



Working Paper Series

Number 26, Winter 2015

# Cities and immigrant citizenship

## A comparison of local citizenship policies in Barcelona and Munich

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### ***Abstract***

This article compares policies for immigrant integration in Barcelona and Munich, two cases of cities following a rather inclusive approach in this area. It is based on the analysis of policy documents and interviews with policy makers and civil society representatives. The analysis is structured along the dimensions status, rights and identity. It identifies very similar approaches, which combine own initiatives of the cities with a favourable interpretation of the policies of higher levels of government that they implement and attempts to directly influence national policies. Contributing to the debate on local vs. national citizenship models, the article suggests that cities that choose to actively engage in regulating immigrant incorporation, both in a more inclusive and restrictive direction, can significantly modify the boundaries of citizenship that national policies impose, while cities that do not engage in this policy area might simply reproduce the orientation of national policies.

### ***Keywords***

Immigrant integration; citizenship; cities; Barcelona; Munich; multi-level governance

### ***Author's biographical note***

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## **Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

This paper contributes to the discussion on the role of cities in immigrant integration policies. It addresses this question from the background of discussions about local models of immigrant incorporation and their relationship to national models (Zapata-Barrero et al., forthcoming). It proposes a citizenship framework, which looks at the specific contribution of cities in a co-production of citizenship across different levels of government.

The research that forms the background for this article is a cross-country-cross-city comparison of local integration policies (Caponio and Borkert, 2010) on four city cases, two in Spain and two in Germany, each pair consisting of one city with a rather inclusive, and one with a rather restrictive approach towards immigration. Based on differences between cities of the same country, this approach aims to assess the scope cities have to regulate immigrant citizenship autonomously, while differences between cities across countries can shed light on the role of national versus local factors. From this original sample, this article takes two cases with a more inclusive outlook, Barcelona and Munich. While a comparison between these two cities cannot answer all the questions, it can shed some light on the scope each of the cities has to modify national and regional policies, and the degree to which the policies of the two cities differ/resemble each other, because of/in spite of being situated in different countries.

The first section provides an overview of research on the role of cities in immigrant integration policies, and identifies some shortcomings of this research. Based on the thesis that cities operate under specific conditions when regulating immigrant incorporation, and that there is a trend to work on immigrant integration within wider, more universalist philosophies, the second section develops the concept of urban citizenship policies, which sees cities as potential co-regulators of immigrant citizenship. The third section then presents the comparative analysis of the two city cases, exploring the three interconnected dimensions of citizenship: status, rights and identity, which together help to understand the policy context within which cities

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<sup>1</sup> The author would like to acknowledge the support he received by a Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship of the European Commission [Grant Agreement Number PIEF-GA-2012-330057]. He would like to thank his colleagues at GRITIM-UPF for valuable feedback he received on his research on various occasions and all interview partners in the two cities for their time. He is also grateful to the reviewer for very thorough and constructive comments.

operate, and the way their policies can make a difference. A fourth section presents the results of the comparison, and suggests how to position the local regulation of immigrant citizenship in relation to national citizenship models.

This work is based on the analysis of policy documents, and a total of 16 interviews (8 in each city) that were conducted with policy makers, immigrant representatives and other experts in 2014/15 aiming to reconstruct the regulation of citizenship in both cities.

### **1. Cities and immigrant integration policies**

In recent years, scholars have called attention to the role of cities in immigrant integration (Caponio and Borkert, 2010; Penninx et al., 2004, Zapata-Barrero et al., forthcoming). One aspect of this research has been the orientation of local policies, i.e. whether local policies follow, by and large, national models or whether they enjoy sufficient autonomy to impose their own logics; and whether city policies share similar features across national boundaries, making them distinct from national policies.

Answers to these questions have so far been rather ambiguous. Some have found that cities and states follow different logics when it comes to immigration (e.g. Poppelaars and Scholten, 2008; Jorgensen, 2012; Ambrosini and Boccagni, 2015) while others have found cities to follow, by and large, the models pursued by their national governments (e.g. Dekker et al., 2015; Scuzzarello, 2015). In the former case, authors have found local policies to often be more accommodative, for instance, regarding the participation of immigrant organisations (Poppelaars and Scholten, 2008), in granting rights to undocumented migrants (Varsanyi, 2009) or in granting basic political rights for non-nationals (Penninx et al., 2004). At the same time, there are also counter examples of cities leading restrictive policies, as case studies on Berlin in the 1970s, Zurich in the 1990s (Mahnig, 2004) and Rotterdam in the early 2000s (Scholten, 2013) have shown. The presence of anti-immigrant parties in some cities is another factor that should caution against taking an overly simplistic view.

To sum up, the picture painted of the status of local immigrant integration policies and their relationship to the national level is rather unclear. In order to make sense of it, I suggest to go one step back and to question the methodological and conceptual model behind this research and to develop a different perspective. One problem, in my view, is that research focuses too heavily on the discursive framing of policies (e.g. Scuzzarello, 2015, critical: Emilsson, 2015) and often ignores the ways in which these frames

translate – or not – into concrete practices. Czaika and de Haas (2011) identify typical discrepancies or “gaps” between discourse and policies; between integration policies on paper and their implementation; and implemented policies and their effects. They argue that more weight should be given to the analysis of concrete policies rather than to discourses.

A second problem concerns the way that the relationship between local and national policies is conceived. Some research looks at local policies as if disconnected from national frameworks, without considering the specific ways in which local policies are determined by national frameworks (e.g. Alexander, 2003). Meanwhile, other research assumes that local policies are mere deviations from national frameworks, applying concepts like ‘assimilationism’ or ‘multiculturalism’ that were developed based on national citizenship models (Koopmans and Statham, 2000; Dekker et al., 2015). This implies, for instance, placing a particular emphasis on concepts of culture and giving less weight to questions of social cohesion, although they might correspond less to the preoccupations and competencies of cities.

Finally, immigration policy scholars have often focused on integration policies in a narrow sense, fixating on target group-specific policies. This reflects the logic of state-led civic integration programmes (Strik et al., 2010; Gebhardt 2015). It might be, however, at odds with the approach adopted by a number of highly diverse cities today, which pursue more universal policies informed by concepts such as 'living together', 'non-discrimination', 'equality', 'inclusion', 'participation', 'interculturality', 'community cohesion' or 'urban citizenship', and try to foster immigrant integration through mainstream services that are equipped to take into consideration the specific problems of immigrants, and of other target groups (see Gebhardt, 2014).

Taking together these issues, this paper suggests examining the role of cities in regulating the inclusion and exclusion of immigrants based on the concept of citizenship, as a suitable framework to capture the more universal approaches city policies draw on, and the interaction with other levels of government.

## **2. Specificities of the local regulation of citizenship**

There are two dominant ways of understanding citizenship, both of which have strengths and weaknesses in their capacity to capture the inclusion and exclusion of immigrants. The first perspective sees citizenship primarily as a formal status –

membership of the state – and is closely associated with liberal state theory. Here, citizenship appears as ‘a hard fact in terms of the passport and a state’s nationality laws’ (Joppke, 2010, 3-4).

The second understanding of citizenship addresses the most fundamental shortcoming of state citizenship: the gap between membership and substantive rights. This ‘practice’-perspective places the struggle of discriminated groups – their demands for recognition and equal rights - at the heart of its understanding of citizenship (Isin and Turner, 2003; Kostakopoulou, 2008, 145; Holston and Appadurai 1996; Bosniak, 2003).

Interestingly, both perspectives pay little attention to how local governments, and cities in particular, regulate citizenship. A formal perspective on state citizenship leaves little space for urban citizenship to unfold. Based on the assumption that ‘state citizenship is the only “citizenship” that is not just rhetorical and metaphorical but formal and institutional’ (Joppke, 2010, 3-4) the city is typically seen to be contained within the state polity, and urban citizenship to draw its ‘acumen from linkage with the state’ (Joppke, 2007, 38; critical: Isin, 2007, 215).

As to the practice perspective on citizenship, it is true that today’s metropolises appear to be of great importance for this understanding of citizenship – the very concept of ‘urban citizenship’ has been drawn upon extensively in the literature on global cities, transnationalism and cosmopolitanism (Holston and Appadurai, 1996; Uitermark et al., 2005; Varsanyi, 2006, 232). At the same time, however, this literature presents cities mainly as contexts for citizenship-claims and identity formation. The way the claims of marginalised groups ‘come back to influence the structure of the formal and legal institution’ is often overlooked (Varsanyi, 2006, 238). This leaves cities in a relatively passive role – they are derivatives of the ‘real’ sources of citizenship: on the one hand the state, and on the other the struggles of groups for their rights. This in return leads to a division of scales of citizenship in which the state is associated with hard and formal, and the city with soft and informal forms of citizenship. Against this binary logic, research on undocumented migrants has identified a variety of cases of the “local production of formal citizenship” (Chauvin and Garcés-Mascreñas, 2012) through bureaucratic forms of incorporation of city residents excluded by lack of national residence status. Such practices often have limited scope and are tied to conditions, but point to a practice of citizenship regulation by local governments.

Authors like Magnussen (2008) and Isin (2007) dismiss an understanding of the city as a mere sub-container of the state, stressing the different logics of both polities. The fact

that the urban polity is closer to its citizenry can result in a greater grassroots pressure on city governments, often channeled by civil society organisations. These specificities link urban citizenship with the practice-based understanding of citizenship: local governments may be more pressured to react to, incorporate or coopt claims from the citizenry, and more threatened by the disturbances and the pressure they create. In this way, urban citizenship policies and citizenship practice are two sides of the same coin, as ‘new migrants and residents... claim their rights as valid members of the urban public, which in turn places pressures on and shapes the meaning of citizenship in these cities’ (Varsanyi, 2006, 234).

As to their relationship to state citizenship, urban citizenship policies may well depend on the state, but they are not entirely contained by it in practice. While it is true that state policies (on visas, permits of stay etc.) constitute the main framework for the inclusion and exclusion of immigrants, there is scope for cities to modify this framework to some degree. As Joppke acknowledges, the philosophical justification of state sovereignty through the state’s rule over emergency ‘leaves no space for the routine “politics” in the liberal democratic state’ (Joppke, 2010, 3). It is exactly within such routine politics that city governments can use their prerogatives of self-government and the competencies gained through decentralization to set their own priorities, to interpret and even to disobey national policies without the state calling an emergency to bring them back in line.

Urban citizenship policies are exposed, then, to two different forces: they are subordinate to the state (but with room to maneuver), and exposed to the citizenry’s claims for inclusion and equal opportunities. The need to reconcile both the normative view of immigration, as represented through national policies, and the reality of immigration, which manifests itself in problems of exclusion and claims of immigrants and civil society is then the particular starting point for local citizenship policies.

The models that arise from this tension can be varied. While local governments may well hide behind or just implement state policy, or even try to follow a more restrictive path, there is a certain pressure to modify the national framework when it creates exclusion and discontent, in particular when this pressure is voiced by civil society groups and immigrant organisations. But there is no determinism here, either. Local idiosyncrasies and political opportunity structures add to the picture, and sometimes lead to policies which may well be more restrictive than the state framework foresees.

### **3. Comparing urban citizenship policies for immigrants in Barcelona and Munich**

From the background of the arguments developed so far, this section will now compare the ways in which local policies in Barcelona and Munich shape immigrant citizenship. The comparison is structured along three mutually constitutive dimensions of citizenship: status defined as membership of the urban polity; rights that are granted as a consequence of membership; and identity that flows from (this) membership (cf. Bosniak 2003; Varsanyi, 2006; Joppke, 2010; Kostakopoulous, 2008, Chauvin and Garcés-Mascreñas, 2012).

Mindful of the criticism formulated above, the comparison “drills down” into citizenship policies: it explores the discursive level of abstract visions down to concrete policies and their results to be able to take into account possible “gaps” and inconsistencies. The comparison will include looking at how the cities’ ambitions of tackling immigration related disadvantage through universal policies makes its way to mainstream social policies. Finally, it will attempt to contextualise, as far as possible, the cities’ attempts to regulate citizenship within policies made at higher levels of government - not so much with regard to abstract models of citizenship, but to concrete policies which have an impact on the inclusion and exclusion of immigrants.

#### ***3.1. Introducing the two cities and their national policy contexts***

Barcelona and Munich are situated in countries with quite distinct histories of international immigration (a considerably longer history in Germany’s case) with the impact this has on the cities’ population structure. At the same time, the differences in national immigration policy are not as strong as might be expected. Germany only started to recognize itself as a country of immigration in its 2005 immigration act. At around the same time, Spain was already developing its own substantial legislation on immigrant integration (in the early 2000s). Today, the integration policies of both Germany and Spain are classified by the 2015 Migrant Policy Index as “slightly favourable” with 63 and 61 points, respectively (see MIPEX.eu).

It is important for the comparison between the two cities to recognize that both countries are characterized by relatively strong decentralisation (a heavily decentralised state in the case of Spain, and a federal country in the case of Germany). This has led to rather complex multi-level government arrangements, with three strong levels of government, at the bottom of which the two cities operate. Looking at the two cities’ policies in this context means understanding how they make use of the formal



competencies they have, but also how they go beyond these competencies try to influence policies made at higher levels of governance, or decide to lead policies in their own initiative.

Barcelona has, over the last 20 years, been a destination for significant international immigration flows, transforming the city into a culturally diverse metropolis. In the early 2000s in particular, the non-Spanish population often saw an annual increase of 30 to 50% - a speed matched by few other European cities over the course of their immigration histories. Today, about 17% of the population has a nationality other than Spanish. This population is composed, almost in equal shares, of Latin Americans, Asians (mainly from China, Pakistan and India) and Europeans, of whom a large majority are EU nationals. It is a characteristic of the immigration to Spain that many of the immigrants from outside the EU came with a short-term permit, overstayed, and only later regularized their situation.

In this context, the city has developed dedicated policies for immigrant integration since 1997, the starting point being its “plan for interculturality” from 1997. Since then, regular immigration plans (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2002, 2008 and 2012) and a dedicated “intercultural plan” (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2010) developed the city’s policies in a relatively steady way (Interview Barcelona policy maker 2). This was carried by a consensus usually going beyond the respective governments, meaning that when the government changed in 2012 from the left to the centre-right this did not lead to the whole policy framework being questioned (ibid.). The policies are coordinated by a department on immigration and interculturality which forms part of the area of quality of life, equality and sports.

The history of international immigration to Munich is much older and has developed in a steadier manner. It started within the German “guestworker” scheme in the 1950s and 1960s, after which family migrants, refugees and intra-EU labour migrants joined the city’s immigrant population. Today about a quarter (24.2%) of Munich’s population is non-German, and around 35% have an immigration background, meaning that they are naturalised or children of immigrants (Landeshauptstadt München, 2013, 42). The biggest nationality groups today are from Turkey, Greece, Croatia and Italy, while the fastest growing groups in the city over the last years have been Romanians, Bulgarians and Poles. Another important flow of the last years has been the arrival of refugees from Syria, Eritrea, Nigeria and Afghanistan. Since the late 1990s, the city’s policy has been coordinated by the “office for intercultural work” within the municipal department for

housing and migration. Coordination was strengthened with the 2008 “intercultural integration strategy” (Landeshauptstadt München, 2008), which defines a process of intercultural orientation based on a “new public management” philosophy defining goals, actors and instruments, and assessing the outcomes through monitoring. In Munich, too, there has been a relatively consistent development of policies since the 1990s under the lead of the governing Social Democratic Party. Although the party’s coalition partner changed from the Green Party to the conservative CSU in 2014, no radical change has been registered so far by the experts interviewed.

### ***3.2. Visions of immigrant incorporation and their implementation principles***

When the rapid growth of international migration to Barcelona started, the city hall had already begun to express its ambition to lead progressive and inclusive integration policies. The first strategy from 1997, the ‘pla intercultural’ (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 1997) still lacked detail on policies, but set out a vision for an intercultural way of living together (*convivència intercultural*) that demanded that equal rights be granted to all, cultural diversity be recognised, and interactions fostered. Three further policy plans (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2002, 2008, 2012) and one intercultural plan (2010) gradually added substance to these foundations, and established certain governance principles: services for immigrants should, whenever possible, be provided by adapted mainstream services (in Catalan: *normalizació*); all policy areas should adjust to the new diversity (transversality); policies should be developed in collaboration with organised civil society (participation). From the outset, Barcelona has been very explicit about being an autonomous source of citizenship, based on ‘the acquisition of rights instead of the concept of nationality’ (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 1997, 14, 19), and granting ‘the same citizen rights and duties to all persons living in Barcelona’ (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2012, 11).

The integration strategy of the city of Munich is also based on an intercultural approach under the title of “intercultural integration”. It is geared towards the vision of Munich as “urban society ... guided by solidarity and based on a mutual understanding among all its members, in which the city’s policies and services empower the capacities of all people living in Munich, independently of their age, gender, skin colour, religion, cultural or social origins, language, disabilities, illness, world view, or sexual identity” (Landeshauptstadt München, 2008, 11).

Integration is understood to be a “process of inclusion of immigrants into the central areas of society...with the aim of equality of opportunities”, and based on the efforts of the immigrants and the host society (ibid., 12). It is broken down into a structural dimension, a social dimension of interaction, a cultural dimension, which is about attitudes and activities becoming closer to those of the host society, and identification, the feeling of belonging to the host society (ibid. 13).

The intercultural element of the philosophy is defined as the attitude of recognition and appreciation of cultural diversity to guarantee equal opportunities and participation for all social groups. In practical terms, this means that services and policies should reach all population groups equally, which is assessed through a process of stocktaking, goal orientation, participation and controlling (ibid. 9).

The visions of immigrant incorporation in both cities are informed by a universal orientation through which the cities strive to become intercultural societies, based on equal opportunities. In the governance modes for implementing these visions, again, many similarities appear, for instance, that both cities stress the need to mainstream immigrant inclusion into all policy areas, and to rely on the participation of civil society. These official visions are important for guiding policies, and even individual actions. But they are not sufficient for understanding what the two cities do. How the visions are broken down into concrete policies for regulating the inclusion of immigrants via status, rights and identity, will be the subject of the following sections.

### **3.3. Status**

Although residence status, permits and passports are a domain that remains under the almost exclusive control of national governments, there are several ways in which local policies have an impact on the status dimension. One is the transfer of competencies from the state through which cities contribute to the granting or denial of residence permits. A second is to build up an alternative mode of membership based not on national membership, but on domicile (Bauböck, 2003) or, in a weaker form, on territoriality or presence (Bosniak, 2007).

Through its local register, the *padrón*, the Spanish state provides a material basis for a local status, which is independent of a residence permit, because registration only requires a passport and proof of domicile. According to several interviewees, the *padrón* has a strong role both symbolically and a formally as a foundation of local membership.

I think that's the cornerstone...everybody is in the *padrón* from minute zero. It is a starting point. You can be irregular, but when you are in the *padrón*, you are a neighbour of Barcelona, and you have some rights ... and everybody, also irregulars, are counted as neighbours (Interview Barcelona policy maker 1).

A city official describes the city's policy as "active registration policy" meaning that there is a generous approach in granting the local status, for instance by allowing people to register even when they sleep rough in the city (Interview policy maker Barcelona 2, see also Garcés-Mascreñas 2014).

National legislation on immigration built on the *padrón's* function to formalize status beyond the local level, when the foreigners act of 2000 connected access to health care and education to the local register. The link to health care was broken, however, by a 2012 government decree - access was no longer universal but instead linked to social security, thereby excluding most immigrants without a regular status (see next section). Other links between local and national status exist in the form of competencies on residence permits that were devolved to the cities. The 2004 reform of the foreigners' act made cities responsible for checking the integration-related conditions for various residence permits. Cities assess the integration and housing conditions of immigrants applying to bring family members for instance. They are also responsible for checking whether immigrants applying for regularization are "socially rooted" – whether they have been registered in a municipality for at least three years, and show signs of integration. In this capacity, the city initially took a benevolent approach, assessing integration requirements favourably and "making things easy" for people to regularize their status (Interview Barcelona policy maker 2).

The conditions for the city changed in 2011 when the national government defined more closely how integration should be assessed, namely through participation in dedicated courses, and left it to each autonomous community to specify the details. The Catalan government that now determines the scope of the city has toughened conditions, by raising the bar in particular regarding Catalan language requirements, and by making its brand new comprehensive newcomer introduction programme the gold standard for "integration efforts" (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2014). Probably as a result of the 2011 changes, the number of people who were refused the accreditation of their social rootedness in Barcelona rose from 0.2% in 2010 to 3.2% in 2012 (Ajuntament de

Barcelona, 2014b). Given that the refusal rate in Catalonia as a whole stands at 8.5%<sup>2</sup>, it can be assumed that Barcelona still enjoys some scope to interpret the guidelines favourably.

The city has also developed its own soft policies on residence permits. Working with the Immigration Council and the local board of lawyers, the city hall elaborated ‘67 proposals to foster the inclusion of immigrants in the framework of foreigners legislation’ (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2014a). The proposals for the local delegation of the national government suggest how state officials can avoid immigrants falling into irregularity by using the many “grey areas that can make a big difference” in foreigners legislation (Interview policy maker Barcelona 2).

In Munich, most policies regarding status and registration are implemented by the *Ausländerbehörde*, which can be translated as foreigners office. The tasks of these offices, which exist in each German county and the bigger cities is to implement foreigners legislation on behalf of each of the 16 *Länder*, which themselves work under the legal framework of the Federal government. The offices are hybrid bodies, which work under the supervision of the home affairs ministries of the higher levels of government, but formally belong to the cities and counties. In this position, local foreigners offices (and their employees) have discretionary powers, which in the case of Munich were used to align the office with the integration strategy of the city, and to provide a more inclusive interpretation of the policies also in matters of status. Already in 1999, a process for service orientation was launched in the office from an intercultural perspective (Sorg and Szoldatits, 2009). Today, an interview partner from the city hall claims that in matters of status, the office’s staff members “go to the limits, although, of course, they can’t break the law” (Interview Munich policy maker 3). For instance, quite untypically, the *Ausländerbehörde* and the department for intercultural affairs try to solve problems related to status on a case-by-case basis that civil society organisations present to them anonymously on behalf of immigrants.

An immigrant representative acknowledged that while he did not like the institution, some efforts were made, mentioning the office’s policy to no longer deport young refugees when they are in training (Interview Munich immigrant representative 1). At the same time, he stressed that the restrictive side of the municipal office continues to exist, when for instance people with a subsidiary status are deported after more than ten

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<sup>2</sup> According to data received from the Catalan DG for Immigration.

years of stay in Munich, which he believes is a result of the pressure of the Bavarian ministry of home affairs, for which “deportation is the highest priority” (ibid.).

Another case where the office shows its enforcement character concerns the treatment of EU citizens from Romania and Bulgaria. NGOs have documented many cases in which, whenever immigrants from these countries applied for state support, the office asked them to explain why they needed such support, given that they had come to Germany to look for work, and then threatened them with deportation. Although such deportations of EU citizens, according to an interview partner, have not happened yet, the office’s threatening attitude towards these EU citizens is in itself a way of regulating status in a restrictive way.

The city has also made it increasingly difficult for this same group of EU citizens from the Balkans to register. Where Barcelona seems to follow an approach where all people that live in the city, even those without a roof, should be on the local register, Munich has raised the formal criteria and, for instance, excludes all those that live in informal accommodation, which has effects on these immigrants’ social rights (Interview civil society representative 1).

Although it is plausible that the foreigners office in Munich pushes its limits further than most other offices in Germany, its hybrid identity still materializes in contradictory actions, which sometimes show a benevolent and sometimes a more restrictive “home affairs style” orientation, and marks a boundary for the city to regulate status of immigrants. In this context, a big difference between the two cities is that unlike in Spain, legal residency in Germany is a condition for registering with a municipality, and the permit and registering are closely connected.

### **3.4 Rights**

In order to have any sense, status must be linked to rights. Cities have some rights under their direct control, for which they can define access criteria; they can foster the access to rights that are granted at higher levels of government, or they can attempt to fill policy gaps through their own services without necessarily having formal competencies. As we have seen further above, both cities make equal opportunities a key pillar of their philosophies. Barcelona claims to be an autonomous source of citizenship based on ‘the acquisition of rights’, and to grant ‘the same citizen rights and duties to all persons living in Barcelona’ (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2012, 11). Munich associates integration

closely with equal rights, which demands efforts of the host society, in particular by taking on an intercultural orientation

#### *Orienting newcomers*

A first step to granting access to rights for immigrants is to provide advice and information to newcomers. In very different national and regional integration policy contexts, Barcelona and Munich follow a similar approach whereby they complement the existing offers for newcomer integration provided at higher levels with their own initiatives. In fact, these local policies in both cities date back further than the national policy framework on newcomer integration.

In Spain, the national framework is still relatively weak. From 2007 to 2012 the state had a dedicated national fund, to finance regional and local integration offers, but this was scrapped with the economic crisis. In 2011 the state legally incentivized autonomous communities to get involved in newcomer integration (see above). In this context, Catalonia moved forward with its long planned newcomer integration programme under which it now obliges all cities above 20,000 inhabitants to provide courses for language, vocational and social orientation following the Catalan government's curriculum. Already in 1989, long before these developments, Barcelona had started its own reception policy. As part of this, the service SAIER (*Servei d'Atenció a Immigrants, Emigrants i Refugiats*) brings together services that NGOs provide for immigrants under the coordination and financing of the city. They include free legal advice, support for refugees, labour market orientation, and support for skill recognition procedures with the Spanish and Catalan administrations. The city has a reception plan and funds a reception network of civil society organisations providing orientation directed to immigrants in a decentralised manner, based on the cities' own introductory sessions for newcomers. All these services are free, and –unlike the Catalan newcomer programme – accessible for all immigrants, regardless of their status. A fourth element is Barcelona's programme on family reunification, which provides families with specific guidance on the legal, practical, and psychological aspects of the process. For newly arrived family members, dedicated group-specific induction programs are organized and children who arrive too late in the term to integrate into school directly can follow a summer programme with language classes and orientation (Interview Barcelona policy maker 3).



In Germany, the state introduced a comprehensive policy for newcomers in 2005. It consists of *Integrationskurse* on language and society, and a migration advice service, which are provided all over the country, mostly through associations. Against a backdrop of more comprehensive state policies, Munich provides or finances additional services for migrants that the city does not see sufficiently covered by the state, for a total of 8.5m Euros (Interview Munich policy maker 1). The advice service IBZ provides immigrants, also those with an insecure residence status, with orientation on language training, education, professional qualification and jobs.

In both cities some of these services attract clients from the surrounding area, suggesting that they have a very real benefit to migrants. One interviewee from the city hall therefore referred to Munich as “a land of bliss” where a big, differentiated and incremental course offer exists (Interview Munich policy maker 1). This is not true of the surrounding areas, partly because they lack the critical mass of participants, partly because they lack commitment or expertise. When the political leadership became aware of about 20% of the participants from language courses coming from outside the city, participation was restricted based on the argument that the (wealthy) suburban communes should provide a financial compensation.

#### *Social rights – offsetting disadvantage in mainstream services*

In the area of social rights, working towards equal opportunities for immigrants has essentially two consequences: providing services to all residents and compensating particular disadvantages that immigrants may face in these services. In meeting these objectives in areas such as education, employment, housing and health, the departments coordinating the integration strategies face a double challenge: on the one hand, winning over the departments that are responsible for these areas in the city hall – this is a key challenge coming with the mainstreaming philosophy; and, on the other hand, coordinating with higher levels of government which hold formal competencies in these areas.

Regarding this latter point, Barcelona has few formal competencies in the field of employment and health care; it co-manages the schools in the city through a consortium with the leading Catalan administration. Munich has some influence over employment policies for long-term unemployed, which are implemented by a joint agency of the federal public employment service with the city. While it runs some of the local schools, education policies are managed by Bavaria, and health care at the federal level.



Regarding housing, both cities manage a limited stock of regular and emergency housing and have little competencies to regulate the housing market.

### *Education*

Barcelona has a number of projects in place in the educational sector, including intercultural mediators and teacher trainings, mentoring programmes and initiatives to increase the participation of immigrants in parents associations. But overall these efforts do not allow to tackle inequalities within a polarised system of public and private schools which, by default, sort students according to their social origins: while more than half of the city's schools are run by private providers, three quarters of the children of immigrants attend public school and thereby reproduce the prevailing pattern of inequality (Garcés-Mascreñas 2014, 20).

From the background of a growing consciousness of the reproduction of inequalities through the German (and in particular Bavarian) education system, Munich is topping up resources of schools in disadvantaged areas to allow for additional staff and more individualized support. The city offers trainings for teachers on interculturality and German as a second language (Landeshauptstadt München 2013: 140).

### *Employment*

Barcelona's reception policy hosts a variety of specific advisory services on employment for immigrants. When it comes to the cities' mainstream employment service, *Barcelona Activa*, the immigration strategy foresees to foster a better participation of the immigrant population in this service's training offers. But so far, immigrants remain under-represented, in spite of their over-representation among the unemployed with 11.6% among the roughly 20,000 participants receiving training in 2013 (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2014c). Within its role as major employer, the city hall also committed to recruiting staff from a more diverse background, but had little scope within a general recruitment stop of the last years (Interview Barcelona policy maker 1). An immigrant representative criticized a lack of such specific measures against the city's intercultural ambition:

If the city were an intercultural city, granting rights and opportunities, the would need to be opportunities for immigrants to become public servants, administrative employees, police, and that does not exist (Interview Barcelona immigrant representative 1).

Munich, similar to Barcelona, offers specific labour market orientation for immigrants within its newcomer integration policies, such as advice for labour migrants from EU member states with lower qualification profiles, or a service for supporting skill recognition processes (Interview Munich policy maker 3). But the city but has moved further in adapting mainstream employment services. Through the project FIBA (standing for “refugees in employment and training”) the city finances a labour market coach for refugees (including those with a subsidiary protection) to provide a more intense coaching and more targeted measures for labour market integration than the regular employment services would allow.

As a result,

the integration quote was 70% just because (the coach) had more time and a little budget to allow to finance other measures, so you could also finance, for instance, a driving license or a B2 language training (Interview Munich policy maker 2).

The city finances courses for young refugees who are beyond mandatory school age that offer a degree with vocational orientation, while taking into account the specific needs of this target group.

City officials stressed their “mainstreaming successes” in inspiring the higher levels of government to take over approaches that were successfully tested by the city, which has been the case for both FIBA and the vocational courses for refugees. At the same time they acknowledged that the implication of the higher levels often leads to changing rules and re-inventing the wheel in a top-down manner (Interviews Munich policy maker 1 and 3).

Through its integration strategy, Munich has set goals to increase diversity among staff working for the city. It formalized and established “diversity competence” as a recruitment criteria and tried to attract in particular young people for apprenticeships (Landeshauptstadt München 2008). The results of this policy are still relatively meager – according to the city’s self assessment at about 20% of staff are from a migration background, but much less in the higher ranks of the administration. One bottleneck for the city’s efforts is that according to German law non-EU-citizens cannot become public servants (Landeshauptstadt München 2013).

### *Housing*

Barcelona and Munich have limited capacities to compensate disadvantage in the field of housing, with Barcelona owning some 10,000 flats and Munich roughly 77,000, of which about 44,000 are social housing.<sup>3</sup> Building affordable housing has not been a priority in both cities, but even less so in their respective national and regional contexts. In Barcelona, an interviewee from the city hall acknowledged that the city's housing stock just allows covering some emergency cases (Interview Barcelona policy maker 2). In Munich, the waiting time for candidates to access social housing is 5 years. This leaves the city with little steering capacity on a market, which is among the most expensive and most competitive in Germany, and which faces a constantly growing demand due to a population growth of more than 200,000 in the last 15 years. This situation poses a particular problem for newcomers, such as labour migrants who have a limited access to social housing. As a result, support organisations report many cases of private housing brokers exploiting immigrants being without a chance on the regular housing offer to make them pay indecent amounts of money to rent containers or commercial premises (Interview Munich civil society representative 1). With the refugees' inflow increasing rapidly, one city employee felt how the city "just can't keep up with housing..." (Interview Munich policy maker 3) and a civil society representative conceded that "it is important that the city keeps the balance with the needs of the (established) residents" (Interview Munich civil society representative 2). In other words, both cities lack capacity to compensate disadvantage on the housing market not only for immigrants, but for a much wider range of residents who are struggling to find a premise.

### *Health Care*

The two cities' efforts on providing access to health care take place in very distinct contexts, with a partial disconnection from residence status in Spain, at least regionally, and an exclusion of immigrants without residence permits in Germany. Both cities have responsibilities on public health, but no formal role in the health care system.

In Spain, the 2000 foreigners act granted access to health care to all immigrants based on local residency, and thereby included immigrants without a residence permit, as long as they were registered with a municipality. A 2012 decree restricted access for most

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.muenchen.de/rathaus/Stadtverwaltung/Sozialreferat/Wohnungsamt/Sozialwohnung.html>

irregular migrants, by shifting the base of the health system to social security. Together with other autonomous communities, Catalonia partially lifted this obstacle by granting access to basic health care in its own jurisdiction for those immigrants in lack of resources who are registered in the *padrón* for 3-12 months, and access to specialized care for those with more than one year of de facto residency upon application (Médicos del Mundo, 2014, 10). Given that the Catalan solution is rather bureaucratic, Barcelona provides guidance with leaflets and through personal reception and advice services delivered for the most part by NGOs.

Today we prioritise the health card. When there are problems of the kind ‘they have denied it to me’, we accompany them. And when we say accompaniment it’s accompaniment, that is, that the officer comes along to the healthcare centre and asks what the problem is (Interview Barcelona policy maker 2).

Lacking support from higher levels the city of Munich developed what could be termed a subsidiary local health system for immigrants with an irregular status. Following an initiative from civil society, the city finances health services that are implemented by NGOs through a dedicated fund. The system also includes clearance with the foreigners office to check whether funding is possible through the social security system. While today many other German cities have followed the “Munich model” to some degree, the city was a pioneer in acknowledging the presence of undocumented migrants, when it started more than a decade ago. For instance, when a Federal decree had established a duty for administrative staff in the public health care to denounce irregular immigrants Munich declared this duty nil because it violated the principle of professional secrecy (Landeshauptstadt München 2010).

### *Political rights*

Political participation is the core dimension of citizenship, and at the same time a last bastion of national membership, which remains mainly reserved for nationals. Both Germany and Spain are among the more restrictive European countries in conceding voting rights and citizenship to non-nationals. In Germany, the only exception are local voting rights conceded to EU nationals, which represent less than half of the non-nationals in Munich. In Spain, in addition, residents from countries (mostly Latin American) where Spanish citizens can vote are also allowed to vote locally. But this still

excludes more than half of the foreign residents in Barcelona. Moreover, it can be estimated that barely a third of all non-Spanish residents who had the right to vote in Barcelona's 2015 local elections were actually inscribed in the electoral register.<sup>4</sup> In other words, both cities face a situation, in which large numbers of non-nationals living in the city do not or cannot engage in formal political participation.

One instrument to partly compensate this problem are immigrant councils that exist in both cities. Barcelona's immigration council consists of members of organisations working with and representing immigrants, and is presided by a politician. In its earlier setup, it was described by Però (2007) as a 'token apparatus', which mainly benefited the political-institutional elites and the 'immigration industries'. More recently it has been strengthened, and now has, for instance, the mandate to hold ad-hoc meetings on urgent issues. Immigrant organisations that participate in the Council still do not perceive it as an instrument that allows immigrants to participate on an equal footing. One interviewee, for instance is critical of the fact that the city hall has insisted on the presence of non-immigrant NGOs (Interview Barcelona immigrant organisation 1), and several suspect that relationships between the city hall and immigrant organisations are tainted by political favouritism. All the same, the Council is seen to be a useful arena for forging networks between migrant organisations and making a difference in policies related to immigrants' rights:

It is possible that (the city hall) does it for its own benefit, but thanks to the Immigration Council we have a voice in the political realm, and a direct relationship with the city hall. We can present our projects and criticise. For instance, when they were delaying the delivery of papers for the reports on housing conditions for family reunification, we went to the city hall, and the process sped up. The same for social rootedness: whenever they were slow, we complained and they sped things up. So there are cases where they take us into account (Interview Barcelona immigrant association 2).

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<sup>4</sup> According to Ajuntament de Barcelona (2015) some 20,000 voters with foreign nationality are inscribed in the electoral register. The eligible foreign population can be estimated based on the 94,000 registered persons in the population register in 2014 that have nationalities enjoying the right to vote in Spanish local elections. Disregarding minors and people with an insufficient length of residency there should have been at least 60,000 eligible voters of non-Spanish nationality.

Munich has a “foreigners board” (*Ausländerbeirat*) of 40 members, who are elected by the city’s immigrant population. Like the Barcelona council, it has only an advisory function, but its institutional position is stronger through the possibility not only to adopt motions, but also to support integration related initiatives with a budget of more than 100,000 Euros. According to one member, the board has an impact,

in that you adopt motions which ‘annoy’ the city council...it is a permanent fight...for instance, we adopted a motion to change street names with a colonial connotation (which was turned down by the city council). We wanted to change more than 20 names, and we organised a discussion with the supporters and opponents of a name change from the parties. We had residents from the districts in the audience; it was interesting, for the first time there was a public debate. You notice that the people from the city council would prefer a calmer, ‘rubber stamp’ type of advisory board, and that leads to tensions (Interview Munich immigrant representative 2)

The respective councils can achieve things in both cities, and they are an important training ground for the mainstream political arena. But the fact that their very constitution can be changed, and is changed, unilaterally by the city hall is one indication that the potential influence of these councils depends on the willingness of the city council to listen.

A second path of increasing the political participation of immigrants is through the participation beyond the immigration councils, in mainstream civil society organisations. In Barcelona,

we try to make these migrant associations enroll in different municipal councils, like women's council, gays and lesbian councils, the inclusion council, youth council...If you are a migrant youth organisation, go to the youth council with other youth organisations...so you can do that from a collective point of view (Interview Barcelona policy maker 1).

Munich has gone a similar way and supported civil society organisations to become more reflective of diversity. It also supported the creation of a local umbrella structure for the city’s immigrant organization (“Netzwerk MORgen”) with the aim to empower these organisations, to build up capacity in terms of political participation and to facilitate cooperation among immigrant groups and with non-immigrant institutions.

Both cities also want to increase the representation of those immigrants that can vote in the regular channels of political participation. Barcelona has at least formulated the goal to introduce “new blood to the city assembly and district councils, in such a way as to guarantee the participation of people and organisations of different origins” (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2012). This goal, apparently, has not yet led to concrete actions. But the city at least tries to influence the number of immigrant voters registering by distributing information on how to register for the electoral roll in various immigrant languages.<sup>5</sup>

The city of Munich now invites representatives of the district councils to be present at citizenship ceremonies to inform new Germans about possibilities to become active in these Fora (Interview Munich policy maker 4).

### **3.5 Identity**

At times where more and more states have raised the bar in terms of the cultural alignment they demand of immigrants in citizenship and integration tests (Strik et al. 2012), cities can provide an alternative or complimentary source of identity. The way to belong to cities has lower hurdles, and is more a matter of fact, qua residence, than a legal matter; an experience of everyday life rather than one of an “imagined community”, and a form of belonging which is historically less related than the state’s with ethnicity.

Following the Marshallian logic of citizenship according to which loyalty is a consequence of ‘the struggle to win...rights and...their enjoyment when won’ (Marshall 1950, 41), the strongest way to foster identity is through the rights that belonging grants for a person. In this regard, we can see the policies of Barcelona and Munich that foster equal rights for all citizens (see previous section) also as policies that foster a civic local identity.

Beyond this, both cities make communication efforts to underline their civic foundation. Since 2010, Barcelona is running an “anti-rumour campaign” which trains a network of 500 local institutions and supporters to use facts to actively quash the most wide-spread stereotypes about immigrants in the city, e.g. about immigrants receiving special benefits or abusing the health system. The initiative has been copied by many other

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<sup>5</sup> See <http://www.bcn.cat/novaciutadania/arees/ca/drets/cens.html>



cities, with the help of international institutions. On a slightly lower level, Munich organises campaigns and events against racism and intolerance.

On the cultural side of their identity policies, both cities underline their commitment to recognise diversity, and to reject the idea of an ethno-national preference. Barcelona's policies aim to 'make the city's inhabitants more aware of that diversity, so it becomes a shared part of everyday life'. The argument goes that 'ignorance, false rumours or the lack of visibility of cultural and religious practices [fuel] prejudices and the incomprehension of diversity' (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2012, 25). The city attempts to increase the visibility of diversity by, for instance, supporting the celebration of holidays like Ramadan or the Sikh Baisakhi procession; organising tours on different immigrant groups in the city together with their organisations; integrating sports from immigrants, such as cricket, into its school curricula; or making public libraries purchase literature that reflects the population's origins (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2010 and 2012; Interview policy maker Barcelona 1). At the same time, the city distances itself from 'pigeonholing and merely classifying communities' (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2012), preferring to identify and promote intercultural commonalities, intersections between cultural and other forms of diversity and hybridisation, and dealing with individuals rather than 'communities'. Cultural events are only supported when they are organized for the whole population, and in particular when they have a cross-cultural design; the city's Chinese New Year's celebrations, for instance, incorporate Catalan folkloristic groups. Also beyond the cultural sphere, the city is keen to foster cross-cultural interaction, for instance by encouraging immigrant businesses to join local business associations. Such activities which link up identity politics with political participation actively seek to redress an imbalance in participation between immigrants and established residents, and show a proximity to the republican tradition of citizenship through equal participation, which is encouraged, but not enforced, by the city.

In Munich, policies that target the cultural side of identity are less widespread. With the strong focus on intercultural orientation of mainstream society, the idea is that these institutions, e.g. sports clubs, become themselves representative of the diversity of the city. Meanwhile, immigrant organisations are promoted by the city as another channel for participation to become involved with mainstream organisations, such as cultural facilities.



Both cities also establish limits in their promotion of cultural diversity, notably the respect the democratic principles of the host society, but also regarding religion. In Munich, organisations with exclusively religious activities are, theoretically, kept out of the umbrella organization of immigrant NGOs which the city supports, although an interviewee acknowledged that such an “exclusively religious” organization would be difficult to find (Interview Munich civil society representative). In Barcelona, religion is kept somewhat outside the intercultural approach, and treated as a civil liberties issue by the respective department:

It is difficult to speak about interculturality and religion. You are one religion or another. You can have interreligious dialogue, you can have ecumenical relationships, but it is difficult to speak about creating something new on the basis of religion (Interview Barcelona policy maker 1).

As a third element, both cities strongly focus on acquisition of the host societies’ languages, which can be seen as binding elements between civic and cultural elements of identity. In the bilingual city of Barcelona, Catalan is promoted as a core element of the local culture, and language as its inalienable core element, lingua franca, and tool for cohesion (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2012, 9). Consequently, the city puts more emphasis on the promotion of Catalan than on Spanish, also because the autonomous community of Catalonia strongly supports such efforts politically and financially, while the Spanish state keeps out of language acquisition. Barcelona’s intercultural centre, the Espai Avinyó, is a joint venture between the city and Catalonia’s consortium for Catalan language learning, combining cultural events and debates with language training under one roof. The centre’s programme is predominantly in Catalan, compared to a much more bilingual orientation of most other city services and events.

As we saw above, the city of Munich has equally made language learning a priority of its policies. This includes both courses for adults, with a professional orientation and support for children of a non-German mother tongue, e.g. through teacher training in German as a second language. The argument is similar than in Barcelona that the host society language is a key for social mobility. While the city praises the federal language programme through the Integrationskurse officially as a “success story”, a civil servant stressed that its own courses are of greater practical value for social mobility. Both cities also strongly endorse support for the learning of heritage languages.

#### 4. Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to compare how Barcelona and Munich can make a difference with regard to citizenship for immigrants along the dimensions of status, rights and identity. An underlying question is about the status of local policies with regard to national models of integration from the perspective of two cities in different countries that see themselves as inclusive and ambitious in overcoming obstacles for inclusion.

##### *Cities regulating citizenship*

Regarding the citizenship approach, we can see how both cities make a difference across all dimensions of citizenship, under the goal to become intercultural cities.

Both work with a wider interpretation of status than the concept of legal residency of the state. In Barcelona, the idea of a local status is more explicit, and can draw on the local register, which is independent from residence permits, while in Munich both go hand in hand. The national policy context is also more favourable for Barcelona regarding the existence of a pathway out of irregularity, in which cities play a role checking the conditions. Ultimately, however, Barcelona cannot “grant” national status and its scope to influence decisions has been narrowed down through the intervention of the Catalan government.

In its less favourable environment, Munich, too, tries, with some success, to steer decisions on status via the local foreigners office into a more inclusive direction, but the office being subordinate higher levels of government limits the room for maneuver. In general, therefore, policies for influencing status have a more informal character in Munich than in Barcelona.

The question of who is a member and who is not becomes more concrete in the rights dimension, where both cities move beyond the idea of legal residency (of the state) by organizing services on a *ius domicili* basis, for instance in their newcomer integration policies. From the background of its rather restrictive national and regional policy context, Munich goes particularly far by financing subsidiary health services for immigrants without a residence permit.

When it comes to mainstreaming the intercultural approach in policy sectors that are crucial for access to social rights (education, employment, health and housing) both cities face challenges in realizing their vision, albeit to varying degrees. These consists of a weak substance of these services (e.g. a lack in steering capacity on the housing

market), of different goals of other departments (e.g. employment services in Barcelona), and the dependency on higher levels of government holding key competencies in education or employment, for instance. While both Munich and Barcelona use their budgets for immigrant integration to incentivize other city departments and institutions at higher levels of government to become more reflective of the specific needs of immigrants, Munich has a stronger internal mandate to do so, as the intercultural approach has become part of the city's general management model.

In the area of political rights, both cities use various policies, from immigrant advisory bodies to measures that increase the presence of immigrants in mainstream politics and civic life to compensate a national context that puts heavy burdens on the participation of non-nationals.

In the identity dimension, both stress the cities' civic foundations and their respect for diversity to foster a common sense of belonging for the whole population and provide substantial support for language acquisition. Barcelona has a more interventionist approach of literally mixing up the immigrants with the rest of the population, and stressing elements of fusion.

#### *Local and national models: islands of the blessed?*

In spite of the very distinctive histories of immigration and institutional setups, the comparison identified many similarities in the ways the two cities regulate citizenship for immigrants, from their visions, to their key governance techniques to the type of policies that they implement.

The national policy contexts play a strong role, as they mark the boundaries and define some of the instruments the cities have at their disposal. For instance, the Spanish system offers more possibilities to Barcelona to regulate status in a more extensive manner, whereas Munich's competencies in employment policies probably make it easier to develop training measures for immigrants.

At the same time, many of the measures that both cities use, e.g. on information and orientation for newcomers, intercultural teacher trainings, support with skill recognition or intercultural orientation of civil society organisations are similar because they are not based on specific competencies that the cities have in their national contexts. Instead they follow the cities' own initiatives, or that of local NGOs, and are often financed with the cities' own resources.

Coming back to the initial question of local versus national models of immigrant incorporation, the conclusion is that there is no general answer. The two cities were chosen as examples for ambitious and inclusive local citizenship policies for immigrants and do not stand for cities in general. Their more restrictive counterparts that were not analysed here indicate that the specificity of such cities is to simply not make such efforts, and rather “wave through” the policies made at higher levels of government. Or, to make efforts to impose further restrictions to the ones imposed by the national policy framework. If these assumptions are correct, it is mainly cities, which, like Munich and Barcelona make efforts to impose their own model and creating significantly different conditions for immigrants which become “islands of the blessed” (or “of the doomed”, in the case of restrictive cities) for immigrants, and thereby modify the “flatness” of national and regional immigration models. Cities with a rather inclusive orientation like Barcelona and Munich, might then, through their specific efforts, become more alike even across national boundaries, as long as the national policy framework they work in does not derive too far from the norm. The majority of cities, in particular smaller and less resourceful, but also simply less ambitious ones, might, however, simply implement their respective national and regional integration policy models and not constitute a big difference.

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*List of interviews conducted*

- Interview Barcelona policy maker 1  
Interview Barcelona policy maker 2  
Interview Barcelona immigrant representative 1  
Interview Barcelona immigrant representative 2  
Interview Munich policy maker 1  
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Interview Munich policy maker 3  
Interview Munich immigrant representative 1  
Interview Munich immigrant representative 2  
Interview Munich civil society representative