



Migration Office | Executive Committee



Migration policy: positions and demands of IG Metall

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Migration policy: positions and demands

I. Global migration

One important secondary effect of globalisation with a neo-liberal economic bent is that migration processes are accelerating throughout the world. With respect to migration, globalisation means that the borders between the living space of people are breaking down both in real and in subjective terms as conveyed in the media. The longing for, and need for firm roots, for people to have a place they can call their home, nevertheless remains a fundamental desire on the part of human beings in spite of this fact.

The Global Commission for International Migration (CGIM) and the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNCHR) have published the following statistics for 2006:

- Around 200 million people (2.5% of the world's population or the population of Brazil) have left their homes (this figure was 70 million in 1970)
- The percentage of people migrating for economic/job reasons is estimated at 158 million. Women accounted for 50% of this figure in 2000.
- 7.5 million people, i.e. 5% of this amount, have Europe as their destination.

Migration in the present-day world is not one-dimensional:

- This process involves millions of people seeking work, cheap labour, poor people, refugees who hope to obtain better living and working conditions or refuge in the richer western industrialised countries,
- And it also involves highly qualified people, businesspersons, scientists and researchers, managers, engineers, diplomats and civil servants who are mobile at the global level (indeed, they have to be).

Therein lies the contradiction in the developed industrialised countries' approach of promoting migration policy at times and impeding it at others. People are increasingly defined in terms of their economic use-value and used either as needed or simply excluded.

II. Europe

While the migration policy of the EU as well as its security-policy focus, including labour-market policy and demographic issues, played a certain role at the end of the 1990s, migration policy has been under discussion primarily from the perspective of internal security since September 11, 2001. Topics such as stopping terrorism, combating illegal migration, trafficking in human beings, prevention in countries of origin, controls at external borders and integration tests for foreigners are all systematically linked together in a web of policies.

In spite of these measures, the EU is still a far cry from being able to truly control migration movements. Ministries of justice and the interior only began linking foreign and development policy in October 2005, pronouncing this as a cross-sectional task in the wake of the incidents in North Africa¹. The fact of the matter is, however, that policy-makers have to date tended to adopt a restrictive approach by sealing off Europe as a "fortress of prosperity", which is to say, they have not developed any strategy for long-term migration policy addressing the causes of migration pressure such as poverty.

¹ The cities of Ceuta and Melilla, Spanish enclaves in Morocco, symbolise the European refugee drama. 16 people died in the events, while around 4000 people were sent back to their home countries by the Moroccan authorities and hundreds of refugees were detained in Moroccan military camps.

Instruments aimed at promoting the integration of European labour market policy and equal treatment under the law affecting migrants in the EU have scarcely been assigned any importance at all thus far.

Exceptions to this are the four EU directives on anti-discrimination, a manual on integration and the eleven principles for pan-European integration², which went through the Council and the Commission surprisingly quickly.

Demands:

- A common, long-term European migration policy includes the issue of the labour market and integration.
- A pan-European strategy for a humane refugee and asylum policy which tackles the causes of exodus.
- A European immigration law and an EU civil rights law for everyone as well as equal treatment under the law for nationals of third countries living in the EU.
- The further development and refinement of common minimum standards for the acceptance of refugees in European countries as well as the Qualification Directive on Integration in the Labour Market.
- An exchange of national policies with the aid of open methods of coordination (OMC)³ at a high quality level and increased controls on the implementation of anti-discrimination directives and integration principles.

III. Germany is a destination for immigrants

According to current statistics on immigrants living in Germany published by the Federal German Agency for Migration and Refugees (2005), there are:

- Around 6.7 million foreign nationals in Germany, which is to say 8.1 percent of the total population
- Around 4 million ethnic Germans from eastern Europe living here
- Approximately 1.5 million children from bi-national marriages
- Around 1 million foreigners who have received German citizenship since the reform of law governing citizenship
- 30,000 refugees, a figure which has declined sharply (this figure was 50,500 persons in 2003 and 438,191 in 1992)..

There are a total of 15.7 million people living in Germany at present who have immigrated here or who are children of immigrants!⁴

Germany is a prime destination of immigrants and this requires an integration-oriented immigration policy. Diversity is accordingly a crucial factor. The task is not to seal off

² 11 Common Basic Principles on Integration

³ Open method of coordination (OMC)

⁴ The terms used to designate immigrants and members of ethnic groups in Germany are, similar to other country, the results of political and historical factors. Thus the term *Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund* or *MigrantInnen* are the preferred. The term "foreigner" (*Ausländer*) is based on legal status and specifies formal citizenship of a state. In addition to nationality, it also conveys a certain homogeneity among immigrants which does not, however, really exist. There have been considerable differences, for instance, between different waves of immigration to Germany: displaced persons in the immediate post-war era, immigrants from other countries seeking work in the 1960s and 1970s, ethnic Germans from eastern and southeastern Europe in the 1980s and 1990s, asylum-seekers and refugees from civil wars in the 1980s and 1990s. There are moreover differences between these groups in terms of their occupational and social origins, just to name two factors.

Germany's borders and assimilate, but rather to shape a "society of a majority and minorities" along positive lines.

This means that this situation needs to be grasped as an opportunity in which the tasks at hand are to

- shape future processes in an appropriate manner and
- develop a new orientation for the "society of a majority and minorities". This requires specific strategies and demands in various areas.

Diversity means "being able to be the same and at the same time different"

The aforementioned diversity is reflected in everyday life in cities, at companies, administrations, schools and day-care centres. It is a very practical matter which has to be dealt with and shaped. Diversity or multi-culturalism is not automatically coterminous with ethnic origin. This would be an oversimplification and reductionist.

Diversity means that there are no unique or closed worlds. Depending upon the environments people live and work in, there are different affiliations with different groups and constantly changing identifies. Aspects of these affiliations can be social and cultural origin, gender, age and many other things.

This means that affiliation with certain groups can change constantly. This gives rise to risks such as increasing isolation, but also opportunities such as new forms of solidarity and integration. A strategy which views diversity to be something worth having and which can be shaped and nurtured needs to **place the structural, political and social debates at the centre of attention and not patterns of cultural interpretation.**

- The more the differences, the more urgent the need to create formal equality and the greater the need to achieve understanding and consensus-oriented action in managing risks and crises.
- The more equality is formally speaking present, the more possibilities there are for different forms of lifestyles to develop.

Diversity does not mean arbitrariness! How should we deal with this diversity?

From the perspective of IG Metall, German society is not homogenous, but rather heterogeneous. This perspective opens up new latitude for social relationships, networks and trade union demands and campaigns. In order to foster coexistence with diversity, we need an ethical framework. Civil-society values are accordingly at the heart of our political understanding. These include:

- Respect for human rights
- The values of a democratic constitutional state
- The German Constitution and the individual freedoms enshrined in it such as religion or world belief.

These foundations allow individual opinions to be respected and a common identification to be developed on the basis of civil-society values.

Demands:

- The passage and the resolute implementation of a national affirmative action plan to appoint immigrants to public office, media positions and information centres of the Federal Government commensurate with their percentage of the population

- The implementation of integration programmes which help the people involved identify with the democratic values of a constitutional state without having to give up their own values.
- A form of urban-development planning which prevents the formation of “ghettoes” and respects social and communicative factors in the residential area.
- Migration statistics which can serve as a secure footing for integration-policy measures.

IV. Integration means equal participation

Integration should in the opinion of IG Metall mean comprehensive participation in political, social and business life. IG Metall is of the conviction that integration problems only become evident when ethnic minorities are not allowed to participate equally in important areas of life.

Integration cannot be successful without equal treatment, promotion of equal opportunities and legal security. To this end it is necessary that sufficient training positions and jobs be created. The demand for pay-as-you-go financing for jobs and the institution of a public jobs-creations programme forms the material basis for this. The following areas are of crucial importance if such programmes are to be successful:

1. Integration in working life, in the labour market and in the social security system (material integration)

Education and training concepts tailored specifically to minorities

More and more children among ethnic minorities are attaining higher and better educational degrees. Nevertheless:

- The percentage of immigrants and ethnic minorities completing lower-level secondary schools and special education schools is disproportionately high, while it is very low with regard to upper-level secondary schools.
- Almost 20% of children leave school without a degree, and almost half with a degree from a lower-level secondary school.

From the perspective of IG Metall, all institutions, in particular educational institutions in Germany, need to be put in a better position to eliminate social inequality by means of modern education and training strategies specifically tailored to immigrants and ethnic minorities.

Demands:

- Funding of day-care centres free of charge for families, where language development is made a priority and the native language skills of children are also taken into account.
- The elimination of the three-tiered school system and the expansion of all-day schools, with inter-cultural social work in all schools involving counsellors from ethnic minorities.
- Training of teaching staff so they can deal with cultural differences.
- The execution of preventive measures to prevent children from dropping out of school prematurely (e.g. through the blanket introduction of practical classes and cooperative classes and the fostering of an early warning system) and reintegration measures for people who have dropped out of school.

Good vocational training is the key to the labour market

It is correct that the opportunities to receive a training position are commensurately higher with a higher degree. A perspective which only attributes low levels of participation in training to success in school is limited, however. Wide-ranging studies and objective data indicate that there are structural disadvantages for young people from ethnic minorities with respect to access to training positions. These persons are also at a disadvantage in company hiring procedures. Vocation training provides the crucial foundations, however, for integration in working life and the future life trajectories of young people.

Due to the fact that about 8% of company training positions have been eliminated since 1992 and that unemployment among young people has risen, the opportunities for young people from ethnic minorities to receive a training position have deteriorated. The facts speak a clear language:

- The participation of young people from ethnic minorities in training programmes has been declining steadily since the middle of the 1990s, from 44% in 1994 to below 28% in 2005.
- The percentage of trainees without a German passport among all trainees has dropped by almost half within a period of ten years – from 8% in 1994 to 4.4% in 2005
- 36.5% of immigrants and members of ethnic minorities have not received any degree (the figure for the same group of Germans is 11.3%).

Immigrants and ethnic minorities thus have slender chances of receiving a job. They are virtually destined for unemployment. Often they have no other choice than to engage in an- und unskilled work, like their parents before them – if they find work in the first place.

Demands:

- Systematic implementation of counselling and orientation programmes by the Federal Employment Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*) providing a vocational orientation to schoolchildren, teachers and parents.
- Take into account cultural competencies and selection procedures and tests tailored to target groups with the aim of boosting the percentage of young people from ethnic groups who undergo in-company training.
- Special support for young adults who have no vocational degree to defray their costs of living when they go back to school to obtain an educational or vocational degree.
- A targeted initiative to increase the participation of young people from ethnic minorities in public service occupations.

Better qualifications translate into greater opportunities for secure jobs!

The massive reduction in the number of manufacturing jobs in the course of structural change and especially long periods of mass unemployment hits immigrants and ethnic minorities especially hard. Employment in Germany with social security benefits is in general decline. But employees who are immigrants and from ethnic minorities are disproportionately affected.

- The unemployment rate among immigrants and ethnic minorities is almost twice as high as for other groups of employees.

For this reason many members of ethnic minorities have to accept low-paid, temporary jobs and are forced into precarious employment situations. This is often the only type of work they can find. On top of the general repercussions of precarious employment such as the negative impact on people's health and the difficulty in planning one's future, the risk of poverty is considerably greater than among native Germans.

Demands:

- The abolition of the “priority-for-German-citizens review” (*Vorrangsprüfung*) in the labour market so that people from ethnic minorities are also able to work at places where they have found a job.
- The fact that people receive social aid or ALG 2 benefits (Hartz IV) must not be allowed to have any negative effect on their residence status.
- Equal, unrestricted access to vocational training regardless of residence status.
- A human resources policy which is based on diversity and a policy of intercultural equality and involving works councils and trade unions.
- Implementation of effective training qualification programmes and vocational counselling by the Federal Employment Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*) focusing on people from ethnic minorities
- Recognition of knowledge, skills and educational degrees acquired in foreign countries.

2. Integration in democratic forms of policy formation

Most immigrants and ethnic minorities have been living in Germany for a considerable length of time or have been born here. A total of 34 percent of all foreigners in Germany in 2001 had been here at least twenty years, and among this group, 15 percent had been living in Germany 30 years. This means that their lives are centred on Germany. Non-EU foreigners have been excluded from political participation and policy-making processes down to the present. They are not even able to influence policy at the local community level, which affects them directly.

Demands:

- The expansion of voting rights in local elections to all non-EU citizens.
- In addition, the involvement of people from ethnic minorities who are permanent residents of Germany in *Landtag* and *Bundestag* elections.
- General admission of dual citizenship and easing of naturalisation requirements.

3. Integration in informal interpersonal networks, self-organised ethnic groups, in neighbourhoods (social integration)

Many immigrants feel at home in Germany. They enjoy positive life opportunities and a safe and secure future here in Germany. Many of them acquire and build houses or condominiums and run businesses, thus creating jobs. These positive trends must not blind one to the fact, however, that the situation of immigrants in the areas of work, education, living and leisure pursuits continue to lag behind the rest of society. Members of this group are discriminated against through restrictive residence, naturalisation and work permit procedures.

But even with the increase of ultra-rightist, racist tendencies and violent acts as well as right-wing tendencies among the middle class and the population are impeding needed integration. One consequence of social exclusion, repression and right-wing extremist tendencies is isolation and involuntary withdrawal on the part of several immigrant and ethnic groups into their own cultural world, where they hope to find security and recognition.

That is why social integration is incompatible with discrimination and exclusion.

Demands:

- An end to government regulatory mechanisms and measures impeding integration such as, for example, “loyalty tests” (*Gesinnungstest*) and the priority assessment in the labour market.
- The non-exclusion of religious minorities or groups with different world views as long as they abide by the Constitution.
- The resolute targeting of the causes of right-wing extremist tendencies and a strengthening of the integrative capabilities of society. This includes, among other things, increasing funding and programmes fighting ultra-right violence such as the struggle against parties on the extreme right and a prohibition of neo-nazi organisations. A broad societal alliance is to be initiated and a civil society instilled with courage fostered.

V. Asylum must not be an act of mercy.

Through the adoption of the new 2004 Immigration Act, improvements have been achieved in the area of humanitarian residence rights. Non-government and gender-specific persecution have also generally been recognised as reasons for people to seek asylum. Some problems (e.g. exceptional leave to remain in Germany) have not been solved by the new law, however.

Demands:

- Unlimited application of the Geneva Refugees Convention.
- The restoration of the former Article § 16a of the German Constitution (GG).
- The repeal of the prohibition against work for more than 200,000 “tolerated aliens”.
- A secure right of residence for all immigrants who have been living in Germany for more than 3 years.
- The legalisation of people without any papers – no person is illegal.
- The abolishment of deportation arrest, the so-called “airport procedure” and “exceptional leave to stay in Germany” (so-called *Kettenduldungen*).

Just as Germany has more net immigrants than emigrants, migration is an open process. For IG Metall, the crucial task is to shape this process in an open, democratic manner, to demand participation rights for ethnic minorities and immigrants in all areas of life and devise strategies to implement these. This requires both a fair distribution of life-opportunities as well as ensuring minimum needs and well-being for everyone.

Focal points in ethnic policy work (2007 - 2008)

The focal points in ethnic policy work primarily derive from the resolutions of IG Metall and everyday practice in the fields of politics, society and business enterprises. In many parts of the IG Metall structure (local administrations, administrative offices, training centres, districts and board areas), the topic of immigration is viewed to be a multi-disciplinary task. Moreover, cooperation with alliance partners of IG Metall (pro-asylum, immigrants and minorities organisations, government ministries, etc.), is being continued and strengthened.

Colleagues from ethnic minorities are indispensable elements of trade union work at companies as members, trade union representatives, works council members and youth representatives.

- At IG Metall approximately 10% of the members come from 140 nations, while the percentage of females among the membership is 17.4 %.
- More than 10,000 foreign trade union functionaries at companies are active as trade union representatives and works council members, among them approximately 6,700 trade union representatives, which is 13% of all works council members (of this amount, approximately 12% are foreign women), among them approximately 3,300 works council members, which is 4.5% of all works council members (of this amount, 16.2% are females).
- Approximately 400 young functionaries among the youth and trainee representatives are from ethnic minorities. These account for 5% of all youth and trainee representatives (of this amount, approximately 10% are women).

Successfully work to achieve these objectives requires action be taken along a broad front in many areas and that this work be interlinked with the main fields of IG Metall's work. This requires cooperation with the respective functional areas in charge, districts and educational and training work.

I. "Europeanisation" of IG Metall

The profile of IG Metall must be strengthened in the area of European policy and our colleagues from groups of immigrants and ethnic minorities must be actively involved. These colleagues can assume important functions building bridges and acting as ambassadors at conferences and congresses, in EWC work, but also in their everyday lives.

- A systematic stock-taking of the possibilities for using these people and an exchange of experience among these colleagues needs to be promoted.

Beyond this, the issue of policy towards ethnic minorities needs to be placed higher on the EU agenda, which means:

- Assigning greater importance to the topic of labour and jobs in committees dealing with ethnic minorities in order for this to assume greater political importance
- Encouraging an exchange of opinion with other trade unions in the EMF and the ETUF, participation in European forums and the broadening of the social movement
- Promoting collaboration in the Working Group for Europe while firmly embedding the European Memorandum of IG Metall in district and regional committees involved with immigrants and ethnic minorities.

II. Implementation of the national integration plan

Intensive collaboration in the "National Working Group for Guaranteeing Good Training and Good Jobs, Increasing Opportunities in the Labour Market" within the framework of the National Integration Plan must take place within IG Metall in order to promote issues relating

to training and labour-market policy. The results, which are to be published in summer 2007, may offer an excellent foundation for activities which have a broad PR impact.

Training

Encouragement of sufficiently qualified training positions and the introduction of pay-as-you-go financing must regain importance.

- The activation and targeted initiation of contacts with works councils in big companies in order to raise the number of young people from ethnic groups who are hired by companies and combating discrimination against them.
- Trial execution of the training programme on “Intercultural Learning in Training” for trainers.

Qualifications / continuing education and training / pay systems

The precondition for successful integration is participation in working life. Technical and language qualifications are and remain crucial to a secure future. This applies especially to immigrants and people from ethnic groups as well.

- Implementation of collective training agreements in connection with the development of specific group counselling and appropriate training measures for people from ethnic minorities.
- Putting company agreements promoting equal treatment and company training measures on solid footing through company agreements in model companies
- Firmly establishing the topic of “intercultural equality policy” in committees dealing with immigrants and ethnic minorities as well as the organisation as a whole.

III. Implementation of the General Equal-Treatment Act (AGG)

Germany is the last country in Europe to implement the four EU Directives on Anti-Discrimination. These have been in force, however, since 18th August 2006 (with additional amendments from 12th December 2006). Practical aid in implementing these laws is required to shape things in the intended direction:

- Support for the work of works council members and trade union representatives (perhaps use the Hans Böckler Foundation’s Action Support Programme)
- Creation of a training module for works councils and the execution of appropriate training programmes.
- Identifying and analysing case examples, and then publishing these both within IG Metall and externally
- A regular, organised exchange of opinion.

IV. Internal work involving immigrants and ethnic minorities

The percentage of people who are immigrants and from ethnic minorities among company interest representatives, but also in the decision-making institutions of IG Metall (local administrations, collective bargaining commissions, etc.) needs to be increased to a level commensurate with the rank-and-file membership in these organisations in accordance with the Foreigners Promotion Programme of 9th April 2003.

- Resolute implementation and transparency and control over the changes instituted and problems which exist must be ensured.

Educational and training work

Colleagues who are immigrants or from ethnic minorities may take part and do take part in IG Metall's education and training events. The further development of educational, training and counselling strategies is assigned a very high priority. At the same time, it is not only the target group of colleagues who are immigrants and members of ethnic minorities which is important, but also colleagues who are not members of ethnic minorities.

- The percentage of departmental heads who are immigrants or from ethnic minorities should be increased and special meetings organised for targeted exchange between them.
- Aspects bearing relevance to ethnic minorities (change in society and institutions) must be taken more into account both conceptually and directly in seminar work in central and regional education and training programmes.
- The topic of inter-cultural didactics and methodology needs to be further refined and developed in a systematic manner in trade union education and training work.
- Training measures for multipliers and heads of departments should include the topic of intercultural competence.
- The further development of strategies for non-racist educational work.
- The establishment of a pool of heads of department and colleagues from different committees on ethnic minorities for European and international seminar work.

Projects and campaigns

Projects and research projects which bear relevance to policy towards immigrants and ethnic minorities (similar to the XENOS project) must continue to be supported and expanded. We are also calling for:

- The initiation of a project on the topic of "ethnic minorities in precarious positions and the impact on the material, residence status and health condition of people.
- The activation of member projects for employees from the Russian-language area and other areas of central and eastern European.
- Targeted recruitment of young people from ethnic minorities.
- An exchange on new strategies for dealing with right-wing groups (parties and movements) in the organisation and measures such as conferences e.g. a "campaign against the right", educational and training events, with such campaigns against the right being carried out at both at central as well as district and regional levels.
- Greater use of the tool of native-language media e.g. Turkish Radio Broadcaster Metropol FM (Berlin) so that people who are not working at companies also learn about IG Metall.

Aside from the political-ideological debate, IG Metall also continues to work – not least as an employees' and human rights organisation – for equal treatment, promotion of equal opportunity and legal security. One basic element of trade union policy is the vision of a society in which every person is free to develop as he or she chooses.