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Migration and Strategic Urban Planning

The Case of Leipzig

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Abstract: This paper discusses the so-called "local turn" in the governance of migration and integration as expressed in the relevant literature. The study focuses on how and to what extent migration-related issues have been reflected in urban development strategies in the east German city of Leipzig over the past 20 years. Based on the analysis of planning documents and interviews with experts and decision-makers, the paper shows that urban planning strategies have increasingly recognized the role of and adapted to immigration. However, migration has certainly not yet become the central focus of planning strategies. Moreover, there is a mismatch between the immigration of sought-after "high potentials" and "creative types", and actual migration which is dominated by refugees. Whereas the first group is targeted through marketing campaigns and specific place-based policies, the latter is by and large subject to welfare state policies. The paper discusses three major factors that serve to explain this double orientation and argues that they create massive barriers to making migration a more central issue in urban planning. In sum, the paper takes a somewhat sceptical view of the "local turn" and cautions against using studies with few cases on limited policy fields to generalise about urban governance trends.

Introduction

In recent years, migration researchers have grown increasingly interested in issues of urban governance, and there is broad agreement that the local level has gained power and importance in the governance of migration (see Caponio, Borkert 2010; Jorgensen 2012; Hepburn, Zapata-Barrero 2014; Scholten, Penninx 2016; Schiller 2015, 2017; Barrero et al. 2017; Schammann, Kühn 2017). *Pars pro toto*, this consensus among migration researchers is expressed in the introduction to a recent special issue of the *International Review of Administrative Sciences* in which Zapata-Barrero et al. state that "[c]ities and regions … are becoming more and more active agents, drawing their own agenda, policy strategies and key questions/answers to challenges related to integration and diversity accommodation" (Zapata-Barrero et al. 2017: 242). This "local turn", they argue, has both horizontal and vertical dimensions. Horizontally, it is claimed that more and more local governments would respond to the challenges emerging from a growth of diversity in their cities and open up to interculturalist perspectives. On a vertical level, a "decoupling" (ibid.: 244) between national and local policies is observed, resulting in policy contradictions and sometimes even conflicts. While these are bold predictions with potentially far-reaching consequences, empirical studies on this issue up to now are far from comprehensive and, as a consequence, we in fact know comparatively little about the actual practices of immigrant policy-making on the local level.

Several issues are at stake here: First, as is well known in policy studies, there is often a gap between political agendas, their implementation and outcomes. Comparisons of European cities (Schiller 2017) have shown that this is particularly true for local diversity policies. Here, local policies are usually enacted in "paradigmatically pragmatic" ways, combining different paradigms and policy goals in pragmatic – and therefore varied – ways (Schiller 2015). Moreover, most studies have so far focused on the horizontal dimension of the perceived "local turn", i.e. on policies towards migrants already living in cities (integration policies). The vertical dimension, that is to say the changes, conflicts and contradictions emerging in the multilevel governance relations between cities and nation-states, has received far less attention. This is even the case for the now widely cited literature on "arrival cities" (Saunders 2010) which adopts the perspective of global migration flows, but mainly examines how cities deal with migrants once they have arrived. The question of whether or not there is a "local turn" in the governance of migration is thus far from being answered, and a fact-based estimation of how cities in fact deal with migration is yet to be found. One reason for this is that the issue of migration may be afforded different degrees of importance depending on the policy field. Thus, while it may be fairly common in some cities that educational or vocational pro-

grammes show special consideration for individuals' different religious backgrounds, this does not necessarily need to be the case when it comes to, for instance, policing or housing. Focusing attention on "soft" policies (e.g. in the educational or cultural realm) which are likely to be receptive to diversity concepts therefore runs the risk of generalizing and overestimating a potentially isolated development.

Second, as is widely acknowledged, cities are not autonomous decision-making bodies. Quite the contrary. Cities operate in multilevel governance frameworks and largely act within national and international legal frameworks. This embeddedness entails different statutory rights and obligations, financial streams and earmarked subsidy programmes, which vary between countries. In the field of migration, the dependency of cities on national migration and border regimes is particularly palpable. Only nation-states decide who is and who is not allowed to enter national territory, and hence cities. Thus, although there is some room for discretion with regard to implementing national regulations (see, for example, Schammann 2015), cities largely lack the power to govern immigration and therefore need to communicate their respective wishes or requests to national or European decision-makers.

In other words, there are reasons to be sceptical about the actual reach of the proclaimed "local turn". The paper at hand aims at contributing to this debate by focusing on a field which has to date hardly been studied. It is based on a case study of the city of Leipzig and aims at examining the relevance of changes in local decision-making on migration-related issues in the field of urban development strategies. It explores the importance of migration in the development of this policy field and identifies barriers to a stronger focus on migration in strategic urban planning. Two empirical questions lie at the heart of this paper: (i) In what sense are migration-related issues reflected in urban development strategies? (ii) Which migrants are addressed and how is this related to different strategies and policy instruments? In other words, the paper aims at scrutinizing whether local governance of migration has indeed had an impact on urban development strategies, finding out in which way this has brought about changes in this field.

The paper directs its attention to a policy field which is not directly connected to the arrival of immigrants (and therefore does not study aspects such as interim accommodation, schooling and language training). In contrast to many recent studies that focus on short-term and often crisis-induced emergency measures, studying urban development strategies directs our attention to how cities develop more long-term policies. Urban development policies are usually implemented over a longer timeframe. They have a strategic dimension and arguably reflect specific goals and preferences prevalent at the time. Despite the recent increase in studies on civil society initiatives, voluntary work and third sector initiatives, this paper focuses on local governmental actors. This is not to say that civil society actors are unimportant. However, binding municipal planning strategies can only be drawn up by municipal politicians and administrations and, as a consequence, non-state actors have less influence in this area.

The empirical material for this paper was collected in the context of a study on "migration-led regeneration" conducted by the Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space (IRS) which examined the interplay of immigration and urban regeneration in the city of Leipzig over the course of two subsequent decades. As with all cities, the history of Leipzig makes this a single case study, the findings of which are not easily transferable to other cities. In this regard, the most important factors impacting on the actual shape of migration- and integration-related issues are the following: The city has experienced a long history of deindustrialisation and population decline in the past, followed by pronounced in-migration in subsequent years. At the moment, Leipzig is the fastest-growing city in Germany. Nevertheless, international immigration is yet a comparatively new phenomenon in Leipzig and the share of residents with a migration background is far lower than in most West German cities. Moreover, as with many shrinking cities, the desire to achieve population growth and stimulate in-migration was for a long time accompanied by a lack of financial means. In sum, the conditions for immigrant integration have been peculiar, yet not unique.

The author has studied the evolution of urban development strategies in Leipzig for more than 20 years. This gives him an in-depth understanding of the city, allowing him to better assess its development and the relevance of immigration issues over time.

In terms of the research design, a mixed methods approach was applied, consisting of three distinct parts. First, key documents were collected and analysed, laying out the city's urban development plan for the past two decades. The sample of documents analysed is provided

in the annex to this paper. All documents were analysed with regard to whether they discuss migration-related issues, which narratives they construct and which policy fields are addressed. On this basis, three distinct phases were distinguished during which migration-related issues played different roles in urban development strategies. This analysis then formed the basis for eleven interviews conducted with mid-level and high-ranking (including retired) representatives of Leipzig's urban development departments. Moreover, scientists working on these issues, local politicians, planners and civil society initiatives were interviewed as well. These interviews focused on understanding the prevalent political constellations during the three phases mentioned above, taking stock of actors' motivations and restrictions, and exploring how different objectives identified in the documents manifested themselves throughout the city. The interviews were later transcribed and then compared as regards common topics and explanations. On this basis, three major barriers that hinder the integration of migration-related issues into urban development strategies in Leipzig could be identified.

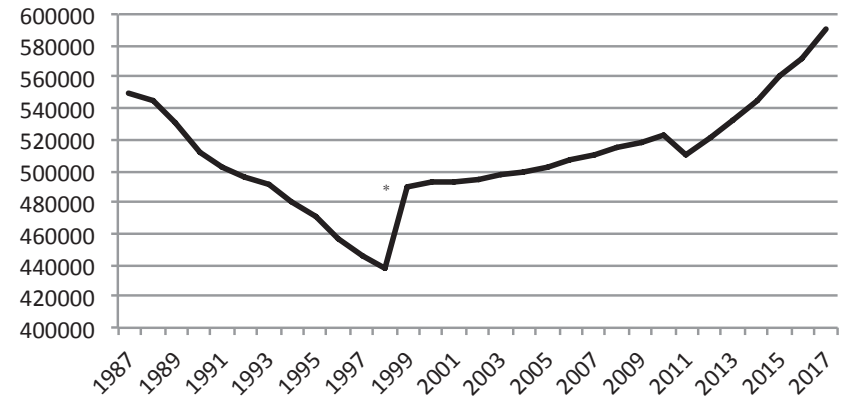
The revival of Leipzig

Before discussing the relationship between urban development policies and immigration in Leipzig, a look at the city's history is in order. It can be said that the city of Leipzig underwent an "urban development of extremes" (Rink 2015). During communist times, Leipzig served as the industrial and administrative centre of the GDR. Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, however, the city experienced massive deindustrialisation and saw its population shrink dramatically. Within eight years, Leipzig lost 74 000 inhabitants, i.e. approximately one sixth of its population. Reflected in more than 60 000 vacant apartments, Leipzig had a reputation for being "the capital of shrinkage" at that time. Today, this trend has totally reversed and the city has become the fastest-growing urban agglomeration in Germany. It is subject to an intense media hype and its population has grown to 590 337 (2017). Figure 1 gives a vivid picture of this radical change.

Immigration has been a part of the story, even though the overall share of foreign residents is rather low compared to other West European cities. Even so, Leipzig has grown successively over the last decades.

Since 1992, the number of foreign residents has quintupled (see Tab. 1). At the end of 2017, 83 406 of Leipzig's residents (14.1 percent of the overall population) had an immigrant background (Stadt Leipzig 2018). Of these, two thirds were foreign nationals.

Since 2001, 24 percent of all migration to Leipzig has been from abroad. If so-called *Spätaussiedler* (members of the German minority immigrating from the former Soviet Union who are automatically granted German citizenship based on Art. 116 GG) are added, it can be estimated that one third of all in-migration is connected to international migration. In sum, international in-migration has helped reverse Leipzig's population decline, which stemmed from prolonged out-migration. In Leipzig, international immigration has mainly been driven



*Note: The increase in 1998 is owed to the amalgamation of a number of previously autonomous villages, while the drop in 2011 is an outcome of statistical adjustments.

Fig. 1: Population numbers in Leipzig 1987–2017. (Source: Municipal statistics)

	1992	1997	2002	2009	2014	2017
No. of foreign residents	10765	18881	26157	26968	37391	56011
Share (in percent)	2.1	4.0	5.0	5.3	6.8	9.5

Tab. 1: Total number and proportion of foreign residents in Leipzig 1992–2015. (Source: Stadt Leipzig 2003; 2012a; 2017a; 2018)

by asylum seekers and – to a lesser degree – by students. As a university city, more than 37000 students live in Leipzig (approximately 12 percent of which, or 4400 individuals, were international students in 2016). In terms of ethnic backgrounds, the migrant population is fairly heterogeneous, with *Spätaussiedler* (Russian Germans), Syrians, Poles and Vietnamese comprising the largest groups. However, none of these exceeds ten percent of the total immigrant population. While statistical reports document considerable differences between various groups of migrants they also show that migrants tend to struggle in the local labour market and on average earn less than Germans (including *Spätaussiedler*). This applies in particular to migrants from the Middle East, who make up the second largest group. Residents with a foreign passport are twice as likely to be unemployed compared to the rest of the urban population. Of those who have immigrated from the Middle East, on average one in five faces unemployment. This is reflected in the income situation. The net equivalent income of migrant households is about two thirds of the (already low) Leipzig average; 44 percent of migrants (excluding students) are officially classified as poor. There are, however, significant differences within this group: two thirds of migrants from the Middle East count as poor, whereas the median income of migrants from the USA, and Southern and Western Europe (which make up less than one sixth of all immigrants) is considerably higher than the Leipzig average (based on the Migrantenbefragung 2016 survey, Stadt Leipzig 2016). It should also be emphasized that migrant households tend to cluster in certain areas of Leipzig. New arrivals predominantly settled in those parts of town which experienced the sharpest population declines during the 1990s. The highest concentration of migrant households – close to 40 percent – is found in neighbourhoods directly east of the city centre. As a rule of thumb, clusters of immigrant households and pockets of poverty closely overlap in Leipzig.

Summarizing this short overview, it can be said that, international immigration has largely been linked to the allocation of asylum seekers, quota refugees and *Germans* from the former USSR *(Spätaussiedler)* in this city. Economic factors have only to a minor degree played a role in attracting migrants to the city. Also, at least compared to other university cities (like Heidelberg or Göttingen), international students only play a minor role in the total immigrant population.

Urban planning and migration

Three distinct phases of urban development planning can be identified in Leipzig during the late 1990s: In a first phase, the emphasis of urban development planning was placed on coping with urban shrinkage. As described above, the decade following German reunification led to dramatic deindustrialisation and population decline in Leipzig. As such, it hardly comes as a surprise that problems relating to urban shrinkage became the focus of urban planning debates. The strategy developed to tackle this challenge, however, rested on two rather contradictory beliefs.

On the one hand, accepting population losses and "rightsizing" the city was placed at the centre of all sorts of urban regeneration strategies in Leipzig. Decision-makers expected a prolonged population decline and sought to adapt the built environment, as well as social and technological infrastructure, to a projected urban population of between 424500 and 450000 residents (2015). It was planned to demolish about 20000 to 30000 housing units to reduce the city's oversupply of flats. Rather fittingly, the then head of Leipzig's urban development department, Engelbert Lütke Daldrup, characterised Leipzig as "a city whose dress has become too big for it" (Lütke Daldrup 2001).

At the same time, the city vied to attract investors, both by incentivising major investments – German car manufacturer BMW famously invested EUR 400 million into a new Leipzig-based production site – and by working to enhance soft locational factors. In this context, city planners sought to transform Leipzig into a genuinely "European City", comparable

to Barcelona or Manchester, with a distinctly metropolitan flair by developing "a range of high-quality housing" and promoting the city's "beautifully renovated historical neighbourhoods" (Lütke Daldrup 2004: 101), among others. The city also competed to host a range of mega-events such as the Olympic Games and the annual German Catholic Congress, and is vying for the status of the 2025 European Capital of Culture. The city has worked hard to raise its national and international profile. While attracting new residents was part and parcel of this strategy and urban development policies focused on making Leipzig more appealing to outsiders early on, there was hardly any reflection on who these immigrants should be and where they should come from. Paradoxically, the actual inflow of migrants from the Soviet Union, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan and Vietnam occurring at the time barely played a role in planning discussions in this period. The following quote vividly illustrates that immigration issues barely featured in planning strategies at that time:

"When the first wave of immigrants arrived in Leipzig, this was hardly noticed. That is because it was a peculiar trend that ran counter to the pronounced out-migration occurring at the time. Suddenly, there was a group of new arrival in Leipzig, which happened almost unnoticed I would say. It was hardly taken notice of. The city focused on other issues so migrants did not really feature on the agenda." (Interview 1, Academic)

This changed in the second half of the 2000s. At that time, out-migration had slowed considerably and the city's population had stopped declining. Leipzig's neighbourhoods experienced highly uneven development. While more attractive parts of the city saw an influx of young and educated residents, and underwent rapid "reurbanisation" (some would even say gentrification), other areas continued to lose residents and grew increasingly poor. Growing numbers of foreign nationals moved into certain areas. In particular, the neighbourhoods of Volkmarsdorf and Neustadt-Neuschönefeld in the east of Leipzig became notorious in this respect. Throughout the 1990s, these areas experienced a significant population decline of around 35–40 percent. In 1991, the share of foreign nationals living there was four percent. By 2006, the share of foreign nationals had increased to 17 percent and ten years later to 40 percent. At the same time, the overall population gradually returned to levels equivalent to the late 1980s. Thus, while Leipzig's population numbers went down and up again, the ethnic composition of the city became more diverse, and especially so in certain neighbourhoods.

Against this background, migration was increasingly reflected upon in municipal planning documents at the end of the 2000s. Thus, when a new "Integrated Urban Development Concept" was published in 2009, laying out the basic strategy for urban planning in Leipzig, one of the notable differences to its predecessors was that it included a number of novel thoughts regarding the impact of international migration. Most importantly, it was posited that the "immigration of young persons with a migrant background helps stabilize the demographic situation …" (Stadt Leipzig 2009: 12). In the context of Leipzig, this was a novel view on demographic issues. Also, for the first time ever, the notion of "ethnic economies" found mention in several sections of the strategy paper. Increasingly, policymakers were paying attention to the impact of immigration on Leipzig. However, this happened in two very different ways. On the one hand, "ethnic economies" and the idea of "multiculturalism" were seen as beneficial to the city and a way to help revitalize deprived neighbourhoods. For instance, foreign nationals could occupy the numerous vacant flats and thus spare them from demolition. In addition, migrant-run businesses were thought of as an interim solution to the poor commercial infrastructure in the respective neighbourhoods. Throughout the past decade, many shops had closed due to a drop in demand stemming from population decline. Immigrant-run shops, meanwhile, were now expected to fill this void. On the other hand, however, the concentration of particular ethnic groups with a high percentage of unemployed and low-income residents in a few neighbourhoods was seen as inimical to achieving a "healthy" population mix. This resulted in efforts to strengthen social welfare services (and provide diversity training to those working in this field), as well as initiatives to make these neighbourhoods more attractive to the middle class. The attitude of urban planners towards immigration was thus contradictory: on the one hand, they recognized the potential of immigration for urban rejuvenation, while on the other regarding immigrant-dominated neighbourhoods as a sign of urban decay. This caused urban planners to vacillate between both positions, which prevented the formulation of a coherent planning strategy.

In a third phase, starting in around 2010, urban planning was completely reoriented to-

wards managing the city's enormous population growth (see Fig. 1). The arrival of Syrian refugees in 2015–2017 intensified this process. Like most other German cities, Leipzig experienced a massive influx of asylum seekers (from around 658 in 2015 to 6895 in 2016), which forced the city council to undertake enormous efforts to house these new arrivals. At first, they were accommodated in reception centres but successively also in normal flats. The dramatic situation also drew great public attention. A range of (left-wing and right-wing) civil society initiatives became involved and further politicised the situation.

While this meant greater attention was now afforded to matters of immigration in urban planning, it did not lead to a radical reorientation. The new strategies combined a welcoming attitude towards immigration as part of a competitive growth strategy with a focus on welfare and public service issues with regard to migrants already living in the city (see Annex, Stadt Leipzig 2012b; 2015; 2017). "Competitiveness" was defined as a "yardstick for future success" (Stadt Leipzig 2012b: 10) and an emphasis was placed on fostering population and job growth. With an unmistakable reference to Richard Florida's theory about the rise of the creative class, immigration and ethnic diversity were welcomed as preconditions for creating a "cosmopolitan" urban atmosphere attractive to "talents" *(Talente)* and "creatives" *(Kreative)*[1]. While this orientation is hardly ever detailed or justified in the planning documents, its connections to the new economic impulses through a fostering of the "knowledge economy" are evident. The line of argument put forward in the new urban development concept of the city can serve as a paradigmatic example for this orientation (*Stadtentwicklungskonzept Leipzig 2030*, Stadt Leipzig 2017). Here, a close, yet rather unspecified connection between immigration, urban qualities and economic growth is posited and it is stated that:

"Immigration increases the cultural, ethnic and religious diversity of our city and thus makes it more international. This creates uncertainties and challenges, but also great opportunities for competitiveness, quality of life and social stability. (...) Openness is a prerequisite for international success (…)" (Stadt Leipzig 2017: 15)

While internationality, diversity and multiculturality are celebrated as guiding ideas *(Leitgedanken)* in urban development planning, the city's migrant stock, in contrast, is seen purely from the perspective of socio-spatial inequality. Thereby, issues of poverty and social deprivation, ethnic concentrations and social segregation are mixed to a considerable degree, as the following quote from the 2009 development concept (Stadt Leipzig 2009: B5–10f., translated by the author) demonstrates:

"Neighbourhoods which are characterized by a high share of immigrants are simultaneously characterized by a concentration of social problems. Low incomes, unemployment and welfare dependency, a lack of education, unfavourable housing conditions and resulting issues like crime, abandonment and difficult conditions for the socialization of future generation are concentrated at these places. (…) Social deprivation gets ethnicized, and this becomes an additional burden for the neighbourhoods affected."

Whenever it comes to dealing with the often impoverished migrant population of the city, narratives of cosmopolitanism, internationality and openness to other cultures become harder to find. Here, the focus is on unemployment, welfare dependency and other social problems. Consequently, urban development strategies focus on "problematic neighbourhoods" *(problembehaftete Gebiete)*, they aim at "integrating" disadvantaged groups into "urban society" *(Stadtgesellschaft)* and strive for "self-sustaining developments". Instruments applied in this context include grants for cultural and community initiatives, financial and technical support for local educational facilities, projects to promote better health care for deprived families, and diversity training for administrative staff. Measures considered also include "improving main roads" and "strengthening migrant economies" (ibid.: 14).

Why migration does not play a central role in urban development

The situation is thus paradoxical: Leipzig has shown a great interest in attracting new residents to compensate for its previous population decline and has proactively engaged in raising its profile vis-a-vis other cities over the last two decades. At the same time, policies were only implemented with weak financial resources and were either ineffective or contradictory. How can this be explained? Why is it that no coherent policies were developed? In the following, I identify three factors that prevented immigration from playing a bigger role in urban planning efforts in Leipzig.

External resources and legal frameworks

The first factor is that the city lacks autonomous decision-making power. As is well known, municipal authorities must act within an intergovernmental framework and lack control over the resources that are necessary to achieve their goals. This is not to say that municipalities have no say whatsoever. On the contrary, recent studies have shown that cities have space for discretion even when it comes to asylum seekers which is used to varying degrees (see, for example, Eule 2014; Wendel 2014; Schammann 2015; Schammann, Kühn 2017). What is important though is that (i) these spaces can only be understood in relation to national policies, and (ii) that the resources of cities (know-how, motivation, money, staff) for making use of these rooms to manoeuvre varies.

Thus, managing the influx of international migrants in Germany is not the task of local decision-making bodies but handled solely at the national level. Yet, the practice of issuing residence permits *(Aufenthaltsgenehmigung)*, organizing the schooling of juvenile refugees and providing accommodation for asylum seekers can vary considerably between municipalities (see Schammann, Kühn 2017). What cities can and cannot do in these areas depends on how much discretionary power is granted by the nation-state. National governments decide which immigrants are allowed to enter the country (e.g. EU citizen, green card holders or asylum seekers) and which are not. This, of course, has different consequences for different groups of immigrants; EU citizens thus enjoy the freedom of movement within the EU. Here, cities hardly have any choice but to accept whoever arrives. The only thing they can do is to try and provide attractive jobs and infrastructures for the desired immigrants. If this fails, or if immigrants other than those aimed at are attracted, there is hardly anything cities can do. With regard to asylum seekers, a national distribution quota exists in Germany which aims to fairly allocate asylum seekers throughout the country. It takes into consideration regional tax revenue and population figures.

In sum, cities only have a minor say when it comes to which and how many immigrants they receive. They simply have to deal with the immigrants who arrive at their respective territory (no matter if these are EU citizens, who enjoy freedom of movement, green card holders, refugees or illegal migrants). Cities also have little leeway with regard to labour market regulations and the recognition of professional diplomas, qualifications etc. The only thing cities can do to influence the flow of immigrants is to stimulate economic growth, thus providing job opportunities for prospective migrants.

The inability to control migration flows and the dependence on national regulations systematically counteracts autonomous decision-making and frustrates attempts to formulate local strategies. This systematically undermines the opportunity for a sound local "immigration policy" and leads to a pragmatic approach (see Schiller 2017) devoid of long-term planning. As an interviewee put it:

"They (the municipal government) neither have the means to influence immigration, nor do they have many resources to control labour and housing markets. So there is actually not much the city can do. That is a fact." (Interview 2, Planner)

The second factor is that, again due to deindustrialisation and urban shrinkage, Leipzig is a cash-strapped city whose budget depends on national financial redistribution schemes. About 50 percent of the city's budget stems from such equalisation payments. But they do not fully make up for the city's economic weakness and its population decline[2]. As a consequence, the city has become very active in applying for grants and participating in a variety of urban development programmes over the last two decades. This has produced mixed results. National and European grant schemes have undoubtedly influenced local policymaking. Neighbourhoods east (Volkmarsdorf, Neustadt-Neuschönefeld, Reudnitz) and west (Plagwitz, Lindenau) of the city centre in particular have become "laboratories" where new approaches – inspired by subsidy programmes such as EFRE, ESF, URBAN, Xenos, LOS and Soziale Stadt – were applied. Special subsidy programmes provided by the EU and the national government helped the city focus on immigration as an urban planning issue. Many of these schemes had originally been developed with West European cities in mind which tend to have much larger immigrant populations. This allowed building on the experience of other cities to facilitate "policy learning".

At the same time, however, all grants are earmarked for specific purposes, have a fixed duration and are subject to complicated bureaucratic and political procedures. This has led to a "streamlining" of strategies in accordance to the "windows of opportunity" presented by the national and European funding programmes. Moreover, even successful approaches cannot always be consistently implemented which

makes it difficult to maintain established structures. As the following quote demonstrates, this had an ambivalent effect regarding strategy formulation:

"… (The plan for the integration of migrants) entails very few clear, serious projects which go beyond what is already done anyway, and it is very weak in a strategic sense. Everybody finds it quite hard to deal with this. Obviously, if there is no additional money, only those projects are included in a plan which are done anyway. At least you can write them down one more time!" (Interview 5, Planner)

Migrants as a problem vs. migrants as a solution?

There is also an inconsistency in the way migrant households are viewed. While migrant-dominated neighbourhoods tend to be seen as a "problem", there is also the belief that migrants can potentially benefit the city. This stems from two competing perspectives, one focused on welfare state polices, while the other emphasizes economic growth. Both entail conflicting narratives about migration.

While concentrations of migrant households within the city – Middle Eastern immigrants in particular – are framed as problematic, some polices also focus on the potential benefits offered by migrants. Since the mid-2000s, one can find many passages in strategic planning documents which highlight the potentials of immigrants for revitalizing deprived neighbourhoods, easing the integration of newly arrived migrants or strengthening the local economy. In terms of actual practices, this thinking is mostly reflected in various programmes that support small ethnic minority businesses. The reasoning behind this is the following: As a consequence of the dramatic population decline described above, many businesses on the main shopping streets across the city went bankrupt. This resulted in an increasingly poor retail infrastructure. The growing number of migrant-run businesses (especially in the food sector) were welcomed as an interim solution to getting the local economy back on track. Consequently, supporting ethnic minority enterprises was put on the funding agenda. Furthermore, a shopping street management agency was established in 2003 and tasked with assisting and consulting existing businesses, and those willing to settle in the area. By and large, this proved quite successful, especially in Eisenbahnstrasse where numerous migrant-run shops were opened, offering inexpensive clothing, food and services. A study shows (Behling 2010) that the majority of these shops operated with a very low profit margin and that "… the main motivation was to avoid unemployment" (ibid.: 138). Precarious employment arrangements are the norm rather than the exception here and wages are often at the subsistence level or below. This highlights a rather problematic situation. While the conditions under which migrants can offer services appear to benefit the local economy, actual employment in this sector is so insecure that the jobs created reinforce existing concentrations of poverty.

International immigration and local expenses

The rapid change of Leipzig's development, meanwhile, represents another reason why the city has struggled to find a coherent approach to migration. As described above, the city faced a massive population decline in the 1990s. As a result, immense efforts were undertaken to downsize its infrastructure, reorganize the public administration and cut costs. At the same time, the city pursued economic development policies designed to attract investors and stimulate economic and population growth. Approximately six years ago, the tide turned and today the city is experiencing a massive population increase, thanks to national and international migration. While many decision-makers see this as illustrating the city's appeal and deem it a success, it also comes at a price. Immense efforts need to be made to readjust the city's infrastructure to a growing population. Leipzig, for example, closed 31 primary schools in the early 2000s. In many cases, former school buildings were demolished and parcels of land sold to investors or transformed into urban open spaces. Since 2005, however, there is once again a growing demand for schools. While the number of primary school children had fallen from 20 523 in 1995 to 11 965 in 2005, that number has risen to 17 945 in 2015 (Leipzig 2016: 20). It is estimated that this trend will continue until 2030. As a consequence, Leipzig has already strengthened its educational sector and plans to build 17 new primary schools (Orbeck 2017). This will not only require enormous amounts of money, but also pose a challenge for existing schools with regard to administrative personnel and teachers. Moreover, finding appropriate plots to build new schools is seen as increasingly difficult.

What these numbers demonstrate is that the rapid transition from urban shrinkage to growth poses a considerable challenge for the city's infrastructures. A high-ranking municipal planner described the situation as follows:

"It is like a part from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's poem *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*, which reads: 'From the spirits that I called, Sir, deliver me!' New people arriving in the city not only need a place to live. But we also need more urban planners to direct all these projects, we need more civil engineers to work out the necessary permissions, and we need personnel to negotiate the requirements and so on… Plus, you need to provide new facilities for the kids: 40 new nurseries and 30 new schools! That is beyond imagination. This is next to impossible." (Interview 9)

What this quote demonstrates is – in more abstract terms – the contradiction between the necessarily long-term orientations of municipal planning and budgeting, and the increasingly volatile development of immigration streams and population numbers. This is particularly difficult in Leipzig, as the theatre of an "urban development of extremes", but far from a unique feature. Thus, even when cities have the willingness to cope with unexpected migration streams and the openness necessary to do so, they still face serious problems when it comes to integrating these orientations into long-term budgetary planning, land-use decisions and staff recruitment.

Conclusion

Over time, Leipzig's urban planning has shifted from ignoring or neglecting the aspect of immigration to gradually recognising its potentials. As migration to Leipzig increased, local planners began factoring it in to their urban development strategies. Furthermore, one can also find a growing number of projects that deal with migration in practice. It can thus be argued that what scholars have described as a "local turn" in the governance of migration in a horizontal dimension can also be witnessed in Leipzig today. As ever more migrants moved into the city, migration was integrated into urban planning strategies. But, even so, migration has hardly ever featured prominently in planning strategies and it has been reflected upon in rather different ways. A closer look at different generations of urban development strategies reveals that over a period of two decades all planning documents analysed explicitly advocated attracting highly-qualified professionals and "creatives" from abroad. In contrast, urban planning strategies never actively encouraged attracting asylum seekers. When these arrived in great numbers their integration was treated solely as a welfare state issue.

What we can observe is a selective take on migration which emphasises that the city should attract "highly-qualified individuals", "creatives", "talents" and "bright minds" as these are seen as beneficial to urban development. This view has remained in place over the decades, irrespective of its efficacy. The actual inflow of migrants, in contrast, has in turn been regarded as a challenge, a potential advantage and, at times, as a corollary of being a more international city.

The situation in Leipzig is thus to a wide degree in line with what Häußermann (2006: 20) has described as a "dual regime" of growth and integration policies. In this "regime", economic development policies are actively interested in the recruitment of "highly-qualified" and "creative" immigrants, and address this issue with the means of place marketing, business development programmes, investments in "soft" locational factors etc. The actually existing immigration of socially disadvantaged households, and in particular their spatial concentration in a number of selected neighbourhoods, in contrast, is addressed from the perspective of "social problems" and "integration deficits". Given the budgetary situation of Leipzig, integration policies are always under financial stress and are often only possible with the support of national and European funding programmes.

In a vertical dimension, local policies are still widely dependent on decisions taken on the national and European level. The distribution of asylum seekers is decided on the basis of a national quota system, immigrants from the EU enjoy freedom of movement within the EU and the same is true for Blue Card holders within Germany. In addition, integration policies are often dependent on financial support from national and EU subsidy programmes. There is hardly any evidence of a "de-coupling" of national and local policies as observed by Zapata-Barrero et al. (2017) in Leipzig. Quite in contrast, the lack of power in steering immigration at the national and European level places the local level under constant pressure and creates numerous difficulties and inconsistencies – but it forces the local level to resonate with policies implemented at the national and European level.

In sum, at least in the case of Leipzig, one can observe a growing openness towards migration-related issues in urban development strategies developed at the local level. But there is hardly any evidence for a "local turn" described by scholars (Caponio, Borkert 2010; Jorgensen 2012; Hepburn, Zapata-Barrero 2014; Scholten, Penninx 2016; Schiller 2015, 2017; Barrero et al. 2017; Schammann, Kühn 2017) in the sense that strategies developed at the local scale are afforded greater importance than those on the national level. Thus, while changes in the city's overall orientation towards immigration are tangible in a horizontal dimension, powerful barriers persist in a vertical dimension which prevent migration playing a more sustained role in urban development planning. The reason for this is not ignorance, or a lack of knowledge. In the section above we have discussed three major contradictions which prevent migration being afforded greater importance in local planning strategies. These are the dependence of local approaches on national and European urban development schemes, the inability of the city to steer many forms of immigration (especially flight migration and labour migration within the EU), and a contradictory view of migrants as both a problematic and advantageous to urban regeneration. As none of these issues are unique to Leipzig, this gives reason to be sceptical about the widely proclaimed "local turn" in the governance of migration and integration. Altogether, it seems, the ability to deal with local problems on the local level alone are limited, and obstacles remain in place that prevent the formulation of a coherent and persistent urban planning strategy in this area.

In sum, this paper is somewhat sceptical of the much vaunted "local turn" proclaimed in the literature. Cities do in fact take initiative in a world in which international migration has become a fundamental fact of life. However, they cannot do as they please as local decision-making is intimately connected to national and supranational intragovernmental networks. If more adequate policies towards migration are to be achieved locally, it will therefore be necessary to study how local responses interact with national policies and take into account both factors that enable local initiatives, but also those that limit local action.

As such, it will be necessary to study a broader range of policy fields and cases. Making general claims about urban governance trends on the basis of studies with only a few cases regarding a limited number of policy fields is problematic. What is needed, therefore, are more systematic empirical comparisons (for a comparison of Bremen and Leipzig see Kühn, Bernt 2019). In this sense, this detailed case study of Leipzig can hopefully serve as a gentle reminder to take into consideration significant variations across places and policy fields, and to avoid sweeping generalisations.

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Notes

1 It should be emphasized that while these terms are frequently used in municipal declarations, they are rarely defined.

2 Cities receive funds to support refugees and may remain within the fiscal equalization framework. "These funds would be sufficient if a refugee would be comparable to an average citizen. Yet this is not the case. Not only because of the greater number of welfare recipients among them, but also because of the multiple challenges connected to them, especially regarding education. Cities with an above average number of permanent refugee residents therefore face a greater financial burden." (Schammann, Kühn 2017: 31, translated by the author)

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Annex

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