



## Summary Migration Barometer:

### Migration Realism in the Immigration Society

Although the recent debates in Germany do not explicitly demonstrate it, migration realism prevails among the population. Within the scope of the SVR's Migration Barometer, over 2,450 persons with and without a migrant background were surveyed. The majority have a pragmatic and straightforward view of migration and migration policy, which is far removed from the apocalyptic ('the boat is full') or migration romanticism ('unlimited right of residence for all'). This conclusion is based on a three-step analysis:

In a first step, the level of knowledge about the current migration situation in Germany on both sides of the immigration society is determined. This indicates a comparatively high level of knowledge. The immigration society is far better informed about the actual migration situation in Germany and the balance between immigration and emigration than is assumed by policymakers. 58.1% of respondents with a migrant background and 63.6% without a migrant background assume that Germany has a negative or balanced net migration level. In contrast, few are aware that the main countries of origin for immigration have changed: The majority of respondents (30%) incorrectly cite Turkey as the most important country of origin. Only 6% of respondents know that Poland is the front runner.

In a second step, immigration policy preferences of both the majority and the immigrant population are determined. Emigration from Germany is critically assessed: Over half of the respondents are of the opinion that "clearly too many" or "rather too many" people emigrate. In sharp contrast to many oversimplified political debates, which only seem to contemplate the options "more immigration" or "less immigration", both sides of the immigration society have differentiated expectations of future migration policy. A clear majority of 60% of respondents with and without a migrant background favours a higher immigration rate of highly skilled professionals. Both the majority and the immigrant population also reject the immigration of additional low skilled workers: Approximately 70% of respondents want "far fewer" or "somewhat fewer" low skilled immigrants. On the other hand, half of the respondents without a migrant background support an increased admission of refugees.

The third step evaluates migration policy. Both sides of the immigration society are neither one-sidedly euphoric about nor one-sidedly dismissive of Germany's migration policy over the last ten years. Instead, one third of both groups perceives an improvement, deterioration or no change at all. This mixed and non-polarized assessment of migration policy since the turn of the millennium confirms the prevailing migration realism and pragmatism of both sides of the immigration society identified in the first two steps of the study. In light of these results, policymakers should not let the notion that the population is sceptical towards immigration paralyze them. Instead, they should exploit the impetus observable since the introduction of the new immigration law and initiate bold reforms, particularly with reference to highly skilled professionals.



The migration barometer unequivocally gives the go-ahead: An immigration policy with clear privileges for highly skilled professionals enjoys considerable support among the population.

Methodological notes:

Over 2,450 persons with and without a migrant background were surveyed for the SVR Migration Barometer by phone in November/December 2010. The survey took place in the Rhine-Ruhr, Stuttgart and the Rhine-Main regions, as well as for the first time in Berlin. The results of the migration barometer are representative for the old German states and Berlin. The total sample of over 2,450 persons consists of 70.8% individuals with a migrant background and 29.2% without a migrant background. 14.1% of the total sample includes "Spät-/Aussiedler" (ethnic Germans) or their children; 13.3% have a Turkish migrant background; 22.2% originate from European Union member states or have at least one parent from these countries. The same applies to 11.0% from European countries outside of the European Union and to 10.2% from Latin American, African or Asian countries. In addition to German, multilingual interviewers offered to conduct the survey in Russian or Turkish. The survey was conducted by BIK Aschpurwis + Behrens GmbH.