained limited to their economic function until the 1990s. Moreover, during the interwar and National Socialist period, the idea prevailed that an ethnically homogenous society

(meaning formed of many people of the same descent, ‘one people’ [*‘ein Volk’*]) was especially desirable. The expulsion and murder of anyone who did not correspond to that standard was a hallmark of the totalitarian Nazi regime – the opposite of integration in both thought and deed (Hillmann 2016: 45 et seq.).

The assimilation debate did not reach postwar Germany until the late 1970s, when the first integration problems with the foreign population became visible in cities. In the postwar years, although foreign workers were integrated into the ▷ *Labour market*, integration was only rudimentary in the everyday social, cultural, and institutional life of the majority of the population. This meant that anyone moving into the federal republic from abroad had the social position of a foreigner existing on the edge of society. Such a foreigner would have to find their way into the majority group individually, by making up for an ‘integration deficit’. Most measures aiming at integration followed this logic: compensating for ‘deficits’, especially those involving language and participation, and bringing about equal opportunities in the different areas of society. The oil price crisis of 1973 and the subsequent structural economic crisis affected the integration of previously recruited *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) in two ways: economically, since they occupied many positions in the labour market; and socially, since their family members could now also immigrate to a large extent. This caused a fundamental shift in the prospects of integration for the immigrant population and for the destination country (Germany).

2.1 The various dimensions of integration

Since the process of integration occurs in various dimensions of social life and extends over various periods of time, and is sometimes even intergenerational, it may be helpful to subdivide the concept of integration into various individual dimensions. Esser (1980) fundamentally distinguishes between social integration and system integration. Social integration entails cultururation and/or cognitive assimilation (such as language, skills, knowing how to behave, understanding and following rules, and knowledge of standards), identification-related assimilation (such as applying for citizenship, participating in the political process, and not planning to return to the home country), interaction or social assimilation (such as the number of formal and informal ethnic contacts, friendships, marriages, socio-spatial segregation) and placement and positioning, i.e. taking on jobs and other positions. This is distinguished from a level of structural assimilation (via income, professional prestige, occupying professional positions, including social ▷ *Mobility* via markets or organisations) (cf. Treibel 1999: 139 et seq.; Esser 2001). Multiple integration is possible in various contexts, such as in the country of origin and the country of residence. Deficits in social integration lead to marginality and exclusion, or to only partial social integration in the country of residence (segmentation). From this perspective, integration is understood as assimilation: an adjustment made by individuals that ultimately manifests itself as a minimisation of systematic differences between the majority group and the immigrant group. The degree of integration is determined by the ‘degree to which members of society comply with shared principles of order’ and ensures social stability (Wilk 2011: 16; cf. also Fassmann 2011).

Fundamental to the notion of integration is the ‘status paradox’ of migration, according to which each migrant constantly considers their own situation against the comparative background of the position they would hold in their place of origin (cf. Lichtenberger 1984). Their own position in their current country of residence is relativised and hardships are consciously accepted, because when the migrant repeatedly returns to their country of origin, their social value and status is (temporarily) higher. Myths about a brilliant ascent in the destination country may circulate about them, and they might serve as a point of reference for projections and unfulfilled hopes at home. The numerous buildings erected by the emigrants in their communities of origin bear witness in stone to their advanced integration in their country of residence and their disintegration in their country of origin (Lopez 2010).

Most migrants experience and interpret their own situation as their personal destiny, not as a collective pattern of social exclusion. The marginal position in the country of residence that manifests itself in more limited participation in the resources and processes of the majority society can be expressed in a renunciation of that very society. Experience shows that this is particularly the case with the third generation of immigrants.

In a world shaped by ▷ *Globalisation*, in which ethnic and national affiliations are newly formed, increasingly decoupled from specific socio-spatial realities, and in which transnational and multilocal lifestyles become normalised, the question of the relevance of a shared notion of national statehood arises differently than before. Adhering to assimilation presumes there is a social consensus on the goal of such inclusion. Ideas about social development geared toward participation, however, are more distinctly aimed at an open-ended inclusion of all participants (Terkessidis 2011), as are multicultural approaches. But what feature should be determinative, if not national citizenship? When does post-migrant status begin (cf. Foroutan 2013)? And the question arises of how individuals can be integrated into a modern and functionally differentiated society (meaning, one divided into subsystems such as politics, economy, law, and religion). In system theory, therefore, the term ‘integration’ is used merely to describe relationships between social systems (Schäfers 2003: 152 et seq.). Table 1 summarises the various academic discourses on integration and illustrates them using the example of integration in the ▷ *Housing market*.

Table 1: Academic concepts of integration and their relevance to urban space

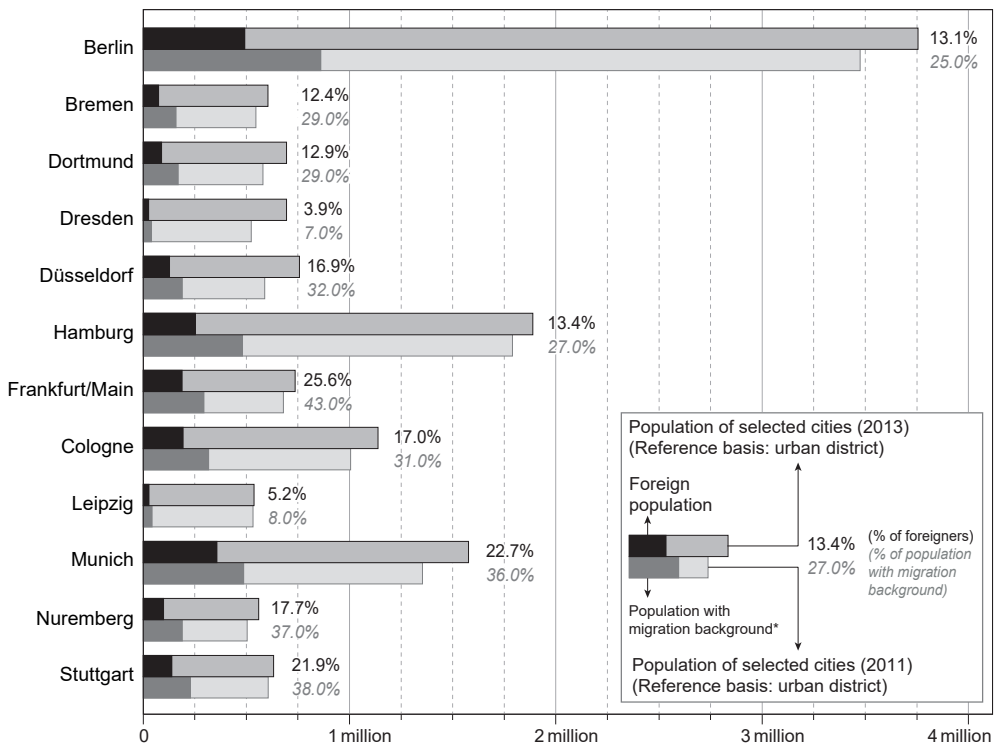
Paired terms	Academic discourse	Example of housing segregation
Integration and disintegration	USA, late 19th century (social reforms) and 1920s, Chicago School Germany: homogeneity as the ideal state	Natural areas, invasion and succession, communities, neighbourhoods
Integration and assimilation	USA: immigrants are part of the national self-image, Americanisation Germany: ideal of the principle of descent; US concepts became more prevalent from around 1980	Colonies as a channel for integration; place of residence is connected with social status; collective housing; social upward mobility in the majority society; freeze on immigration
Germany		
Integration and segregation	Polarisation of cities, restructuring of cities, calculating ‘threshold values’ in the form of blocking family reunification	Segregated places of residence, lower living standard of migrants, notion of a ‘social mix’, small-scale (local) action spheres, the waning of cities as integration machines
Integration and inclusion	Shift away from a clearly defined majority society, institutionalising integration – approaches to the debate on multiculturalism	Proposals for new residential forms for disadvantaged groups, such as housing cooperatives, strengthening their position in the urban borough, ‘international buildings’, migrants as customers
Integration vs. participation, diversity	Transnationalism, life across two locales, milieu research, post-migrant social environments	Transitory ways of living, such as those for refugees, highly-qualified people, long-distance commuters

Source: The author

3 The places of integration

Integration is a process bound to a place. It can occur as part of system integration, for example by including migrants in a welfare state that offers its members advantages (such as pensions or participation in educational programmes). But this will inevitably mean that non-members, people with another nationality, will have no access to those benefits. Moreover, integration would thereby involve being closed to the outside (cf. Bommes 2011: 75 et seq.). In general, the integration of foreigners takes place in cities and their individual boroughs. In Germany, the share of the migrant population in cities is already so high in some age groups that they form the majority society. In 2013, foreigners made up 13% of the city states of Berlin, Bremen, and Hamburg, and significantly more (17%) of the urban districts of Frankfurt, Munich, Stuttgart, Cologne, Nuremberg and Dusseldorf. In absolute figures, the percentage of the population made up of foreigners is largest in Berlin, Hamburg, and Munich. At the end of 2014, an average of 15.2% of the population in the cities participating in the inner-city spatial observation (*innerstädtische Raubeobachtung, IRB*) were not German citizens, and in West German cities, that value was much higher (34% in Offenbach, for example) (*BBSR* [Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development] 2015).

Figure 1: Foreigners and population with a migration background



* People with foreign citizenship, born outside Germany, immigrated after 1949, one parent who is an immigrant or has foreign citizenship, children of foreigners born in Germany who became citizens later

Source: Federal Statistical Office (Statistisches Bundesamt) 2013, Engler 2012

Graphics: R. Spohner

Source: Hillmann 2016: 128

The percentage of the population with a migration background is around twice that high. In cities such as London and New York, which are strongly shaped by immigration, the ethnic variety is called diversity or even ‘superdiversity’ (Vertovec 2006, 2015). In the context of the ▷ *Demographic change*, the pronounced presence of cohorts of young people with a migration background carries particular weight. The visibility of migrants and migration in urban space is part of ▷ *Urbanity* (Hillmann 2011).

3.1 The beginning of spatial integration, neighbourhoods of arrival

The immigration of guest workers that began in 1955 and was fuelled by the building of the Berlin Wall in Germany in 1961 is still shaping the structure of Germany’s migrant population. Until recruitment was banned in 1973, most guest workers lived in collective accommodation. In the political arena, guest workers experienced a period of ‘*Integration auf Widerruf*’ (‘Integration until revocation’, a temporary status until migrants were expected to return to their country of origin), the German Federal Government’s guideline for immigration policy in 1974. Simultaneous with the recruitment ban in 1973, the legislature allowed family reunification for the first time. This meant that the guest workers tried to change their makeshift lives: they moved out of collective housing, searched for flats to rent, saved less for the return back to their country of origin, and their connections to home loosened (Herbert 2003: 233). The foreigners moved into inexpensive housing near the factories, or into inner-city regeneration areas (▷ *Inner city*): e.g. to Wedding, Kreuzberg and Nord-Neukölln in Berlin; to Gröpelingen and Walle in Bremen; to Gallus in Frankfurt; and to St. Pauli in Hamburg; and frequently into old buildings needing renovation. In cities such as Frankfurt and Berlin, ‘immigrant colonies’ gradually emerged with a dual function: for new arrivals, they were an integration channel into the new society, and at the same time served as a place where immigrants could orient themselves and hold onto their original culture (cf. Heckmann 1981). ‘Inclusion’, if living together can be called that here, occurred in this case through separation from the majority society.

In the 1970s, large-scale regeneration took place in the most neglected prewar neighbourhoods of many inner cities, and, at the same time, ▷ *Urban design* drove the expansion of large-scale residential settlements with a higher degree of comfort. Poverty was deemed to be a socio-politically controllable problem of a small fringe group (Farwick 2012: 383 et seq.). As long as economic growth was a given, the cities functioned as integration machines for work, housing, and education (Häußermann 1998: 158).

With economic structural change, however, fundamental structural unemployment began to affect former industrial workers. Many of them continually depended on state benefits. A disproportionately large number of them had come to Germany as guest workers. In the Fordist work society, the purpose of migrants was functional and related to the working world; in cities, they were mostly perceived in two ways: first, as deficient regarding their (expected or assumed) integration into the city’s society; and second, as a threat whenever they began to appear in public spaces with their own symbols, such as mosques. ▷ *Segregation* and polarisation became visible in cities. In these urban boroughs, various reciprocally reinforcing factors took their toll: minimal resources were directed into the neighbourhoods, there was social learning of specific destructive behaviour patterns, such as a lack of social control and standards, as well as the stigmatising and

discriminating effects of disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Farwick 2012: 390). Those boroughs are continually the subject of negative press reports. At the end of the 1990s, new integration measures to stabilise these boroughs were tried out across Europe: in Germany, they were mostly part of the ▷ *Socially Integrative City* programme for promoting urban development.

Cities threatened to disintegrate into subareas that attracted certain groups of residents especially strongly, reinforcing polarising effects and cementing existing disparities (▷ *Disparities, spatial*). Urban boroughs became marginal zones consisting of disadvantaged residential areas (Häußermann 1998: 104 et seq.), and the formerly socio-politically configured European City lost its integrative power (▷ *European city*). Residential areas in the inner cities, mainly occupied by workers, were now subject to a trickledown effect, and neighbourhoods of workers became neighbourhoods of the unemployed (Häußermann 2000: 17 et seq.).

3.2 The mixing of ethnic and social integration

The new social issue was combined with the ethnic one. Until a few years ago, ▷ *Urban research*, for lack of other data, used the percentage of the non-German population as a small-scale indicator of poverty, because the districts with a normally older and socially established native population almost always have a lower percentage of foreigners. Over the last three decades, the social and demographic segregation in the cities of North Rhine-Westphalia has constantly increased (*Stadt Essen* [City of Essen] 2013: 19 et seq.).

The effects of ethnic and social segregation are intermixed in the debate about integration. How could the ethnic effects in relation to a spatial concentration of a group be distinguished from the social effects? Farwick (2009) uses Bremen as an example to show that the neighbourhood has no effect on the frequency of inter-ethnic contact. Instead, it is clear that the city residents of the new 'lower class' have only small-scale spaces for action at their disposal (▷ *Action space*). This limited integration of the migrant population is also confirmed by the evaluations of the microcensus, which map a correlation between minimal education, relative income poverty, and residential areas with a high ratio of foreigners (cf. Janßen/Schroedter 2007).

3.3 The neighbourhood becomes the starting point for integration

The residential neighbourhood as a ▷ *Social space*, however, could also offer the socially marginalised groups social resources: local family connections and stable neighbourhood relationships, but especially institutional resources in the form of state and private institutions, were incorporated into social reforms (cf. Vogel 2003: 203; Schnur 2013). For integration research, therefore, the neighbourhood became the focus of integration efforts, beneath that of the borough level, as the chief location of everyday life (Schnur/Zakrzewski/Drilling 2013). As part of these neighbourhood-based approaches, ▷ *Urban development planning* has relied on *empowerment* and resident participation, in addition to an upward valuation of residences, residential environments, and social infrastructural institutions with corresponding education and participation programmes. Neighbourhood management serves as a local interface between citizens and the administrative authorities; it is tasked with identifying deficits and potential in the neighbourhoods, stimulating improvements, initiating projects, and coordinating services

(▷ *Neighbourhood/neighbourhood development*). In most cases, however, it is difficult or impossible for the urban developers and neighbourhood managers to reach migrant groups, as opposed to the native population (Selle 2013).

4 Integration via the labour market, the housing market, education, and participation

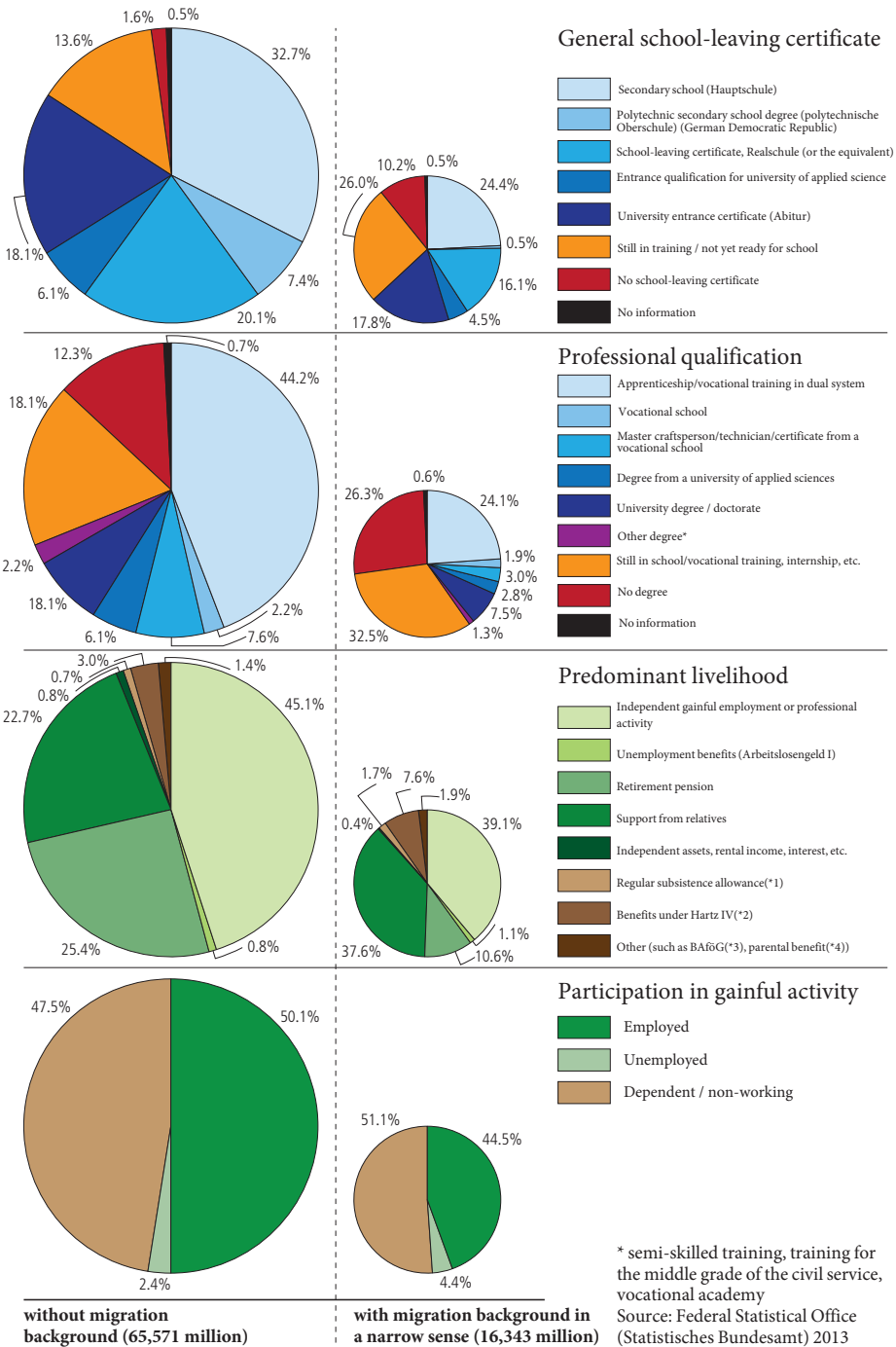
Individuals are structurally integrated by participating in the labour market, through the location of their residence, and by participating in social life, particularly in educational programmes. Here, some clear distinctions can still be recognised between the majority and minority societies in Germany. Regarding integration into the labour market, first, second, and even third-generation migrants are more likely than average to be affected by long-term unemployment, and they earn less than the native population for the same positions (*Agentur für Arbeit* [Federal Employment Agency] 2013).

For lack of alternatives, migrants establish their own businesses and companies more frequently than the natives, often as part of migrant economies that first came about mostly in the work-intensive and less lucrative niches of the postindustrial labour markets, such as small food outlets or personal care businesses. Today, migrants' companies are found in almost all subsegments of the labour market; among other things, they ensure a transnational connection between Germany and the world, and are prominently represented in the cityscape (Schmiz 2011; Hillmann 2013; Bukow/Heck/Schulze et al. 2011). Although people with an immigrant background have completed school or gained vocational training more frequently in recent years, they still lag behind the native population in this regard, to say nothing of academic degrees (see Fig. 2). Studies have shown that there is still discrimination based on a foreign name (cf. Kaas/Manger 2010).

Moreover, the migrant population still experiences discrimination in the housing market. According to the standard indicators for integration (resources, living space, percentage of home ownership, rent prices), the situation for Turkish migrants has improved since the 1990s. But problems of underprovision and discrimination persist (living space, rent per m²). Only a low level of integration has taken place overall (Gestring/Janßen/Polat 2006). Experience has shown that gatekeepers such as housing associations and agents often have an ethnic hierarchy.

Despite numerous integration measures, there are still differences regarding the degree of integration of various social and ethnic population groups into the majority society of the federal republic, and there is (still) no uniform integration legislation. Heterogenous environments have arisen (▷ *Milieu*) that must be differentiated in social and spatial terms.

Figure 2: Educational degrees and livelihoods



Source: Hillmann 2016: 232

4.1 Latest trends

The integration debate itself has moved closer to inclusion through EU requirements that demanded antidiscrimination measures as part of an inclusion policy in Germany. Those measures, and the idea of participation (in the sense of taking part and being involved), entails a general integration of groups that have been disadvantaged due to gender, nationality, disability, or sexual orientation (cf. Bude 2015).

The immigration of refugees into the municipalities, which occurred on a massive scale in 2015, led to a renewed debate over integration and stoked the political debate over dealing with asylum and migration as a whole. In light of the rapidly increasing number of refugees (one million in 2015), the debate on the integration and participation of the migrant population up to that point suddenly began to play a much more subordinate role. The priority shifted to providing for the immigrants' immediate needs, rapidly constructing and activating infrastructure for accommodation, such as gyms and prefabricated housing estates that had long since been abandoned. In many places, this emergency situation was offset by spontaneous offers of help from the civil population. Existing structural defects, such as an insufficient supply of social housing, became apparent.

More and more, short-term migration and transitory mobility shape urban space and challenge traditional notions of integration, which had a long-term orientation. For one thing, the phenomenon of multilocal lifestyles, which arose from the postindustrial flexibility of the working world and entails living in multiple cities for some individuals, contribute to this short-term mobility (Dittrich-Wesbuer/Föker 2013). For another, foreign investors purchase houses in globally oriented, growing cities such as London, but also Munich, Berlin, and Hamburg, without actually living there. They sometimes also integrate themselves only in the short term in selected service sectors in the city (by undergoing surgeries in prestigious hospitals, for example). Like the numerous short-term visitors in recent years in booming holiday flats in metropolises such as Berlin, they fuel a certain orientation of the neighbourhood ▷ *Infrastructure* and have little interest in completely integrating into the urban borough. Their presence also changes the integration of long-term residents (cf. regarding London: Glatter 2016: 197). Furthermore, the integration of the temporary residents in refugee camps in the cities, which have formed almost everywhere in Europe over the last several years, constitutes a special challenge. These 'interim solutions for integration' refer to the extensive topic of migration mentioned at the beginning, and therefore require an overarching strategy that must be settled at very different socio-spatial levels.

One of the greatest tasks of ▷ *Urban development* in the Federal Republic of Germany will therefore be integrating the refugees, who have been arriving in great numbers since 2015, into the regional fabric: local authorities, the Federal Government and the states are working nationwide on short- and long-term integration strategies that relate to the above-mentioned aspects of housing, work, and education. Intense work is being done on innovative (and increasingly, participatory) approaches to integration, that – unlike in the old Federal Republic of Germany – take the migrants seriously as stakeholders and include them.

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Integration, social and ethnic

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