Multidimensionality of immigrant integration policy at the local level. Examples of initiatives in Germany and The United Kingdom

Abstract

Awareness that immigrant integration takes place at a local level has been growing for several years. Immigration policy debates and decisions mostly occur at the national level, but the question of how to implement immigrant integration policy is much more urgent at a local level. The purpose of the article is to present the multidimensionality of integration actions as well as examples of projects considered to be "best practices" that are carried out today at the local level in German and UK cities of different sizes. The countries chosen have long histories of immigration and have developed significantly different approaches to immigration issues, nevertheless local experiences (in both countries) highlight not only differences but also similarities in immigrant integration policy. The surveys presented help us to understand that immigrant integration is a complicated process that can be stimulated in various ways, and that there is no single way to introduce policy towards immigrants.

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Introduction

The inflow of immigrants to European countries has permanently changed the social structure of their host societies and created new challenges of how to manage ethnically diverse societies effectively. Even though immigration policy debates and decisions generally occur at the national level, the question of how to implement policies and practices for social, cultural and political integration is much more urgent at a local level. The majority of immigrants (particularly in Europe) today live in cities or small rural towns (Penninx et al. 2004) as this is where the jobs, housing, schools, support services (government or non-government), religious and leisure facilities and their own social networks are concentrated[1].

Studies of integration processes and policies at the local level are more recent than at a national level, nevertheless there are quite a few European cities that have been studied. Early examples of such comparative attempts focused predominantly on the political dimension of integration as well as policies related to civic and political participation[2]. Some comparative studies focused only on specific aspects of local policy such as housing

and segregation patterns (Musterd et al. 1998), policing (Body-Gendrot 2000) or the management of diversity in the implementation of local policies (Moore 2004, pp. 127-138). Attempts to carry out more systematic analysis on integration policies at the local level include examples such as the UNESCO-MOST project "Modes of Citizenship and Multicultural Policies in European Cities" (MPMC) that ran from 1996 till 2004, as well as the European Foundation's project "Cities for Local Integration Policies" (CLIP) that started in 2006. The MPMC-project focused particularly on the political participation of immigrants (but also included a more general comparison) in 16 major European cities and Tel Aviv. The CLIP-project consisted of consecutive modules in which specific aspects of local integration policy were studied empirically and compared systematically (housing of immigrants, diversity policies in employment and service provision, inter-group relations and immigrant entrepreneurship)[3] (Penninx 2009, pp. 611-613). More recently, interesting works were carried out under the Intercultural City Programme that began in 2008 as a joint pilot initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Commission. The purpose of the Program was to examine the impact of cultural diversity and migration from the perspective of Europe's cities and to identify strategies and policies that could help cities work with diversity (Wood 2009).

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[1] Most of today's immigrants live in large urban areas. In 2011, about half of the UK's foreign-born population resided in London (37%). In German cities like Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Munich, more than 20% of residents were foreigners in 2005. The spatial concentration of immigrant settlement in cities, often within particular neighbourhoods, intensifies impact on the local environment, so that even in cities with a smaller migrant population the impact can be significant.

[2] As in the case of Ireland's study of four cities in France and Switzerland (Ireland 1994), Rex & Samad (1996) in Birmingham and Bradford, Blommaert & Martiniello (1996) in Antwerp and Liege, Garbaye (2000, pp. 39-57) in Birmingham and Lille and Fennema & Tillie (2004, pp. 85-106) in Amsterdam, Liège and Zurich

[3] While the MPMC-project was initiated primarily by researchers, CLIP started as an initiative of policy makers. The city of Stuttgart, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions created a network of 25 European cities that wanted to exchange experiences on local integration policies and learn from each other systematically.

The main purpose of this article is to present the multidimensionality of immigrant integration initiatives introduced at a local level as well as examples of projects considered as "best practices" carried out in recent years at the local level in cities of different sizes. Most of the existing surveys concentrated on the largest cities, where the percentage of immigrants was the highest. Nevertheless, local authorities in smaller settlements have also raised the question of integration of local communities. The process can be seen inter alia in Germany and the UK[4], which I chose for detailed surveys. These countries are interesting for the study of changes in integration policy, as they both have long histories of immigration, experience in dealing with such policies and have, over many years, developed significantly different approaches to integration[5]. In order to complement the existing literature, I decided to examine not only large cities but also medium sized ones (with different percentages of immigrant population) that are very often overlooked in research and where local authorities create their own integration strategies (20 cities in Germany and 17 urban areas in the United Kingdom[6]) (Appendix 1).

In order to characterize the initiatives taken at the local level, I researched official documents[7] that deal with integration in the selected cities. In Germany, I analyzed integration plans and integration strategies while in the UK, the most useful documents that show the integration actions toward people of immigrant origin prove to be strategies for social cohesion, equality programs and programs of racial equality[8] (Appendix 2).

Migrant settlements affected a broad range of local policy areas, generating demands on municipal services, housing, schools and the local labour market, as well on local policies. A comparison of local policies over a large number of cities and policy areas requires a survey to be ordered. Alexander's (2004) classification of "policy domains" and "issue areas" had theoretical relevance for the analysis. The various policies were ordered into four domains that corresponded to four dimensions of integration, i.e. socio-economic, cultural-religious, spatial and legal-political. These were further subdivided into issue areas (education, housing etc.)[9]. Alexander's theoretical tool can help to identify common patterns of policymaking despite considerable institutional differences between Germany and the UK and their cities. In the article, I provide not only the policy domains and issue areas that could be identified in official documents, but also practical examples of interesting immigrant integration projects ("best practices") carried out by local authorities in the selected cities. The surveys presented help us to understand that immigrant integration is a complicated process that can be stimulated in various ways, that there is no single way to introduce policy aimed at immigrants and that it is not only large cities that try to deal with this issue. The German and British experiences presented in this article seem to be important for the new EU accession countries such as Poland, where work on the basics of policy integration are being conducted.

"Local immigrant integration" – definition

The term "local integration of immigrants" is not easy to define clearly. There is a host of literature on immigrant integration and an endless variety of definitions of the concept of integration itself. According to Grzymala-Kazłowska & Łodziński (2008) integration can be viewed from theoretical and research perspectives in three ways: from the point of view of the situation and experience of migrants; from the perspective of the relationships between migrants and the host society; and finally from the perspective of the opportunities and barriers, mainly institutional and legal, that exist for immigrants. A psychological and anthropological approach that focuses on the individual prevails in the first type of research. From the perspectives of psychology and anthropology, integration is the most balanced form of adaptation by immigrants to a culturally diverse environment. In the second, more sociological approach, the emphasis is on intergroup relations, social order and social structures. In this approach, integration is examined from the point of view of conflicts, harmonious intergroup relations or as a reversal of discrimination and exclusion. In the third approach (used in this paper) integration is recognized from the perspective of social policy and the actions of the institutional and legal authorities as the determinants of the migrant adaptation process and as instruments that shape the relationship between groups.

In Europe, the notion of "integration" has become a term most often used to describe the relationship between the host society organized in a structure of the nation state and the collectives of immigrants, often from non-European countries, with different cultures and ethnic origins (Grzymała-Kazłowska & Łodziński 2008). In most definitions, integration is understood as a two-way

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[4]The increase in the local level policy in Germany is particularly noticeable since 2005, when a new immigration law was implemented and immigrant integration became an even more important political issue. The National Integration Plan introduced in 2007 was an impulse to create new official documents in many cities. According to Gesemann & Roth (2009), between 2005 and 2008 41 out of 81 German cities of over 100,000 inhabitants, worked on the conceptions of integration. In the UK, local strategies took on new meaning *inter alia* after riots in 2001 in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham and also the terrorist attacks in 2005 when a new approach towards community cohesion was sought. The focus of immigrant integration policies consequently shifted away from a race-relations model and concentrated on refugee integration policy, community cohesion, a strong and broad emphasis on equality, counterterrorism (CT) policy, mainstream policies with some targeting of immigrant groups embedded within them and citizenship policy.

[5]In the literature, we can find many works that compare policies in the countries chosen and propose different models of integration designed to explain the differences in policy on the integration of immigrants. Hollfielda (1997) distinguished models in which Germany is the prototype of *Guestworker model* (when immigration is determined by the needs of the labor market, the presence of immigrants is seen as temporary, so there are no integration activities) and the UK is the prototype of the *Ethnic minorities model* (where immigration is an ongoing process, immigrants are defined on the basis of their ethnic or national origin. They create new communities that are culturally different. The challenge is to allow the harmonious coexistence of these communities in a multicultural country, hence the integration activities are directed toward them). While Rudiger and Spencer (2003) proposed the division based on the dominant ideology of the state, where Germany was in the *model of functional assimilation into an ethnically defined national state* and UK in *multicultural and communitarian models which are based on a pluralist conception of democracy*.

[6]These cities were selected after an internet survey (questionnaire sent by e-mail) and after reading the available literature relating to integration activities undertaken at the local level. During the selection of cities the following factors were taken into account: the number of inhabitants, the proportion of foreigners in the total population and the availability of materials (existence of official plans and strategies). In the UK, selection of plans for analysis was extremely difficult. Most actions toward foreigners were made in England, where the highest concentration of newcomers can be found. Therefore, strategies analyzed for the UK come from England. A city that deserves special attention is London. I decided to analyze strategies both for the entire metropolitan area and the programs implemented in selected boroughs (Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hillingdon and Bexley).

[7]Only the declaration was taken into account and no attention was paid to the implementation or evaluation of existing policies. The absence of policy mean that the city is unwilling or unable to implement it, or perhaps the issue is already covered by another government or non-governmental body.

[8]In the UK there is no official immigrant integration policy. In this country, instead of exploring the issues of integration, researchers began to consider the wider problem of the relationships between communities, i.e. the issue of community cohesion (Cantle 2008). In this paper, the concept of community cohesion is used interchangeably with integration to determine the activities undertaken in the UK.

[9]A description of issues that were analyzed was included later in this paper in the sections relating to different dimensions of integration.

process that is based on mutual recognition and acceptance of cultural differences[10]. Researchers and people involved in social policy use the term "integration" to determine present actions towards immigrants. For example Favell (2003) acknowledges that integration concerns activities designed to: ensure basic rights and social protection; enable receipt of naturalization or citizenship; create antidiscrimination legislation; measure equality access; redistribute grants for minorities in difficult social conditions; ensure good housing policy; support multicultural education or training for the host society on cultural differences etc. In this light, integration policy is a set of measures taken by the authorities (at different levels) that create the conditions that encourage and facilitate the integration of a newcomer (Heckmann & Schnapper 2003).

The term "immigrant" is also not unequivocal. Predominantly, we understand that an immigrant is a person who migrates to another country, usually for permanent residence. When we look at integration policies in the countries surveyed, significant differences in the capacity of the target groups of these policies can be seen. For example in Germany, integration policy is addressed to immigrants understood as foreigners, (so it includes people who do not have German nationality even if they were born in Germany or have lived there for many years), refugees and people of immigrant origin (*Migrationshintergrund*, even if they have German nationality). In the United Kingdom, most actions are addressed to refugees, foreigners (people without British nationality) and ethnic minorities (which are very often immigrants but also people of ethnic origin that were born in the UK or have British nationality). The differences in the delimitation of the group that is supported by integration policies also makes the term "immigrant" ambiguous. In the paper, the term immigrant is understood widely as a person who migrates to the EU (3rd country nationals) or is of immigrant origin.

The adjective "local" refers to or is characterized by a place or position in space, usually related to a city, town, or small district rather than an entire state or country. The term "local" relates to the spatial scale of the studied phenomenon - the local system. Jałowiecki (1988) recognizes that the local system is "a place inhabited by a self-governing community" so it can be related to a city, municipality or commune etc., depending on the role that the local level plays in political systems. The interaction between the receiving society and individual migrants takes place in the very defined context of streets, neighborhoods, schools, work places, public space, local organizations etc. In this paper I have considered a city as a local system, in accordance with the assumption that today most immigrants live in the cities that attracted them for a variety of reasons.

Based on the above, it seems reasonable to assume that the concept of local integration is far from clear and that there is no universal definition. Local integration of immigrants in this article is understood as the process of becoming an accepted part of society that takes place locally, in the city. Local integration policy is a process of creation of actions and measures which relate to the local level and enable immigrant integration.

Characteristics of integration activities at the local level

In the analyzed documents, activities in the **socio-economic dimension of integration** were divided into three thematic areas: education, labour market and social services.

In the **area of education**[11] there were many convergences (e.g. the promotion of language learning was the most important issue). Most differences seem to arise from previous experiences in the introduction of educational projects toward immigrants and focusing activities on different immigrant groups. In Germany, more emphasis was placed on pre-school education, bilingualism of children and increases in the employment of teachers of immigrant origin. For example in Munich, the project *Sprachförderung von Anfang an - Sprachberatung in Kindertageseinrichtungen, Horten und Tagesheimen (Language training from the very beginning – language consultancy in day-care centers and kindergartens)*, was designed to ensure individual support in teaching the language to children in institutions such as nurseries and kindergarten (München 2008). In Hanover, one of the integration projects hired bilingual teachers who conducted classes in German and the children's native language (Hannover 2008). Parents were often included in the educational programs. One example carried out in many German cities was *Mama lernt Deutsch (Mother learns German)*, which encouraged parents to learn the language while the child was at nursery, kindergarten or school.

In the UK, such initiatives have been working for many years, so there are more projects that emphasize the adaptation of the existing offer to new groups of immigrants or new problems faced by ethnic groups (especially refuges and young people from Africa). For example, under the program *Brent Youth Inclusion Programme and Crime Action Zone* conducted by the Wembley Youth Club in London, children from African and Caribbean countries were encouraged to take part in workshops, music, vocal and sport classes. Thanks to the initiative, teachers were able to identify potential gaps in the childrens' education and propose appropriate extracurricular activities to increase their skills and to build confidence in their own abilities (Brent 2008).
In both countries actions taken towards older children were designed primarily to provide them with equal opportunities to access education or advise them how they could continue their education. For example in Gelsenkirchen and Hamburg, educational programs were adapted to individual needs (the "educational plan" was introduced) (Gelsenkirchen 2005; Hamburg 2008).

In Germany and the UK most initiatives in the **area of access to the labour market**[12] concentrated on increasing immigrants' skills and competences. For example in Stuttgart, courses on "professional orientation" for people of immigrant origin were designed not only to increase their language skills, but also increase their general knowledge, teach them communication techniques and to prepare them for job interviews or writing a CV (Stuttgart 2009). In the UK, a number of initiatives concentrated on refugees. In Leicester, the project *Refugees into Libraries* enabled refugees to gain experience by working as volunteers in libraries. With the involvement of workers and refugees, a meeting point for refugees was created and special classes to prepare them for the citizenship test were also conducted (Leicester 2010).

In Germany and the UK, programs were often designed to activate young people of immigrant origin who were unemployed or threatened by unemployment. For example, the *Berlin brauchst du (Berlin needs you)* program tried to encourage

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[10]According to International Organization for Migration, "successful integration is a two-way process that involves mutual adaptation of migrants and the host society, as well as equality of rights and obligations. It involves acceptance by the host society and adjustment by the migrant. It is not something that happens once in a static manner. Integration is a dynamic relationship between two communities"(IOM 2006).

[11]In the field of education I analyzed if there was a special offer of language classes, adjusted curricula or if there were special (compensating) classes created for immigrants, whether there are professional teaching staff employed in kindergartens or schools (including interpreters and bilingual helpers), etc.

[12]In the field of employment, I analyzed the way in which the authorities were carrying out activities aimed at integration of immigrants into the labor market, inter alia whether special language courses, retraining and advice were offered, and whether the companies started by the newcomers were supported.

people of immigrant origin to work in the public service (Berlin 2007). In Sheffield within the framework of the *A City Where Everyone Thrives* project*,* authorities tried to bring young people together with business leaders from whom they could learn how their ideas can be made real and bring the expected benefits (Sheffield 2008).

An important element of labour market integration was to provide an advice service for immigrants. Advice services included all elements of assistance in finding a job such as: resume writing, recognition of qualifications, interview techniques and vocational training. In Berlin one of the integration projects created a special multicultural careers advice unit (Berlin 2007). In many cities in the UK, special units of a national advisory project (RIES) were introduced to promote the integration of people granted refugee status (Sheffield 2008).

An important issue that supported integration plans concerned the creation of businesses by immigrants'. In Nuremberg, the program aim was to facilitate the establishment of enterprises and workshops. An "early warning system" was created to protect them from the possible effects of the economic crisis (Nüremberg 2010). In Hamburg, local authorities offered immigrants special assistance in obtaining legal advice and a loan to open their own business (Hamburg 2007). In Leeds, the *Sharing the Success* project aimed at activating excluded immigrants through the development of entrepreneurship and support of initiatives by individuals and groups (Leeds 2008).

Among other activities worth mentioning are the efforts to recognize foreign qualifications. Most authorities tried to organize language and vocational training to help immigrants obtain the certifications required to work, as well as create information centers where immigrants can receive information on how a diploma (obtained in the country of origin) may be considered in the new country of residence. These sorts of projects were introduced in Berlin, Munich and London (to refugees and new immigrants).

In the area of the labour market, some differences seem to follow directly from the law. In Germany, initiatives are nowadays focused on people of immigrant origin (especially on second generation immigrants) and increasing their employment, particularly in public service – in some cities affirmative hiring actions can be observed. In the UK, favoritism of employment or favoring any group is illegal, which is why actions concentrate only on equal access to the labour market.

In the **area of social service[13],** in both countries most actions concentrated on giving advice on opportunities to improve living conditions (e.g. in Gelsenkirchen, Erfurt and Bristol). In the area of social services, differences arise from the history of immigration or the focusing of integration activities on various immigrant groups. In Germany more and more people of immigrant origin (who have lived and worked there for many years) are getting older and because their legal and institutional integration was delayed for many years, initiatives are now focusing on ensuring their access to health care and social benefits. In the UK on the other hand, many projects concentrated on the popularization of healthy living. Their target were immigrants and refugees from culturally different countries, often from rural areas, who hadn't had the opportunity to use many facilities available in the UK and had to learn how to live in a Western country. Furthermore in the UK, in most urban areas special consulting services for new immigrants were implemented. Great emphasis was placed on the availability of translations and translators. For example,

the Bristol project involved setting up a website containing information about life in the city for people of Somali and Polish origin (Bristol 2009).

In the **cultural-religious dimension of** integration[14], actions seem to be the most similar. In both countries it was emphasized that it is necessary to make the public aware of issues of cultural differences and to enable dialogue between representatives of different cultures.

Integration courses for new immigrants and people of immigrant origin were one of the elements aimed at building competence in dealing with other cultures. Among other initiatives, for example in Bremen and Osnabruck, intensive dialogue between representatives of different religions was conducted. Mutual invitations to churches and mosques, the common celebration of religious holidays and festivals in community centres, schools and kindergartens, lectures on cultural differences and events like the Islamic Week were examples of positive initiatives to promote understanding, openness and tolerance (Bremen 2007; Osnabrück 2007). The Sheffield project *Doors for Sheffield's Faith* in the UK was established to provide a forum that brings together representatives of various religious groups. The Forum dealt with *inter alia* organizing events and projects that aimed to build the capacity of religious groups and increase their involvement in the city life (Sheffield 2008). Local authorities (often in cooperation with NGOs) were involved in the organization of cultural events and festivals that aimed to strengthen the cultural and religious dimensions of integration. London was the capital of many such events[15]. In many cities in both countries studied, multiculturalism weeks were organized and included numerous exhibitions, concerts and shows for children,. One of the programs in Munich, *Migrantinnen und Migranten in München - 1945 bis heute* (*Immigrants in Munich – 1945 until now*), was established to create exhibitions and meetings on everyday life and the civic participation of people of immigrant origin (München 2008). In the UK, a significant number of projects concerned the creation of a "good attitude" to refugees. The projects in Bristol, Liverpool, Nottingham and Sheffield aimed to create "hospitable conditions" for refugees, providing them with an appropriate reception.

In many cities, efforts were made to regularly provide information on integration. Many initiatives were taken to new citizens of the cities through the distribution of information leaflets for visitors in native languages, such as *Begrußungsmappe* (*Welcome Map*) in Saarbrucken (2007). Activities in the UK rely primarily on the issue of information materials in different languages (*Welcome Packs*), providing personal advice (face to face) or running hotlines.

The **spatial dimension of integration**[16] is primarily concentrated with the spatial segregation of different ethnic groups and their access to public resources. In both countries, actions concentrated on equal access to the housing market. Special policy was introduced in cities with a higher proportion of social housing or refugees that needed accommodation. In

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[13]In the area of social service, I analyzed whether special services were made available to foreigners along with activities for all residents, as well as whether there were any special programmes for children and young people, women or elderly people offered by government or non-government organizations (charities, bringing together immigrants or ethnic groups).

[14]I examined whether and how integration policies relate to religious and cultural organizations that gather foreigners and whether there were any records of initiatives trying to prevent discrimination. I considered whether informational activities on cultural difference, training or seminars, special exhibitions, events and multicultural festivals were organized.

[15]Events worth mentioning are the festival of Bengali culture Baishakhi Mela, a festival associated with the end of Muslim Ramadan, Eid in the Square, and the Notting Hill Carnival, Europe's largest festival of Caribbean culture.

[16]The spatial dimension of integration policy refers primarily to housing and urban policies. The even development of the city boroughs, access to housing stock responsive to the needs of individuals and preventing discrimination were the most important goals to be achieved in this dimension. I investigated whether the programs were carried out with respect to these objectives and whether the actions were direct (only to migrants) or indirect (to all residents).

Germany, local authorities aimed to mix the population both socially and ethnically within districts. In many cities there was segregation of immigrants, usually resulting from their social situation but not based on ethnic or religion discrimination. Successful projects were implemented thanks to the *Soziele Stadt (Social City)* program. Managers of the districts (*Quartiersmanager*) encouraged residents to carry out their own initiatives in neighborhoods and tried to convince them that the change of their place of residence depends on them.

In Blackburn and Darwen in the UK, the *Neighbourhood Voices* project encouraged residents, many of whom came from different backgrounds, to participate in local events. They wanted to encourage them to discuss their needs, aspirations and concerns and identify actions that could improve living conditions in the area (Blackburn and Darwen 2010).

An interesting initiative was also undertaken in Hamburg. *An die Platz - Fertig - Kunst* (*Ready-Set-Art*) was designed to stimulate and improve the quality of public space near Essener Street. The projects involved children, adolescents and adults who, under the direction of artists, decorated courtyards, created sculptures and light installations and organized readings and performances. The projects were opportunities for intercultural and intergenerational dialogues (Hamburg 2007). In the UK, a similar project was undertaken under the name *Sheffield Changing Perceptions* in Edward Street (Sheffield 2008).

Actions taken in **the legal-political dimension**[17] of integration were most dissimilar. In both countries, the information campaign on civil rights or actions aimed at strengthening immigrants' involvement (especially in local initiatives) were conducted. The legal position of immigrants in both countries is different. In Germany, foreigners generally do not have the right to vote in local elections, whereas in the UK they do have this right. For many years in Germany access to citizenship was much harder than it was in the UK, also the support and acceptance of immigrant organizations varied greatly. For these reasons, in Germany most initiatives today concentrate on strengthening the involvement of foreigners in local initiatives, for example through participation in the elections for the local Council for Integrations (created as an advisory institution in many cities) or through participation in public service institutions. Berlin is an example of a city that introduced a project that encouraged immigrants to apply for German citizenship. In 2006, there was the naturalization campaign *PASSt mir* (*Passport suits me),* which addressed and raised the awareness of immigrant youth of the possibilities of naturalization through a series of activities, for example information brochures, adverts at bus stops, information events and radio spots (Berlin 2007).

In the UK, most actions today emphasize "strengthening" the role of becoming a citizen and the "prestige" of having citizenship – this is a response to the riots and terrorist attacks that took place in the UK that demonstrated that easy access to citizenship does not always mean that new citizens are connected emotionally with the host country. For example, in Blackburn and Darwen the *Belonging Campaign* was carried out.

As part of the integration initiatives in Germany and the UK, local authorities emphasized informing foreigners about the possibility that they could get involved in civic affairs and the benefits such involvement could bring. In Osnabruck Germany, the *Integrationslotsinnen und Integrationslotsen (Pilots of integration)* program relied on the commitment of "honorary pilots of integration" who assisted new arrivals in Germany. Within the

initiative, these "pilots of integration" took part in special training to learn about support measures for different groups of immigrants (Osnabrück 2007).

Social participation, understood as the inclusion of foreigners in the decision making process and an opportunity to express an opinion was also supported in the documents analyzed (especially in the UK). One of the examples was the *Community Leadership Programme* led inter alia in the municipality of Bexley in London. Within the initiative, participation in courses on leadership was offered. By taking part in the training many people managed to open their own non-governmental organizations, become members of Councils dealing with other social programs, initiate crime prevention programs and enter into collaboration with local centres.

It is worth mentioning that the legal-political dimension of integration was high on the political agenda in the largest cities such as London, Birmingham, Berlin and Stuttgart (where the immigrant organizations also focus more people) and was rarely discussed in the smaller cities.

In summary, Appendix 3 lists the key integration initiatives that appear most often in the official documents used in this research. The table was divided into four policy arenas and subdivided into issue areas. The initiatives presented show the multidimensionality of integration policy conducted at the local level.

End notes

The examples of initiatives show that the process of integration concerns all aspects of life in a society and includes migrants as well as the host society. Integration measures are generally intended to preserve or reestablish the smooth functioning of a society and to assist people who require support in order to become active participants in economic, social or cultural life. There is no single set of "best practices" that would be relevant for all, that is why it is important to look at the creation of integration policy as a multidimensional process.

The information included in the article indicates that the projects introduced at the local level in both countries are similar in many areas. In the countries surveyed, most similarities can be seen in the socio-economic, cultural-religious and spatial dimensions of integration that concentrate on the access to basic rights. This seems to arise not only from experiences in the implementation of immigrant related policies, but also from the exchange of information between European cities and integration within European Union policy (creation at the EU level of the *Common Basic Principles of Integration* and the *European Integration Fund*). Most differences can be seen in the legal-political dimension of integration, which remains a matter of much controversy. It seems to arise from differences in political and ideological preferences, existing mechanisms and policy instruments, the history of immigration and the social situation of immigrants that live in both countries. Different attitudes toward integration issues affect different groups of immigrants that are involved in the integration projects.

The increased interest in local immigrant integration policy means that more cities began to create concepts for integration policies. The process of creation of local integration policy in smaller cities seems often to be stimulated from above (by national or EU law) and does not always arise from the real needs of smaller settlements (this can be seen in Germany in particular). The direction in which it will evolve remains an interesting topic for further research.

I believe that the most appropriate way to assist integration is to recognize the characteristics and multidimensional factors that lead to the adaption of both immigrants and the host society to the new situation of coexistence, taking into account the complexity

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[17]In terms of legal and political integration, I checked most of all whether there were immigrants or ethnic minorities involved in the creation of integration strategies (e.g. whether there were consultative structures for immigrants), how local authorities work together with ethnic or religious groups as well as the role of NGOs.

of the process and its varying progress in different areas of life. The multitude of factors and aspects that should be taken into account when assessing the policy cannot, in my opinion, be summarized in a single article (especially when many different cities are analyzed).

I analyzed only the official policy projects (declarations) of cities and paid little attention to implementation, so this article cannot serve as a basis for evaluation of the actual response to the diverse needs of local communities. Although I didn't analyze it in the article, the role of different mechanisms and policy instruments is worth emphasizing because differences in political systems and the role of the local level in this system significantly affect the creation and implementation of local integration policy. Nevertheless, the material collected can be helpful in finding different solutions to the implementation of integration policy, particularly in countries that do not have long experience in immigrant integration policy. The creation of strategies in smaller cities (where the percentage of immigrants is close to that observed in the new European countries) can also generate new indicators of how to prepare local strategies, participate in the creation of integration policy at the EU level and moreover, to what extent the proposed solutions should be implemented in the context of the real needs of a given city.

Acknowledgements

Appendix 1. Local areas that were covered by the survey

	Germany	Percentage of foreigners		United Kingdom	Percentage of foreign-born
Cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants					
1	Berlin	13.7	1	Great London	31.6
2	Hamburg	14.2		Brent	54.2
3	Munich	24.0		Ealing	44.8
4	Stuttgart	23.7		Hammersmith and Fulham	35.8
5	Hannover	15.1		Hillingdon	28.4
6	Bremen	13.2		Bexley	11.9
7	Dresden	5.2	2	Birmingham	19.5
8	Nuremberg	17.8	3	Leeds	10.0
			4	Sheffield	11.0
Cities with 250,000-500,000 inhabitants					
9	Bochum	11.4	5	Leicester	32.5
10	Mannheim	22.5	6	Manchester	25.7
11	Karlsruhe	15.2	7	Nottingham	20.1
12	Wiesbaden	20.7	8	Sandwell	16.0
13	Aachen	17.2	9	Newcastle	12.1
14	Gelsenkirchen	13.5	10	Bristol	11.3
			11	Kirklees	8.7
Cities with less than 250,000 inhabitants.					
15	Potsdam	4.6	12	Slough	34.4
16	Erfurt	3.3	13	Southampton	15.5
17	Mainz	17.9	14	Peterborough	18.4
18	Saarbrucken	13.3	15	Blackburn and Darwen	15.1
19	Osnabruck	9.0	16	Middlesbrough	6.6
20	Ingolstadt	15.3	17	Blackpool	4.4

Source: own calculations based on integration strategies listed in Appendix 2

Appendix 2. List of documents analyzed

Aachen 2006, *Integrationskonzept der Stadt Aachen*, Available from: <www.aachen.de> [1 March 2011]

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Appendix 3. Key integration initiatives taken at the local level

	Integration	Germany	United Kingdom
1.	_Socio-economic dimension_		
1.1	Education	Language learning (for children and young people). Changes in the curriculum to enable equal educational opportunities for all groups. Special social projects for children and youth.	
		Support for bilingualism. Emphasis on primary education. Increase in employment of people of immigrant origin, planned employment of bilingual staff in schools.	Adapting the offer to the needs of new groups, translations, hiring of additional staff, appointment of working groups for the new community. A number of projects concentrated on young people from ethnic minorities. Their aim was to eliminate conflicts and prevent anti-social behavior.
1.2	Employment	Special language courses. Vocational training. Support for entrepreneurs (consultancy, financial support). Anti-discrimination policy and actions.	
		Affirmative hiring.	-
1.3	Social Services	Allowing foreigners to access services on the same basis as nationals. Adapting the advice service (offered after arriving) to the needs of different groups of immigrants. Special social projects for women and older people.	
		An important element was to draw attention to the situation of older people of immigrant origin. The aim of the activities was to ensure they had access to health care and social benefits on the same basis as nationals.	Emphasis on information about the opportunities and places where immigrants could get support. Popularization of healthy living. The existence of a special police policy on migrants to tackle racial attacks and crime.
2.	_Cultural-religious dimension_		
		Actions to raise awareness of the general public and institutions (including local authorities themselves). Seminars/media campaigns/promotion of permanent cultural centres.	
		Building a dialogue between representatives of different religions and ethnic groups.	Publishing materials on cultural differences and the real impact of new arrivals on the local environment. „Myth busting" leaflets.
3.	_Spatial dimension_		
		Anti-discrimination in access to the housing market. Temporary accommodation policy aimed at refugees. Long-term housing policy aimed at the settled community. A number of initiatives aimed at increasing the involvement of newcomers in the neighborhood and community life.	
4.	Legal-political dimension		
		Information campaigns, advice on civil rights. Strengthening the involvement of immigrants, encouraging them to work actively with NGOs and forums/councils that advise local authorities and to create their own associations. Transfer of powers to implement integration projects to non-governmental organizations. Supporting local activities taken by migrant associations.	
		Encouraging foreigners to participate in elections to the Council for Integration and involvement in local issues.	Encouraging immigrants to participate in local elections. Measures to strengthen the „prestige of applying for citizenship".

Source: own research

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