



## **The governance of religious diversity inside urban integration agendas: Cases from the Ruhr Area in Germany**

Eva Dick

### **Abstract**

In the last decade, integration has become a leading policy objective in Germany. The issue has also been lifted high on municipal and city agendas, albeit with changing emphasis. Recently, within what has been termed the inter-cultural paradigm, the governance of religious diversity has become a topic in many urban integration plans in the country. Based on the analysis of integration concepts of eleven metropolitan cities in the Ruhr Area this paper examines, how religious actors and inter-religious activities are included in urban integration plans, why urban stakeholders chose to integrate them in the agendas and, from a normative point of view, what relevance such activities possess for urban integration and cohesion. The paper suggests that while the inclusion of inter-religious activities and actors in integration measures aligns with recent principles of urban (diversity) management, the often political dimension of such encounters may reinforce rather than attenuate social and cultural borders and stereotypes.

### **Key words**

Migration, urban integration, inter-religious activities, governance, Germany

### **1. Introduction**

The objective of this paper is to discuss the governance of religious diversity and inter-religious activities in the context of urban integration policies in Germany. This will be done by asking how religion and inter-religious activities are dealt with in urban integration plans, why urban governments and administrations include inter-religious activities in these plans and about related potentials and challenges for managing diversity and building up social cohesion in increasingly multicultural cities.

Since 2000, Germany has significantly altered its legislative framework for immigration and the acquisition of citizenship, and in this context integration has become a leading “policy symbol” (Bommes, 2007, p.3) or objective. While the integration of immigrants has turned into an issue of national debate, it has also been lifted high on municipal and city agendas. This must be seen against the fact that in Germany the local level, rather than the national, has been at the forefront of addressing and implementing integration measures for years. Here, and particularly in the large urban areas to which most migrants moved, problems such as unequal

unemployment, education and housing were most directly felt, and as a consequence integration strategies sought to uplift migrants' situation in these fields.

While in the 1970s and 1980s local integration strategies largely consisted of compensating the above-mentioned 'structural' deficits of migrants, current ones follow a different approach. In accordance with the paradigm of inter-culturality, emphasis is now placed on the recognition and activation of immigrants' potentials, on the role of the majority population in a two-sided integration process (Baraulina 2007: 30) and on the 'software' of urban practices and conviviality e.g. cultural identities, values and beliefs. Also religion has become an important ingredient of integration policies, and inter-religious activities are included in many urban integration concepts (Klinkhammer et al., 2011, pp.242, 252).

I will argue that this inclusion is driven by a variety of factors: First, in the context of a migration-related growing religious diversity in German cities urban administrations are increasingly confronted with claims of different religious groups for urban participation and place-making e.g. in the context of the construction of representative religious buildings (Baker, 2008; Beaumont and Baker, 2011a; Schoppengerd, 2008). Second, the significance of inter-religious bodies "as strategic actors for the pursuit of the local governance of religious diversity"(Griera and Forteza, 2011, p.119) has gained political relevance in the context of anti-radicalization efforts following 9/11 (Tezcan, 2006, p.28). And third, the promotion of inter-religious activities in urban integration agendas can be related to a changing planning culture calling for intensified civil society activation and participation within new urban (diversity) management.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In the subsequent, second, chapter I sketch the research context and methodology of this paper. In the third section, I describe the evolution of migration and integration policies in Germany, notably at the local level. In the fourth chapter, I portray the evolution of inter-religious activities in the last decades and discuss the changing attitude of city actors towards such dialogues. In the fifth chapter the present incorporation of religion and interreligious activities in urban integration plans will be discussed, based on the assessment of integration and intercultural plans in eleven metropolitan districts of the Ruhr Area. The sixth chapter concludes with a summary and an assessment of future potentials and challenges for new state-civil society alliances in the governance of religious diversity within urban integration agendas.

## **2. Research context and methodology**

This paper is elaborated in the context of a recently started interdisciplinary research project called "Inter-religious activities and urban governance in the Ruhr Area" conducted by the Faculty of Spatial Planning of TU Dortmund and the Centre for Religious Studies (CERES) of Bochum University. The project uses Duisburg and Hamm, two selected cities of the Ruhr Area, as case study areas and will employ a mix of qualitative individual and focus group interviews, document analysis and (participant) observation as empirical methods. Since it has only recently started the

present paper predominantly draws on literature review, as well as on an internet-based analysis of integration concepts and plans in eleven cities of the Ruhr Area, thereby reaching beyond the case study areas chosen by the research project. At the time of the presentation at the conference, some preliminary results of interviews conducted in the cities of Duisburg and Hamm may however be included.

### **3. Immigration and integration policies in Germany**

According to Klaus Bade, migration scholar and presently chairman of the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration, over decades migration policies in Germany were characterized by the paradox of ‘a situation of immigration without [being] an immigration country’ (2007, p.32). That is to say, until the beginning of the present century, Germany did not see itself as an immigration state and consequently did not have an explicit immigration policy.

In the first years after World War II refugees from Eastern Europe and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) were the principal immigrants to Western Germany (Krämer-Badoni, 2001, p.19; Hillmann and Windzio, 2008, p.10). From the 1950s until the late 1980s guest workers from Southern European countries and their families occupied the highest share among the migrant population. Intergovernmental agreements signed between Germany and the guest workers’ respective countries of origin constituted the legislative framework for their temporary recruitment: The first such agreement was signed with Italy in 1955, the last one with former Yugoslavia in 1968 (Friedrichs and Alpheis, 1991, p.117)<sup>1</sup>.

Today the proportion of the foreigners in Germany is almost 9 percent and the proportion of the population with a migration background stands at a little more 19 percent (BAMF, 2010, p.189).<sup>2</sup> With Turkey still being the country of origin of the highest proportion of the population with a migration background, the legacy of guest worker immigration is reflected. However, in the last years an increasing diversification of national origins, as well as immigration purposes and pathways can be observed, also resulting in the diversification of religious origins of migrants (Dick, 2011, p.69).

The influence of guest worker migration is also evident in the Ruhr Area, an urban agglomeration migrants were historically attracted to due to employment opportunities in the mining and related heavy industries. Among today’s foreign population in the Region, the Turkish population shows the highest share of approx.

---

<sup>1</sup> Agreements in between these were signed with Spain (1960), Greece (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964) and Tunisia (1965) (Friedrichs/Alpheis 1991: 117).

<sup>2</sup> The population with a migration background is defined as the immigrants that came to the country after 1949, as well as foreigners born in Germany and all German-born with at least one migrant parent or a parent born in Germany as a foreigner (BAMF 2008: 235).

40 percent, followed by people from ex-Yugoslavia (13 percent) and Poles (7 percent) (Regionalverband Ruhr, 2012).

Related to the intended temporary character of guest workers' stay, in Germany in the second half of the 20th century an explicit immigration policy was not deemed necessary (Bade, 2007, p.35). This situation only changed in the 1990s and migration policies started to be conceived in conjunction with strategies for migrants' political, social and economic integration. The underlying, rather pragmatic, assumption was that social costs of neglected integration would otherwise grow far beyond the costs of timely integration support (ibid: 34, Baraulina, 2007, p.28). This has also manifested itself in important legislative changes: The principal milestones in this regard represented the reform of the citizenship law in 2000 and the immigration law that came into effect in 2005. The annual national Integration Summits conducted since 2006 under the auspices of the German Chancellor as well as the formulation of a National Integration Plan in 2007 and its 2012 revision (now National Action Plan Integration) illustrate that the topic has obtained a high policy priority in Germany.

The National Action Plan Integration delineates the following priority sectors for integration strategies in Germany: Early-childhood support; education and (professional) training; labour market and employment; migrants in the public service; health and care services; local support for integration; language and integration courses; sports; integration and the media; support of civic engagement and integration and culture (National Action Plan Integration, 2011). A variety of stakeholders from the State and civil society, among them religious associations cooperated in the formulation of the plan (ibid). By way of the priority sector "providing local support for integration" the role of cities and neighbourhoods for the implementation of integration is underlined.

Since the 1970s, the municipal level has always had a particular role for the integration of the migrant population, since it was at this level, particularly in the urban core neighbourhoods, that integration problems were most strongly felt. However, local integration concepts have considerably evolved in the last decades: Whereas until the 1990s municipal actors largely made use of compensatory integration measures (Baraulina, 2007, p.29)<sup>3</sup>, in the last decades the inter-cultural paradigm has gained momentum. In its context, a more resource-oriented approach is brought into play, in which emphasis is placed on the activation and participation of migrants in integration initiatives, the attitude of the majority population and strategies for improving mutual understanding and conviviality. At the same time, organisational networking at the local level for integration-related services e.g. with (inter-) religious bodies amongst other civil society organisations is becoming an imperative, not least in the context of budgetary restrictions (Baraulina, 2007, pp.31-32.).

---

<sup>3</sup> For these compensatory programmes municipalities or municipal actors merely act as executing agents while the funding comes from the Federal or States-level (id.: 30).

#### **4. Religious diversity and inter-religious activities in Germany**

Alongside the growing ethno-cultural diversity notably through migration in the last decades Germany has become ever more multi-religious (view religious groups and memberships in REMID). In the State of North-Rhine Westphalia in which the Ruhr Area is located, the majority of the population (approx. 75%) affiliates itself with the catholic and protestant religion. However, in the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there has been a growing migration-related pluralisation through Islam (aprox. 3% of the population), Eastern religions, and through the advent of new religious movements (Religion Plural).

While this statement can be made for the country as a whole, religious pluralism and faith-related manifestations in the public space are predominantly an urban phenomenon (metroZones, 2011a, p.18; Penta and Schiffauer, 2011, pp.265-266). To the extent that members of different religious affiliations interact for faith-related or other purposes (e.g. inter-religious prayers, community building or sports events, negotiations for the erection of religious building etc.), religious diversity translates into inter-religious contact and thus becomes potentially relevant for urban integration policies.

Besides historical antecedents, inter-religious activities in Germany set off during the early years of ‘guest worker’ migration in the 1970s. These activities were predominantly civil society-lead, with the purpose of exchanging information about the respective other religion or, from the side of Christian groups, providing support to recent migrant arrivals. Only from 2000 onwards and notably in the context of a growing sensitivity towards religious fundamentalism, activities between (predominantly) Muslims and Christians obtained political relevance and thus came to the centre of public and media attention (Tezcan, 2006, p.28; Klinkhammer et al., 2011, pp.24.). Also in other European countries, interfaith bodies and activities have recently become more institutionalized and increasingly drawn into governance processes at national, regional and notably local levels (Griera and Forteza, 2011, pp.117-118; metroZones, 2011a, pp.18-19).

In Germany, integration is the policy field religious diversity and interreligious activities have obtained the highest relevance for. Due to the above-mentioned link with security concerns, religion and particularly Islam have become highly relevant elements of the integration discourse (Klinkhammer et al., 2011, p.242). This manifests in high-profile events such as the annual German Islam Conference initiated in 2006 by the Federal Ministry of the Interior, but also in the topical orientation in Muslim-Christian dialogue circles which tend to be dominated by integration-related questions (Klinkhammer et al., 2011, pp.251-257). While the association with integration policies seems to be particularly prevalent in regional or national-level dialogues, it can also be noted on the local level.

In the present paper however I do not inquire into the prevalence of integration themes in interreligious events. Instead the inquiry comes from the other side, i.e. the

focus is placed on the degree and the reasons inter-religious activities and encounters have become a subject matter in urban integration policies and plans in Germany.

## 5. Results: Inter-religious activities in urban integration policies and plans

In order to analyse the relevance of religion and interreligious topics in integration concepts and plans in cities of the Ruhr Area, the focus is placed on the eleven largest, i.e. metropolitan districts of this region (Regionalverband Ruhr).<sup>4</sup> These are the cities Duisburg, Mülheim a.d. Ruhr, Oberhausen, Bottrop, Gelsenkirchen, Essen, Bochum, Herne, Hagen, Dortmund and Hamm.

### Description

Table 1 displays integration definitions and fields of intervention formulated in integration or inter-cultural plans in five of the mentioned cities<sup>5</sup>, and illustrates the role of religion and interreligious activities in the plans. Cities seem to use the terms ‘integration’ and ‘inter-cultural’ synonymously since ‘inter-cultural’ concepts (view e.g. of the city of Essen) tend to place emphasis on similar fields of intervention and objectives as the ‘integration’ plans of other cities.

With respect to the question how (inter-) religious activities and events are dealt with in urban integration and/or intercultural plans, the analysis in the eleven cities has produced the following results:

1. In most cities inter-religious activities are *not treated as a separate field of intervention*. Rather, the plans place most emphasis on structural integration support, e.g. in the areas of education, employment, language acquisition and housing and urban development. Among the eleven analysed plans or concepts, only the “Masterplan Integration” of the City of Dortmund points out “Interreligious dialogue and promotion of acceptance of non-Christian faith groups” as a separate field of intervention. In the City of Gelsenkirchen, “inter-religious concept” forms an explicit sub-field of action under the intervention field “culture and sports”.

---

<sup>4</sup> It is assumed that in these large cities inter-cultural and inter-religious relations have the highest prevalence.

<sup>5</sup> For reasons of readability the number of cities indicated in Table 1 was reduced to the five largest, out of the original sample of 11 cities. The information about the other five cities (apart from what is mentioned in the text) may be directly requested from the author.

Table 1. Principles, fields of action and the role of religion in integration concepts/plans in six cities of the Ruhr Area

CITIES AND PLAN	PRINCIPLES OF INTEGRATION	FIELDS OF INTERVENTIONS	ROLE OF RELIGION / IRA	FURTHER ISSUES OF INTEREST
<b>BOCHUM</b> Integration Concept	Process and potential orientation; Constitution as basis of action; Mutual respect; Same-level dialogue; Equal participation and opportunities; Fighting discrimina- tion; Inter-cultural opening of institutions	Education, Language, Employment, Conviviality, Children and Youth, Elderly Migrants, Health, Culture, Intercultural Opening and Sport	-No extra field of intervention -Objective promotion of respect towards cultural and religious difference, within human rights and constitution; Informal meeting between women of Christian and Muslim backgrounds	
<b>DORTMUND</b> Masterplan Integration (2008)	Acknowledgement; Equal oppor- tunities and access; Potentials and participation of all population groups	Education, school and transition; intercultural opening of admin.; language promotion; children and youth leisure; political and social participation of migrants; cooperation and dialogue with migrant organisations; interreligious dialogue; people with insecure residence status; culture and inter-culture; health; age; employment; housing; family; monitoring and evaluation; Dortmund International; Action Plan for Diversity; Action Plan for Socially Integrative City; Integrated Urban Development/Urban Renewal	Interreligious dialogue and promotion of acceptance of non- Christian faith groups is a separate field of intervention Projects in this field: - Supply options for Muslim funerals - Cooperation with Council of Muslim Communities in Dortmund -> target group are representatives of administration, Muslim faith groups, other religious institutions and members of the 'majority population' -Model project religious course for Muslim pupils	Project in 2008: visit of mosques for members of urban administration, in the context of action field intercultural opening of administration
<b>DUISBURG*</b> Concept of Integration "We are You" (2010)	Resource orientation; Dialogue and participation; Individual integration instead of 'ethnisation'; Common urban identity; Neighbourhood scale focus; Lived inter-culturality ( <i>Interkulturalität als Lebensgefühl</i> )	Supervision of the Duisburg Council for Integration; Cooperation with migrant organisations; Work with integration 'guides'; Inter-cultural urban portal; Inter-cultural opening of the administration;	- No extra field of intervention - Mentioned in the context of action field inter-cultural urban portal, emphasis on non- essentialised concept of diversity (not only result of cultural, ethnic or religious difference, but also	Important role of Mosque in Marxloh-neighborhood highlighted; city cooperates with and promotes the 'Board/Council' of the Mosque; encounter location of Mosque ( <i>Begegnungsstätte</i> ) was co-financed with EU- and State- funds, as symbol of urban

Table 1. Principles, fields of action and the role of religion in integration concepts/plans in six cities of the Ruhr Area

CITIES AND PLAN	PRINCIPLES OF INTEGRATION	FIELDS OF INTERVENTIONS	ROLE OF RELIGION / IRA	FURTHER ISSUES OF INTEREST
			other elements)	interculturality and integration, not least to high media attention
<b>ESSEN</b> Concept for Intercultural work in the city of Essen – Sachbericht 2010”	Dual change in perspective 1. From traditional support of foreigners (Ausländerarbeit) towards inter-cultural orientation; 2. From traditional administration management towards new public management.and new public management. Integration as a two-sided process.	In 2010: Recognition and participation; Inter-cultural opening; Language, Health and education; Qualification, Employment and self-employment; Urban society and development; Sports; Art and culture General: Teaching in language of origin; Inter-cultural concept; Inter-cultural play and learn groups; Inter-cultural language promotion and training of parents; Inter-cultural mediation; Sport and migration; Cooperation with schools	In intervention field “inter-cultural mediation”, interreligious dialogue between Muslim and protestant communities in migrant neighbourhood, location of Aya-Sofia Mosque Mosques are used as locations for a number of (non-religious) integration measures, e.g. education of youth for democracy, support of youth with homework, language learning, conflict management, family support etc.; but also inclusion of family- and youth-related problems in Friday prayer in Aya Sofia Mosque	Close co-operation of city’s office for intercultural cooperation with integration Council (representation of migrant’ interests in the urban context); action in 2006, “Muslims for Dialogue, Integration and Peace”
<b>GELSENKIRCHEN</b> Integration Concept Gelsenkirchen (2006?)	“Gelsenkirchen is dialogue-oriented”: <b>D</b> emocratic, <b>I</b> nter-cultural/inter-religious; <b>A</b> ttentive and sensitive; <b>L</b> iveable and lively; <b>O</b> pen for learning; <b>G</b> ender-sensitive and just	Education in and outside of schools, children and youth work; Culture, leisure and sports; Economy and employment; Intercultural opening of institutions and the administration; Urban development, housing and transport; Social and health affairs	Inter-religious concept a proper area of action under intervention field “culture and sports” including four recommendations; these are quite general and related to inter-religious communication processes, but also to physical buildings	Participation of representatives of intercultural work group ( <i>Arbeitskreis</i> ) ‘mosque and church’ in formulation of integration concept, as well as of different Christian, Muslim and Jewish groups

2. However, religion and/or inter-religious activities are mentioned as *important elements under other fields of intervention in almost all the plans*. In most cities, inter-religious activities or dialogues appear under intervention fields dealing with (inter-) cultural affairs (e.g. in Duisburg, Essen, Gelsenkirchen, Hagen and Hamm). In the city of Oberhausen they are attributed to the field of intervention labelled “dialogue and conflict”. And in Dortmund, a project of inter-religious encounter (view below) was implemented under the intervention field “intercultural opening of administration”.
3. The integration or inter-cultural plans mention a *considerable variety of inter-religious or religion-related activities* to be pursued. For instance, in the city of Dortmund, projects involve the organisation of Muslim funerals, to cooperate with the city’s Council of Muslim Communities, a model project of religious courses for Muslim pupils and a visit of mosques by members of the urban administration. For the city of Duisburg, the “site of encounter” (*Begegnungsstätte*) of the Merkez-Mosque in the Marxloh-neighbourhood hosts a variety of inter-religious events and is considered a symbol of urban interculturality and integration; a similar project is planned in the city of Oberhausen. In Essen, neighbourhood mosques are used as locations for non-religious integration measures targeted at needy families and youth, e.g. education for democracy, homework support, language learning and conflict management. The great majority of interreligious activities mentioned in the integration plans refer to Muslim-Christian events.
4. With the formulation of most integration plans involving the participation of a large variety of stakeholders from State/municipal institutions and civil society, also *representatives of religious associations have cooperated*. For instance, in Gelsenkirchen, representatives of the intercultural work group “Mosque and Church” participated in the formulation of its integration concept, as well as members of different Christian, Muslim and Jewish groups. In the city of Bottrop, six out of 38 members of the Council for the formulation of its Intercultural Concept were representatives of mosque and church organisations.
5. Although inter-religious activities can be considered an important element of today’s integration plans and concepts of the Ruhr metropolitan cities, the *nature of State support or involvement in these activities remains unclear*. Exceptions to this pattern can be found in the following cities: In Dortmund, members of the municipal administration are defined as one target group amongst others for the mentioned cooperation with the Council of Muslim Communities and also the inter-cultural opening of the administration. And in Duisburg, city officials are on the Board of the site of encounter (*Begegnungsstätte*) of the Marxloh Mosque that was also financed with federal State and EU-funds.

## Discussion

A number of factors determine the relevance inter-religious activities and events have recently acquired in urban integration policies. Based on the studied integration/intercultural concepts or plans of the eleven metro districts of the Ruhr Area I want to specifically point to the following three:

- Changing integration paradigm
- Post-secularization of urban space and societies, and
- Increasing relevance of (inter-) religious actors in local governance processes

Changing integration paradigm: The inter-cultural paradigm facilitates the entry of religion in integration policies insofar religion is treated as a base element of people's 'culture' (Tezcan, 2006; Nagel, 2012). As pointed out in chapter 2, the inter-cultural discourse has become dominant in describing migration- or migrant-related policies and strategies at the local level (Weber et al., 2010). The discursive modification notwithstanding, on the programmatic level in many urban areas 'traditional' strategies continue to play an important if not leading role (Baraulina, 2006). This is also mirrored in the integration plans and concepts of the studied Ruhr Area cities, in which 'classical' integration measures in the field of language, employment and skills promotion tend to be included (view table 1). Nonetheless, the inter-cultural paradigm transpires through the principles (integration as a two-sided matter, oriented in people's potentials etc.), labels (a few cities have set up 'intercultural' instead of 'integration' concepts) and intervention areas of all the plans. The changing integration paradigm goes along with a change in perspective on public and 'diversity management', the latter implying a much higher focus on recognition, networking and encounter between public and civil society stakeholders in the urban context (Fincher and Iveson, 2008; Sandercock, 2003).

Post-secularization of urban societies and space: A recent strand of literature is discussing the growing importance of faith and inter-faith action in the context of the post-secularization of contemporary societies and cities (Beaumont and Baker, 2011a; Baker, 2008). Cities are labelled post-secular due to a presumed "re-emergence of faith into the public realm of civil society and the built environment" (Baker, 2008, p.1), a notion that stands in contrast to former postulations of secularity of public life in modern (Western) metropolises (ibid: p.1; metroZones, 2011a). This is connected to a growing migration-related ethnic and cultural diversity, bringing about pluralized claims on urban participation and space which specifically materialize in cities and the local context (Griera and Forteza, 2011, pp.113, 117). To the extent that migrants bring their claims from the urban periphery to the centre (Arnold and Nagel, 2011), this calls for an increasing attention to such claims by urban policy makers and planners e.g. in the context of negotiating acquiescence for the construction of representative religious buildings (Schoppengerd, 2009). The management of social and spatial claims of religious

groups, particularly Muslims, becomes also manifest in the studied integration plans and their focal areas of intervention.

Increasing relevance of religious actors in local and urban governance processes: Related to the former point, in the last decade religious actors and/or interfaith bodies have gained a larger role in local and urban policies (metroZones, 2011a, pp.7, 18; Griera and Forteza, 2011). Besides the per-se pertinence and pluralisation of religious needs and claims in cities, the literature posits at least three factors shaping this: First, an enhanced capability of religious and inter-religious organisations to make their voices perceived, e.g. due to institutional formalisation and socio-political positioning (ibid: 124; Penta and Schiffauer, 2011, p.252). And second, an opened policy window for such claims and actors, e.g. due to the religious illiteracy of policy makers and planners in Western ‘secularist’<sup>6</sup> metropolises and the political dimension of religion and inter-religious relationships in the macro-political field (Griera and Forteza, 2011, pp.124-125). Both lead to (inter-) religious groups fulfilling an important broker-function – both actual and symbolic – between municipal stakeholders and disadvantaged communities, but also between potentially conflicting ethno-cultural or religious communities themselves (Baker, 2009, pp.7-8). And lastly, the inclusion of (inter-) faith actors in urban governance processes is consistent with new discourses on public and urban management in which networking and civil society participation constitute key normative components, however also budgetary necessities (Griera and Forteza, 2011, p.125; Baraulina, 2006, pp.31-32; metroZones, 2011a, p.19). In the studied Ruhr Area cities, particularly representatives of Muslim and Christian communities participated in the development of the integration and intercultural plans, thus suggesting their growing relevance as policy actors, but also the coupling of integration with security agendas down to the local level.

## **6. Conclusions**

This paper shows that linked to changes in the migration legislation, integration has become an increasingly important policy topic in Germany in the last decade. This development has occurred on the national, as well as State and local levels. The specific relevance of the local level and particularly large cities for both conceptualising and implementing integration strategies lies in the fact that traditionally most foreigners have moved to urban areas, among these the former industrial hubs of the Ruhr Area. Thus, as of today most large cities in Germany have come to formulate local integration concepts or plans.

---

<sup>6</sup> I am consciously adamant to make a generalizing statement about a ‘secularist’ urban policy and planning tradition, since this holds only true for a very limited period of time in a very specific geopolitical context, i.e. the one of the post-World War II European Welfare State (view Eade, 2011, p.154).

In the last decades the ideas about integration and thus principles nurturing local integration plans have significantly evolved towards what has been coined the inter-cultural paradigm (Baraulina, 2006). In the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> century so-called compensating integration measures dominated, seeking to counteract perceived educational or skills deficits of migrants. This deficit-oriented perspective on integration has gradually been replaced by the inter-cultural one, placing emphasis on reinforcing potentials (of immigrants e.g. in the ‘ethnic economy’, but also the multi-cultural urbanity as a whole), on interventions at the local (neighbourhood or city) level, and on the mutual responsibilities of majority and minority population groups to work towards improved urban integration and social cohesion (Weber et al., 2010, pp.1-2).

While traditional measures for the structural integration of migrants still tend to engage the larger part of local integration policies and budgets, strategies focusing on the promotion of urban socio-cultural understanding and conviviality are on the rise. This paper argues that thereby the inter-cultural paradigm has facilitated the entry of religious themes and inter-religious activities and built up the voice of religious actors (i.a. inter-religious bodies) in local integration policies and planning processes. It develops this and other arguments based on the analysis of integration concepts or plans in 11 metropolitan cities of the Ruhr Area in Germany.

Apart from the inter-cultural paradigm, the paper relates the inclusion of religion and inter-religious activities in urban integration agendas to at least two further factors. First, the proliferation of ever more pluralised religious needs and claims in the urban context, primarily, albeit not exclusively, voiced by urbanites with a migration background. And second, related to the former point, the growing importance of religious actors in the field of local politics. The “opened-up policy window” (Griera and Forteza, 2011, p.125) also needs to be considered in conjunction with transforming wider policy discourses on urban and diversity management, in which civil society and migrants’ participation as well as public-civic networking constitute key ingredients. Many interreligious structures and activities in Germany have existed for decades (Klinkhammer et al., 2011) and thus represent civil society activities ready to be built upon in integration programmes.

In the author’s view the inclusion of (inter-) religious activities and bodies in urban integration agendas, poses both potentials and challenges to cohesion-oriented future urban diversity management. The potentials are, that the dialogue between different religious groups may effectively enhance options for inter-cultural understanding and bring to the fore the experiences of culturally and socially marginalised groups, considering that many religious groups act as advocates on behalf of the latter. The challenge lies in that the politization of inter-religious dialogue may foster cultural/religious essentialism and the fixation of participants to their ascribed ‘cultural’ or religious orientation, particularly in the context of overall heated-up political climates. This may eventually work against creating space for “negotiated or performative identities in which secular and religious aspects intermingle” (Baker,

2009, p.7; also view Tezcan, 2006, p.31; Klinkhammer et al., 2011, 243, Weber et al., 2010, p.15).

It also needs to be said that interreligious activities in the context of Ruhr Area integration plans predominantly attend to Muslim-Christian relations - not least as a result of regional demographics. However, since also other religious groups have become claim makers in urban and public space it seems imperative that their concerns are not left out in the process.

The analysis carried out in this paper leaves open a number of questions, notably about the exact motivations of municipal stakeholders to involve (inter-) religious agents and activities in integration policies and plans, their role in these activities and the related processes of co-operation. These aspects will be addressed in the mentioned research project "Inter-religious activities and urban governance in the Ruhr Area" the author of this paper co-directs and will thus hopefully provide complementary insights to the topic.

## References

Arnold, M. and Nagel, A., 2011.: Ausstellungs- und Kunstprojekt: Migration und Religion im öffentlichen Raum. *Raumplanung*, 155. Pp. 109-110.

Bade, K., 2007. Versäumte Integrationschancen und nachholende Integrationspolitik. *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 22-23, pp. 32 – 38.

Baker, C., 2009. 'Faith in the City? Negotiating the postcolonial and the postsecular' - paper given by Chris Baker for the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations at the University of Warwick, March 2009. Available through: William Temple Foundation < <http://www.wtf.org.uk/activities/documents/Faithinthecity.pdf> > [Accessed 10 May 2012]

Baker, C., 2008. 'Seeking Hope in the Indifferent City' - paper given by Chris Baker at the 2008 Association of American Geographers annual conference in Boston April 2008. Available through: <[http://www.wtf.org.uk/activities/documents/AAG2008\\_paperfinalversion.pdf](http://www.wtf.org.uk/activities/documents/AAG2008_paperfinalversion.pdf)> [Accessed 10 May 2012]

Baraulina, T., 2007. Integration und interkulturelle Konzepte in Kommunen. *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 22-23, pp. 26 – 32.

Beaumont, J. and Baker, C. (ed.), 2011. Postsecular cities. London and New York: Continuum.

Beaumont, J. and Baker, C. ,2011a. Postcolonialism and religion: New spaces of 'belonging and becoming' in the postsecular city. In: Beaumont, J. and Baker, C. (ed.), 2011. Postsecular cities. London and New York: Continuum, pp. 33-49.

Bommes, M., 2007. „Integration – gesellschaftliches Risiko und politisches Symbol.“ *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 22-23, pp. 3 – 5.

BAMF 2010: Migrationsbericht des Bundesamtes für Migration und Flüchtlinge im Auftrag der Bundesregierung 2010. Nürnberg. Available through: [http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2010.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2010.pdf?__blob=publicationFile) [Accessed 10 May 2012]

Dick, E., 2011. Integration in the urban context in Germany. The example of the Socially Integrative City Programme. In: Dick, E., Frazzetto, A. and / Kirsch, A. (eds.), 2011. *Sprache und Integration. Ein interdisziplinärer Beitrag zum aktuellen Integrationsdiskurs*. Baden-Baden: Nomos, pp. 65 – 78.

Eade, J., 2011. From race to religion: Multiculturalism and contested urban space. In: Beaumont, J. and Baker, C. (ed.), 2011. *Postsecular cities*. London and New York: Continuum, pp. 154–167.

Fincher, R. and Iveson, K., 2008. *Planning and diversity. Redistribution, recognition and encounter*. Palgrave Macmillan: London.

Friedrichs, J. and Alpeis, H., 1991. Housing segregation of immigrants in West Germany. In: Huttman, Elizabeth (ed.) et al., 1991. *Housing segregation of minorities in Western Europe and the United States*. London: Duke University Press, pp. 116 – 144.

Griera, M. and Forteza, M., 2011. New actors in the governance of religious diversity in European cities. In: Haynes, J. and Henning, A. (eds.), 2011. *Religious actors in the public spheres*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 113-131.

Haynes, J. and Henning, A. (eds.), 2011. *Religious actors in the public spheres*. Routledge: London and New York.

Hillmann, F. and Windzio, M., 2008. *Migration und städtische Integration: Chancen und Risiken der Segregation und Integration*. Opladen & Farmington Hills: Budrich UniPress, pp. 9 – 27.

Klinkhammer, G., Frese, H.-L., Satilmis, A. And Seibert, Tina 2011. *Interreligiöse und interkulturelle Dialoge mit MuslimInnen in Deutschland. Eine quantitative und qualitative Studie*. Institut für Religionswissenschaft und Religionspädagogik der Universität Bremen.

Krämer-Badoni, T., 2001. Urbanität und gesellschaftliche Integration, *Deutsche Zeitschrift fuer Kommunalwissenschaften*, (1) 2001, pp. 12 – 26.

metroZones (ed.), 2011. Urban Prayers. Neue religiöse Bewegungen in der globalen Stadt. Hamburg und Berlin: Assoziation A.

metroZones, 2011a. Urban prayers. In: metroZones (ed.) 2011: Urban Prayers. Neue religiöse Bewegungen in der globalen Stadt. Hamburg und Berlin: Assoziation A, pp. 7-24.

Nagel, A., 2012. Vernetzte Vielfalt: Religionskontakt in interreligiösen Aktivitäten. Unpublished document.

Penta, L. and Schiffauer, W., 2011. „Nur in der Stadt kannst Du rein religiös sein“. Ein Gespräch über Politik und Praktiken religiöser Gemeinschaften in Berlin. In: metroZones, 2011 (ed.). Neue religiöse Bewegungen in der globalen Stadt. Hamburg und Berlin, Assoziation A, pp. 249 – 270.

Sandercock, L. ,2003. Cosmopolis II. Mongrel cities in the 21st century. London, New York: Continuum.

Schoppengerd, J., 2008. Moscheebauten in Deutschland. Rahmenbedingungen, Fallbeispielanalyse, Empfehlungen für die kommunale Ebene. Dortmunder Beiträge zur Raumplanung 131 (Blaue Reihe). Dortmund: IRPUD.

Tezcan, L., 2006. Interreligiöser Dialog und politische Religionen, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 28-29, pp. 26 – 32.

Weber, F. D. et al., 2010. Städtische Integrationspolitiken in der Diskussion: ein Tagungsbericht. Available through:  
<[http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=st%C3%A4dtische%20integration%20und%20religion&source=web&cd=6&ved=0CEgQFjAF&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.geographie.uni-erlangen.de%2Fdocs%2Farticle%2F334%2Ffweber\\_public\\_staedtscheintegrationspolitiken\\_110802.pdf&ei=5WpoT\\_etO7Lc4QToraSrCQ&usq=AFQjCNFuafIToaz6tL6LvES4RgsbLNVzfQ&cad=rja](http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=st%C3%A4dtische%20integration%20und%20religion&source=web&cd=6&ved=0CEgQFjAF&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.geographie.uni-erlangen.de%2Fdocs%2Farticle%2F334%2Ffweber_public_staedtscheintegrationspolitiken_110802.pdf&ei=5WpoT_etO7Lc4QToraSrCQ&usq=AFQjCNFuafIToaz6tL6LvES4RgsbLNVzfQ&cad=rja)> [Accessed XX].

## Websites

Bochum Integration Concept. [online] Available at:  
<[http://www.bochum.de/C12571A3001D56CE/vwContentByKey/W27UZAQS626BOLDD E/\\$FILE/Integrationskonzept.pdf](http://www.bochum.de/C12571A3001D56CE/vwContentByKey/W27UZAQS626BOLDD E/$FILE/Integrationskonzept.pdf)> [Accessed 27 April 2012].

Bottrop Intercultural Concept. [online] Available at:  
<[http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=interkulturelles%20konzept%20bottrop&source=web&cd=4&ved=0CD4QFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.raa.de%2Ffileadmin%2Fdateien%2Fprojektlandkarte%2Faa-bottrop%2FA-IK-Gesamt\\_Planungskonzept.PDF&ei=NX2eT7u0NYWn4gSU-WpDg&usq=AFQjCNF9tuonwyTSDDDDfJyXmKr70fkWPA&cad=rja](http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=interkulturelles%20konzept%20bottrop&source=web&cd=4&ved=0CD4QFjAD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.raa.de%2Ffileadmin%2Fdateien%2Fprojektlandkarte%2Faa-bottrop%2FA-IK-Gesamt_Planungskonzept.PDF&ei=NX2eT7u0NYWn4gSU-WpDg&usq=AFQjCNF9tuonwyTSDDDDfJyXmKr70fkWPA&cad=rja)> [Accessed 27 April 2012].

Dortmund Masterplan Integration. [online] Available at:

<[http://www.dortmund.de/media/downloads/pdf/integrationsbro/Vorlage\\_Masterplan\\_Integration\\_2008.pdf](http://www.dortmund.de/media/downloads/pdf/integrationsbro/Vorlage_Masterplan_Integration_2008.pdf)> [Accessed 27 April 2012].

Duisburg Integration Concept “We are You”. [online] Available at:

<[http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=duisburg%20interkulturelles%20konzept%20wir%20sind%20du&source=web&cd=3&sqi=2&ved=0CDEQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.duisburg.de%2Fv%2Fob\\_5%2Fmedien%2FDuisburger\\_Integrationskonzept\\_web.pdf&ei=yn2eT6DbC46K4gTo7\\_WpDg&usq=AFQjCNHh2BQTJmRVzbZpuj4NVbalKEefMg&cad=rja](http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=duisburg%20interkulturelles%20konzept%20wir%20sind%20du&source=web&cd=3&sqi=2&ved=0CDEQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.duisburg.de%2Fv%2Fob_5%2Fmedien%2FDuisburger_Integrationskonzept_web.pdf&ei=yn2eT6DbC46K4gTo7_WpDg&usq=AFQjCNHh2BQTJmRVzbZpuj4NVbalKEefMg&cad=rja)> [Accessed 27 April 2012].

Essen Concept for Intercultural Work in Essen – Sachbericht 2010. [online]

Available at:

<[http://media.essen.de/media/wwwessende/aemter/0513/Sachbericht\\_2010.pdf](http://media.essen.de/media/wwwessende/aemter/0513/Sachbericht_2010.pdf)> [Accessed 30 April 2012].

Essen Field Inter-Cultural Orientation. [online] Available at:

<[http://essen.de/de/Rathaus/Aemter/Ordner\\_0513/RAA/Interkulturelle\\_Orientierung.html](http://essen.de/de/Rathaus/Aemter/Ordner_0513/RAA/Interkulturelle_Orientierung.html)> [Accessed 4 May 2012].

Gelsenkirchen Integration Concept. [online] Available at:

<[http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=integrationskonzept%20gelsenkirchen&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CDsQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fstadt.gelsenkirchen.de%2Fde%2FRathaus%2FAuslaenderangelegenheiten%2F\\_doc%2FIntegrationskonzept.pdf&ei=KH6eT4PLH6Tk4QSA9MypDg&usq=AFQjCNG3A\\_Wt1yJ0gHY1B-A-HipVZ7yOpg&cad=rja](http://www.google.de/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=integrationskonzept%20gelsenkirchen&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CDsQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fstadt.gelsenkirchen.de%2Fde%2FRathaus%2FAuslaenderangelegenheiten%2F_doc%2FIntegrationskonzept.pdf&ei=KH6eT4PLH6Tk4QSA9MypDg&usq=AFQjCNG3A_Wt1yJ0gHY1B-A-HipVZ7yOpg&cad=rja)> [Accessed 30 April 2012].

Hagen Municipal Concept Inter-Culture. [online] Available at:

<[http://www.hagen.de/web/media/files/fweb/a41/interkultur/Kommunales\\_Handlungskonzept\\_Interkultur.doc](http://www.hagen.de/web/media/files/fweb/a41/interkultur/Kommunales_Handlungskonzept_Interkultur.doc)> [Accessed 30 April 2012].

Hamm 2nd Integration Report of the City of Hamm for the Year 2003. [online]

Available at:

<[http://hamm.de/fileadmin/civserv/1110000/forms/52-523\\_Migrationsbericht\\_II.pdf](http://hamm.de/fileadmin/civserv/1110000/forms/52-523_Migrationsbericht_II.pdf)> [Accessed 4 May 2012].

Herne Guidelines for Integration Work. [online] Available at:

<[http://www.herne.de/kommunen/herne/ttw.nsf/files/Leitlinien/\\$file/leitlinien.pdf](http://www.herne.de/kommunen/herne/ttw.nsf/files/Leitlinien/$file/leitlinien.pdf)> [Accessed 30 April 2012].

Herne Recommendations for Integration Activities. [online] Available at:

<[http://www.herne.de/kommunen/herne/ttw.nsf/files/sonstiges/\\$file/clavis.pdf](http://www.herne.de/kommunen/herne/ttw.nsf/files/sonstiges/$file/clavis.pdf)> [Accessed 30 April 2012].

Mülheim a.d. Ruhr Pre-Report “Inclusion is an Opportunity” (*Inklusion ist eine Chance*). [online] Available at:

<[http://www.muelheim-ruhr.de/cms/shared/datei\\_download.php?uid=19f14af9508e0c961a4d06547a6c1e21](http://www.muelheim-ruhr.de/cms/shared/datei_download.php?uid=19f14af9508e0c961a4d06547a6c1e21)>  
[Accessed 30 April 2012].

National Action Plan for Integration, 2011. [online] Available at:  
<[http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Anlagen/IB/2012-01-31-nap-gesamt-barrierefrei.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile&v=5](http://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Anlagen/IB/2012-01-31-nap-gesamt-barrierefrei.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=5)> [Accessed 30 April 2012].

Oberhausen Municipal Integration Concept. [online] Available at:  
<[http://www.oberhausen.de/downloads/KIKO\\_mitEinleger\\_download.pdf](http://www.oberhausen.de/downloads/KIKO_mitEinleger_download.pdf)> [Accessed 30 April 2012]

Regionalverbund Ruhr. [online] Available at:  
<<http://www.metropoleruhr.de>> [Accessed 9 May 2012]

Religion Plural, in NRW [online] Available at:  
<http://www.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/relwiss/rp/religionen1.html> [Accessed 10 May 2012]

RE MID – Religionswissenschaftlicher Medien- und Informationsdienst, religiöse Gemeinschaften und Mitgliedschaften [online] Available at:  
[http://www.remid.de/index.php?text=info\\_zahlen](http://www.remid.de/index.php?text=info_zahlen) [Accessed 10 May 2012]