

How Is Mobility Behaviour Affected by a Migrant Background?

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1 ABSTRACT

Population changes are part of the transformation in European cities. The growing group of migrants is one element of these transformation processes. Due to socio-demographic changes they are set to play a greater role in the future development. Thus, new mobility needs and requirements as well as increasing cultural and ethnic influences and diversity are new challenges for planners and city authorities. In the context of such re-mixing processes, cities are in demand to reconsider existing management procedures in order to adapt and manage different elements accordingly. This is also true for the transport system that needs to facilitate and support sustainable mobility behaviour. In Germany, nearly 20 % of the population are first- or second-generation immigrants (so-called “people with a migration background”). Despite these facts, little is known about their mobility behaviour, mobility options and needs, and they remain “terra incognita” with regard to their travel patterns. An important and interesting research question is therefore if and how a migration background affects mobility behaviour and transport demand, with such information needed to define whether local infrastructures can fulfil the needs of all inhabitants.

In reply to this, the ILS conducted a pilot study¹ to broaden the empirical basis in Germany and ascertain possible motives and reasons for any differences in mobility behaviour. Results show some interesting differences between the survey’s three main target groups (“without a migration background”, “with a Turkish migration background” and “with another migration background”) regarding mobility-related variables such as driving license ownership, vehicle ownership, personal vehicle availability and usage of different transport modes.

People with a migration background have their own views and needs regarding mobility services and transport infrastructures as parents of schoolchildren, public transport customers, or as employees of different companies. Some also belong to groups with special mobility needs, like elderly people or people with reduced mobility. Up to date it remains an open question if people with a migration background need additional assistance and further services to use all mobility options which are offered by a sustainable, barrier-free and inclusive transport system. So the project paves the way to further research.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

In addition to population decline – varying widely from region to region –, the overall ageing of society and changing forms of social life, growing ethnic diversity is a major quantitative and qualitative consequence of demographic change, with nearly 20 % of people living in Germany now having a migration background² (Statistisches Bundesamt 2010).

In view of the shift from labour migration to permanent immigration, which continues to take place in Germany, the inclusion of immigrants, their families, and coming generations in societal and political life is

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² The definition of a population group with a migration background was introduced in 2005 by the ‘Microcensus’, an official representative survey of the population and labour market. The group includes “ (...) all persons who have immigrated into the territory of today’s Federal Republic of Germany after 1949, and of all foreigners born in Germany and all persons born in Germany who have at least one parent who immigrated into the country or was born as a foreigner in Germany. The migration status of a person is determined based on his/her own characteristics regarding immigration, naturalisation and citizenship and the relevant characteristic of his/her parents (Statistisches Bundesamt 2012).”

becoming increasingly important. Due to the positive migration balance together with greater follow-up immigration of family members and higher birth rates than among the ethnic German population, the proportion of children and young people with a migration background, as well as older people, is set to greatly increase. From a spatial, societal, and economic point of view, people with a migration background will thus remain a determining factor in urban development.

Urban development policy research and practice, programmes and measures have until now focused on integration, community life, language acquisition, political participation, education, and vocational integration, as well as cultural diversity. What has so far been neglected is the question of the impact of growing ethnic diversity on everyday mobility, transport and traffic in cities and urban neighbourhoods.

There are some initial indications that people's everyday mobility is determined not only by the classical spatial, economic, and socio-demographic factors such as age, gender, education, and employment, but also by national and thus cultural/ethnic background. In particular, there are signs of gender-specific differences in access to and use of different forms of transport (Kasper, Reutter, Schubert 2007).

Although mobility and transport studies have as yet ignored the migration background of transport users, a few studies included their nationality in the bivariate form German/non-German. One of these few studies is MID (Mobilität in Deutschland) 2002, the survey on mobility in Germany. The findings of this ten year-old survey show that immigrants do not necessarily travel less than Germans, but they do so differently. Differences are also apparent between nationalities, with gender variable often having an intensifying effect. For example, whereas on average German women and men made the same number of journeys, among non-German respondents, men made more journeys than women of the same nationality. On average, far fewer non-German women own a car and vehicles are more rarely available to them. As far as driving licences are concerned, there are similar major differences in immigrant groups between men and women (Kasper, Reutter, Schubert 2007 based on MID 2002).

Findings from studies in European and US contexts also suggest that everyday mobility may be determined not only by "classical" factors (age, income, transport facilities, specific location-related spatial factors, etc.), but also by national or cultural/ethnic background and by migration circumstances (e.g. duration of stay in the new country) (DfT 2010; Beckman, Goulias 2008). For example, a study on the mobility behaviour of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands found that immigrants were less mobile than the native Dutch population, mainly differing in their use of public transport and bicycles (Harms 2007).

However, statements about differences in mobility behaviour between Germans and non-Germans, between people with a migration and non-migration background, or between different groups of migrants are very poorly grounded, with research urgently needed.

2.2 Project objectives

In reply to this dearth of knowledge in Germany about the mobility options, needs and behaviour of people of non-German origin (with a migration background), the ILS conducted a pilot study to broaden the empirical basis in Germany and to ascertain possible motives and reasons for any differences in mobility behaviour. Initial indications suggest that everyday mobility may well be determined not only by the "classical" factors, but also by national or cultural/ethnic background.

3 METHOD

3.1 Survey Design

The survey was conducted as a pilot study, designed to combine questions on family background such as citizenship, date of migration and native country with such mobility-related questions as the number of cars and bicycles per household or the availability and use of different transport modes.

The survey took place in Offenbach am Main, a major city with over 120 000 inhabitants. The share of people with foreign citizenship (31 %) is one of the highest in Germany; with even more people accordingly having a migration background. Therefore, telephone interview participants could choose between four different languages. German was by the far most frequently selected (94.0 %), followed by Turkish (4.9 %), Russian (0.8 %) and Polish (0.4 %). The survey took place in September and October 2010. The participants were aged 18 years and above and were allocated by quota to the three main groups "without a migration

background” (n=666), “with a Turkish migration background” (n=631) and “with another migration background” (n=617). In the last group, participants had 54 different nationalities and came from 73 different countries. In addition, each main group was equally divided between women and men. In the following text the results are presented separately for the three main groups.

To facilitate understanding, the group of participants without a migration background is referred to as “German”, that of people with a Turkish migration background as “Turkish”, and that of people with another migration background as “other-nationality”. This reflects the background and not the current citizenship status of the participants; i.e. Turkish participants who have adopted German nationality are assigned to the Turkish group, due to their Turkish background. When referring to groups with a migration background in general, i.e. without differentiating Turks, the term “non-German” is used.

3.2 Sample description

In total the survey sample contains data from 1914 participants. While non-German survey participants tend to live in or close to the city centre of Offenbach, German ones tend to live more on the city’s periphery.

	Without a migration background	Turkish migration background	Other migration background	Total sample
Average age in years (participants age: 18 and above)	59	43	45	49
Average household size	2.0	3.2	2.9	2.7
Percentage of households with children under the age of 18	28.8	55.3	47.9	45.3

Table 1: Sample description by migration background

Regarding some general socio-demographic parameters, there are quite big differences between the three groups (see Table 1). The overall average age of the total sample is 49, pretty close to the average age of the whole population of Germany (aged 18 and above). Looking only at people with German citizenship, to be found in all three groups, average age increases to 52. Similar to the total population of Germany, in our survey Germans are older than non-Germans. Consequently, only 28.8 % of German households live together with children under 18. This contrasts to 55.3 % of participating Turkish households. Household size similarly reflects this pattern, with German households having only two household members on average, while Turkish households have on average 3.2 members, closely followed by other-nationality households.

The older age of German participants is reflected in the high proportion of retired people (48.6 %). By contrast, only 15.1 % of other-nationality participants belong to this group. More than half (53.3 %) of this group goes out to work (part-time or full-time), compared to 46.1 % of Turkish participants and only 38.9 % of German ones. The highest number of unemployed people is to be found in the Turkish group (9.7 %), the least in the German group (1.8 %).

	Without a migration background	Turkish migration background	Other migration background
Below 1,000 €	21.0 %	52.5 %	34.9 %
1,000 € up to 1, 499 €	21.9 %	23.5 %	27.4 %
1,500 € and 2,999 €	49.7 %	21.5 %	33.9 %
Above 3,000 €	7.4 %	2.4 %	3.9 %

Table 2: Household income per month by migration background (equivalent scale: OECD modified scale)³

Even though many of the German participants are retired, they tend to have a higher household income per month than the other two groups (see Table 2). For example, only 21.0 % of them have a (equivalent scale) household income less than 1.000 € per month, in contrast to 52.5 % of those in the Turkish group. The latter group generally tends to have the lowest household income, followed by the other-nationality group.

³ In order to reflect that the needs of a household grow with each member but not proportionately, the size of the household and the age of its members are taken into account. An equivalent scale is used following the OECD-modified scale. This scale assigns a value of 1 to the household head, 0.5 to each additional adult member and 0.3 to each child.

4 FINDINGS

The following chapter provides an overview of selected mobility-related survey findings, such as percentages of people holding a driving licence, vehicle ownership and usage of different forms of transport as well as findings regarding satisfaction with the provision of key services. All findings are presented by three migration groups (‘Without a migration background (German)’, ‘Turkish migration background (Turkish)’ and ‘Other migration background (other-nationality)’ and also by gender.

4.1 Driving licence ownership, car ownership and use

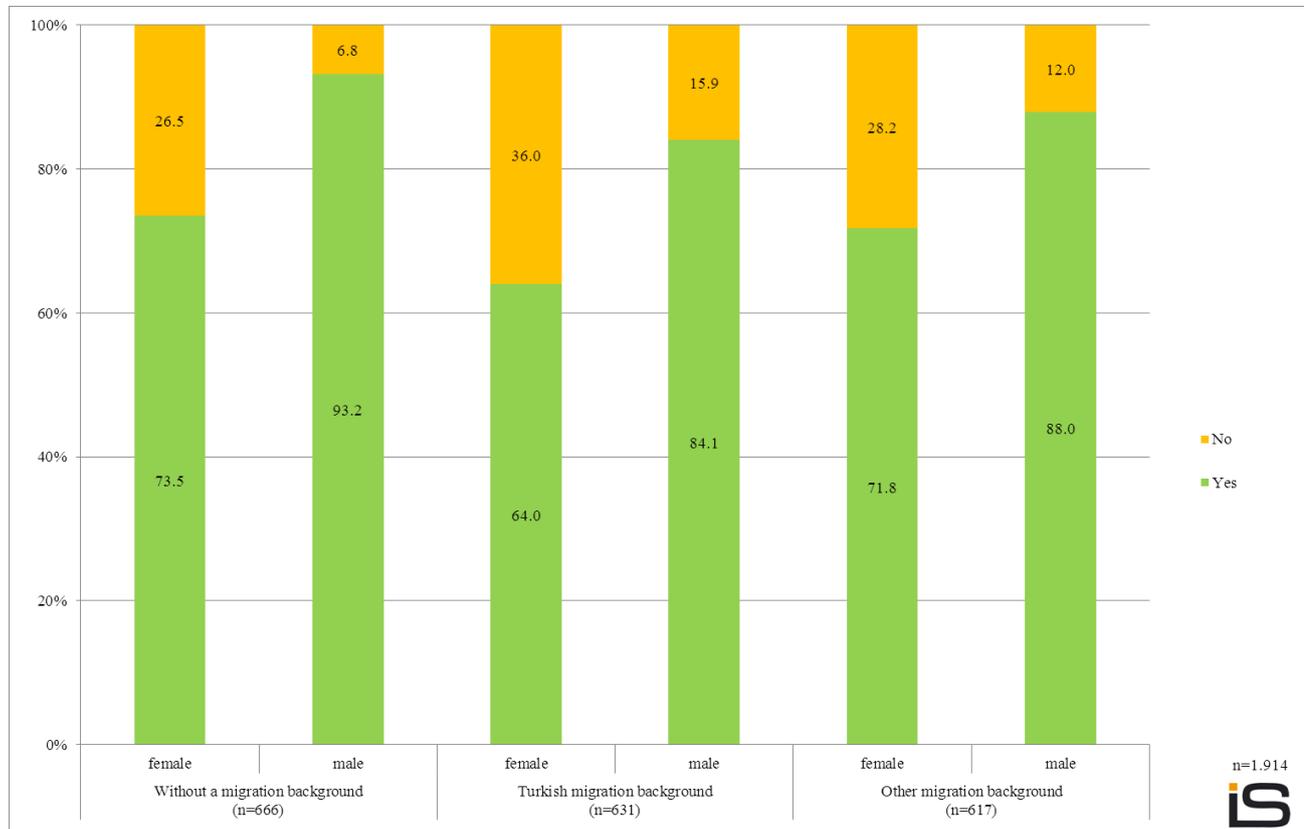


Fig. 1: Car driving licence holders by migration background and gender

As the chart above shows, the proportion of women holding a driving licence is clearly lower in all groups. Whereas 73.5 % of German women hold a driving licence, this figure drops to 64.0 % for Turkish women. It should also be taken into account that 80 % of all female German non-licence holders are over 60 years old. By contrast, the majority of non-German women are considerably younger (between 18 and 39 years old).

Findings on car ownership per household do not show any major differences between the three groups. The majority of all households has at least one car, with only 24.5 % of German households, 21.7 % of Turkish households and 23.5 % of other-nationality households not owning a car. The majority of these non-car-owning households are singles living – as expected – close to the city centre of Offenbach. To find out why these households did not own a car, the respective participants were asked about the reasons why. The majority of German households answered that the main reasons were age and health (reflecting the higher average age of this group), while non-German households cited primarily financial reasons (‘Purchase or maintenance of a car too expensive’).

However, car ownership by household-size shows that German households tend to generally have more cars than non-German households – the larger the household, the higher the number of cars in the household. By contrast, in Turkish households the number of cars hardly increases with more household members, with only 23.1 % of 5-person-households having two or more cars.

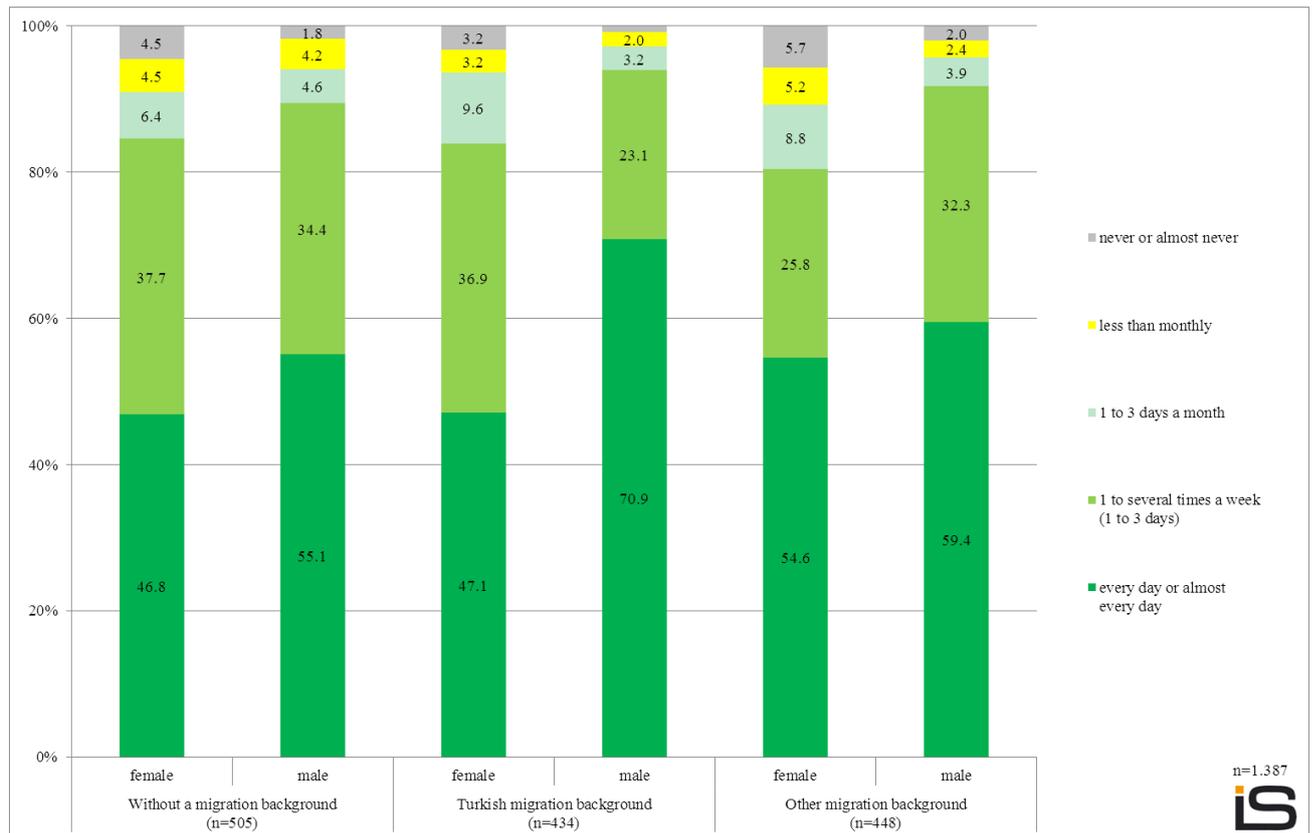


Fig. 2: Car use (as driver) by migration background and gender

Participants holding a driving licence and at least occasionally having access to a car were asked how often they normally use the car as a driver. Fig. 2 illustrates that in all three groups people use the car several times a week, though women use it less frequently than men. Turkish men use the car more often than all others (70.9 % use it every day or almost every day). In addition this group shows the greatest difference between women and men, with only 47.1 % of Turkish women using the car every day or almost every day. German women use the car less than the others but these women are older.

4.2 Bicycle ownership and use

Findings on bicycle ownership per household show no major differences between the three groups, with the majority owning a bicycle. Nevertheless 24.7 % of German households, 22.9 % of Turkish households and 26.8 % of other-nationality households do not own a (useable) bicycle. In all three groups these are mainly people living on their own. In German households nearly every household member has a bicycle – the more members per household, the more bicycles are available. By contrast a relatively high percentage of non-German households - especially other-nationality households and including multi-member households - do not own a bicycle. For instance, 1/3 of 2-person-households and 1/5 of 3-person other-nationality households do not own a bicycle.

Similarly, participants with at least occasional access to a bicycle were asked how often they normally used it. Although German participants are on average older than the non-Germans, their bicycle usage is significantly higher: 60.2 % use the bicycle at least once a week in contrast to 45.7 % of the Turkish and 45.7 % of the other-nationality participants. Women also use the bicycle less than men, especially other-nationality women. 41.5 % other-nationality women cycle less than once a month or never. In addition, the main reasons mentioned for someone not using the bike are time constraints (Turkish participants), distance to destinations (not accessible by bicycle) (other-nationality participants) and health restrictions or physical disabilities (Germans).

4.3 Public transport use

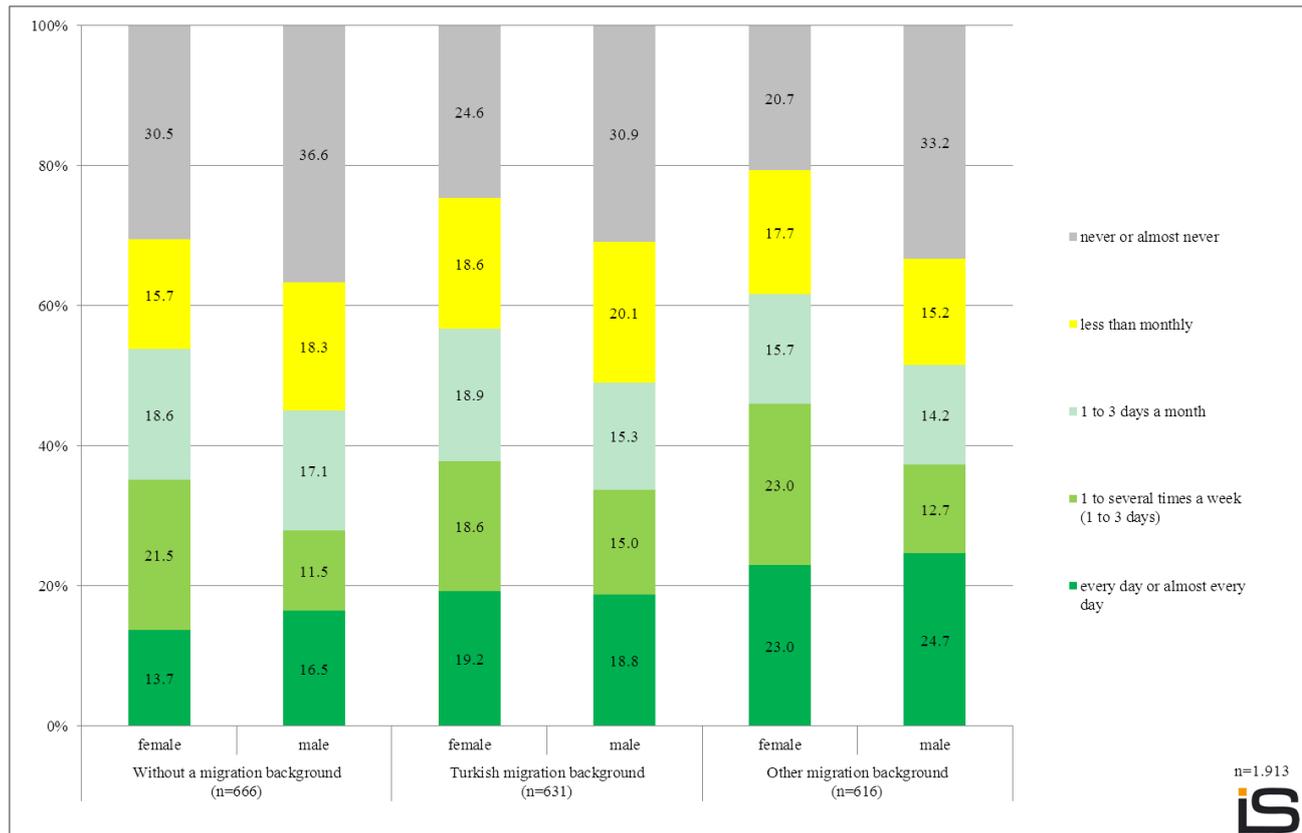


Fig. 3: Public transport use by migration background and gender

To find out more about Offenbach public transport users, participants were asked how often they normally used public transport (bus/local trains). A high proportion of all participants use the public transport system less than once a month or never. For instance, 36.6 % of German men never or almost never use public transport. In all three migration groups women make greater use of public transport than men. Nevertheless 46.2 % of German women, 43.2 % of Turkish women and 38.4 % of other-nationality women answered that they used public transport less than once a month, almost never or never. These results are particularly relevant in connection with the findings on car and bicycle use, with non-German women making lesser use of the car and bicycle but greater use of public transport than non-German men. It should also be noted that the main reason mentioned for not using public transport was the availability and convenience of a car.

4.4 Shopping facilities

Finally participants were asked how satisfied they were with shopping facilities in the district of Offenbach where they live. The findings show that Offenbach is very well equipped with shopping facilities: 77.0 % of German respondents, 82.8 % of Turkish ones and 82.7 % of other-nationality ones strongly agreed or agreed with the statement “My shopping facilities are good”. Looking at the findings by place of residence, participants living closer to the city centre show higher agreement than those living on the city periphery.

5 CONCLUSION

What conclusions can be drawn from these findings? The project set out to broaden the empirical basis on mobility behaviour, options and needs of people with a migration background. In summary, the survey provides first important findings on the mobility variables of the sample, indicating certain significant differences between people with and without a migration background and especially between genders. For example, less women hold a driving licence than men. But it seems particularly important that the majority of German women without a driving licence are over 60 years old. By contrast, the majority of Turkish women without a driving licence are comparatively young (18-39 years old). It remains to be seen whether subsequent generations will behave more in line with their German counterparts. Furthermore choice of transport impacts their commuting, childcare or shopping travel patterns. Non-German women – especially

young ones – seem to be a very important target group for public transport and non-motorized forms of transport, thereby guaranteeing their independent mobility.

Findings on the usage of different forms of transport show that women use cars and bicycles less than men in all groups. Though women use public transport relatively more often, the proportion of non-users in all three groups is noticeably high (> 20 %). But the results also indicate differences between the three groups: German women tend to use the bicycle more than the other women in the sample although they are much older. It should be emphasized that non-German women – especially younger generations – need to be encouraged to cycle. For example a number of German cities offer cycling courses for women with a migration background. Such initiatives need to be further developed, together with improvements to the cycling infrastructure.

In addition, the findings on shopping facilities indicate a very positive attitude towards their living environment whether participants have a migration background or not.

More and more people with a migration background are entering Germany's – especially urban – society, they are re-mixing their city and affecting and influencing all aspects of everyday life. Research into the differences in mobility behaviour is becoming increasingly important. Whether as parents of schoolchildren, public transport customers or as company employees, they all have their own views and needs regarding mobility services and transport infrastructures. In addition, some also belong to groups with special needs, like elderly people or people with reduced mobility. To address all these specific needs it is indispensable to conduct more mobility research and include the findings in planning practice. To date the question remains unanswered whether people with a migration background need additional encouragement to use all mobility options. Such active participation needs to be supported by a real choice of mobility options, therefore cities have to offer a sustainable, barrier-free and inclusive transport system. In conclusion, this project provides first important scientific findings on the mobility behaviour of people with a migration background in Germany, a group which is re-mixing the city but is – up to date – almost neglected by mobility research. But, as already said, this project merely paves the way for a lot of absolutely necessary further research.

6 REFERENCES

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