Immigrant Integration and Multilevel Governance: EXPLORING THE ISSUES  
24. February 2012  
ProjektZentrum Berlin der Stiftung Mercator  
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Role of City Governments in Federal Systems in effective immigrant integration

Case study: Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg
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Overview:
1. Historical context and conditions of success

2. Hamburg’s advantages:
   - Germany’s second largest city
   - combines federal district and local affairs

3. Hamburg’s proven practice of welcoming immigrants

4. Conclusion
1. Historical context and conditions of success

a. Historical context

- Hamburg was a flourishing Hanseatic city when Amsterdam had just been founded and New York and Tokyo did not even exist.

- 1376: home to 84 Dutch merchants, 35 from Great Britain. The Hamburg Senate permitted immigration of Dutch Protestants as well as Spanish and Portuguese Jews.

- Hamburg has a thousand year old tradition of globalisation.

- Present: Every year more than 80,000 newcomers, about 25% from abroad.

(Source: Wolfgang Michalski, Capitalising on change in a globalising world, Murmann 2010, 2011)
1. Historical context and conditions of success

b. Conditions of success from a policy point of view

Hamburg has always pursued policies of openness not only with regard to trade and investment but also with respect to migration.

(Michalski, 22)

Other conditions for successful globalisation:
- to avoid participation in war and social conflicts
- to allow economic and social structures to adjust flexibly to changing market conditions
- to adopt a forward-looking approach towards development
- to be wary of inflation and volatile exchange rates

(Michalski, 22)
2a.

Hamburg is Germany’s second largest city; 1.8 mill. inhabitants

(and, because of the harbour, a hub of foreign trade)
2b.

“Stadtstaat” / City Federal District
- federal and local affairs in one hand
3. Hamburg “nice” or: Hamburgian Welcome Practice

a. System of “Triple Step Integration”

Step one
- Pre-Integration:
  Contact via homepage www.welcome.hamburg.de
  or email: info@welcome.hamburg.de

Step two
- Face-to-face greeting in the Hamburg Welcome Center

Step three
- Individual and ongoing appreciation
3. **Step one and step two:** Hamburg’s proven welcome practice
   b. **Hamburg Welcome Center goals**

   (1) **Daily routine regarding people coming in**
   - to offer an arrival free of bureaucratic barriers
   - to offer a personal, welcoming atmosphere

   (2) **Background leadership activities regarding the existing society**
   - to enhance Hamburg’s openness by shaping the common public view of the existing society, policies and administration:

     **Immigrants are a benefit and potential to our city and our society**
c. Daily HWC routine beyond foreign and register affairs (I)

- to get fast, individualized advice

- to get information about special challenges

- to understand the infrastructure of the city

- to get an idea of how the administration works

- to learn how health insurance, tax registration, etc. work

- to get information about accommodations, language courses, child care, sports, culture and community

- (bilingual by email, by telephone, and personel advice)
c. Daily HWC routine (II)

Special Service:

- residence permit and registration service for business, creative, athletic and academic persons

General service

- advice in Hamburg for all Newcomers
- information about living and working
- personal and individual advisory services
- bilingual assistance
- offerings for leisure activities and cultural events - particularly for families
d. General background leadership activities (I)

- to facilitate immigration regulations, e.g. for high qualified persons

- to optimize the processing of immigrants’ applications

- to explain and clarify the proceedings
  also bilingual virtual at the website
  www.welcome.hamburg.de
  to give the opportunity to inform from abroad


d. Measures (I)

- Communicating the practice, experience and challenges of the newcomer system to the Hamburg Ministry of Interior
  Trying to influence the German legal system with this administrative feedback

Issues

- legal barriers and long and non-transparency in terms of \textit{visa proceedings}

- optimizing the \textbf{German laws} regarding:
  getting a job from abroad
  getting a job in dual career,
  changing the target of career,
  getting a job after finishing studies,
  deciding spontaneously to stay here for professional or academic reasons
d. Special background activities (II)

The Hamburg Welcome Center works as an platform for co-operation, strategic alliances and stakeholder networking: „Welcome to Hamburg“

- corporations, labour offices, NGOs, consulates, firms, universities, foundations, (international) organisations, communities, relocators, other cities and local institutions

  - encouragement of integration and intercultural dialogue
  - forum for cultural and social events with an international approach
  - local, national und international positioning of Hamburg as an „open city“
  - extension of media communication through Social Media
    (Hamburg Welcome Portal & Facebook)
4. Conclusion:

Question 1.

Are there greater opportunities for innovation and collaboration at the local level?

Yes!
4. Conclusion (2):

Question 2.

Is the potential for learning from others being fully exploited?

No!

The HWC cooperates in particular with the network of OPEN Cities, and Cities of migration and learns from the cities of Toronto, Madrid, Barcelona, Amsterdam and Copenhagen.
4. Conclusion (3)

Question 3.

Are the immigrant integration programs of big city governments under-resourced? From my very personal point of view:

Yes!
Thank you for your attention

www.welcome.hamburg.de
Mail to: info@welcome.hamburg.de
www.facebook.com/HamburgWelcomeCenter