



# Integration Policy in the State of Hessen, Germany

Dr. Ingrid Wilkens, Dr. Ulrike Neumann  
**Hessian Ministry for Social Affairs and Integration**  
Dostojewskistraße 4  
65187 Wiesbaden, Germany  
Phone +49 (0) 611 817-0

## 1 Framing Conditions

Hessen is a *Bundesland* of Western Germany, located in the heart of Europe (see figure 1), and has a population in excess of over 6 million; compared to countries such as Denmark, Norway or Finland, there is a higher population in the state of Hessen.

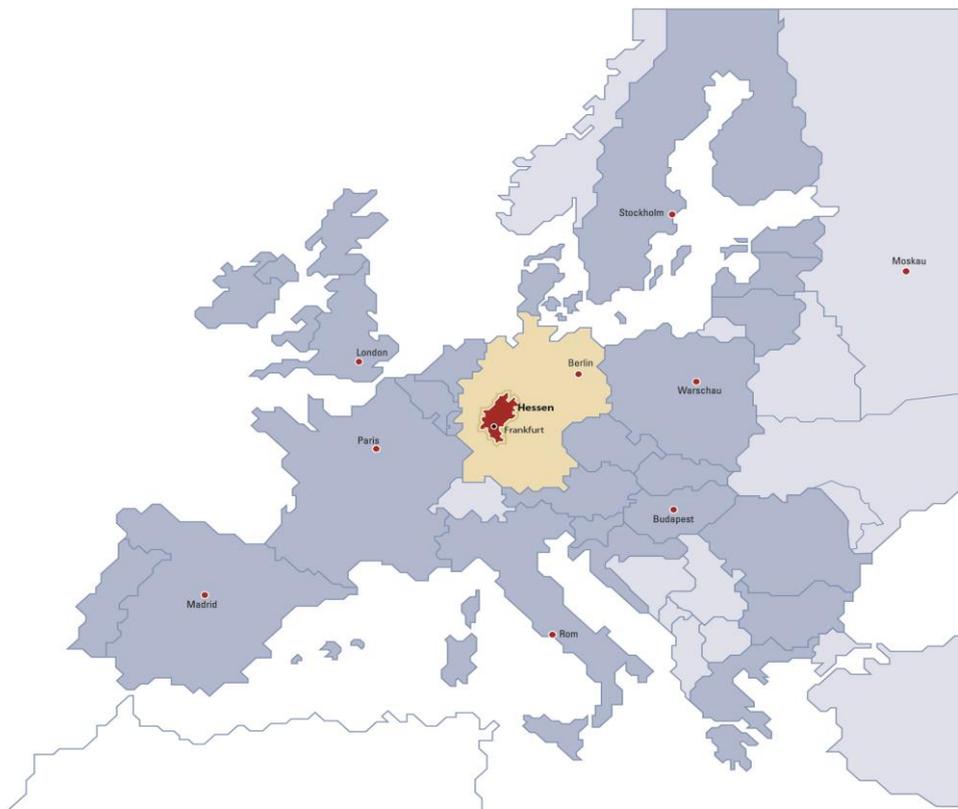


Figure 1: The position of Hessen in the European Union  
Source: [www.invest-in-hessen.de](http://www.invest-in-hessen.de) (adapted)

Northern Hessen is characteristically rural. The south is dominated by one of the most important agglomerations in Europe – the Rhine-Main metropolitan area. Many global corporations are located here, such as Deutsche Lufthansa, Deutsche Bank, Commerzbank and Fraport (Frankfurt Airport).



Today, people from over 170 nations live in Hessen. More than one in four inhabitants in Hessen has a migrant background<sup>1</sup>. The majority of people with a migration background, about 862,000 people, have German citizenship. Out of those with migration background, a third were born in Germany and two third immigrated. Since 2005, the immigrant population in Hessen has increased by more than 300,000 people. In 2015, refugee migration to Germany reached an unprecedented level which had enormous influence on the migrant population in Hessen (see below).

People from a migrant background tend to live in the southern agglomerations and not in the country, which is a typical phenomenon of settling migrants.

On average, people with a migrant background are younger than Hessen`s total population. One out of two children under the age of six is brought up in a migrant family. In the future, this percentage will continue to grow.

Considering the current situation, immigration is considered both an opportunity and a challenge. On the one hand, the immigrant population`s diversity is a resource and immigration could hopefully serve as a tool to solve the specific labour market shortages. On the other hand, the size and composition of the migrant population (see the table below; reliable data on refugees still largely lacking) require a variety of integration measures.

<u>Country of origin</u>	<u>share in the migrant population</u>	<u>share of first generation migrants</u>
Turkey	17	49
Poland	9	78
Italy	6	52
Russia	5	79
Kazakhstan	5	76
Croatia	3	60
Romania	3	85
Morocco	2	60
Afghanistan	2	70
Greece	2	62

Table 1: Top 10 immigrant groups in Hessen, their share in the migrant population and the share of those who have migrated themselves

## 2 Immigration History

Due to the different histories of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic still today the composition of immigrant populations differs between West and East Germany. The immigration patterns in Hessen can be considered representative for the West

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<sup>1</sup> As defined by the German Federal Statistical Office (2008), a person with a migrant background includes "every person who immigrated into the present territory of the Federal Republic of Germany after 1949, every foreigner born in Germany, and every person born as a German in Germany but who has at least one parent who is an immigrant or was born as a foreigner in Germany."

German *Länder*. On the basis of the classification by the OECD, West Germany can be regarded as one of the “European states with post-war labour recruitment”.

The ongoing immigration to West Germany can be divided into several phases:

The first phase was characterized by the recruitment of low-skilled foreign workers from Mediterranean countries. They were mostly employed in industrial mass production. The initial idea of the guest worker program was that workers would return to their home countries after one year and would be replaced by newly arriving workers. Therefore, integration measures – e.g. language instruction or further vocational training – were not provided. However, practices were different from program expectations: Recruitment processes and on-the-job-training caused costs and temporary workers wished to stay longer to increase their earnings. Thus, the rotation cycle was cancelled. More and more migrants settled in Germany. Particularly after the ban of recruitment in 1973<sup>2</sup>, when foreign workers who had left Germany were not allowed to work again, there was an observed subsequent influx of family members migrating to Germany.

From 1973 until 1989 (opening of the inner German border), the share of foreign workers decreased, while the share of *Aussiedler* (ethnic German resettlers) and their families<sup>3</sup>, and of asylum seekers, rose.

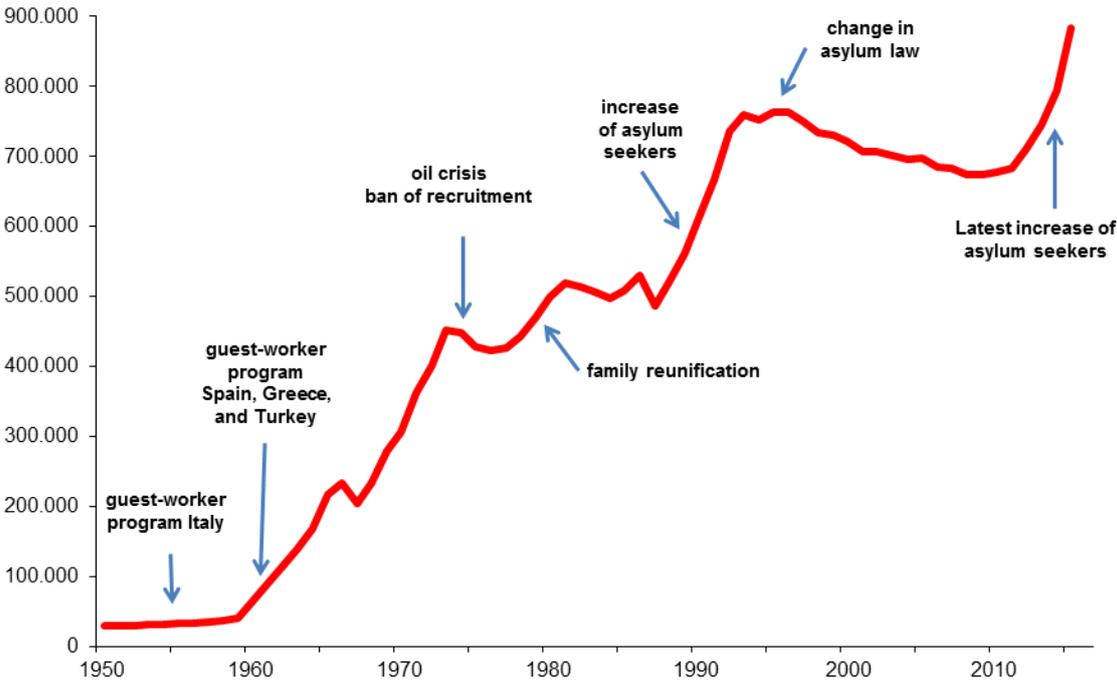


Figure 3: Foreigners in Hesse 1950 to present

<sup>2</sup> The ban of recruitment was a result of the oil crisis and was conducted e.g. in the Netherlands and Belgium, too.

<sup>3</sup> These groups had been living in Eastern European countries (e.g. Romania, Russia) for centuries. Due to their German roots, they easily obtain German citizenship.

The next phase, starting in 1990, was first characterized by a humanitarian immigration. The number of *Aussiedler* (and their family members) increased after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Additionally, there was an increase in the number of asylum seekers searching for refuge from the wars in former Yugoslavia. Around the turn of the millennium immigration stagnated partially due to the change in asylum law.

Since 2009, the influx of foreigners has been significantly rising. While for years, marriage and family reunion have been the key reasons for third-country nationals to migrate to Germany, the Eastern enlargement of the European Union and the economic crisis that affected the Mediterranean countries appear to have caused a significant increase in current labour migration.

In 2015, an enormous number of migrants and refugees crossed into Europe. In 2015, 890.000 refugees came to Germany. In 2015 and 2016, Hessen received 100.000 refugees.

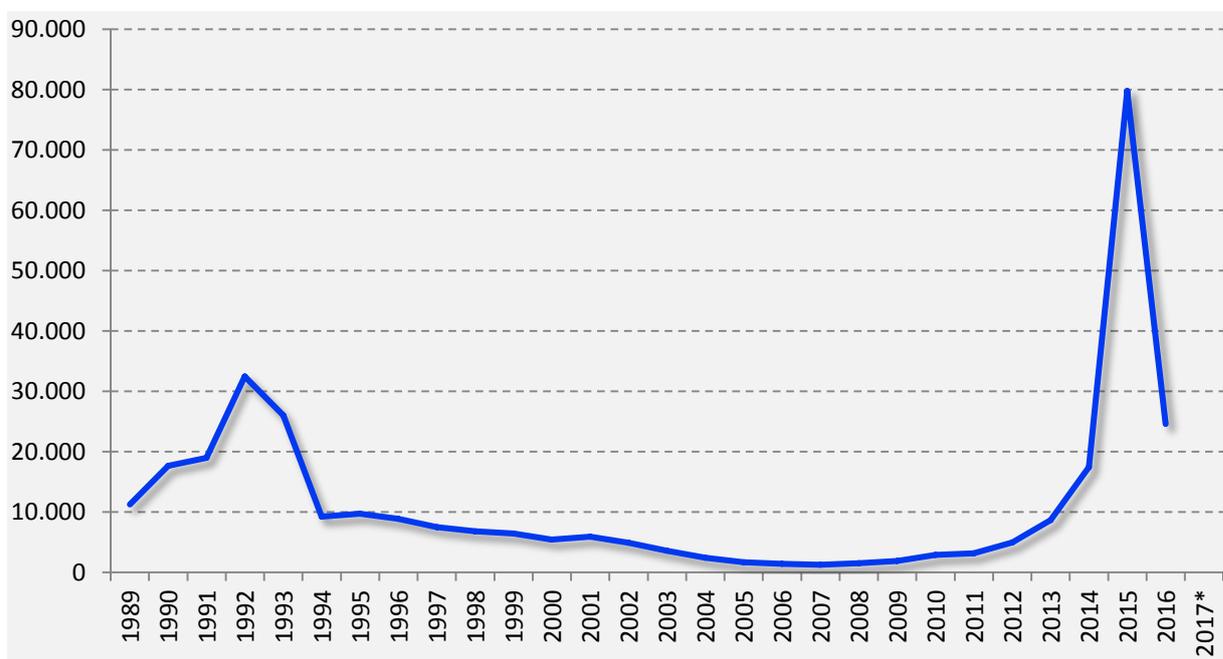


Figure 4: Registered asylum seekers (“Asylzugänge”)  
Source: EASY

### 3 Implementation of Integration Policy in Hessen

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Germany officially stated that a large proportion of its population were immigrants. At the same time they recognized that integration had not always been successful. Many migrants – particularly the guest workers and their children – had only low vocational qualifications that were not sufficient for the demands of a modern service economy. In traditional immigration countries like Australia or Canada, immigrants with professional qualifications, work experience, proven business skills or substantial financial resources are attracted. However, in Germany an immigration policy had been implemented which increased the proportion of lowly-skilled immigrants in the population dramatically. Even today, Hessen’s migrant population is eight times more likely to lack a secondary school diploma compared to the population

without this background (8% vs. 1%). Migrant students attend *Gymnasium* (high school) less often and receive the highest-level diploma (*Abitur*) less often.<sup>4</sup> These gaps in educational achievement are reflected in the labour market outcomes: In 2015, migrant unemployment was three times as high as non-migrant unemployment.

Integration policy in Hessen was not developed before the turn of the millennium. Within this process, a paradigm shift - a change from one way of thinking to another – occurred: Until 1999, *Ausländerpolitik* (policy on foreigners) was practiced; now, *Integrationspolitik* (integration policy) for a diverse society had to be implemented. The policy guidelines included rewarding achievement, enabling advancement in society, and preventing exclusion. The Hessen Government founded an integration unit at the Ministry for Social Affairs, declared integration to be a cross-cutting issue, developed a catalogue of integration measures for all State Ministries, and passed an integration concept which covered all areas of society by the year 2000. An *Integrationsbeirat* (advisory council on integration) was appointed and consisted of representatives of various civil society groups.

Other Bundesländer as well as the federal government picked up the Hessian governments ideas: In 2006, the Hessen Government proposed the idea of a *Nationaler Integrationsplan* (National integration plan) to the federal government. For the first time, all those dealing with integration in politics and in society worked hand in hand: Federal Government, the States, cities and municipalities, migrants, institutions and organizations from science, media, culture, sports, trade and industry, trade unions and religious groups. Part of the plan`s implementation was the annual *Integrationsministerkonferenz* (Integration Ministers` Conference). This exchange and close cooperation has had positive effects on the Hessian integration policies.

#### **4 Tools of Hessian Integration Policy**

In addition to European and national rules, the *Bundesländer* are permitted to create their own integration policies. Therefore, the Hessian Government has initiated a broad spectrum of measures to achieve its integration goals on a regional and local level.

Hessian integration policy works to recognise the population`s diversity as a resource. When Integration is successful, diversity enriches the all of society. Each individual should be able to unfold their potential and have equal opportunities. Everybody is required to take responsibility for oneself, for others and for society as a whole. Immigrants as well as people who have lived in Hessen for generations, must both contribute their share to successful integration. Integration does not know any special rights or privileges. It is not a special task for a specialised office. Rather, the governmental structures need to function in a way that fits everybody - regardless of their origin or migrant background.

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<sup>4</sup> The Abitur is an examination that students must take if they attend the highest level of secondary school in Germany (*Gymnasium*). Once they complete the Abitur, the students receive a secondary school diploma and have the capability to attend a university.

### ***Integrationsbeirat (Advisory Council on Integration)***

This advisory council was founded in the year 2000. Its main tasks are discussing integration issues and giving policy recommendations to the government. The members represent organisations working in the fields of immigration and refugee policies, in churches and other religious communities, in employers' associations and trade unions as well as in cities and municipalities. The members have a broad background of work experience and some of them have immigrated themselves. The council regularly defines fields of action and introduces proposals for efficiently implementing measures of integration.

### ***Landesprogramm WIR (State Program "We")***

As already described, integration is not a special task for a specialized office. Rather the governmental structures need to function in a way that fits the whole of society. With the program "WIR", the State of Hessen aims to facilitate intercultural awareness and to establish a welcoming culture on the local level. The program addresses every citizen – with and without a migrant background - in order to enhance opportunities for societal participation. Throughout this active integration partnership between the municipalities and the State government, the structures and services should be adapted to the diversity of the population.

The program's elements are:

- Full-time-integration-coordinators in each of the 33 Hessian rural and urban districts. They are responsible for implementing integration strategies and intercultural awareness and for establishing a welcoming culture.
- Full-time WIR-case managers in each of the 33 Hessian rural and urban districts. They are responsible for coordinating integration opportunities for refugees and implementing a network of integration volunteers for refugees.
- Funding of innovative integration projects.
- Funding of projects for female refugees.
- Support of migrant organizations, such as: Funding of micro-projects, networking, qualification and consultation.
- Support of integration volunteers: The Hessian government has developed a network of integration volunteers by promoting the training and deployment of volunteers working with migrants. Usually, integration volunteers have a migrant background themselves. They accompany migrants with public authorities, provide advice on school career decisions or arrange contacts with institutions offering public services.
- Language courses for refugees.
- Easily accessible language courses for migrants who have already been living in Germany for a longer time (for example "Mum learns German").

The program has a budget of 8.85 million EUR annually. Municipalities and non-profit-organizations can get funding from the program.

### ***Integrationsmonitoring (Monitoring Report on Integration)***

Integration monitoring is used to measure the integration process and make it visible. The government considers the ability to observe and measure the progress achieved in integration as necessary in order to ensure a long-term successful and sustainable integration policy. In 2010, the Hessian Monitoring Report on Integration was published for the first time. Currently, the fourth edition is being prepared, which will display integration trends since 2005.

### ***Studies on Integration***

In addition to the Monitoring Report on Integration, the Hessian Government publishes more detailed studies on certain integration topics, e.g. on school education of young migrants, early childhood education, migrant organisations or religious beliefs in Hessen. When possible, the Ministry also conducts public opinion polls. So far, the Hessian population was surveyed on immigration twice. To serve the local actors, a study on the state of integration policies in cities and municipalities had been conducted wherein most municipalities had been involved.

### ***Integrationskonferenz (Integration Conference)***

In order to lead a discourse on integration between different political and civil society actors, the Integration Conference was established in 2009. The first Conference focused on the most important fields of action: education and work. In 2015 the Integration Conference was assigned to support the elaboration of the Integration Plan.

### ***Hessischer Integrationsplan (Hessian Integration Plan)***

The general policy objectives underline the importance of measures and programs in areas such as education, professional training, participation in social, cultural and political activities and preventing the social exclusion of migrants. It was decided to join and concentrate all these different measures in the „Hessian Integration Plan“. Organized by the Hessian Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration, the responsible Hessian state ministries and the Integration Conference worked on the priorities, strategies and actions of Hessian integration policy to be laid down in this new policy framework. The plan will be published in autumn 2017.

### ***Hessischer Integrationspreis (Hessian Integration Award)***

In Hesse, a very large number of trend-setting projects and initiatives in the field of integration have been developed over the years. Since 2004, the integration prize has been awarded to persons and projects that contribute to improve intercultural living and the integration of migrants. Every resident of Hesse is entitled to propose candidates. The winners are chosen by an independent jury. The prize has a value of 20,000 EUR and is awarded once a year.

### ***Interkulturelle Öffnung der Landesverwaltung (Intercultural opening of the State Administration)***

To ensure the equal participation of all groups in society, the Hessian Government strives for more intercultural openness of the State administration. The major aim is to increase the proportion of employees with a migrant background. In order to monitor this aim, the state administration has implemented a survey on diversity. Almost 23 percent of the newly recruited employees in the state administration have a migrant background. In addition, the government tries to increase the intercultural competence of its staff. Furthermore, it should be ensured that the ideas of intercultural openness are considered in planning, organisation and staffing decisions. Therefore, various measures are taken, e.g. the targeted recruitment of persons with a migration background or the cooperation with migrant organisations.

### ***Charta der Vielfalt (Diversity Charter)***

In 2011, the Hessen Government signed the German Diversity Charter. The signing of this charter is a voluntary commitment. The Charter is a corporate initiative to promote diversity in companies and institutions. The initiative aims to promote the recognition, appreciation and integration of diversity into Germany's working environment. All employees should be valued – regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or worldview, disability, age, sexual orientation and identity. With the signing the Hessian government is committed in applying the Charter to its staff of approx. 144,000 employed at the regional government authority.

### ***Survey on Diversity in the State Administration of Hessen***

Within the framework of Hessen Government intercultural opening strategy the administration has set itself a goal to recruit even more individuals with a migration background. In order to monitor, to what extent the state administration is able to address persons independently of their origin or the origin of their parents, and to encourage them to take up a job in the state administration, the survey on diversity was implemented in 2013. All new employees in the state administration are anonymously asked to answer up to 16 questions regarding their applications for employment, professional careers and their personal family background. First results have shown that almost 23 percent of all newly recruited employees have a migration background.

### ***Citizenship Campaign***

Hessen wants to encourage people, who have already been living in Germany for several years and -who fulfil the requirements to naturalize, to do so. Therefore, the state government started the campaign "Hessen und ich DAS PASST". Elements of the campaign include informational meetings, leaflets and posters distributed throughout Hesse as well as a website. Furthermore, Hessen funds local naturalization campaigns and celebrates its new citizens through annual citizenship ceremonies.

### ***Campaign “Löwen im Herz. Hessen integriert”***

“Lion in the heart. Hesse integrates” is the slogan of a public awareness campaign that began in 2016. Hessian integration policy is based on mutual acceptance and respect. Throughout the country, there are countless exemplary activities of individuals, municipalities and civil-society actors. However, integration problems often attract a great deal of attention. Therefore the campaign aims to raise the awareness to the fact, that integration is usually successful in Hesse. The core of this campaign are the people who stand up for social cohesion and serve as a model for the commitment to successful integration. The symbol of the campaign, the lion, is the Hessian heraldic animal, which symbolises strength, courage, self-confidence and responsibility.

### ***Integrationskompass (Integration Compass)***

This is the Government’s homepage for all integration matters ([www.integrationskompass.de](http://www.integrationskompass.de)). Aim of the website is providing information, cooperation and integration. It provides information on the objectives and priorities of Hessian integration policy and offers more than 420 links to projects and services of public and non-public bodies at the local, state and federal level. Other focal points consist of information on integration policy, State government programs, the different activity fields, research on migration and integration, integration monitoring and literature on integration topics.

### ***Integrationsbrief (Newsletter on Integration)***

This newsletter is published by the Ministry for Integration four times a year. It generally informs the reader on Hessian integration policy and reports on events, features projects, and includes interviews. Each issue contains a main topic, e.g. classes in Islam or the impact on immigration for securing skilled labour in Hessen.

### ***Stiftungsnetzwerk Integration (The Hessian Network of Foundations for Integration)***

Integration can be successfully developed if the public and the nonprofit sectors work together. The work done by foundations is a prime example of such commitment to the common good. Foundations are more and more frequently supporting integration and want to exchange their experience and best practices and to expand their know-how by coming together with other nonprofit organisations. In 2009, the Hessian Network of Foundations for Integration was set up to encourage such regular exchanges and unleash new synergies.

### ***Funding of the Association of Hessian Foreign Resident Advisory Boards (Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Ausländerbeiräte)***

Since 1983, foreign resident advisory boards have been established on a local level. These advisory boards represent the interests of the foreign population in the cities and municipalities of Hessen. The association itself works to achieve the political, legal and social equality of foreigners, to foster integration and to counteract discrimination and racism. It is also a member of the Hessen

Advisory Council on Integration. The State of Hessen promotes the personnel and material costs annually with 357,000 EUR.

## 5 Development of Tools for Refugee Integration

In 2015 and 2016 Hessen managed to accommodate 100.000 refugees and to provide the necessary medical and social care. Now, the challenge is to integrate those who are staying here.

In order to bring together the involved actors from politics and administration as well as those from civil-society, the Hessian Prime Minister established an asylum convention (Asylkonvent). In seven specialized working groups, experts develop solutions e.g. in the fields of education, health-care or housing.

With two action plans for integration of refugees and social cohesion, the Hessian government has provided 1,3 billion EUR for 2016 and 1,6 billion EUR for 2017. So over 100 concrete measures could be taken and continued. For example, in 2016, almost 800 new teachers were recruited and in 2017 1,100 new teachers will be recruited for Hessian schools; 1000 apprenticeship positions will be funded for young people under 27, and urban development funding was and will be increased.

## 6 Outlook

Displayed, the Hessian government uses a bunch of measures for fostering integration, ranging from large programs to symbolic acts. However, the defining elements of Hessian Integration Policy are information, building networks and providing incentives for the local authorities.

All the measures mentioned are not special, tailored for a German *Land*. In every region across Europe every single tool can be used. Moreover, measures can be picked out to be combined.

The Hessen government continually works to improve the tools. In order not to reinvent the wheel and to make integration policies more effective and efficient it is continuously observed how other *Bundesländer* and other countries organize their integration policies.

For further details see [www.integrationskompass.de](http://www.integrationskompass.de) (in German language).

