

Local practices of integration and local networks.

The case of Bebra

Kerstin Schenkel, Sven Messerschmidt, Katrin Grossmann

Preface

As an urban sociology research group from the University of Applied Sciences Erfurt, we accompanied the city of Bebra for almost a year as it dealt with its migration and integration policy. We encountered a small town that looks back on a wealth of experience with immigration and refugee movements that are quite unusually strong for small towns. We found ambivalent ways of dealing with the situation: strong integration efforts, a variety of civic groups, and active administrative staff on the one hand, and on the other a town which still had to deal with conflicts, tensions and even racism reports in parts of the local society.

Bebra's formerly negative external image – stigmatised as a “Turks town” in the 1990s and 2000s – has changed significantly: intensive redevelopment and development activities have revitalised the inner city and led to a diverse mix of new migrant and traditional small-town businesses. Many residents are aware that Bebra would be exposed to severe shrinking processes without the migrant community due to the present demographic decline. Nevertheless, Bebra's different communities live separately, both spatially and socially: the inner city with a high share of migrants next to village districts with residents of mainly German descent, disadvantaged districts next to better off single-family house districts. There is a generational divide: while older, first-generation migrants often stick to their communities of origin, the younger generation generally sees the ethnic mix of Bebra as normality.

Regarding political activities and participation, with the exceptions of two longstanding established migrant communities, newcomers are poorly networked and weakly organised. Representation of migrants' interests lies mainly in the hand of advocates for integration in core positions of the municipality, mostly of German descent. In addition, in recent decades there has been a lack of formal instruments to strengthen integration and political participation of migrant communities. However, since the Hessian Municipal Code was amended by the federal¹ State of Hesse in 2020, all Hessian municipalities with more than 1000 inhabitants must implement one of two pos-

¹ In this report, we use “federal” for the governance level of the 16 federal states of Germany. However, some institutions may officially have “Federal” in their title, e.g. the ministries.

sible instruments of migrant participation, an integration commission or a foreigners' advisory board. The establishment of a commission for integration perhaps means for Bebra the start of a new chapter in political integration, which we have been able to accompany from the beginning. Bebra is of course part of the history of immigration and refugees in Germany and Europe in how it deals with immigration. German regulatory efforts and legal frameworks as well as the discourses on integration and immigration of the last decades have also shaped Bebra. We would therefore like to begin our case study with a brief overview of the different phases of emigration and immigration from and to Germany, as well as the refugee flows of the last ten years. These have repeatedly triggered public debates on the migrants' participation rights and led to various phases of state integration and migration policy (s. chap. 1). The study also includes the various legislative projects that have greatly increased in scope and design, especially since the mid-2010s due to the rising numbers of refugees. Since 2019, we have observed a very restrictive dichotomy between relatively lawless refugees on the one hand and favoured skilled workers on the other, who are supposed to relieve the labour market. In recent years, new cross-sectorial institutions of political regulation have also emerged at the federal and state levels (s. chap. 2). Against the background of national and federal integration policy for our empirical case study of Bebra it is important to identify which entities pursue the integration policy with what responsibilities and to what extent. Therefore, we have focused on the integration networks and the network-independent actors as well as their activities in the municipality and the relevant district (s. chap. 3). From this analysis we were able to gain valuable inputs that form the starting point for the development of guidelines for strengthening integration and political participation in small towns (s. chap. 4).

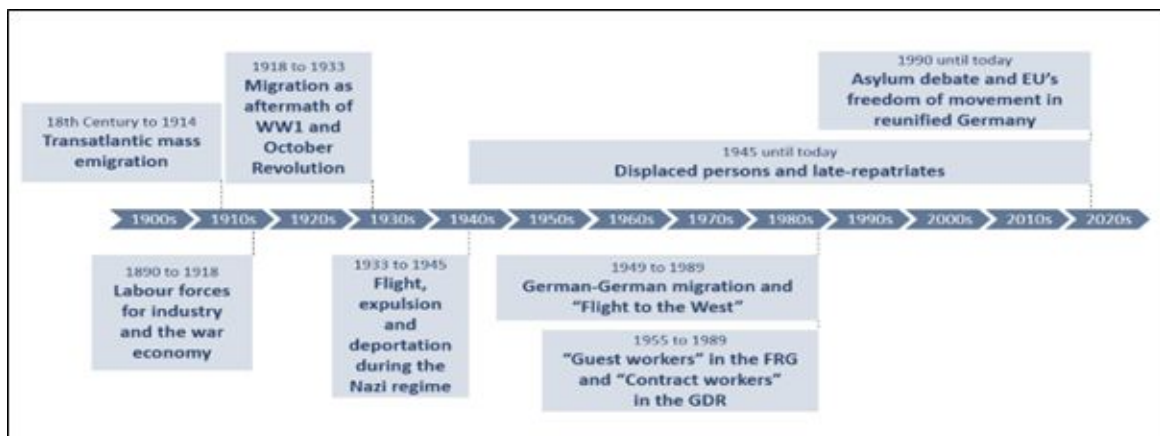
1. Modern migration and its discourses in Germany

1.1 History of modern migration in Germany

Germany has never been just a country of immigration or emigration. In German history there have been different phases of migration. In the 19th century, emigration to Northern America dominated, whereas at the beginning of the 20th century, many workers immigrated. The two world wars were marked by expulsions, deportations, and forced labour. After the end of the Second World War, immigration occurred first as war-displacement from Eastern Europe and later, in 1960s, the majority of migrants came as so-called "guest workers" to fill the labour force shortage in the (Western) German industries. After the 1990s, immigration was chiefly composed of refugees and asylum seekers or "late repatriates" resp. "late re-settlers" from Russia or former soviet states like Kazakhstan. Lately, most people arrived to Germany thanks to the establishment of

freedom of movement as European Union citizens, and for a few years now again as asylum seekers (Oltmer 2017). Today, Germany is the main destination country for migration in the EU and 26.7 per cent of Germany's population has a migration background, as first or second-generation migrants (BMI 2020: S. 7). Historical migration research has analysed a large number of different migration processes (see fig. 1). Currently, the most elaborate works focus on the 19th and especially the 20th century.

Figure 1. Phases of migration in German history from the 20th century until today

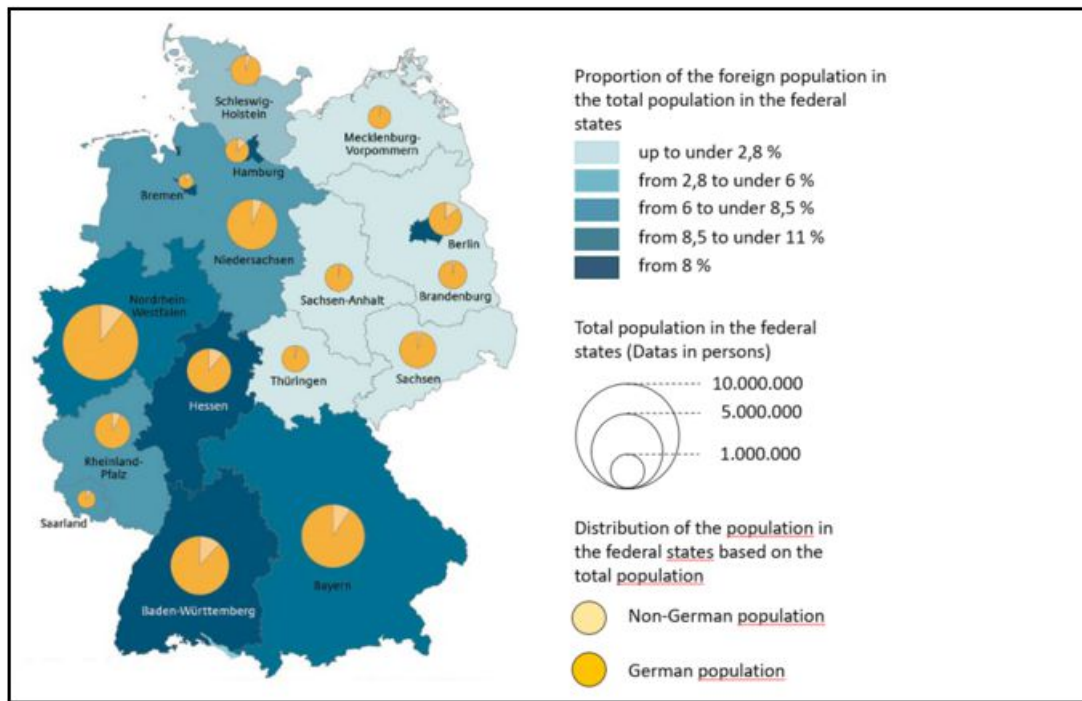


Source: Own illustration based on Garschagen, Lindner 2015

Today, Germany has now become the main destination for migrants in the EU. 26.7 per cent of Germany's population (21.9 million people) has a so-called "migration background" (Federal Government's Migration Report 2020). This counts people without German citizenship or with at least one parent who did not have German citizenship at the time of their birth. Spatially, they are distributed very differently across the individual federal states (see fig. 2). In particular, the federal states of Hesse and Baden-Württemberg as well as the city-states Hamburg, Bremen, and Berlin have a very high share of migrants. Nevertheless, Germany was also characterised by constant work-related outmigration to mostly Western Europe and the US.

More than half of residents with a "migration background" are by now German citizens. Almost two-thirds of this group immigrated to Germany at some point in their own biography. However, despite the fact that the latter group has on average lived in Germany for around 21 years, they still have no right to vote in national elections and partly in state and local elections (BAMF 2020: 7 ff.).

Figure 2. Foreign population in the federal states.



(Foreign population are residents without German citizenship)

Source: Federal Statistical Office 2009

1.2 Development of migration discourses

1.2.1 State migration discourses

The definition of the state's integration policy goals and instruments and the respective legislation in Germany have changed a lot since 1990. During the reign of Chancellor Helmut Kohl (1983-1998), policies stuck to a concept of integration that was referred to as the 'German *Leitkultur*' (Reinhardt 2021: 123). The concept of *Leitkultur* (guiding culture) is based on ethnically, culturally, religiously and historically grown traditions and habits of an ethnically defined population and demands newcomers to adapt to this guiding culture. Habermas defines this as "[...] historical ethno-cultural understanding of nationhood" (Habermas 2004 after Takle 2007: 24). In the Red-Green national government of 1998-2005 and later under Chancellor Angela Merkel (2005-2021), there was a gradual distancing from the *Leitkultur* concept and a shift toward an integration policy, which recognises Germany as a country of immigration. During this time, immigration was seen as an economic necessity and a growing cultural-religious diversity was valued as an expression of mo-

dern cosmopolitan society. However, not all national ministries, state governments of the Länder, and municipalities shared this view to the same extent. The federal state of Bavaria, for instance, recently signed its critically discussed Bavarian Integration Act, in 2017, holding on to the concept of German *Leitkultur*:

"It is the aim of this law to offer these people help and support for the time of their stay, to make their life easier in the country that is at first foreign and unfamiliar to them (integration support), obliging them to respect the *Leitkultur*, which is indispensable within the framework of their guest and residence status, and requiring their integration efforts (integration obligation). This should at the same time avoid overtaxing the social-integrative and economic capacity of the state and its municipal levels" (Reinhardt 2021: 123; see Art. 1 BayIntG).

A comparison with other European countries explains the continuing relevance of the question about the necessity and legitimacy of a *Leitkultur* in Germany. Already in the 1990s, Brubaker (1992) emphasised that the ethnos-demos antagonism is more deeply rooted in Germany than in its European neighbours. As the Bavarian integration law illustrates, Germans rather see themselves as a community of origin, which is why there are far higher obstacles to citizenship than for example in France, which sees itself rather as a territorial community (Takle 2007: 13).

1.2.2 Current public debate on migration

Reinhardt (2022) distinguishes - following Hahn (2016) and Stojanov (2022) - four ideal-typical basic positions in the public debate on migration in Germany. The extreme right-wing ethnic-nationalist position propagates an ethnically homogeneous national state that is to be shielded against foreign immigration. The national-conservative position insists on the concept of the 'German *Leitkultur*' (see 2.1), a dominant national culture, to which migrants should be subordinated. Both the neoliberal and the inclusive-democratic positions reject the ethnic-nationalist and the conservative-national positions. The neoliberal position emphasises the economic benefits of a diverse labour supply in a globalised economy and therefore rejects a national foreclosure policy. The inclusive democratic position, emphasises the importance of implementing democratic norms of a plural democracy and advocates inclusive, egalitarian, and socio-economic development (Reinhardt 2022: 32).

Before 2015, the public discourse focused for a long time on the tension between the need to create a 'welcome culture' for high-skilled, but also for humanitarian migrants, and the fear of 'poverty migration', exploiting the German welfare system together with a loss of the German *Leitkultur* (Aksakal, Schmidt-Verkerk 2014). Since the 'long summer of migration' in 2015, these con-

cerns are shifting towards concerns about the integration, particularly of successful asylum applicants, into different spheres of the German society (Faist 2016). In Germany, the refugee debate dominated domestic politics from 2015 to 2018. Then the open conflict between Chancellor Angela Merkel and Minister of the Interior, Horst Seehofer, on how to deal with the rapidly growing number of refugees, was not only a dispute within the Christian conservative party. It also reflected the conflict between controversial positions in society, a growing cleavage between cosmopolitan, humanitarian liberal positions pro-immigration and conservative, nationalist positions against immigration. Chancellor Merkel represented a humanitarian-liberal program, while the Minister of the Interior represented a national-conservative, even populist one. As in many EU countries during these years, national conservatives and right-wing extremist groups have succeeded in politicising and instrumentalising the rapidly growing arrival of refugees from the Middle East. In this atmosphere, we have seen a rising of right-wing populist, even nationalist-authoritarian positions within society (Reinhardt 2021, Heitmeyer 2018).

The events of 2015 and 2016 had a strong effect on the public debate in Germany. As a result, the perception that migration should be re-regulated strengthened, leading to the introduction of a "migration pact" in the Bundestag. As a result, several national laws were signed in 2019 and 2020, mainly re-regulating labour migration (see chap. 2.1).

In December 2019, the Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration published a report that is a sort of counter-draft to national conservative positions. It is entitled "Germany can integrate: Promoting potential, demanding integration, strengthening cohesion" and presents in detail the results of migration research, integration problems and planned measures (Bundesregierung 2019). The report rejects a concept of integration that primarily refers to a "cultural and ethnic origin or a supposed group identity" (ibid. 37) of migrants and describes the weaknesses of the concept of "migration background". Finally, the "Catalogue of Measures of the Cabinet Committee to Combat Right-Wing Extremism and Racism" was signed in November 2020 (Bundesregierung 2020). There are also initiatives at the municipal level that are turning away from national conservative positions. These include the "Cities of Safe Harbours" alliance founded in June 2019 with twelve founding members in Germany. In June 2021, the cities of Palermo in Sicily and Potsdam in Germany initiated the foundation of the European alliance of cities "International Alliance of Cities of Safe Harbours", which supports the rescue of refugees in the Mediterranean Sea. The participating cities are ready to take care of all rescued refugees (European Mayors 2021).

So, the current German discourse on migration is simultaneously characterised by political polarisation and by a paradigm shift at local and national policy level towards an inclusive, liberal agenda of immigration and integration. The polarisation mirrors an urban-rural or, more precisely, pe-

riphery-centre divide. However, there are major deficits in the representation of migrants in political decision-making bodies at municipal, state, and national levels (Reinhardt 2021: 129).

1.2.3 Postmigration

Since the beginning of the 2010s, the German debate in civil society, the public sphere, academia, and politics have increasingly been influenced by the term "postmigration". The prefix "post" does not stand for the end of migration but describes social negotiation processes that take place in the phase after migration (Foroutan 2015). The use of the term post-migrant, coined in a theatre project in Berlin, is intended to refer to the emergence of new experiences linked to being German in the course of the pluralisation of society (Langhoff 2011). The term is meant to open up the space for demarcation from the problematic and hierarchical attribution as a migrant. The prefix also includes the recognition of migration as a constitutive component of the social structure. Furthermore, lines of conflict that are being disguised as migration-related conflicts but can be decoded as social conflicts, gender inequalities or racism, should be questioned (Foroutan 2018; Römhild 2015; Yildiz 2018).

2. Development of migrant participation.

2.1 Regulations on migrant social participation

Up to the 1970s, legislation was determined primarily by the control of the so-called guest-worker immigration. At the beginning of the 1980s, the focus lay on regulating the immigration of refugees. In 2001, the "Independent Commission on Immigration" developed recommendations for action to reform the integration policy. It was the first time that long-term immigration had been recognized as positive, so integration measures started to be considered. In 2006, the first Integration Summit convened, and subsequently the National Integration Plan was adopted at the second Integration Summit. In 2011, the National Integration Plan was further developed into the National Action Plan on Integration (NAP-I) with concrete, binding and verifiable targets (Bundesregierung 2022; BBMFI 2022).

The Integration Act 2016 in particular tightened asylum law and integration measures because of the increase in refugee migration in 2015. Integration was primarily discussed in terms of normative and cultural integration. This included, among other things, the demand for integration into the so-called "German value concepts". The debate on immigration to Germany led to the redefi-

nition of nationality, which is associated with the obligation to sit the so called “naturalisation tests” (Einbürgerungstest, literally “test to enter citizenship”) that test language skills but also knowledge of the legal system, of society, and of ways of living in Germany, some of which are considered controversial. Integration courses now also impart knowledge of the legal system, culture, and national history.

Since the mid-2010s, there has been a clear intensification of legislative procedures to develop general legal frameworks. The 2015 and 2016 refugee flows led to the adoption of a "migration pact" in the Bundestag. This migration package marks a clear turn towards a more restrictive and selective migration policy: as a result, several national laws were signed in 2019 and 2020, such as the Skilled Workers Immigration Act, the Foreigners Employment Promotion Act, the Act on the Toleration of Training and Employment, the Act on the Deferral of Integration Act, the Third Act Amending the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act and the Third Act Amending the Nationality Act. Among other things, the new laws provide for simplified deportation of rejected asylum seekers. On the other hand, those who meet the requirements of the German labour market will be asked to stay. These laws are the result of the agreement reached by the so-called "grand coalition" in the 2018 national government between the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats. Here, the defined immigration conditions are based on the needs of the national economy, such as qualifications, age and language, as well as proof of receiving wages from regular employment (Reinhardt 2021).

2.2 Migrant interest groups

The appointment of ombudsmen, migrants’ interest representatives was the first step towards migrants’ interest protection and started in the 1970s (Hunger, Candan 2009). Ombudsmen supported migrants in matters of daily life and represented them politically before the administration. In parallel, coordinating groups were established which consisted of representatives of social organisations (churches, associations, political parties, craftsmen’s association) and municipal institutions (city administration, employment office). The members of the coordination circles were appointed by the respective institutions. The coordination circles worked with representatives of migrant organisations at the municipal level (ibid.; Hoffmann 1986).

Political participation was intensified with the formation of local foreigners' advisory boards in the early 1990s, initially in two federal states – North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate. These foreigners' advisory boards reacted to the simple reality that an increasing number of the so-called guest workers intended to stay in Germany for good. This led to social, political, and le-

gal integration issues on which migrants had no political influence. Through the introduction of foreigners' advisory boards, for the first time, they gained influence on municipal decision-making processes. Although the councils had only an advisory function, they were long regarded as the central political representative body for migrants. At the beginning of the 2010s, some federal states reformed their regulations. Currently, in ten of the 16 federal states the formation of such councils is optional. Two federal states have mandatory rules, and only three - including Hesse since 2020 - have binding commandments. An evaluation by the Institute for Social Pedagogical Research in Mainz (Gesemann, Roth 2015) shows that the reform has led to an increase in the acceptance and legitimacy of the advisory boards. Central goals of the advisory boards are simplifying their own election modalities and the municipal decision-making processes, expanding the number of eligible voters and target groups, and further developing opportunities for participation in formal and informal political bodies. However, there is still considerable room for manoeuvre in involving the advisory boards in municipal decision-making processes (ibid.; Budnik *et al.* 2022; Kersting 2020).

Since 2020, the federal state of Hesse, where this case study was carried out, amended its municipal law to implement a new form of a political representation of migrants. This amendment was motivated – or rather justified – as a reaction to the difficulty in establishing foreigners' advisory boards. In fact, the municipalities did not show much consideration for these boards, as proved by the very low participation of the foreign residents in the local foreigner advisory board elections (FAB) in Hesse but at the meantime they wished to implement a better concept of the migrant interest's representation. Differently from FABs the Committees of integration are formed according to composition criteria (1) the mayor as chairperson and administration representative, (2) at least 50% of expert citizens proposed by the migrant communities, with a 50% proportion of women. Furthermore, the ethnic diversity of the communities should be kept into account (see §89 HGO; Federal state of Hesse 2020).

Parallel to these processes, migrants in Germany began to establish their own interest groups in the 1980s. Today, migrant organisations (migrantische Selbstorganisationen, MSOs) are established state partners in shaping integration policies and are partly seen as instruments for involving migrants in political decision-making processes (Thränhardt 2012: 5 ff.). The spectrum of migrant organisations is very heterogeneous as well. It includes very small voluntary temporary networks as well as large organisations with full-time staff (ibid.). The variety of their activities ranges from cultural or sports associations to political interest representation.

At the federal state level of Hesse, the federal state relevant for this report, the various MSOs have different forms of umbrella organisations. With respect to political representation in Hesse,

the association of municipal foreigners' advisory boards (Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Ausländer: innenbeiräte in Hessen, agah), is the Hessian interest group of about 80 municipal foreigners' advisory boards. Its objective is to improve the social and legal situation of migrants in Hessen, promote integration and counter discrimination and racism (agah 2022). Among those municipalities that have chosen to establish an integration commission rather than a foreigners advice board, a network of integration commissions (IC) is set up to discuss the objectives or guiding principles of the work of these integration commissions and share experiences. In addition, with respect to specific interests of migrant women, female migrants and their associations are organised in the Intercultural Women's Network Hessen e.V. (DaMigra), acting as an interface between Hessian institutions and women with a migration background. The district of Hersfeld-Rotenburg, where Bebra is located, namely the city focused in this case study, boasts 25 organisations which deal with migration and integration issues, out of them 10 are migrant self-organisations. They are mainly active in the areas of culture and religion and networked with local politics and administration through the newly formed integration commissions. Institutions of integration policies on national, federal, and local level.

2.2.1 Institutions of integration policies on national, federal, and local level

The Ministry of the Interior and Home Affairs in Germany (BMI) regulates integration and migration issues (see fig. 3). The Immigration Act in 2005 concentrated on integration as a national priority. Within this framework, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF, national level) was entrusted with the management of measures to promote integration. The Immigration Act represents the central element of integration policy efforts at national level. Here, the National Action Plan on Integration defines five stages of integration, (1) Before migration", (2) "Initial Migration", (3) "Integration", (4) Growing together", and (5) "Cohesion" (see fig. 3).

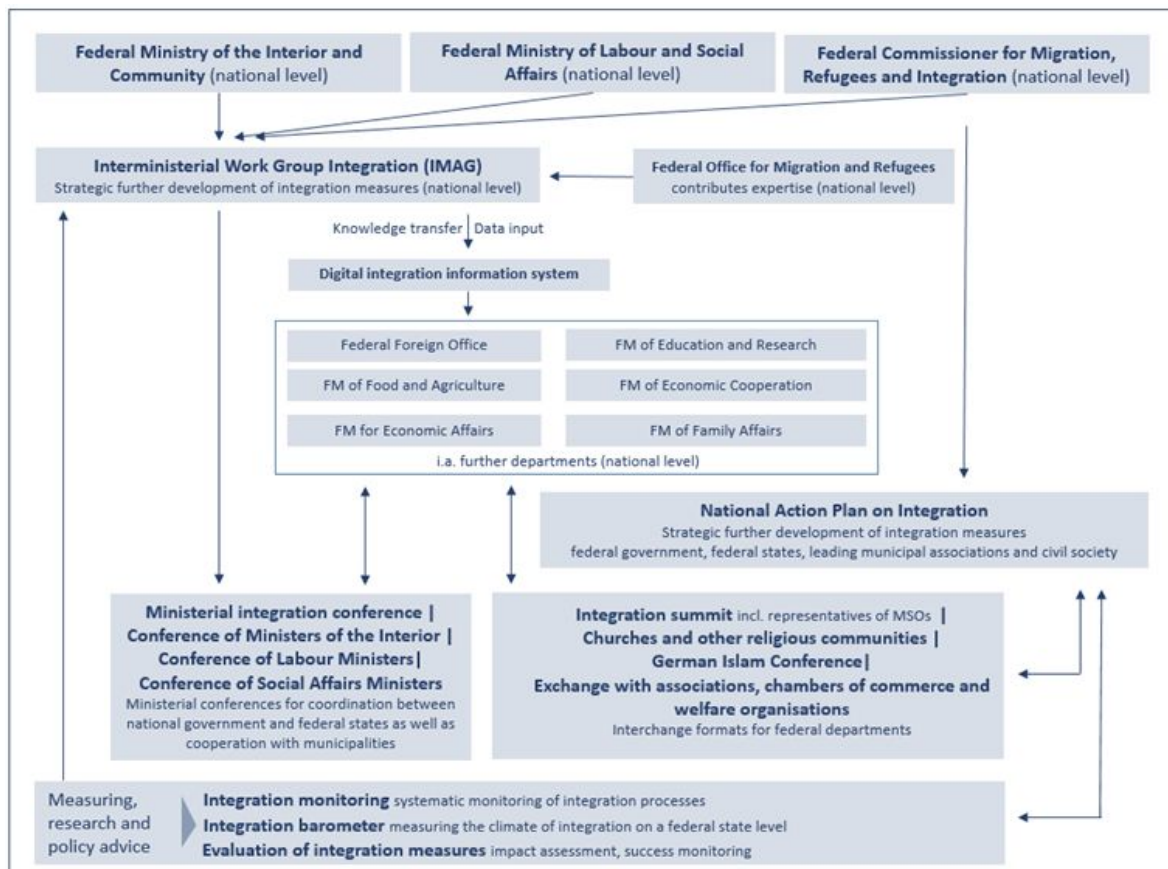
Political participation is considered part of *cohesion*, the fifth stage of participation. It is defined as the area of political education as well as participation in parties and committees. The BAMF is the highest managing institution for conducting asylum procedures and granting refugee protection in Germany. It is also the coordinator of the nationwide promotion of integration. Furthermore, it works as a research institution to obtain an overview on the state of migration and integration and how it can be governed. It organises decentralized institutions like local offices, arrival centres and decision centres (see fig. 4).

As well as at national level, the German federated system implements the integration policy also at federal and local government levels. This cross-cutting task requires efforts in different policy

fields and the respective government and administration departments. It includes education, culture, and religion as autonomous fields of action of the federal states, as well as the definition of the legal framework according to which the municipalities are obliged to implement integration measures - such as the formation of foreigner advisory boards or integration commissions. The integration processes can be steered by legal regulations and support measures such as language and qualification programs as well as cooperation with civil society actors, and symbolic political procedures such as naturalisation campaigns.

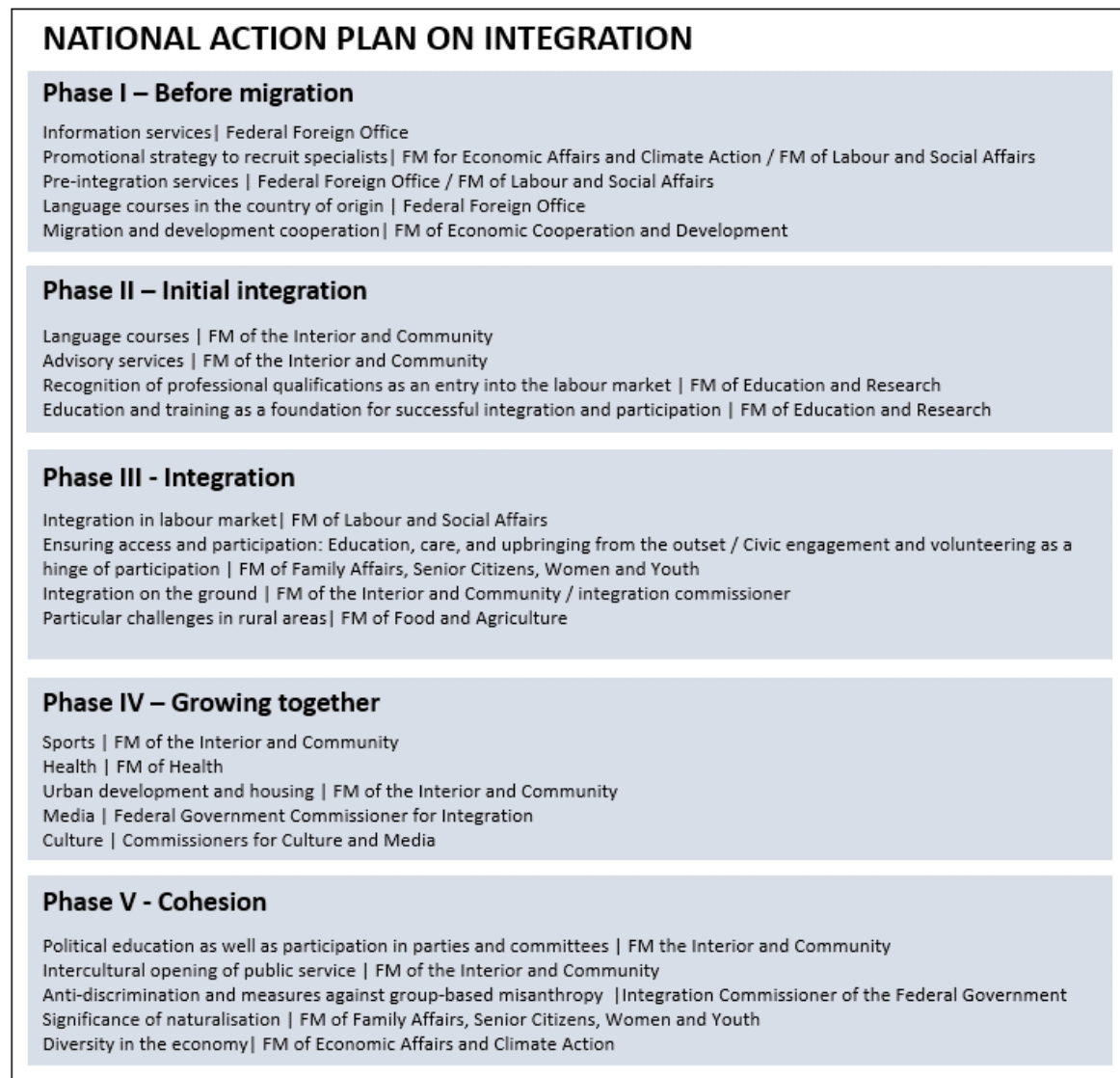
All federal states have developed integration concepts or corresponding guidelines for integration (Hanewinkel 2021). The state also promotes migrant engagement by supporting MSOs (see Chap. 2.1).

Figure 3. Governance on national and federal levels since 2021



Source: Own Illustration

Figure 4. National Action Plan for Integration



Source: Own Illustration

The federal state of Hesse

Compared to other German federal states, the Hesse is among the pioneering states in the legal structuring of participation opportunities for foreign population. This is also reflected in the development of the foreigners' or migrants' advisory boards, which began in Wiesbaden in 1972. The Hessian County Code (HKO) and the Hessian Municipal Code (HGO) regulate the establishment of

foreigners' representation at the district and municipal level. With the amendments to these codes in 1993, municipalities with more than 1,000 registered foreign residents were obliged to establish a municipal foreigners' representative body (KAV) or foreigners' advisory board (FAC) (Budnik *et al.* 2022).

In 2009, the federal state of Hesse began to view integration as a cross-cutting task. It started to involve integration as tasks in all state government domains. In parallel, model programs were introduced such as the program "Model Regions for Integration", which, in 2014, was continued as the follow up-program "WIR" for further development of integrative projects for migrants. The relevance of the integration policy was further elevated with the appointment of a state secretary and a representative for integration and anti-discrimination in 2014 (*ibid.*). At the end of 2017, for the first time the Hessian government adopted a comprehensive Hessian Integration Plan. It bundled together the political objectives, concepts, and programs into a long-term plan. The Hessian Integration Monitor analyses the progress in participation of immigrants in various areas of society over time. It also monitors the representation of migrant groups in social life and institutions (HessMSI 2022). As part of its local government legislation reforms, Hesse renewed its municipal legislation in 2020 to promote the political participation of immigrants, a reform that has been contested by MSOs. Before 2020, municipalities with a population of 1,000 or more were obliged to elect a Foreigners' Advisory board (FAB), but since then, they have been able to choose between two options: Foreigners' Advisory board or Integration committee (GVBL 2020; see fig. 4). By and large, both have only an advisory function for the municipal council and the right to bring in suggestions for municipal decisions, but they differ in legitimacy and composition.

The choice between these two options has been contested. Especially MSOs at federal level in Hesse criticise the option of integration commissions as a loss of electoral legitimacy, also the composition and the mayor's strong influence is criticised as a step back in political influence of migrants. On the other hand, small towns like Bebra had rather negative experiences with the election of foreigners advisory boards, a) because participation in the election was low, b) because foreigners' advisory boards did not lead to a strong migrants' representation in the municipality, c) because their members rather reflected the existing competition and power relations of migrant organisations in Germany, and d) because they did not manage to have all interests represented on a supra-ethnic basis. Thus, some welcome the introduction of integration commissions and see a potential advantage in the participation of the mayor and members of the city council. First experiences expressed in online meetings of a network of small towns in Hesse show, that they still have difficulties in finding their role and mode of work. So just like the foreigner advisory

boards previously, the actual political instruments available to them are limited to the right to propose certain issues to the city council.

Table 1. Comparison of Hessian FAB and IK 2021

	Foreigners' Advisory Board Hesse (FAB)	Integration committee Hesse (IC)
Election / nomination	Foreign residents by secret and direct election	Members are nominated
Chair	Elected chairman	Mayor together with a co-chairman elected by the group of expert residents ²
Composition	Voters: foreign residents / stateless persons / legal status as (also) foreign residents	50% / 50% expert residents plus politicians and administrators / 50% female / P
Institution	Obligation to set up in municipalities with more than 1000 foreign residents	Optional FAC or IC / obligation if foreigners' advisory board is not formed
Competences	Municipality has duty to inform	IC advises the municipality
	Right to be heard, right to make proposals, right to file applications	
Contra	Composition does not consider the heterogeneity of MSOs / no link to administration and council	Restriction of autonomy due to lack of electoral legitimacy and missing rules of procedure

Source: Own Illustration

3. The case of Bebra

3.1 Recent immigration in Bebra

Bebra, a small town of about 14.000 inhabitants, it has developed since the mid-19th century as a railway industry town and - related to this - as a city strongly influenced by labour migration (1960s and 80s). Accordingly, the migration history of this city is reminiscent of a metropolitan context. In the 1980s, the successive loss of importance of the railway industry as the main employer of native German workers led to the town centre depopulation. The influx of migrant workers into these vacancies in the town centre led to strong ethnic segregation, for example in the neighbourhood Göttinger Bogen, which is an arrival district, with rental housing mainly targeted to the less privileged and migrants. To the contrary, the outer neighbourhoods, mainly former villages, had and still have a very low proportion of immigrants. The town started to be associated with immigration and the immigrants' concentration in the centre signified the town's image de-

² Expert residents ("Sachkundige Bürger") are a group of residents who participated in thematic committees of the municipal council, bringing in their expertise but not entitled to vote.

cline and earned it the name of "Turks city". Since 1985, two phases of intensive urban renewal attempted to counteract this loss of image and actually succeeded in re-qualifying the city. However, the urban renewal has led to an increased attractiveness and demand for inner city housing. This fosters residential segregation and separates spatially less privileged migrants (and Germans) from well-established migrants. Today, ethnic segregation seems to be less important than social segregation as the economic rise of immigrants has allowed them to reach the middle class - in some cases even the upper class:

"From 2000 onwards, one can say that the whole thing has taken a positive turn. I think of the school, of the fact that there have been infinite contacts between the different cultures, between the natives and the immigrants. Of course, this has also led to the fact that fears of contact have also disappeared at some point, and many young people have taken up professions, settled down, built houses, acted as investors" (Administration 1, pos. 18).

As a result, not all immigrants identify with "immigrant only" concepts of integration:

"The word integration? It is a relationship you have to arrange, we have to arrange. It has to work on both sides, but integrate? Integration is not only for migrants" (Migrant or migrant organisation, pos. 22).

Four interviewees, all rather central persons of the local autochthonous society, criticise of the concept of integration as exclusively concerned with the integration of migrants and with ethnic differences:

"The explicit call for the participation of migrants is a transitional process because integration is actually about the inclusion of all citizens, not forgetting also other social groups with experiences of exclusion" (Administration 8, pos.1).

At the same time, the vast majority of interviewees sees integration more traditionally and positively. People understand integration as meaningful in the sense of accepting different cultures:

"So for me, someone is integrated when they understand and accept all cultures. For me, that's someone who is integrated" (Migrant or migrant organisation, pos. 189).

3.2 Migrants organisations in Bebra

Currently people from about 80 countries live in Bebra (Bebra Municipality 2022). The Turkish nationality is the most strongly represented one. Most of the Turkish community came to Bebra in

the course of the “guest worker” labour migration in the 1970s and 80s mentioned earlier, together with Spanish and Italians. Syrian, Eritrean, Kurdish, and Armenian people are part of the refugee movements that took place since 2000, as well as Indian, Somalian, Albanian, and Egyptian people. Overall, the share of migrants without German citizenship in Bebra in 2020 is 13.3%, the share of immigrants with German citizenship is approx. 20% and the share of first, second and third generation migrants is approx. 60%, as estimated by the head of social affairs within the municipality (Administration 1, pos. 33).

The level of organisation of these ethnic groups varies a lot. The community of the Syrian Orthodox Aramaic church is very well organised. It went through a long and conflictual recognition process in Bebra and was finally able to build its orthodox church in the city. The Turkish-Islamic cultural association, which is run by the Turkish state organisation DITIB, is well organised as well. Both cultural associations had and have an important integration function in the refugee situation of the 2010s and the following years:

“We have a big Syrian Orthodox church here ... that's a Syrian Orthodox church with quite a big community, they do quite great volunteer work, ... thanks to that the Syrian refugees ... have been taken in” (Political body 3, pos. 125).

The mosque association, a local religious association formed by the Turkish Muslim community, is a contact point for the Syrian-Muslim refugees, and the Christian Aramaeans for the Eritrean refugees. In addition, the Albanians and the Russian-Germans are organised as Mennonites and as a so-called country association, the Somalis own a bar as an informal meeting place and the Kurdish Yazidis are connected with politics and administration as well as other MSOs through the vice chairperson of the integration commission. It is clear that good self-organisation of ethnoreligious groups correlates with stronger network integration. They are better able to articulate their needs and establish contact with the mayor, for example. However, the priority assigned to these groups to create a strong community integration in order to preserve their language and religion corresponds to the special role they play in society.

3.3 Preconditions for political participation

Political participation needs social and cultural integration as a precondition. There are some dimensions of social and cultural integration of migrants, which are a kind of civic participation, a participation in community life, for example integration in local relationships and networks, access to local services and institutions, e.g. attending religious services at local worship places and

be part of the local football team. Political participation is about making decisions, being recognised as a full member of the local society, having a voice and being listened to. It means also being a co-producer of community development, being able to engage in conflicts on eye level with other community members without being assigned an inferior position (or accepting to hold an inferior position). In our research, we focus more on political participation. However, even within the migrant communities, especially the longer established ones, civic and political integration and participation are inseparably linked issues: (1) Large migrant self-organisations in Bebra for instance organise integration into social services of general interest, like school launch events for the entire city. At the same time, they have (2) a form of internal democratic and (3) strongly informal access (private contacts, sports clubs etc.) to formal institutions and their actors.

Integration policies fall into the responsibility of the municipality but also of a regional government level based on regional districts within the state of Hesse. Thus, the district of Hersfeld-Rotenburg as well as the municipality of Bebra are responsible for such policies (see fig. 5). The district office's tasks are the registration of immigrants, the handling of asylum seeker procedures and decisions on residence status, the admission to social welfare and the organisation of social integration support (e.g. language and integration courses). Other support is distributed in the form of distribution of financial allocations for the welfare organisations, which offer integration and migration counselling as the case management in Hersfeld and Rotenburg as well as in Bebra. The municipal administration of Bebra is responsible for the registration of immigrants, for urban and neighbourhood development, and the housing and economic policy. The state educational institutions – responsible for education and training requirements, clubs (especially football) and festivities – are organised partly by the city and partly by private initiative. The current status is as follows:

- According to the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act, refugees without a residence permit generally have no right to work (BMJ 2021). In contrast, recognised migrants with a residence permit have been widely integrated into the labour market, achieved economic progress and some are self-employed as entrepreneurs.
- The big charities such as Caritas cover important integration needs and in particular fill the gaps that are not covered by standard state benefits: e.g. food distribution, second-hand sales of clothing and smaller household items. They are responsible for various counselling and language services for migrants and refugees. Language courses are organised by the Migration and Asylum department in the district of Hersfeld-Rotenburg and the city council, but they are far from covering the high demand. Poor skills in German is the most urgent obstacle to integration. The shortage of language course teachers partially explains this situation but also, due

to the district being responsible for language teaching, for Bebra residents reaching Bad Hersfeld, where the courses take place (Public service or commissioned service 3, pos.55) is time consuming and expensive, as the district centre is 14 km away.

- Specific needs for migrant women are still not considered enough in integration policies. For example, Turkish men seem to have created an infrastructure that meets their socio-cultural needs whereas Turkish women lack this to some extent: "The men (migrant men, the recorder) already have everything, football, tennis, 4 bars, 2 arcades, what is missing is something for us women" (Migrant or migrant organisation 7, pos.1). When migrant women are well organised as cultural associations, for example in the Syrian Orthodox Church, the needs of women are more likely to be taken into account.
- Other prominent integration needs are access to affordable housing and infrastructures for residents of different origins. There is also a demand for social infrastructures for ageing migrants, shared flats for mother-tongue residents with dementia (Public service or commissioned service 5, pos.88).

3.4 Network of integration and political participation

One aim of the PISTE project was to investigate the existing networks for integration and political participation. The network structure we found in Bebra is characterised by the interplay of formal and informal structures and is centred around one key person in matters of migration in Bebra, the head of the department of social affairs (see fig. 5). The network structures mainly provide support and services for social and cultural participation, which are (only) the pre-conditions for political participation.

3.4.1 Network structures of integration and political participation

Beyond the responsibility of the Hessian district of Hersfeld-Rotenburg and the administrative and political institutions here, the formal structures of social integration are primarily state and state-mandated bodies and institutions, the craftsmen's association, as well as smaller networks and civil society actors. For children, teen-agers and young adults in transition to employment, a state-financed youth centre, school social work as well as a counselling service of the regional craftsmen's association offer important social integration support. The Bebra Diakonie (Social Service of the Protestant Church) is a well-established welfare organisation. Important networks exist in the "Ecumenical Working Group", the "Language Working Group", the Round Table "Social Com-

mitment" and the "Network for Integration", which has organised communication with key stakeholders in recent years. In addition, some migrant communities have migrants' self-organisations, MSOs. About the approx. 80 ethnic groups represented in Bebra, the degree of self-organisation can be classified as rather low.

Regarding actual political participation, in Germany, foreigners have limited voting rights, hence limited chance to be elected. This entails that the total share of migrants with and without German citizenship is not represented in formal political bodies (Roth 2018), and this is also the case for Bebra. The migrant's share in the Bebra city council, the main political institution, is 20%, in the magistrate³, the elected executive body, is 9% and in the municipal administration, which represents the implementation level, the share is 10% approximately. The structural lack of opportunities for co-determination in urban development policy issues as well as the influence of other political cultures and language barriers make access even more difficult. At the same time, however, these figures can also be read as a sign of an existing political integration process because the share rose over the years. For the more established migrants with contacts into local society, there is also the possibility of expressing needs or objections through networks and informal contacts. The network key person is seen as an easily approachable, open, and supportive networker.

When it comes to formal bodies for political participation of migrants, Bebra opened a new page in 2021 by founding an integration committee (IC), prompted by the amendment of the municipal law in the overall state of Hesse, as described above and in figure 6. The implementation process was largely determined by the central migrant networker who prepared nominations, gathered migrants who agreed to be nominated and organised first meetings. It takes account of the representation interests of different actors and the strong authorities of the MSOs. The networker nomination was confirmed by the magistrate. The IC members we interviewed confirmed that they see the Integration Committee as having adequate legitimacy. Since the vice-president is a migrant woman democratically elected by the IC, the latter shows signals of emancipatory progress. According to legal requirements, the integration committee must be composed of a mayor, three councillors (including one woman and one migrant), and ten expert residents, all with a migrant background from ten different ethnic groups, among which five must be women. However, many of the sixty less incorporated and less organised ethnical groups are not represented. Actually, the goals of the IC are defined by the active involvement of the migrant target group in order to promote political participation, to create cross-cultural cohesion and to strengthen the migrant communities' impact on the local urban society.

³ The magistrate is the elected body, leading the administration.

Table 2. Strength and weaknesses of political migration structures

	Advisory board Hesse (FAC)	Integration committee Hesse (IC)
Contra	Lack of a leader with vision Problematic compatibility of work and voluntary work = no employer exemption (see FFW) No further training for members Dominance of the Turkish-Muslim list Lack of representation of heterogeneous MSOs Too little creative power - too loose a link to administration and local council	Restriction of autonomy due to lack of electoral act No extension of competences vis-à-vis AB No employer exemption, further training for members and budgeting for volunteers Advocacy function + Welfare associations include risk of appropriation
Pro	Legitimised through election Greater autonomy Self-representation	Decision-making competence of the networker advocacy function is accepted Revitalisation of interest representation Better representation of the different MSOs Closer institutional link to administration and municipal council

Source: Own Illustration

Further objectives, a mission statement and a self-image have not yet been formulated and are understood as part of the future work of the IC. There are different assessments of the IC chances to influence Bebra's integration policy among our interviewees. Some hold that the implementation process is still young, and the rules of procedure, a mission statement, and a definition of goals are still missing. Others argue that the top-down implementation is only an example of so-called fig leaf politics:

"They have to find out now whether they are satisfied with what they have brought to the table and whether they can really work with it or whether they are just followers ... There are no rules of procedure, there is no mission statement, there is no definition of goals ... if we want to lay a foundation somewhere and have a goal, then not only on paper" (Migrant or migrant organisation, pos. 64-65).

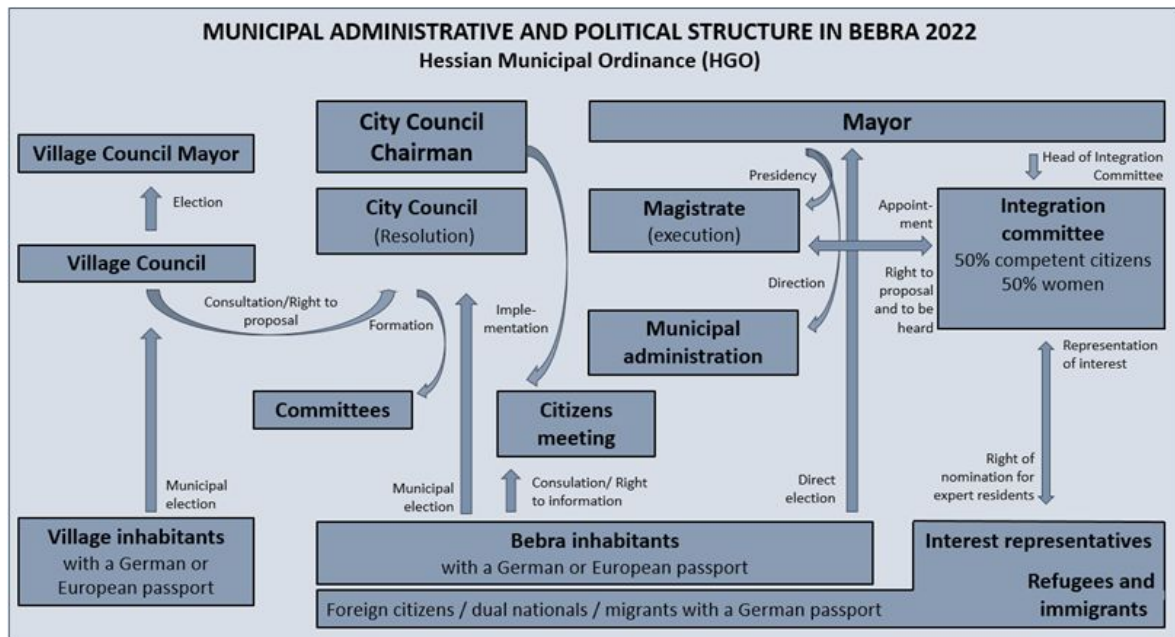
Others argue that, after all, the integration committee has the right to propose requests to the city council:

"The fact alone that the integration commission is the only commission that can independently submit requests to the city council is worth doing it this way. ... As a member of the integration commission, I can define something ... I can make a request ... and the parliament has to deal with it. You can initiate a lot of things. So without this possibility, I think it's just as much hot air as everything else" (Public service or commissioned 1, pos.179).

One problem, however, seems to be that within migrant communities - as in other parts of the German population - there is little practical and detailed knowledge about the political system and its possibilities:

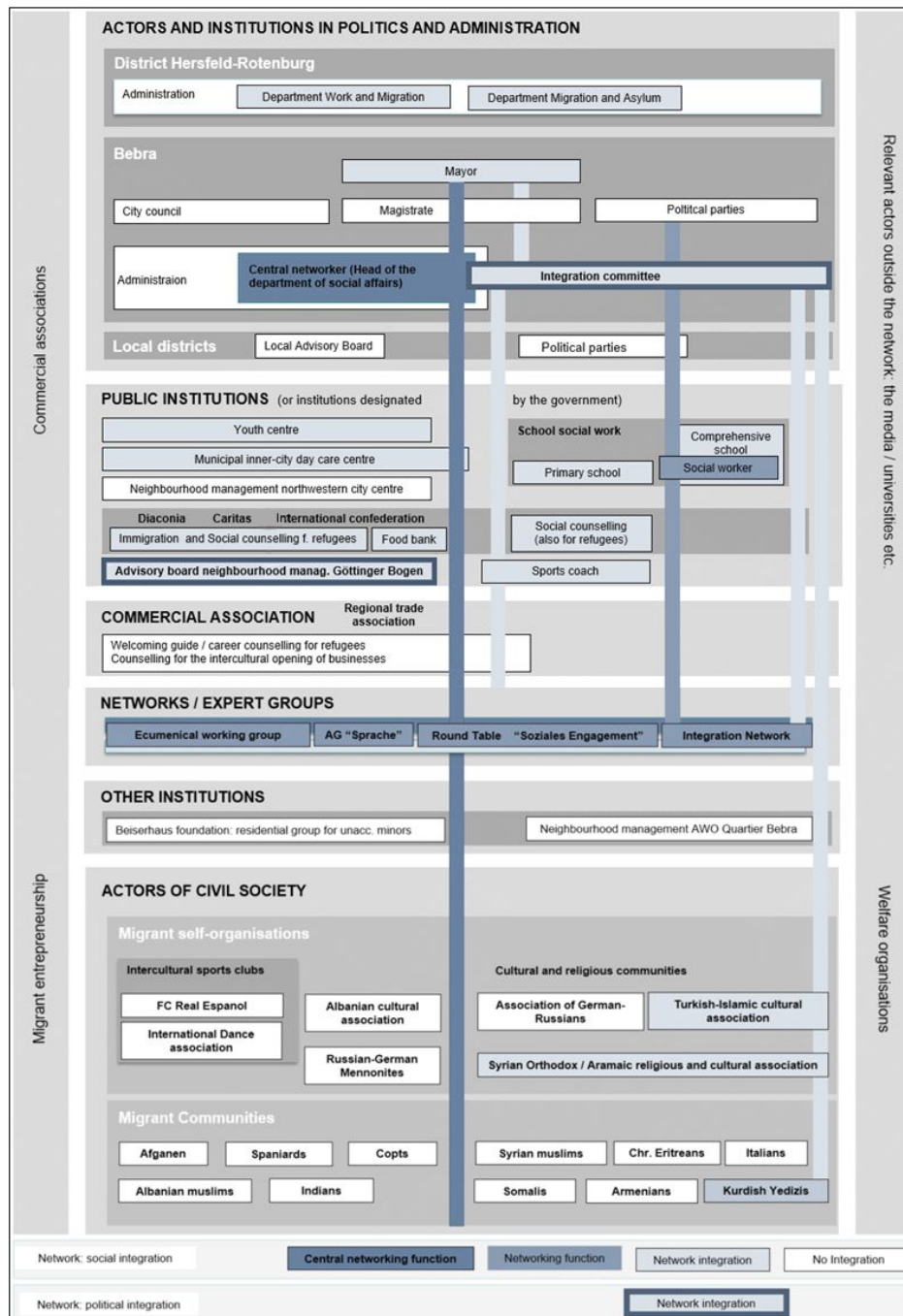
"I also believe that the migrants have not yet realized what an opportunity there is in it. ... they probably don't even know this political system, they don't even know what you can do with it, ... perhaps they not even used to such a concept, because it doesn't exist in their own culture, that you can work somewhere and have your say and that the topic is self-determination. And ... that process will not be over even in ten years" (Political body 4, pos. 72).

Figure 5. Formal structure of municipal administration and politics in 2022



Source: Own Illustration

Figure 6. Policy networks of social and political integration of migrants



Source: Own Illustration

Stakeholders

The entire migration-related network is centred around one key figure, the head of the Department of social affairs, who has intense connections with the administration and strong informal networks in various local communities. According to self-definition he is a networker:

"That's what a city councillor once said to me, networker. I think that perhaps sums it up a bit. Of course, it's not an official job title, but when you have contact with many people from the world of Germans on the one hand, but also from the world of migrants, then something like us automatically comes into being, I think, a network worker who knows the two different worlds and tries to link them, ... to create encounters, to clear up misunderstandings, to explain one world to the other and vice versa. And just again and again ... communication" (Administration 1, pos. 3).

At the same time, due to his many years of work in the Bebra Youth Centre, he has good contacts into almost all migrant communities. He had considerable influence on the composition of the IC, on the work of MSOs, on individual migrant actors and, typical for a small town, a direct line to the mayor.

Another important networking position is held by his wife, who is a city councillor for the Social Democrats, member of the integration commission and social worker in the comprehensive school. She, too, has the reputation of being a strong advocate for migrants' interests. In addition, individual key personalities from each of the organised communities - e.g. the head of the mosque or the patriarchs of the two large family associations of the Syrian Orthodox community - have a representative function for the entire community. In contrast, other not or less formally organised communities are little or not represented at all in the network, such as refugees of various nationalities - as far as they are not supported by the Muslim or Aramaic religious institutions - as well as the so-called late repatriates. The needs of marginalised groups, such as women, young people, seniors, the educationally disadvantaged and black people, are not represented, too.

Considering the entire network structure, the central political and administrative leadership positions in Bebra are held by the mayor, the political and administrative bodies - the magistrate and the city council - as well as the political parties. The parties seem to be strongly influenced by the local German communities and represent their interests, while the migrant communities are only marginally represented by them:

“In essence, integration has taken place in the minds only ... But the tangible direct political influence has remained small” (Political body 3, pos. 57).

The mayor has a strong power to define the degree of attention given to migrant interests and whether they are of local interest. In our interpretation, this is a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it can be read as openness to intercultural issues:

“I think we are still a long way from where we need to be. I would say that ... [the central networker] has always been our reminder when it comes to intercultural issues, and if he wasn't here, the topic would be totally understudied” (Political body 4, pos. 72)

On the other hand, such a perspective possibly prevents the perception of structural inequalities:

“Integration issues? I'm pretty naive about that. Maybe I would even say that we don't need that at all, because sometimes issues are simply constructed that aren't even there, aren't they?” (Political body 4, pos. 72).

Informal structures

Informal support networks can be found within the refugee communities, e.g. organised by Ukrainian or Syrian refugees. Their multipliers sometimes contact the existing counselling institutions with questions, but there are also some informal support networks that have no links to formal structures. On the one hand, this makes it possible to provide fast and unbureaucratic support. However, this practice also entails risks, in fact in some instances these structures can lead to strong dependency relationships, which in the most negative case also lead to indebtedness and exploitation:

“Refugees are also sometimes betrayed by people from their own community, where they first felt safe. We often see this with landlords who supposedly have good intentions and do everything for the refugees and take care of them. They are familiar with the country, they have been in Germany for a long time. [...] The refugees survive through some dubious contacts who come to them later and have horrendous demands” (Public service or commissioned 5, pos. 38-40).

The bars and coffee shops that have emerged - especially those of the Turkish and Arab communities, but recently also established by the Somali community - also form a kind of informal network. They are generally used by men, there is no comparable informal offer for women. However, this gap has now been clearly articulated to policymakers via the Integration Commission.

3.4.2 Strengths and weaknesses of the network

The strength of the migration supporting network in Bebra is first and foremost the fast central decision-making. With the central networker there is one contact person for everything. As head of the department of social affairs this position is networked in politics, administration and migrant communities. Through personal relationships and informal contacts, a high level of trust to the individual is built up. On the other hand, the importance of this person also leads to the dependence of the entire structure on the central networking figure who is about to retire. This person cannot be replaced so quickly, with the risk of an immense weakening of the network in the medium term. The high level of trust also makes it difficult to keep a critical distance from a person who has a strong power of definition and who, for example, has significantly influenced the composition of the IC:

"The head of the department for social affairs is a great man. And we've been together with him for just over 40 years now, since he managed the youth centre back then. ... I've known the youth centre since I was a kid, it's really great. He has also helped us a lot. With everything in general. Yes, and then the municipality said, we don't want the members to be elected, we want them to be nominated" (Migrants or migrant's organisation 3, pos.80).

Another problematic aspect is the compartmentalisation of political institutions and parties, which is due to the fact that these structures mainly represent locals and migrants are little included in local political discourses. In addition, socially weak migrants and refugees, old migrants, educationally disadvantaged classes, late repatriates and blacks as well as migrant women with children – especially without a family environment – are only weakly integrated politically:

"In contrast to Hersfeld, I always notice that the women here are not very well networked. They are very, very much on their own. I notice that just by looking at the fact that they come to me for counselling and asking information on children care. Very often they don't know what to do here in Bebra. ... that strikes me extremely in Bebra [that they] have no idea where anything is located. Yes, what can I do where and when and how? From public and official matters to leisure activities" (Public service or commissioned service 5, pos. 94-96).

Very likely, many needs of migrants have not yet been articulated. Overall, we observe a partly weak social influence as well as a still low level of political integration. However, migrants' children may bring some changes in future, as a first-generation migrant explained:

“Of course, if I come from another country ... I want to first work, earn my bread, first lead my life sensibly. That was important for us first. And we didn't think about the political side at all. Many of us were weak in terms of education, so we didn't have the opportunity. But our children today were born here and are also educated. And I think the time is coming ... I can already hear that many young people are already party members in the right positions. I think that's coming more and more in the next few years as well” (Migrant or migrant's organisation 8, pos. 78).

However, through the implementation of a neighbourhood management and a family centre, which is currently being established, attempts are being made to close this gap in a marginal settlement in the north-west of the city, the Göttinger Bogen. Middle-class migrants are also more likely to be informally consulted as strong economic actors. Some circumstances can also be seen as small town specific; these include the behaviour of migrants in the initial adaptation process, but also the central networker. Due to the limited personnel in small towns administrations, many positions are usually tied to one person. However, there is little outreach work, only "pull" structures. Several times the interviewees highlighted that new immigrants should behave calmly, adapt, not just make demands. Such claims even came from (older) representatives of migrant communities. To what extent this is an effect of the small town's limited social arena, we cannot say. This behaviour certainly occurs in metropolitan areas as well, but it can be assumed that the sanctions for misbehaviour are stronger in small towns as it is easier to exercise control in a limited area.

3.5 Activities for integration and political participation

3.5.1 Activities fostering integration

Most activities in the field of social integration and participation are organised formally and initiated by public institutions and municipal bodies, the big charities as well as educational institutions. Mostly, the activities are executed or coordinated by a few professional employees and a team of volunteering supporters. In Bebra, the professional employees are, with few exceptions, autochthonous Germans. Among volunteers, the proportion of people with a migration background has been slowly but steadily increasing over the years. Formal integration work is also done by the two large MSOs, the Islamic Cultural Association, and the Syrian Orthodox Church and Cultural Association (see chap. 3.2). While the two MSOs mainly serve their own communities, the two charities, Diakonie and Caritas (see chap. 3.), reach a variety of migrant groups. Nevertheless, interviewees report that a specific institution, like a youth centre or a counselling office may be

(temporarily) "occupied" by a certain (migrant) group with the risk of discouraging other groups from visiting this institution:

"We're just in a very, very small town here. Yes, and when one group comes in, I think my office becomes a taboo for the others. So, word gets around very quickly that helps in your own community. And suddenly there are lots of people from Eritrea here. And then I get more or less burned for others. You have to be careful that you are not seen as the one who is only there for one migrant group, without actively pushing it. Yes. That already happened very often here" (Public service or commissioned 5, pos. 20).

We can summarise that most of the analysed integration activities target the groups that are to be "integrated". Only a few activities are aimed at the groups that are "integrating" in order to initiate processes of mutual acquaintance, opening up structures or raising awareness. A prominent exception is the role of the "welcome pilot" of the district craftsmen association. This person advises businesses and companies on how they can open up to refugees and recruit them as workers.

Activities launched by the Municipality

The lead person of all the municipality's initiatives related to integration and social participation, as well as the central networker for this issue is the head of the department for social affairs. Integration is one of this figure's core concerns, and is included in all department and municipality activities. The city organises the cultural festival "Kirmes", a traditional fair or festival which is mainly attended by autochthonous Germans that has been altered in character so to include also non-autochthonous groups and display their food and music. The Kirmes is a prototype of a new generation of festivals that do no longer make a difference between traditional festivals and specific events to foster integration. In previous years, the central integration networker together with the "Integration Network", had initiated the "Intercultural Festival" and a connected "Night of the Open Houses of Religion". In the meantime, the festival has been abolished because the central integration networker has the ambition that all festivals should be perceived as intercultural festivals:

"No, there were four times, if I remember correctly. But then we scrapped it because I said there would be ... no more intercultural festivals, but only intercultural festivals" (Administration 1, Pos. 92).

The position of the "City Sports Coach" is also staffed by the municipality. As a volunteer, the coach acts as a link to connect the city, refugees and the sports clubs and takes care of the integra-

tion of refugees into the clubs. Bebra is receiving funding from the state of Hesse through the "Sport and Refugees" programme for this project. Among the city's current projects there is the creation of a family centre with neighbourhood management and community work in the rather marginalised and migrant-dominated neighbourhood "Göttinger Bogen". Funding has already been secured and the construction planned.

Activities initiated by migrant's organisations

Formal activities are carried out by the two religious MSOs "Turkish Islamic Cultural Association" and "Syrian Orthodox Church and Cultural Association", as well as the Real Español football club and the International Women's Dance Club Bebra. The two religious associations focus their activities primarily on their own community. Both organise religious education (only the Syrian Orthodox Church is allowed to teach in public schools), work with refugees, language courses, social welfare work. Both organisations try to preserve their traditions and culture; for example, the church is planning its own kindergarten where the Aramaic language can be taught. Both organisations also engage in intercultural work. The Turkish-Islamic Cultural Association organises the annual intercultural festival "Kermes" (not to be confused with the "Kirmes" festival, see above) with the aim to gain an impact on the local society in order to build bridges between the cultures. This is also the aim of the "International Women's Dance Group" and the Real Español football club. Originally, Real Español was founded by Spanish immigrants who were not welcome in the local German football clubs, today it has developed into one of the main sports institutions in the city and, like the dance group, is now a multicultural association.

Stakeholder initiated activities

In Bebra individual stakeholders provide most of the activities and services for migrants, especially for refugees. The main actors are charities, educational institutions, regional government district offices, as well as the Protestant church. The charities Caritas and Diakonie have a Christian background, but are open to all groups of the population and are accepted by most. They offer individual case counselling (from arranging language courses, help with bureaucratic errands, help with applications for social welfare benefits, job search, etc.). A similar service is provided by the "Integration Assistance" of the regional government district with its office in Bebra. The "Language Working Group" is an association of independent organisations that organises and offers language courses. The "International Bund" is an educational institution that offers language, social, educational and vocational integration, especially for young people and women. The district handicraft union offers career guidance and the integration of refugees through employment and training

courses. The Protestant church is a contact point for Ukrainian refugees in particular, offering access to low-threshold support services.

Informal activities

A noteworthy and significant part of the activities for integration and social participation takes place informally, through personal contacts. Interviewees stress that usually people who belong to a certain community support each other. A common case is the connection with a person with a migration background or migration experience who has lived in Germany or Bebra for a long period and is well-integrated in the local society. Usually, such person supports newcomers from his or her community. The well-integrated person and the newcomer may have family relations, be already known to each other, or may be connected through networks such as social media. Well-integrated contacts often assist migrants in the arrival phase, for example in administrative procedures, translations, and job and flat searches. We were told that for instance such informal activities are common among Syrian refugees. This makes fast and uncomplicated support possible:

“There is a very strong consolidated Syrian community here in Bebra [...] I can hardly work in there, they are able to cover all the needs of newly arrived” (Public service or commissioned 5, pos. 10)

Interviewees also report on the ambivalent nature of help and support. Relationships between those who give help and those who receive it risk degenerating into dependency relationships. Moreover the helpers also take personal risk, for example, we were told that long established families take out loans and guarantees for newcomers sometimes assuming indebtedness.

3.5.2 Activities fostering political participation

While integration is an established field of policy, institutions, and activities in Hesse and also in Bebra, political participation is way less developed. The reform of the Hessian Municipal Code 2020 has made political participation formats for foreign citizens obligatory in Hessian municipalities (see chap. 2.3). Municipalities, including Bebra, are increasingly trying to achieve a more intensive political participation of all citizens through informal participation formats like neighbourhood walks and participation workshops. The establishment of these formats is still at an initial stage in Bebra. At the same time, MSOs are organising their members and professionalising their structures. This enables them to identify the demands of the communities they represent and then address them to policymakers through formal and informal channels. Marginalised groups

are gaining recognition through self-organisation. Nevertheless, the political organisation and articulation of interests of many other migrant groups is still missing.

Political participation activities initiated by the municipality

We identify two types of activities initiated by the municipality: Activities demanded by the legal system including the establishment and regular meetings of the integration commission (IC, see chapter 2). The commission has the right to submit proposals for decisions to the city council. However, this right has not yet been exercised in Bebra with the IC now working since September 2021 (14 months at the moment). The voluntary activities are divided into formal occasion-related activities and informal citizen participation processes. In the formal occasion-related activities, the city administration invites the various stakeholders involved in a process, such as road construction, to express their views. The large MSOs in Bebra are regularly invited to such events. However, they have no decision-making power, they are just consulted. Migrant actors are also invited by the city to informal citizen participation processes. Formats of informal citizen participation such as neighbourhood walks and workshops are becoming more widespread in Germany; they are voluntary and their results do not bind the municipality. A self-created participation instrument in Bebra is the neighbourhood management advisory board for the north-western core city. According to the Head of the Department for Social Affairs, this committee is composed of an equal number of migrants and non-migrants.

Political participation activities initiated by MSOs

MSOs organise themselves into sub-groups and in this way enable their members to have a more effective participation in the organisation. The Syrian Orthodox Church Association, for example, has set up a women's group and a youth parliament. We also learned of similar groups in the Turkish-Islamic Cultural Association. The large MSOs initiate political involvement by regularly organising informal discussion evenings with representatives from politics and administration, e.g. by inviting newly elected mayors to introductory visits, to talk about planned projects or to request information from the authorities on specific topics. In addition, migrant groups also use the support of public institutions to get in touch with political decision-makers. In one case, the staff of a municipal institution helped a group of Syrians write a letter to the city asking for facilities for their association:

“I know from the Syrian refugees that they wanted to start a dance association where they could practise their traditional dances. I assisted them in writing a letter to a city officer to use the clubhou-

se for a certain period of time, so that they could then meet regularly” (Public service or commissioned 22, pos. 62).

It is evident that Bebra’s MSOs tend to implement their political participation through informal, rather than formal, channels of participation.

4. Strengthening political participation in Bebra

Based on the results of the studies on the legal framework and the migrant participation networks, a number of essential aspects appear to be essential for strengthening the political participation of migrants; these include strengthening the preconditions for political participation as well as expanding political rights as such.

4.1 Strengthen preconditions of political participation

We can currently identify six strands that constitute a precondition on the basis of which successful and lasting political participation of migrants can be established. These relate to different issues like ways of communication and cooperation, but also institutional change or resources.

Strengthening communication and cooperation culture

In order to build a stronger communication and cooperation culture, places of encounter and intercultural communication in the inner center of the city - before instance intercultural museums or intercultural libraries – could help to show social as well as migrant diversity. Such places could help to develop a constructive, view-broadening approach to diversity as well as personal relationships among the different population groups, especially within the adult population and the older generations.

Developing a culture of conflict resolution

The empirical findings point to significant – but nevertheless common – conflicts, both within migrant ethnic groups and migrant organisations and against autochthonous parts of the local society. In fact Bebra is home to ethnic groups that have ethnic, religious and even military conflicts in their countries of origin. These kind of tensions, existing rejection of immigration among the autochthonous population, even racism, and unaddressed conflicts need to be made addressed explicitly. Ultimately, only a new culture of conflict management can bridge social divisions, in this di-

rection conflict management activities may be included in the municipality's tasks and institutions, or alternatively might be carried out by external, professional support.

Expanding social inclusion and participation

There are considerable differences in interests between autochthonous and migrant population and also within the two. The social and legal inequalities between the immigrant and the autochthonous population have developed into disadvantages and privileges that reveal hierarchical - sometimes racist - stratification patterns between the different population groups. These differences need to be understood in order to generate impulses for increasing the social and participation of marginalized people. Such situation affects, among others, black people, migrant single women, elderly migrants, and, to some extent, young migrants, but also impoverished and deprived people of German descent. Moreover, after arriving in a new city, newcomers must first orient themselves and secure their livelihood. Many have the opportunity to become politically active only after having secured their own economic livelihood. Long-term economic security for all groups of the society is therefore also an essential precondition for successful participation. The political integration status is reflected in the social participation status, which means that if you want to promote political participation, you have to enable social advancement.

Supporting migrants organisations

Because only few migrants are organised in MSOs, there is a large lack of support, especially for smaller, volunteer-based associations or non-formalized groups. Access to spaces and infrastructure as well as support in applying for funding are often missing. In this context, the establishment of a place of support, resembling the idea of the "Houses of Resources"⁴ for e.g. the regional government district Hersfeld-Rothenburg, can be an instrument to facilitate information and training events on topics such as association and project management, applying for funding and fundraising or public relations.

Establishing institutional learning

The sensitivity of administrative structures for intercultural issues and the opening to the civil society could be strengthened beyond the head of department of social affairs. This includes the intercultural opening of specialised departments as well as self-reflection actions and openness to processes of change in the administration in general. It also includes flatter hierarchies and a more equal involvement of all stakeholders in urban development processes. Since in some cases

⁴ See: https://www.bamf.de/DE/Themen/Integration/AkteureEhrenamtlicheInteressierte/EhrenamtlichesEngagement/HousesOfResources/housesofressources_node.html

the integration of professionals with a migrant background into the regular services of non-migrant providers is already taking place successfully, the next step could be to advance the recognition of MSOs as providers of social services and political participation. Both measures increase permeability and promote openness on both sides. In addition, the administrative institutions could build up a better welcoming culture, which could also provide information about the opportunities for participation. Within the framework of the integration commission, strategies could be developed together on how the institutions could reduce difficulties.

Creating outreach work and group-specific integration services

Since many primarily marginalized migrants - as well as other marginalized groups within the resident population - find it difficult to seek out existing integration services and are sometimes perceived as very isolated, there is a need to create outreach social work, meaning to seek the contact with marginalized groups actively rather than waiting to be contacted by them and group-specific integration services.

4.2 Strengthening political participation

In order to strengthen the political participation of migrants, a distinction must be made between the different levels of responsibility.

Municipal level

Transforming and extending participation processes

In future it will increasingly be necessary to transform and expand participation procedures. In particular, informal participation procedures that focus on the participation of the whole of civil society, including migrants, could lead to greater overall participation. This includes above all the informal instruments of urban development planning. The empirical results of this study have also shown that political bodies for the time being, still display low accessibility for newcomers. A change in their own self-image towards a more cooperative approach could contribute to their intercultural opening towards the whole civil society.

District level

Supporting migrant organisations through political education

At the political level, support for migrants and their organisations should also be considered. Among other things, migrants are still poorly acquainted with the structures and processes of the

national, federal, and local German administrative and political system. It would be desirable to eliminate this lack of knowledge through applied political education to be imparted through organisations like the "House of Resources" mentioned above.

End unequal distribution of Resources

There must be an end to the unequal distribution of financial resources and staff - for language teaching, among other things - between the capital of the regional government district and other district minor towns.

Federal state level

Revision of municipal legislation

The empirical findings show that there is a need to revise the instruments of migrant participation, i.e. the foreigners' advisory council and the integration commission, in two respects: (1) the municipal choosing process between the election of a foreigners' advisory council or the alternative formation of an integration commission (as per §86) does not seem to be sufficiently regulated. It implies that the municipalities undertake activities to hold elections for the foreigners' advisory council, but there are no regulations on how they have to come about. (2) The regulation of the right of petition in §88 - that foreigners' advisory councils and accordingly also the integration commissions are to be heard "in all matters concerning foreign residents" - leaves room for different interpretations. It should be formulated more clearly.

Support migrant organisations

The district Hersfeld-Rothenburg and the federal state of Hesse are both responsible for filling the knowledge gap of the structures and processes of the German administrative and political system. The federal state should detail and underpin the 2020 requirement for the formation of an integration commission in the Hessian Local Government Act, clarifying tasks and rights, and setting up programmes to financially support the establishment of the above-mentioned "Houses of Resources".

Funding

According to empirical results, the abundance and variety of voluntary tasks undertaken by individuals in small towns involve difficulties related to time resources and integration into professional but also family work. Specific support and privileges such as the introduction of a citizen's or public welfare allowance or a more favourable taxation could be granted in return for social and political voluntary work in rural areas and small towns. At the same time, municipal financing by the federal states could be regulated by a distribution pattern that rewards the public services provi-

ded by rural municipalities and civil society (social, cultural, political commitment) outside the official standard service.

Conclusion

This report investigated the state of regulatory frameworks on different levels of government, the existing networks and the available activities for social integration and political participation in a small town in the state of Hesse in Germany. It further examines how integration and political participation can be enhanced in a small-town setting.

Regulatory frameworks

The institutionalisation of integration measures at national level has made a leap since the 2000. In 2006 the federal government, the federal states, civil society organisations and migrant organisations jointly prepared the National Integration Plan. Its aim is to bundle the integration policy measures of all actors for a better integration of migrants living in Germany. However, political participation – described in the Integration Plan as “Political education as well as participation in parties and committees” – is only one small aspect of the whole Agenda and considers only political education and formal processes of participation. Connected with the National Integration Action Plan is a well-formed institutional restructuring as well as the division of tasks among all participants at all levels, that is national, state and local levels.

Since the mid-2010s, a clear intensification of legislative processes to develop general legal frameworks can be observed. In 2019, the migration package marks a sharp break and strictly separates incomers into two groups, roughly wanted and unwanted migrants: the rejected asylum seekers who are to receive deportation relief, and those who benefit because they are well integrated into the German labour market. Currently, a new three-tiered naturalization law (Einbürgerungsgesetz) is being discussed with the aim of facilitating immigration to the labour market in Germany, which is facing a severe shortage of labour force.

At the federal level, also in Hesse there has been a strong shift in integration policies and in establishing new structures. In 2009, Hesse began to view integration as a crosscutting task, a program for integration was launched, and a first Hessian Integration Plan was established in 2017. In 2020 Hesse reformed its municipal legislation to promote the political participation of immigrants. These reforms are being disputed, because the established Foreigners' Advisory Boards in the larger cities of Hesse and their influential and established actors fear that the new law might lead to fewer rights and less influence of migrants and their organisations. On the contrary, some small

towns in particular are gaining a new tool and hope that this will give migrants a greater ability to influence the urban development processes.

For Bebra, migrant society is already a reality in view of the large variety of migrants in town. However, although a large proportion of interviewees in Bebra have a migration background and feel "integrated" in many areas, in local politics only a few people with a migration background are represented. On a spatial level, we observed segregation processes: between (1) the inner city, (2) the local districts with a high rate of natives and mainly owner-occupied houses, and (3) a neighbourhood mainly inhabited by the socially deprived, migrants and asylum seekers. Still, the majority of city councillors have come from the village districts (2) for decades, which demonstrates that political participation and socio-economic factors intersect in Bebra and political migrant participation is weakly institutionalised. Even though the Integration Commission (IC) started its work in 2021; it is still in the phase of running in and gaining experience. In order to implement its tasks successfully, the commission needs targeted support, which means IC member training on the political culture of Germany and its institutions, on the structure and function of the administration and on administrative action and consequently being able to reduce all barriers that hinder participation of migrants in political work. Apart from the main problems that Bebra of course shares with other places, like the safeguarding of privileges or even existing racism, there are also seemingly neglectable issues like difficulties caused by shift work and commuting, which make afternoon participation in events impossible. An exemption obligation on the part of employers, similar to that applied for volunteer firefighters or other collective interest activities, would be a simple solution.

Also at the level of social participation, which we consider a prerequisite for political participation, too, and where great progress was achieved in the past years, there is still room for improvement. In light of the growing attractiveness of the inner city, it is complicated to integrate new arrivals and the generation of young families into the housing market. Furthermore, there is an urgent need for the state to take responsibility for guaranteeing social security instruments in times of poverty and hunger, such as food banks, etc. Last, but not less important, the lack of German language skills is the most urgent obstacle to integration – and consequently to political participation – across all migrant communities. A better provision of language courses is the most important target for integration. Language courses take place in the district and the city, but they are far from covering the great demand. Moreover, a solution to the shortage of language teachers and to reduce travel time and costs to reach the centres where the classes are held does not seem to be achievable in the medium term. Overall considered, much has been done at the regulatory level in the last decades, but full political migrant participation is still far away.

Network of political participation

The strength of the network is at the same time its weak point: its dependence on one central key person with decision-making power (as well as a few other main actors). This person's influence is widespread in the networks, and thus networks depend on this figure. On the positive side, a key person can foster a fast central decision-making, but at the same time has difficulties to maintain the critical distance that any democratic process needs. Even if young migrants are allowed to participate through informal participation measures at neighbourhood level, and despite middle-class migrants are integrated as important economic actors, it must be stated that political institutions and parties are still dominated by people of German descent. The relatively weak social influence of migrants and the lack of articulation of interests seems to be problematic.

Small-town specific reasons are also responsible for the lack of representation of migrants in the political process. The fear of sanctions for misconduct in a small town may be greater than in large cities and likewise, the narrow staffing of politics and administration rest on the shoulders of a few people serving many functions simultaneously. In Bebra, this affects almost all stakeholders we have spoken to. Work overload and overstress seem to be the basic characteristic of responsible, committed citizens as well as political or administrative functionaries.

Activities of integration and political participation

The activities of the existing network for integration in Bebra focus on a wide range of offers and services for social and cultural participation and thus for political participation. The majority of integration activities are formally organised by public providers such as the two welfare organisations Diakonie and Caritas - whose funding is not always secured in the long term - as well as the two large MSOs, the Islamic Cultural Association and the Syrian Orthodox Church and Cultural Association, activities are also organised by public providers from the municipalities and the district. Informal activities are offered by a network of private volunteers. Both formal and informal activities focus on basic help and support such as arranging language courses, assistance in contacts with the authorities, help for social benefit applications, finding accommodation and work, etc. On the one hand, informally organised integration activities can offer quick and need-based help, on the other, there is a danger that the newcomers do not come into contact with the official bodies at all, do not learn to cope with the German structures and the local society, ending with isolating themselves in the long run. Most of the positions in the professional structures are filled by autochthonous Germans, while many voluntary activities are carried out by migrants. We see an imbalance here and the potential for more public positions to be filled by people with a migration

background as part of peer learning experience. In Bebra, there are also only a few activities that explicitly deal with political participation.

Strengthening political participation in Bebra

Our empirical study shows that political participation at present is strongly correlated with socioeconomic participation. For this reason, it seems necessary to strengthen the preconditions for political participation and to expand political rights as such. To strengthen the preconditions for political participation, we propose strengthening a culture of communication and cooperation in the city, e.g. by creating (public) places of encounter. Developing a culture of conflict resolution is becoming increasingly important for municipalities with a high proportion of migrants. Conflicts between residents of various backgrounds, not necessarily bound to a dichotomy of migrants vs. German descent, emerge owing to social and legal inequalities that need to be addressed and negotiated. Strengthening social cohesion seems to be one of the most essential tasks. We have seen that MSOs may play a bridging role between communities, their members and the municipality. This potential should be exploited by targeting MSOs and their cooperation with public authorities. We see further potential in the processes discussed under "institutional learning" and "inter-cultural opening". In Germany public authorities in particular are encouraged to take on a pioneering role and adapt their structures and processes to the reality of life and the needs of citizens i. In order to strengthen the political participation of migrants explicitly, changes should be targeted at three levels. The municipality can stimulate participation through informal processes as otherwise it would not be able to achieve any results. For this purpose, the city could set itself self-committed goals and expand its participation processes. The lack of understanding of the structures and processes of the German administrative and political system can be addressed by suitable programmes of assistance and knowledge transfer offered by the regional government district. In addition, there must be an end to the unequal distribution of financial resources and staff - for language teaching, among other things - between the capital of the regional government district and other district minor towns.

Our empirical findings reveal three aspects for the state of Hesse that need to be addressed in order to revise the idea of the Integration Commission. 1) Hesse has to clarify the regulation of the commissions' proposal right, and introduce IC members to this tool, especially if the municipalities use a restrictive interpretation. 2) It must be ensured that the citizens of Hesse, but especially the members of public boards such as the Integration Commission, gain deeper knowledge of the political system of the Federal Republic of Germany as well as the possibilities that the instrument of the IC offers. 3) In small towns, there are multiple burdens falling on a few people in volunteer

work. Therefore, new financing models are needed, such as the introduction of an income for community work, or a return for social and political volunteer work in small towns and communities.

In cooperation with the city of Bebra, we follow the goal of strengthening the participation of people with a migration history in the design, implementation and evaluation of an integration policy and to foster political participation in a wider sense. This small town has a long tradition of international immigration and its dynamics can partly be compared with those of big cities. Nevertheless, there seem to be some small-town specific aspects that are relevant for the instruments to strengthen political participation. These encompass a less specialised administration with limited personnel, more immediate social bonds but also stronger social control, engaged individuals acting in a number of roles, overburdening themselves, and a concentration of networks depending on individuals that take over a central role making the network system more effective but also more dependent. Such key figures also concentrate their own power to shape political processes. Therefore, testing new appropriate policy instruments will be vital in the upcoming second part of the project.

We close our report with a final and maybe more academic note. The project is focused on migrants' social integration and political participation. Given that AMIF EU is the main funding body for this project, this is in a way something due. However, a focus on migrants in general suggests migrants to be a somehow homogeneous group. Scholars from a range of disciplines have instead underlined the differences within such groups and across the migrants vs. autochthonous divide with concepts like "superdiversity" or even "hyperdiversity". Although also people of German descent are marginalized and have limited access to political decisions, many recent and former migrants are well integrated, they have even become members of local elites, and go for high positions or political mandates. Actually, they partly no longer see themselves as migrants. From a so-called post-migrant perspective – in the German civil and academic discourse widely debated – there is a urge to stop contributing to such sorting and categorising. Therefore, we would emphasise that enhancing political participation is best addressed in an intersectional perspective.

References

agah – Landesverband der kommunalen Ausländerbeiräte Hessen. 2022. *Wir über uns*. Published online: <https://www.agah-hessen.de/ueber-uns/agah/> (last checked last checked 31st January 2023).

Aksakal, M., Schmidt-Verkerk, K.. 2014. *New Migration Trends in Germany - Characteristics, Actors and Policies*. COMCAD Working Papers, 128. Bielefeld: Universität Bielefeld, Fak. für Soziologie, Centre on Migration, Citizenship and Development (COMCAD). Published online: <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-50868-8/> (last checked last checked 31st January 2023).

BMJ – Bundesministerium der Justiz. 2021. *AsylbLG – Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz §5, Arbeitsgelegenheiten*. Bonn.

BAMF – Federal Office of Migration and Refugees (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge). 2020. *Das Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF) als Bundesoberbehörde*. Published online: <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/behoerden/DE/bamf.html> (last checked last checked 31st January 2023).

Bayerisches Integrationsgesetz Art. 1 BayIntG. Published online: [shorturl.at/fwZ45](https://www.rechtspraak.de/shorturl.at/fwZ45) (last checked 31st January 2023).

BBMFI – The Representative of the Federal Government of Migration, Refugees and Integration (Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Migration, Geflüchtete und Integration). 2022. *Nationaler Aktionsplan Integration. Der strategische, integrationspolitische Ansatz für die 2020er Jahre*. Published online: [shorturl.at/jvRTV](https://www.rechtspraak.de/shorturl.at/jvRTV) (last checked 31st January 2023).

BMI – Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Bundesministerium des Inneren und für Heimat). 2020. *Migration*. Published online: [shorturl.at/goy57](https://www.rechtspraak.de/shorturl.at/goy57) (last checked 31st January 2023).

Brubaker, R.1992. *Citizenship and nationhood in France and Germany*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bundesregierung – Federal Government (Die Bundesregierung). 2022. *Nationaler Aktionsplan Integration*. Published online: <https://www.nationaler-aktionsplan-integration.de/napi-de> (last checked 31st January 2023).

Bundesregierung – Federal Government (Die Bundesregierung). 2020. *Maßnahmenkatalog des Kabinettausschusses zur Bekämpfung von Rechtsextremismus und Rassismus*. Published online: [shorturl.at/ghiP9](https://www.rechtspraak.de/shorturl.at/ghiP9) (last checked 31st January 2023).

- Bundesregierung – Federal Government (Die Bundesregierung). 2019. *Deutschland kann integrieren: Potenziale fördern, Integration fordern, Zusammenhalt stärken*. Published online: shorturl.at/vzGKX (last checked 31st January 2023).
- Budnik, M., Hedtke, C., Zemke, R. 2022. *Die Integrations-Kommission des neu gefassten § 89 der hessischen Gemeindeordnung – eine demokratische Innovation?*. Erfurt: beck-online.
- European Mayors. 2021. *Declaration of Mayors*. Published online: <https://staedte-sicherer-shorturl.at/bfips> (last checked 31st January 2023).
- Faist, T. 2016. *Cross-Border Migration and Social Inequalities*. "Annual Review of Sociology", 42: 323-346.
- Federal state of Hesse. 2020. *Hessische Gemeindeordnung (HGO) in der Fassung der Bekanntmachung vom 7. März 2020*. Published online: shorturl.at/suOQY (last checked 31st January 2023).
- Foroutan, N. 2018. *Was will eine postmigrantische Gesellschaftsanalyse?* In: *Postmigrantische Perspektiven. Ordnungssysteme, Repräsentationen*, Foroutan, N., Karakayali, J., Spielhaus, R. (Hrsg.), pp. 269-299.
- Fouroutan, N. 2015. *Die postmigrantische Gesellschaft*. In *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* (Ed.). Published online: shorturl.at/KSV45 (last checked 31st January 2023).
- Garschagen, T., Lindner, J. 2015. *Welche Migrationsbewegungen haben Deutschland geprägt?* In: *Rat für Migration* (Ed.). Berlin. Published online: shorturl.at/stG69 (last checked 31st January 2023).
- Gesemann, F., Roth, R. 2015. *Integration ist (auch) Ländersache! Schritte zur politischen Inklusion von Migrantinnen und Migranten in den Bundesländern*. Eine Studie des Instituts für Demokratische Entwicklung und Soziale Integration (DESI) für die Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. Berlin: Self-published.
- GVBL – Gesetz zur Verbesserung der politischen Teilhabe von ausländischen Einwohnerinnen und Einwohnern an der Kommunalpolitik sowie zur Änderung kommunal- und wahlrechtlicher Vorschriften vom 7.5.2020, GVBl. S. 318.
- Hahn, P. 2016. *Soziologie der Migration*. 4. Auflage. Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft.
- Hanewinkel, V. 2021. *Integration und Integrationspolitik in Deutschland*. Published online: shorturl.at/fwxy9 (last checked 31st January 2023).
- HessMSI – Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration (Hessisches Ministerium für Soziales und Integration). 2022. *Der hessische Integrationsmonitor 2022*. Published online: shorturl.at/bkmpX (last checked 31st January 2023).
- Heitmeyer, W. 2018. *Autoritäre Versuchungen*. Berlin: Suhrkamp-Verlag.

- Langhoff, S. 2011. *Die Herkunft spielt keine Rolle – Postmigrantisches Theater im Ballhaus Naunynstraße*. Interview mit Shermin Langhoff, 10. März 2011. In: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung. Published online: shorturl.at/abfiZ (last checked 31st January 2023).
- Hoffmann, Lutz. 1986. *Beiräte – Wahlrecht – Bürgerrecht. Zur politischen Situation der nichtdeutschen Einwohner in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. Frankfurt am Main: Dagyeli.
- Hunger, U. Candan, M. 2009. *Politische Partizipation der Migranten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und über die deutschen Grenzen hinweg: Expertise im Auftrag des Bundesamts für Migration und Flüchtlinge*. Münster. Published online: <https://nbnresolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ss0ar-259506> (last checked 31st January 2023).
- Kersting, N. 2020. *Politische Repräsentation und Integration. Zur Akzeptanz von Migrationsbeiräten*. In: Egner/Sack (Ed.): *Neue Koalitionen – alte Probleme, Lokale Entscheidungsprozesse im Wandel*. Wiesbaden: Springer, S. 190.
- Oltmer, J. 2017. *Migration. Geschichte und Zukunft der Gegenwart*. Bonn: wbv Theiss.
- Reinhardt, D. 2022. *Konkurrierende Konzepte in der Integrations- und Migrationspolitik*. In *Niemanden zurücklassen, Herausforderungen und Chancen für Kommunen in Zeiten gesellschaftlichen Wandels*, K3B – Kompetenzzentrum für kommunale Konfliktberatung (Ed.). Salzwedel: Self-published, pp. 31-36.
- . 2021. „Multikulti“ im Bundeskanzleramt und postmigrantische Gesellschaft in der abgeschotteten EU-Festung? In *An Konflikten wachsen oder scheitern*, Großmann, K., Budnik, M., Haase, A., Hedtke, C., Krahmer A. eds. Beiträge zur Reflexion eines komplexen Phänomens. Erfurt: Self-published.
- Römhild, R. 2015. *Jenseits ethnischer Grenzen. Für eine postmigrantische Kultur- und Gesellschaftsforschung*. In *Nach der Migration. Postmigrantische Perspektiven jenseits der Parallelgesellschaft*, Hill, M., Yildiz, E. (Hrsg.). Bielefeld, pp. 37-48.
- Roth, R. 2018. *Integration durch politische Partizipation*. In *Handbuch Lokale Integrationspolitik in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft*, Gesemann, F. Roth R. (Hrsg.), pp. 629-658.
- Stojanov, K. 2020. *Inklusion statt Integration als Leitbegriff für Migrationspolitik?*. In *Integration. Teilhabe und Zusammenleben in der Migrationsgesellschaft*. Baden-Baden, Nomos-Verlag, pp. 103-115.
- Takle, M. 2007. *German policy on immigration - from ethnos to demos?* Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag.
- Thränhardt, D. 2012. *Zur Bedeutung der Länder im Konzept einer nachhaltigen Integrationspolitik*. Bonn: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

Yildiz, E. 2018. *Ideen zum Postmigrantischen*. In Postmigrantische Perspektiven. Ordnungssysteme, Repräsentationen, Kritik, Foroutan, N.; Karakayali, J., Spielhaus, R. (Hrsg.). Frankfurt am Main, pp. 19-34.