

Abstract

The 1st InterCultureBarometer

The impact of migration on the arts and culture in Germany

Intention of the study

The first "InterCultureBarometer" survey was conducted in 2011 by the Centre for Cultural Research (ZfKf) in cooperation with the University of Hildesheim and the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg with the support of the Federal Commissioner for Culture and Media (BKM) and the *Länder* (federal states) Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). Its goal is to investigate how migration influences cultural life in Germany, in particular cultural participation and artistic-creative processes.

Method

In a quantitative survey, 2,800 people, aged 14 years and older, living in Germany were interviewed. Within the framework of this stratified sample, an increase in the number of cases was made in Lower Saxony and NRW, as well as in population groups with an immigrant background ($n = 1,637$), taking into account frequently represented countries of origin. The weighted results optionally reflect the federal population, the population of specific *Länder*, or certain migrant population groups. Simultaneously, 60 qualitative interviews were conducted in order to deepen contexts and to reflect local conditions.

Main results

Persons with a migrant background emphasize the term *culture* differently. While people of German origin focus more likely on the arts, groups with a migration background construe it in a wider sense, which implies for instance aspects like religion or family. Especially the third migrant generation tends towards a "hybrid" understanding of culture by often combining definition features that, on the one hand, relate to the arts and, on the other hand, to broader concepts of culture. Younger population groups without a migration background increasingly opt for a wider definition of culture which relates cultural diversity to the growing importance of immigration in Germany.

Population groups with and without a migration background have an almost identical mental image of the *current cultural life in Germany*. While the quantity and the quality of cultural supplies are rated very positively, the interest of the population and the existence of art from different countries of origin are considered to be weak. Population groups with a migrant background selectively show an increased interest in cultural history or in artists from their countries and regions of origin; this is especially so among migrant population groups from cultural areas as far afield as for example the Arab world.

As well, the individual history of immigration impacts on a person's cultural interests. The first generation migrants are particularly interested in traditional art forms (37%), the second generation shows a stronger interest in popular art forms (75%), while the third generation more likely appreciates classical (30%) and contemporary art forms (10%).

The "cultural capital" gained by Germany in the artistic area due to immigration processes is rarely picked up by the German population. For example, no more than four percent claim to be interested in art of the Arabian cultural sphere although a higher percentage of immigrants with this back-

ground migrated to Germany. In comparison, 25% of the population groups with a migrant background from Arabian countries state an interest in art from their countries of origin.

A majority of the population (97%) has already participated in a cultural event. In that context, the "classical" arts institutions are less frequently visited by people with a migrant background than by the majority of the population (31% vs. 46%); the same large gap between visitors with or without a migration experience exists also in the independent arts scene (15% vs. 25%).

It can be observed that for population groups with a migrant background education plays a less important role in their cultural participation than is the case in the German population, for which well-educated parents and their cultural influences are more decisive. We can hypothesize that immigrant families are less familiar with the cultural infrastructure of the host country and that, for this reason, their mediating influence could be less relevant, even though they might be well-educated. In relation to this finding, numerous suggestions in the qualitative interviews fit, including the desire for more references to the everyday life of people with a migration background in public policies and in marketing channels of cultural event organizers.

As a reason for not visiting cultural events, population groups without a migrant background refer, in the first place, to a lack of personal interest, while at the same time they deplore a lack of interest among leisure time partners in their social environment. For the migrant population cultural activities are to a certain extent social events which are primarily attended with friends or family members.

The population with and without a migration background clearly agrees on the need to integrate more art from migrant countries of origin into public cultural life. People with a migrant background desire more cooperation between cultural institutions and migrant cultural associations. Especially in the first migration generation we find groups demanding improvements in audience development measures and information material with regard to the language of their countries of origin.

Nevertheless, there are "concerns" within both those polled with and without a migrant background that their "own" art forms might not be sufficiently taken into account or perceived and respected by other population groups. Exceptions can be found among those respondents who define a culture programme as a common dialogue or art as a development process and rate it very positively in this form. A deeper engagement with the cultural history of the countries of origin and the host country has a key function in this respect. As can be seen from the results, a positive attitude towards the cultural history of the host country and the country of origin offers the basis for a particularly positive migration experience and the opportunity to open up new artistic perspectives and contemporary forms.

Recommendations of the study

Especially, public cultural institutions and their managers should better reflect and take into account the diversified perception of culture and society in Germany among people originating from different cultural contexts. Against this background, the repertoire or "canon" of e.g. theatres, orchestras, operas, libraries or museums needs to be checked and continuously renewed. The increasing interest of population groups with and without a migration background in new art forms, which pick up and advance traditions from the host country as well as from the countries of origin, should be reflected in repertoires or programmes; the publicly funded cultural institutions, in par-

ticular, should engage in such policies in order to mobilize new audiences. In this context, experiences gained in other European countries – such as those collected in the EU-study "Sharing Diversity" (2008) – could provide interesting starting points for action.

In order to minimize the conflict potential, quota systems for art from migrants' countries of origin should be avoided and instead, one should increasingly focus on inter- and transcultural mediation concepts. With the help of participatory approaches, these should highlight the trans-boundary development process of the arts across time. Themes and cases from cultural history that illustrate common roots of different population groups may help to overcome cultural differences. Accordingly, educational programmes that offer insights into the history and culture of the host country and the countries of origin should be expanded in school, leisure time and cultural institutions. They represent an important basis for the formation of one's own identity and for a productive positioning in society.

Cooperation between migrant culture associations and cultural institutions should be extended at "eye level" and under the premise of mutual artistic enrichment. Language barriers, experiences of diverse media worlds and living environments of main migrant population groups in Germany should be considered more strongly when addressing target groups and in the design of public relations of cultural institutions. In this context, it is particularly important to address both real and virtual social networks that are relevant to specific population groups.

In the framework of audience development, the third migrant generation, which shows a strong cultural interest but is currently reached especially by commercial cultural event organizers, should increasingly be the centre of attention. Identity-cultivating concepts for the second and the third migration generation in particular have to be supported more strongly in social life as well as in media and cultural programmes. Here, it can be helpful to consider cultural forms of expressions of both the countries of origin and the host country, as well as emerging new "hybrid" forms that already reflect expressions of the countries of origin and the host country.