



## Germany's Transformation to a Modern Immigration Country. SVR 2014 Annual Report with Migration Barometer

### Summary of the 2014 SVR Integration Barometer

In recent years, a lot has been initiated and accomplished both politically and legally to improve integration in the sense of equal opportunities for participation in the key areas of society. Headlines about integration policy in the last five years, however, often do not bode well for the integration climate in Germany: the debate about integration in the media and often in the political realm focuses on inadequacies, reproduces stereotypes and frequently concentrates on hand-picked individual cases that are then used to make sweeping generalisations. Positive reports, for example, that more skilled workers are immigrating to Germany, that it is easier to have foreign professional qualifications recognised or that integration is possible at a local level, have hardly attracted attention – true to the media principle that bad news is good news.

This makes it even more important that the SVR has developed the Integration Barometer, a tool that objectively and transparently captures the integration climate in Germany (see “Comments on methodology used in the SVR Integration Barometer”). The 2014 SVR Integration Barometer shows that the integration climate in the immigration society has generally remained friendly; on the other hand, however, experiences of discrimination and biases against certain groups are certainly not isolated incidences.

**(1) The 2014 SVR Integration Barometer shows a generally pragmatic and positive integration climate in Germany.** The population as a whole clearly rated the current state of integration to be “good”, in some case, even somewhat better than in previous years. More in-depth analyses of the survey, however, show that distinctions need to be made to reflect the pluralistic nature of German society. Perceptions vary depending on an individual's sociodemographic background and country of origin: on average, *Spät-/Aussiedler* (repatriated ethnic Germans), EU27 immigrants and interviewees from “other European countries” as well as those from the “rest of the world” (Africa, Asia, Australia and America) are more optimistic about the integration climate than people without a migration background and respondents of Turkish origin. Education and employment situation also play a role in shaping opinions. People with an *Abitur* (high school diploma with qualification for university admission) feel more optimistic about coexistence in Germany than those surveyed with a *Hauptschule* diploma (*Hauptschule* in Germany is a secondary school that prepares students for vocational school, apprenticeship in trade, or the



lower levels of public service); pensioners, part-time employees and the unemployed are more negative than people who work full-time. Respondents in the regions of Berlin-Brandenburg and Halle-Leipzig feel that the integration climate is significantly worse than those surveyed in the Rhine-Main region, where the integration climate generally received the best rating. Overall, however, there is no pronounced 'integration pessimism' in Germany, quite the contrary.

**(2) Attitudes about the development of integration are generally more positive in most sub-areas than in 2011.** The integration climate is calculated based on the following four sub-areas: community, employment, social ties and education. Compared to the 2011 survey, people with and without a migration background perceive integration to be generally more positive in most sub-areas in 2013. However, both groups still rate the integration climate lowest in the area of education even though the figure slightly improved among people without a migration background.

**(3) Need to foster intercultural openness.** In terms of integration policy, the majority of the population sees a need for changes that would encourage more intercultural openness in German society. A significant majority of people with and without a migration background holds the view that immigrants are not adequately represented in the educational, public service or political realms. Accordingly, a clear majority of those interviewed said that more immigrants should be hired as teachers, public servants, police officers and judges and the German *Bundestag* (the national parliament) should have more parliamentary representatives with a migration background.

**(4) Experiences of discrimination despite a generally positive integration climate.** Even though the integration climate was given a positive overall assessment, this cannot, and should not, conceal the fact that coexistence in Germany's increasingly diverse society is not entirely rosy in every respect. The 2014 Integration Barometer shows, for example, that people with a migration background experience different forms of discrimination in their day-to-day lives. This kind of discrimination is mainly experienced at educational institutions, on the job and on housing markets. Even though overall the level of discrimination in Germany is not very high, people with a migration background report experiences of discrimination much more frequently than those without a migration background. People of Turkish descent and respondents from the "rest of the world" in particular perceive much more discrimination in how they are treated than interviewees without a migration background and those from EU member states who report a significantly lower incidence of discrimination. This is an indication that people with certain external traits are more likely to experience discrimination.



**(5) Cultural and religious diversity: ambivalence of pragmatism and scepticism.** For the first time, the 2014 SVR Integration Barometer also looks at the population's attitudes about how cultural and religious diversity is handled politically as well as their views about minorities. The survey shows that people have a generally pragmatic concept of a society that is gradually opening up but at the same time have biases against individual groups, primarily Muslims and Roma immigrants. Respondents both with and without a migration background reacted positively to measures undertaken by the Federal Government and *Länder* to address demands for religious equality, e.g. the introduction of Islamic religion classes at state schools. In contrast, the majority of both groups is sceptical about religious justification for individual issues, such as being excused from physical education or swimming lessons for religious reasons or permission to wear a headscarf for teachers at state schools.

## Comments on the methodology used in the SVR Integration Barometer

The SVR Integration Barometer measures the integration climate in the immigration society. People both with and without a migration background are surveyed. The data for the 2014 Integration Barometer was collected in the summer of 2013 in the five major regions Rhein-Ruhr, Stuttgart, Rhein-Main, Berlin-Brandenburg and Halle-Leipzig. These are densely populated urban areas where the coexistence of people with and without a migration background plays an important role in everyday life.

To reflect Germany's plurality as a migration country, minimum numbers of people defined ahead of time were surveyed from Turkey, the group of *Spät-/Aussiedler* (repatriated ethnic Germans), immigrants from EU countries, people from non-EU European countries as well as people from the "rest of the world" (Africa, Asia, America and Australia). Weights are used to reconcile the numbers to the actual population percentages, making a representative analysis possible.

A total of 5,659 people with and without a migration background were interviewed for the Integration Barometer. The total sample is comprised of 74.7 per cent of people with a migration background and 25.3 per cent of people without a migration background. 15.0 per cent of the total sample belong to the group of *Spät-/Aussiedler*, 17.5 per cent to the EU27 group, 10.9 per cent of the interviewees have a Turkish migration background, 15.7 per cent have a migration background from a non-EU European country and 15.6 per cent have a migration background from another third country ("rest of the world"). The survey was conducted by phone. The telephone numbers used were taken from the pool of numbers of the Arbeitskreis Deutscher Markt- und Sozialforschungsinstitute e. V. The numbers were randomly selected, i.e. they are primarily a stratified random sample. Telephone numbers selected on a



name-related basis were also used to more effectively target people with a migration background particularly in the eastern German survey regions (9.7% of the sample).

One person aged 16 years or older who was randomly selected by date of birth (last birthday method) was surveyed per household. Bilingual interviewers offered the survey in Russian, Turkish or English instead of German. Before carrying out the survey, the foreign language versions of the questionnaire were subject to a cognitive pre-test to ensure that they were comprehensible. This was followed by a quantitative pre-test with people with and without a migration background in all five survey regions. The interviews were carried out by BIK Aschpurwis + Behrens GmbH.