

New Research in  
Global Political Economy



Lisa-Marie  
Heimeshoff

## **Cooperation or Confrontation?**

Migrant Political Participation in Essen  
and Newark

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Department of Social Sci-  
ences

“Globalisation & Politics”

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Author:

Lisa Marie Heimeshoff: [L.Heimeshoff@gmail.com](mailto:L.Heimeshoff@gmail.com)

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Lisa-Marie Heimeshoff

Kassel University

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**Abstract**

With globalization and increased connectedness, migration has become a political issue. Nevertheless, without citizenship participation in the political system in the host society is limited. Based on a neo-institutionalist approach and referring to political opportunity structure theory, this paper analyzes differences in means of political participation by migrants in two cities, one in the U.S. and one in Germany. Specific focus is put on the welfare state as one factor potentially influencing forms of participation of migrants. From interviews with migrants, local governments, and organizations, this paper establishes that political participation in the German city, Essen, is more institutionalized than in the U.S. city, Newark, NJ, where demonstrations and rallies play a more significant role. Looking at these findings, this paper explains the differences with a variation in the political opportunity structure between the two cities. Whereas in the conservative-corporatist welfare state, ideas of collective bargaining and the conferral of social rights to migrants leads to government-created bodies for migrant participation, in the U.S. city, these bodies do not exist and, therefore, migrants use different means of political participation. Through the conferral of social rights on migrants as well, in Germany, the cleavage between migrants and majority society has been pacified. In the U.S. city, where this is not the case, demonstrations and rallies are more common.

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**List of Abbreviations:**

ACORN	Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now
AFSC	American Friends Service Committee
AWO	<i>Arbeiterwohlfahrt</i> (workers' social service organization)
CDU	<i>Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands</i> (Christian Democratic Union of Germany)
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
GO NRW	<i>Gemeindeordnung</i> NRW (municipal code NRW)
NJ	New Jersey
NRW	North Rhine-Westphalia
POS	Political Opportunity Structures
RAA	<i>Regionale Arbeitsstelle zur Förderung von Kindern und Jugendlichen aus Zuwandererfamilien</i> (Regional Office for the Support of Children and Youth from Immigrant Families)
SPD	<i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i> (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
U.S.	United States

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## 1. Introduction

With the end of the Cold War and enhanced global interconnectedness, cross-border flows of people have increased along with growing international trade, investment, and communication. All over the world, international migration has become a political issue (Castles & Miller, 2003). Especially in the case of economic migration, political participation and organization of migrants are not often intended or even supported by the host society; however, with increasing numbers of migrants, this issue has been raised and it has been discussed whether migrants can even be seen as a new political force (Bermeo & Leblang, 2009, p. 13). As migrants do not usually immediately receive citizenship and voting rights are mostly connected to citizenship, migration also carries challenges for political participation. For the host country the question arises of whether and how to include migrants politically into the society, whereas migrants face the problem of defending their interests in a situation where they do not always have the same means of political participation available as citizens. However, citizenship is only one aspect that determines means of political participation of migrants. Other structures in the host society might help explain ways of migrant participation in the political society of the host country. Not only is migration a global topic, but it is also a local (and urban) topic. Migrants move predominantly to cities (Castles & Miller, 2003, p. 5). As Martiniello points out, “political mobilization, participation, and representation of ethnic immigrant minorities have become topical issues especially at the local and city level” (2006, p. 83). Since the local level is the actual sphere of interaction between the migrant and the host society as well as the immediate environment of migrants and thus a potential point of confrontation with the host society, this is not surprising. At the local level, migrants are confronted with problems concerning their immediate living situation, e.g. in regards to integration, discrimination, and work. Here they also develop a public, economic, social, and cultural life; here they experience for the first time upon arrival government and institutions of the host society (Jones-Correa, 2001, p. 1). As political activities of immigrants often show on the local level, it makes sense to analyze the differences in political participation of immigrants on this level when looking at specific forms of migrant participation.

First, this thesis intends to answer the question how the form political participation of migrants takes differs between the United States of America (U.S.) and Germany, focusing on migrant participation in local politics in one city in the U.S., Newark, New Jersey (NJ), and



one in Germany, Essen. Second, this thesis looks at political opportunity structures (POS) to explain those differences, referring also to variations of welfare state regimes as part of the POS. In this way, this thesis shows to which degree differences of political participation of migrants can be explained by differences in the welfare state regime. Comparing political participation in a post-industrial city in Germany and in one in the U.S., it is expected that in Germany, as a conservative welfare regime, due to differences in the institutional framework, of which the welfare state is one aspect, participation of migrants takes a different form compared to that in the U.S. as a liberal welfare regime. That is that in the German city Essen institutionalized, state-based political participation of migrants dominates in contrast to Newark in the U.S., where forms of participation are not institutionalized and rooted in the state as much. This thesis expects to find that political participation through less institutionalized and less state-focused means is less salient in the German city because the government, as part of the conservative-corporatist welfare regime is based on a different idea of the role of the state. It already presents institutions, which make it possible for immigrants to become involved, whereas in the U.S., as a liberal welfare regime, less institutionalized means of self-organization would be expected to be more relevant for political participation of migrants.

While a wide literature has developed in the large field of migration, case studies focusing on urban politics in connection to migration have been limited in number. In the U.S., Jones-Correa (1998) and Marwell (2004) look at incorporation of immigrations in the local political system in New York. In the case of migrant incorporation, the local situation is especially interesting, because in both countries examined in this case study, local governments have a large degree of discretion in integrating migrants into the local political system, as both analyzed cities are located in countries with federalism. Nonetheless, inter-country comparison of the local level has been rarely used in finding new knowledge about migration. Of the existing comparisons, which mostly focus on the national level, not many comparative studies look at different modes of participation of migrants. In a study of Germany, Wiedemann analyzes forms of participation of migrants in general (2006), whereas most other studies focus on electoral participation and migrants' involvement in parties (Claro da Fonseca, 2006; Wüst, 2002, 2003). Several scholars have also looked at migrants' involvement in organizations, analyzing the organizations' including and excluding functions, as well as migrant organizations as a way of interest representation (Diehl,

2002; Goldberg & Sauer, 2001; Thränhardt & Dieregsweler, 1999; Zinterer, 2007). In the U.S., Theodore and Martin have analyzed the importance of community organizations in migrant neighborhoods, which provide services, but are at the same time social forces (2007). Ceylan argues that participation through self-organization plays an important role in Germany, because that is one way to present claims to the government (2006, p. 81). This thesis confirms this idea, but stresses that Ceylan's evaluation of the federal level (that the government does not take institutional representation of migrants into account) is not valid for the local government in Essen, but that, in contrast, the local government promotes institutional involvement of migrants. There is a, therefore, lack of studies explaining differences in modes of political participation, especially when using an institutional perspective, which Koopmans and Statham decry (2000, p. 30). From an institutional perspective, POS can be used to explain differences in political organizing as this thesis does and as others have done previously like Sackmann (2004) in her study of migrant self-organizations in France, Netherlands, and Germany. Her study also asserts that, in corporatist systems, self-organizations by migrants are important, because in such a system – if those organizations are recognized like other partners within the system – have resources available like other actors and can influence agenda setting of the government (ibid., p. 194). Similarly, Vermeulen uses POS, analyzing migrant organizations in Amsterdam and Berlin (2006). He finds that government policy influences the number of migrant organizations significantly, because it can increase external resources of migrant groups and grant them more legitimacy (ibid., pp. 160-161). In his comparative study of five Western European countries, Odmalm stresses the influence of institutions on migrant behavior with the POS approach and finds that host society institutions steer migrants towards certain forms of participation (2005). Diehl and Urbahn show that migrant self-organization is more dominantly influenced by the societal framework than by cultural characteristics of the migrant population (1999, p. 12). Diehl names *Integrationsbeiräte* and voting rights as part of the POS that can improve those chances and support political participation (2002, p. 81). Even though it has been mentioned (Hunger, 2006) that migrants' involvement might differ because of different public spheres in different countries, it has not been explicitly connected to Esping-Andersen's welfare regime typology (1990) and analyzed as part of a comparative case study. Bommers refers to the welfare state by saying that the approach of municipalities towards migrants has developed in close relationship with the development of the welfare state (2009). Similarly, Filsinger believes the social security system in Germany to be one factor impacting the participation of migrants (2009, p. 279). Nevertheless,

these approaches do not analyze the situation with regard to the welfare state clusters in a cross-country comparison. While some studies suggest that welfare states might lean towards excluding immigrants because access might be limited for foreigners and newcomers (Bommes & Halfmann, 1998), Castles points out that the granting of social rights to immigrants, is in some cases, like in Germany ahead of other kinds of integration into society and necessary to prevent social conflict and division among residents (2007, pp. 46-47). Overall, so far no research has been done to analyze factors influencing political participation of migrants in cities in a cross-national perspective. Exceptions like Vermeulen (2006) and Odmalm (2005) have not analyzed Germany and the U.S. in comparison and not specifically looked at the welfare state as one aspect of the POS.

For clarity, some words on definitions are necessary: Whereas the common term found in the literature is “**political participation**,” authors like Putnam (2000) or Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins, and Delli Carpini (2006) also employ **political engagement** or being **politically active**. In this paper, I therefore use these terms interchangeably. Similarly, the terms **migrant** or **immigrant** will be employed interchangeably in this study. In order to grasp the situation of political participation of migrants, it is necessary to apply a broad understanding of these terms "migrant". Some people born in one of the cities might see themselves as migrants and participate politically, because of their origin and an identity related to their heritage or ethnicity. As a result, a broad definition of the term migrant that does not exclude second generation migrants will be used. Equally, it is not advisable to leave out undocumented immigrants. They are not easily distinguishable from other immigrants; and like documented migrants they might participate politically and present their interests.

## **2. Political Participation**

### ***2.1 Definition and Conceptualization***

Participating in the political realm, people can express themselves and their interests (Mariën, Hooghe, & Quintelier, 2009, p. 1). This is true not just for citizens, but also for immigrants, who do not necessarily have citizenship. While some kind of participation is only possible for citizens, e.g. voting, other types of political participation are open for non-citizens as well.

This thesis constitutes an exploratory study, i.e. evaluating which differences in form of political participation by migrants in the two selected cities can be explained by differences in the welfare state regimes and which other parts of the POS help explain differences in form of participation. In order to be able to discuss this question, it is necessary to develop common definitions: Which behavior in this study is considered to be political participation? Martiniello sees political participation as “various ways in which individuals take part in the management of collective affairs of a given political community” (2006, p. 84); however, this definition does not help differentiate between political and social participation. Zukin et al. distinguish between political engagement and civic engagement, political engagement being an “activity aimed at influencing government policy or affecting the selection of public officials” and civic engagement being “participation aimed at achieving a public good” (2006, p. 51). In a wider definition, Putnam counts among ways of political participation not only electoral participation and means to influence a policy directly, but also discussing politics with neighbors, wearing buttons, etc. (2000, p. 31). This is, however, too broad a definition, because discussing politics does not necessarily mean that one intends to influence policies. In order to have an applicable definition, it is necessary to find a middle way between Zukin et al.’s narrow definition with a focus on electoral politics and Putnam’s broad definition. An appropriate definition can, therefore, be found in Steinbrecher (2009), who draws the line between political and social participation, where activities have a political aim. This is also related to Kaase’s definition of political participation, which includes all activities which people voluntarily do with the goal of influencing decisions on the different levels of the political system (1997, p. 160; Verba & Nie, 1972, p. 2).

In general, there are several ways to participate politically in society. According to Steinbrecher, political participation has five dimensions: legality, legitimacy, direct form, legally

constituted forms, and conventionality (2009, p. 39). Legality is not as interesting for this thesis, because it is limited to legally permitted forms of participation, i.e. illegal forms of political activism like terroristic activities are excluded. It is furthermore not salient whether the means used to pursue their goal are seen as legitimate by the interviewees, because the focus is on which means are actually employed. Direct forms of participation describe the immediate impact of participation, e.g. voting can be direct, if a person is elected directly through the vote. Legally constituted forms are activities that are regulated by legal provisions, i.e. participation in elections is a legally constituted form of participation, because the law strictly regulates this form of participation (ibid.). Some distinguish in this category instead between institutional means (like voting or party membership), and non-institutionalized ways of participation like demonstrations and boycotts (Mariën et al., 2009, p. 1). Conventionality of political participation as another way of categorizing is the relationship between legitimacy and constituted forms of political participation (Kaase, 1997, p. 162). In current discussions, this criterion has been criticized because it mixes other categories; therefore, it is not usually applied anymore (Steinbrecher, 2009, p. 41) and will not be used in this thesis. Martiniello has divided forms of political participation in two categories: “state” politics and “non-state” politics (2006, p. 91). Whereas participation in electoral politics, parliamentary politics, and consultative institutions is part of state politics, participation in political parties, union, and other organizations along ethnic or religious lines are called non-state politics, because those groups and organizations do not belong to the core formal political institutions (ibid., pp. 91-96).

Research has shown that education, class, gender, religiosity, and social connectedness as well as other personal characteristics influence how much people are interested in politics and become politically involved (Woshinsky, 2008, pp. 89-92). Still, this only accounts for the level of participation, not for different ways of political activity. For this thesis, it is not important to look at how much immigrants participate politically, but it is more salient to look at the form political participation of immigrants takes.

## ***2.2 Political Participation and Immigrants***

As Hollifield puts it, “[a]s foreigners gain a legal foothold in liberal societies, rights accrue to them, and they become political actors capable of both policy and polity” (1999, p. 54). Following Marshall, rights in a society can be divided into civil, political and social rights (1950/2006). Civil rights are the freedom of speech, right to justice, personal freedom, and

the right to earn property. Belonging to political rights are the right to participate in political power, voting, and being elected. Social rights are “the whole range, from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society” (ibid., p. 30). Political participation belongs to the political rights, welfare to social rights.

While migrants can sometimes become active in electoral politics or political institutions depending on the regulations of the political system, they have always been involved at least at the margins of the political system (Martiniello, 2006, p. 87). If access to citizenship is possible or voting rights exist also for non-citizen residents, in some instances migrants have the option of becoming involved in electoral politics. Furthermore, they can form their own parties or become active in existing parties (ibid., pp. 92-93). Among common means of political participation of migrants are electoral turnout, membership in parties, participation in consultative institutions, and participation in groups and movements (ibid., p. 86). Nonetheless, especially with electoral rights limited for non-citizens, migrants are restricted in some of these means like voting, becoming elected, and forming parties. As a consequence, migrants resort to other forms of political participation. Looking at the mentioned ways of participation, it is important to stress with regard to the above-developed definition of political participation that engagement in groups and movements is political participation only if the group has some underlying objective of influencing political processes or policies.

The administrative levels of the state are connected and migrants, who are anyhow active and are participating on one level, are, therefore, also likely to engage in other levels. However, it is important to stress that participation on the local level differs from political participation on other governmental levels. While all levels of government offer ways to become involved, the local level is the immediate environment of residents and, therefore, causes grievances, which might motivate to participate. The local level is also home to organizations, local party groups, etc., which serve as the initial point of contact for participation. Additionally, rights on different levels might differ: for example, in Germany, local election rights are conferred also on non-citizens from the European Union (EU) and deliberative representation of migrants happens mostly on the local level. Similarly, local authorities have opportunities to be more lenient towards undocumented immigrants and they

implement national immigration law differently. One has to consider that these sub-nation-state levels are themselves political systems with their own conditions (ibid., p. 91). As a consequence, political participation cannot as such be assumed the same on all these various levels and should, therefore, be analyzed specifically.

### ***2.3 Theoretical Explanation for Political Participation of Immigrants***

Researchers have used neo-marxist approaches and referred also to ethnicity and culture to analyze political behavior and participation by migrants. However, these theories overemphasize culture and identity as causes for common political behavior and overlook external, environmental factors like existing institutions, informal rules, and conventions in their analysis. In neo-institutionalism, political institutions can be seen as shaping processes of decision making, because they shape political actors' scope of options and actions, constraining and facilitating certain policies and priorities. Unlike original institutionalism, however, neo-institutionalism not only analyzes how institutions function, but also investigates how they influence individual and collective behavior (Odmalm, 2005, pp. 75, 83). As institutions favor some issues over others, they impact "preference formation and strategies of political actors" (Koopmans & Statham, 2000, pp. 29-30). By stressing the role of institutions in determining "social and political outcomes" (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 936), neo-institutionalism responds to criticism by behavioralists, who decried the lack of attention towards human behavior in institutionalism (Odmalm, 2005, p. 77). With neo-institutionalism arising in the 1980s, institutionalist approaches moved away from limiting themselves to describing formal political institutions, but included informal institutions and rules in the analysis as well, because – like formal institutions – they shape relations and interactions between individuals (Lowndes, 2001, p. 1953; March & Olsen, 1989, p. 22). Overall, it is important to see that institutions carry values and offer orientation for behavior, having "causal impact on social results" (Odmalm, 2005, p. 83). A way to specifically analyze participation with neo-institutionalism is by referring to political process theory and the POS approach (Giugni & Passy, 2004; Koopmans & Statham, 2000).

Political process theory looks at social mobilization based on POS and mobilization structures. Being the central concept of public process theory, POS theory takes environmental factors into account, when looking at political activism. Initially, POS was developed to analyze and explain protest movements and contentious politics (Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvendak, & Giugni, 1995; Tarrow, 1989, 1998; Tilly, 1978), using factors external to

movements like institutions (Meyer & Minkoff, 2004, p. 1458). Made explicit for the first time as a separate theory by Eisinger in his paper on riots and protest in American cities (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 239; Meyer, 2004, p. 128), Eisinger (1973) outlines that POS of cities can influence the incidence of protest events. In the last two decades, POS has also been used for the analysis of political participation of disadvantaged groups such as migrants (Ireland, 1994, 2000; Sackmann, 2004). With that the idea developed that POS through “inclusion-exclusion mechanisms” and the political system of the host society determine the level and form of participation (Martiniello, 2006, p. 88). Presenting the basic assumption of the concept of POS, Meyer says, “activists’ prospects for advancing particular claims, mobilizing supporters, and affecting influence are context-dependent” and influenced by exogenous factors which “enhance or inhibit a social movement’s prospects for (a) mobilizing, (b) advancing particular claims rather than others, (c) cultivating some alliances rather than others, (d) employing particular political strategies and tactics rather than others, and (e) affecting mainstream institutional politics and policy” (2004, p. 126). Analyzing the relationship between political structures and movements as the POS approach does, helps the understanding of forms of political activity. Actors do not choose strategies and tactics in a “vacuum,” (ibid., p. 127), but if political participation works better in one form than in another because of external factors, actors will choose a different kind of political participation. Therefore, in one city one kind of participation might be preferred to another because of the POS present in that place.

In migration theory, scholars like Ireland worked with the POS approach (1994), because institutions influence the choices migrants have for politically organizing and participating. Sometimes being referred to as “institutional channeling theory” (Ireland, 1994, 2000), the POS approach in migration theory is based on the idea that institutions influence and “channel” how minorities participate more than socio-economic, cultural characteristics of the group or identity based on class, ethnicity or common homeland, as neo-marxism or ethnic/cultural theories would assume (Koopmans & Statham, 2000, p. 30). Following Ireland, “[t]he political opportunity structure includes the immigrants’ legal situation; their social and political rights; and host-society citizenship laws, naturalization procedures, and policies (and nonpolicies) in such areas as education, housing, the labor market, and social assistance that shape conditions and immigrants’ responses” (1994, p. 10). There are, however, different approaches when looking at POS, regarding which exogenous factors to focus on. Within migration studies so far, residence laws, immigration policies, administrative practices, government institutions, naturalization procedures, political rights, and wel-



fare policies among others have been looked at as explanations for the way minorities, including immigrants, mobilize (Ireland, 2000, p. 234; Koopmans & Statham, 2000, p. 30). POS theory has been criticized for being too general, because it uses exogenous factors to explain a social movement and these factors could be a large range of environmental conditions. Gamson and Meyer have, therefore, expressed the fear that “[t]he concept of POS is in trouble, in danger of becoming a sponge that soaks up every aspect of the social movement environment” (1996, p. 275). Additionally, the theory has been criticized for neglecting the importance of activist agency and as a consequence giving only a mechanistic understanding of social movements (Goodwin & Jasper, 2004, p. 17; Meyer, 2004, p. 126); this is due to its emphasis on structure over agency. While neo-institutionalist approaches like POS can be criticized for these shortcomings, they also avoid the socio-economic and cultural determinism of other theories (e.g race and ethnicity) (Koopmans & Statham, 2000, p. 30). Furthermore, it is actually relevant to look at the way the environment influences actors’ behavior, because actors act within a set environment and use the opportunities the environment presents. Additionally, unlike other theories for explaining political participation of immigrants, the POS approach “explicitly consider[s] the available means for a constituency to lodge claims against authorities” (Meyer, 2004, p. 127). Using POS, it is also possible to explain changes in the patterns of mobilization due to changes in the political context (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. xiii), which cultural, ethnic, or class explanations do not. Other theories often focus too much on culture and identity and overlook how external factors shape behavior. Migrants can only participate within the set framework of the environment of the host society they live in. As a result, it is important to include this political framework in analyses of political behavior of migrants.

### 3. Germany and the United States

This study of political behavior of immigrants is based on a cross-country comparison of two cities, one in the U.S. and one in Germany, analyzing the differences in means of migrant political participation. In order to be able to understand differences of political participation of immigrants, it is necessary to give a short overview of migration development and policy in the two countries. Since local politics does not mean the same in every country (Martiniello, 2006, p. 91), I will also outline how local politics work in Germany and explain specifically what the situation is in Essen with respect to immigration. Then I will do the same for the U.S. and Newark.

#### 3.1 Germany

##### 3.1.1 Germany and Migration

After the end of the Second World War and due to the consequent reconstruction and economic boom, Germany encountered a scarcity of labor. Therefore, the German government concluded bilateral agreements for labor recruitment and promoted guest worker programs, especially with Turkey (Bade, 1997, p. 23; Münz & Ulrich, 1997, p. 79). The guest worker program was based on the idea that guest workers would rotate, i.e. work in Germany for one year before they would return to their home countries (Hollifield, 2007, pp. 71-72). As these guest workers were supposed to stay in Germany only temporarily, they were expected to have only short-term economic goals. For that reason, political participation was neither expected nor promoted, but often even considered being undesirable (Martiniello, 2006, p. 83). Additionally, since Germany expected migration to be temporary, it did not see itself as a country of migration until the early 2000s. As a consequence, German politics did not have a comprehensive or a long-term concept on how to deal with immigration, lacking an approach to political participation and integration (Bade, 1997, pp. 23-24).

In 1973, with the *Anwerbestopp*, Germany stopped permitting guest workers into the country because of the economic downturn related to the oil crisis (Lamura, 1998, p. 7). This meant for guest workers that they would not be readmitted into the country if they left Germany. Therefore, many brought their families to Germany under rules that permitted family reunification (Bade, 1997, p. 23). So immigration continued, just changing form from labor migration within the guest worker program to family reunification (Hollifield,

2007, p. 72). As children born to foreigners, guest workers' children had difficulties acquiring citizenship until the reform of the citizenship law in 2000, because of the *ius sanguinis* approach in place in Germany (Meyers, 2007, p. 155). As it became slowly clear that the guest workers would not leave, migrant political participation became a more prominent issue, especially at the local level (Martiniello, 2006, p. 83) and deliberative bodies of foreigners were introduced.

In order to understand German policy towards immigrants, it is important to realize that Germany is an ethnically defined state (Münz & Ulrich, 1997, pp. 65, 73-74). This means that German national identity is based "on common descent and culture" (Castles, 2007, p. 35) and, therefore, citizenship followed until recently the concept of "*ius sanguinis*." Therefore, ethnic Germans migrating from Eastern Europe to Germany were able to receive citizenship quickly after arriving in Germany (Münz & Ulrich, 1997, pp. 73-74), whereas at the same time guest workers and their children, who might have been born in Germany, were not often eligible for citizenship until 2000 (Meyers, 2007, p. 153). Even though political rights were not awarded, it is critical to know that from the beginning, immigrants were considered part of the social security system and granted social rights. That was negotiated by the trade unions in Germany, who agreed with the employers on equal wages for Germans and guest workers within the corporatist tripartite system (Münz & Ulrich, 1997, p. 79). Also three large non-state social services organizations in Germany (Bade, 2007, p. 54) (Caritas, Diakonie, and AWO (Arbeiterwohlfahrt)) each received one national group of guest workers during the heyday of the guest worker program to provide services and support (Brubaker, 2001, p. 537; Ireland, 2000, p. 259). Overall, while immigrants could not take part in elections because of the lack of citizenship, they were nevertheless incorporated into the welfare system.

After German reunification, the approach towards immigrants changed slowly. While Germany still denied its status as a country of immigration and skepticism towards foreigners determined Germany's policy on immigration in the early 1990s, the need for a policy for integration became obvious (Bade, 1997, pp. 29-30), because of a significant number of people were now living in Germany, who were born in the country, but lacked citizenship. With a reform of the Foreigner Law (*Ausländergesetz*), immigrants, who had been living for a long time in Germany, as well as children of immigrants, could receive German citizenship more easily than before, but many restrictions still applied. Further reform in 2000

allowed for a limited “*ius soli*” approach, i.e. children born to foreign residents in Germany were permitted dual citizenship until age 23, when they have to decide which citizenship they would take (Bade, 2007, pp. 51-52). Therefore, in regard to Germany’s policy towards migration, the term “*nachholende Integrationspolitik*” (catch-up integration polity) or “emerging migration state” is frequently used, which implied that Germany’s integration policy has to catch up, because of the lack of one previously (Bade, 2007; Bommes, 2007; Hollifield, 2007).

### ***3.1.2 Local Politics in Germany – The Case of Essen and Immigration***

In Germany, while the federal level gives guidelines for immigration and is responsible for many policy fields affecting immigrants, including immigration laws as well as economic, labor, and family policy, the discussion about social integration of migrants has been focused specifically on the local level (Bommes, 2007, p. 103). Even though the local administrative entities (*Kommunen*) are bound by federal decisions, they have a wide degree of discretion in their policies towards immigrants and their political participation (ibid., p. 106). Legally, through the *Gemeindeordnung* (municipal code) of the German State of North-Rhine Westphalia (GO NRW), cities are required to act with the aim of pursuing welfare for the residents, not just citizens (e.g. Bommes, 2007, p. 107; §1 GO NRW, 1994). This legal code also requires municipalities with more than 5,000 foreign residents to establish a deliberative body for foreign citizens, the *Integrationsbeirat* (§27 GO NRW). With almost 60,000 foreign residents, which make up about 10% of the population, Essen has had an *Integrationsbeirat* (in different forms) since 1975 (RAA, 2007, pp. 9, 27). The *Integrationsbeirat* is a consultative body elected by foreigners in Essen. Voters have to be at least 16 years of age and are foreigners or have not been awarded citizenship more than five years before the election. They have to be in Germany with documents for at least a year, residing in Essen for 16 days (§27 GO NRW). Elections to the *Integrationsbeirat* are based on election lists according to proportional representation, but independent candidacy is allowed. Persons, who are over 18 years old and who are residents of Essen for at least three months, can be elected, including German citizens without migration background. The term of the *Integrationsbeirat* is five years, like the one of the city council (ibid). Besides elected members, the *Integrationsbeirat* has consulting members and elected members. Consulting members are representatives of institutions that the *Integrationsbeirat* chooses to support it (e.g. social services organizations, a pro-asylum association, etc.). Ad-

ditionally, one member per party represented in city council acts as a consulting member of the *Integrationsbeirat* (Stadt Essen, n.d.)<sup>1</sup> The *Integrationsbeirat* does not have any decision-making power as such (§27 GO NRW). Its – however limited – influence is based on consulting members it sends to the committees of the city council.

In regard to immigration and integration, the city of Essen established a committee within city council for immigration and integration (*Ausschuss für Zuwanderung und Integration*). As election to city council is based on citizenship, members have German citizenship. Some members have a migration background; however, this depends on party politics and whether or not parties put candidates with a migration background on a promising place on the list, which is not always the case. Essen, like other cities, has implemented integration programs for parents and children. They are organized by an office within the local government, known as the RAA, i.e. the Regional Office for the Support of Children and Youth from Immigrant Families/Office for Intercultural Work. The RAA aids immigrants with integrating into the German education system, teaches parents how to assist in their child's education, and manages the day-to day operations of the *Integrationsbeirat*. Like other municipalities (Bommes, 2007, pp. 108-109), the City of Essen financially supports migrant self-organizations and holds leadership trainings for those associations (Stadt Essen, 2009a). Migrant self-organizations are connected with each other within an umbrella organization, the Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations (*Essener Verbund der Immigrantenvereine*). In Essen, around 100 migrant self-organizations exist with different aims. Some are based on religion (e.g. *Türkisch-Islamische Union*/Turkish Islam Union) or common culture (*Türkischer Kulturverein*/Turkish Culture Association); some have political or social goals (*Libanesischer Zedernverein*/Lebanese Cedar Association). On its homepage, Essen provides an "*Integrationsatlas*" with information for immigrants and their families. Information can be found on integration classes, language classes, or literacy classes. In 1999, the Essen City Council passed a concept for intercultural work (Stadt Essen, 2009b), aimed at changing government institutions as to better serve a diverse population and to keep social peace (ibid). Measures that support intercultural work within this framework are financed with € 1.5 million annually (Stadt Essen, 2009c). In Germany, Höbel, Kloth, Reimann, and Schuleri-Hartje have praised the development of Essen's con-

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<sup>1</sup> This thesis looks at the *Integrationsbeirat* as it existed in 2009. As the legal requirements (*Gesetz zur Förderung der politischen Partizipation in den Gemeinden*) have changed, the election to the *Integrationsbeirat* now also includes immigrants who have already acquired citizenship. A new *Integrationsbeirat* was elected on February 7, 2010.

cept for integrating immigrants and several of the projects Essen has implemented, especially because of immigrant participation in the concept's development (2006).

### **3.2 *The United States***

#### **3.2.1 *The United States and Migration***

Unlike Germany, the U.S. has always been a country of immigration and has always seen itself as one. Immigration was also always seen as permanent. Therefore, as a country based on a heterogeneous population, the U.S. relied in their creation of a national identity on the common experience of migration and diversity (Ueda, 1997, pp. 39-41). While initially after the independence of the U.S., immigration was not restricted, starting from the 1870s, when migration from Asia and Southern and Eastern Europe replaced immigration from Western Europe, the U.S. started regulating and limiting immigration and naturalization from China and later from other Asian countries like Japan or Korea (Meyers, 2007, p. 56; Ueda, 1997, pp. 42-45). The aim of these policies was to permit only immigrants into the country who were supposedly easy to incorporate into society. Later, with the Immigration Act of 1917, and eventually with the introduction of a quota system in 1921, the U.S. changed its immigration system, deciding from which region immigrants would be allowed to go to the U.S. (ibid, p. 44). After the First World War, the U.S. needed cheap labor and, therefore, established a guest worker program for Mexican workers (Hollifield, 2007, p. 72). Around this time mass immigration from Mexico and the Caribbean started (Ueda, 1997, p. 45); however, until the 1960s the majority of immigrants were still either European or Canadian (Bean, Cushing, & Haynes, 1997, p. 123). Having become a leading country based on liberal democracy, the U.S. changed its immigration policy after the Second World War, because it could not defend a policy based on discrimination anymore. Therefore, in 1965, the Hart-Cellar Immigration Act stopped limiting immigration based on race (Glazer, 1998, p. 61) and instead of quotas, family reunification principles became the basis for immigration (Bean et al., 1997, p. 123; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Qin, 2005, p. ix). At the same time, irregular immigration started playing a greater role in the United States. These can be divided into two groups; the first group are people overstaying their visa; the second one, people crossing the border without papers (Bean et al., 1997, p. 127).

Unlike in Germany, immigration was part of U.S. society before the founding of a national society and the development of an industrial society (Ueda, 1997, p. 49). In contrast to Germany, where the idea of an ethnic community is much more prevalent (Münz & Ulrich, 1997, pp. 65, 74-75) and the collective identity is based on nationality (Kastoryano, 2002, p. 161), in the U.S. “immigrants and their descendants possessed the right to assimilate and the right to preserve ethnic qualities” (Ueda, 1997, p. 53). Whereas Germany’s citizenship law used to be exclusively based on “*ius sanguinis*” policy and now has some “*ius soli*” aspects, the United States built their citizenship law mostly on the principle of “*ius soli*”. Anybody born in the U.S. receives citizenship automatically (Schuck, 1998, p. 237). This was done to ensure that immigrants quickly integrate into the political community. Unlike in Germany, where this incorporation is based on conferring social rights to migrants, in the U.S. political rights come first. With political rights, social rights become better accessible. The republican concept of citizenship included everyone born in the U.S. (initially who was white, but later including other races), and citizenship and nationality coincide (Ueda, 1997, p. 50). Until the 1996 reform of the welfare system, *documented* aliens had a right to public welfare (Schuck, 1998, p. 231), which is now mostly denied (Hansen & Lofstrom, 2003, p. 75; Meyers, 2007, p. 48) as social rights are being tied to the possession of political rights, i.e. citizenship (S. Martin, 2002, pp. 216, 225).

### ***3.2.2 Local Politics in the U.S. and Migration – The Case of Newark***

Like most of the U.S, Newark also has experienced an influx of Hispanic immigrants from the 1970s on. In Newark, many of the migrants were Portuguese-speaking ones (Malanga, 2007). Overall, in 2000, 55% of Newark’s residents were black, 20% Latino, and 29% white (Newman, 2004), showing the diversity of the city. Even though the part of the Ironbound with many restaurants is not as affected by poverty, overall Newark was the 4<sup>th</sup> poorest city in the U.S. in 2008 (Thomas, 2009).

Like Germany, the U.S. is a federal state; i.e. local entities play a central role in public administration within the federal administration. In regard to immigration, power lies with the federal government, but immigrants in Newark face the local political environment and local approaches to immigrant absorption are important to take into account here also (Glazer, 1998, p. 65). Nevertheless, whereas in Germany the local government has much leeway in implementing deportation of undocumented immigrants, in the U.S., municipalities do not. Still, local governments sometimes decide to instruct local police not to check

for immigration status in incidents not related to immigration, and, therefore, strongly influence immigrant relations. Because of a similar approach, Newark is sometimes called a “sanctuary city” in regard to irregular immigration (Kirwin, 2007). A sanctuary city is a municipality in which city employees are not supposed to notify immigration officials about undocumented immigrants or inquire about immigration status (Villazor, 2008, pp. 142-143). However, Newark does not officially see itself as a sanctuary city (local government official, interview, Sep. 22, 2009). There are however approaches the local government supports in regard to migrants, e.g. in 2007, the mayor of Newark founded the so called “African Commission,” a body in which African Americans and African immigrants come together to with the purpose of promoting African culture and understanding of Africa (African Commission, 2009).



## 4. Conceptualization

### 4.1 Comparison

Both cities have been targets for immigration, but comparable data is difficult to find. In Newark, 24.1% of the population was foreign born in 2000 according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2009). In Essen, in Sep. 2010, 10.2% did not have a German passport (an additional 7.8% had dual citizenship) (Stadt Essen, 2010). Even though these numbers are not comparable, they show that in both cities immigration has played an important role. Comparison between migrants in different countries, including between Germany and the U.S., is possible because they have similar class positions in the host countries, despite the fact that they are coming from different countries (Ireland, 2000, p. 236). These immigrants fulfill similar functions within the host society. They are mostly working class (*ibid.*, p. 270), being cheap laborers and working often in jobs not wanted by the native-born majority population. As a structurally weak group, migrants are often marginalized and discriminated against. Additionally, empirical evidence supports this cross-national comparative approach. Ireland has shown for Western Europe that it is possible to compare migrant political participation across countries, because migrants might organize along ethnic, racial, or religious lines, but the form the different ethnicities' participation takes is similar within one host society. Forms of participation of one ethnic group differ between different host countries because of the differences in the national institutional framework (*ibid.*, pp. 269-270). Looking at participation as a dependent variable can be problematic to measure, especially in country comparisons, since measures for importance of one form of participation over another form are difficult to calculate. Additionally, there are large numbers of strategies available which might be difficult to take into consideration in a quantitative study. Therefore, a qualitative study regarding political participation is more effective in such a cross-country comparison (*ibid.*).

Both Essen and Newark face similar issues, especially in regard to taking on challenges due to the decline in industry in these cities in a globalized world since the 1960s. During the industrial age, they both had large industrial sectors with many job opportunities – also for unskilled labor. Their important industrial role with available jobs in industry was also the reason for many immigrants to go there. While in Essen jobs were available in the coal and steel industry (Klagge, 2005), in Newark, once “America’s most heavily industrialized city,” workers went into the garment industry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Malanga, 2007). With

globalization, production has shifted to low-wage countries, cutting jobs in Newark and Essen. Therefore, both cities have to deal with unemployment and a low skill level among residents. This results in poverty, especially on the part of residents who have difficulties with the language and are not part of skilled labor (for data on unemployment and poverty see table 1, p. 55). Additionally, as consequences from heavy industry, both cities face contaminated soil and pollution. Essen has not seen the exorbitant crime rates and crass violence of race riots connected often to the economic decline of Newark. Still, the two cities were confronted by the same structural challenges due to globalization. Unlike many other cities, both cities have in urban studies been attributed with a successful approach of restructuring after the end of the industrial age. Over the last years, Newark has built an arts center, a baseball stadium, and expanded its high-class office space (Malanga, 2007). The income of the residents has increased again, and Newark has even seen a rise in population (Tuttle, 2009). Essen's "*Strukturwandel*" (structural change) has also been deemed successful (Goch, 1999). While Essen is still losing population, has chronically high debt, and above average percentages of welfare-dependent residents, this development has slowed down, a large corporation has moved to Essen and its marketing and cultural projects and economic progress have attracted positive comments (Klagge, 2005, p. 71; Krummacher & Kulbach, 2009, pp. 382-383). Nevertheless, both cities still are confronted with many problems of their post-industrial phase, among which are high unemployment and poverty. Looking at two cities in Germany and the U.S. is especially intriguing, considering this thesis is especially interested in welfare states, as the two countries represent different types of welfare state regimes within Esping-Andersen's typology, Germany being part of the "conservative" regime type and the U.S. being an example of the "liberal" welfare regime (1990). The two cities are also both located within federal welfare state systems.

#### **4.2 Operationalization of Political Opportunity Structures**

Within the POS approach, many institutions can be counted as structures influencing behavior. Residence laws, immigration and administrative policies, government institutions, naturalization procedures, and political rights, as well as welfare policies have been among the structures analyzed and found shaping immigrant participation (Koopmans & Statham, 2000, p. 30). However, the lack of clear refinement of basic propositions has evoked criticism (Goodwin & Jasper, 2004, p. 4). In order to circumvent this criticism, scholars have developed models for the application of POS. The two main models used in literature are

the one by Tarrow (1994) and the one by Kriesi et al. (1995). Grouping external factors into clusters, Tarrow's five dimensions of POS are "(1) the opening of access to participation for new actors; (2) the evidence of political realignment within the polity; (3) the appearance of influential allies; (4) emerging splits within the elite; and (5) a decline in the state's capacity or will to repress dissent" (1998, p. 76). Kriesi et al.'s model names "national cleavage structures, prevailing strategies, informal procedures and prevailing strategies, as well as alliance structures" (1995, p. xiii). While Kriesi et al.'s model was originally developed for the analysis of social movements, Koopmans and Statham suggest that it can also be used to analyze immigrant behavior (2000, p. 32). Their categories based on Kriesi et al. are: national cleavage structures, formal institutional and legal structures, informal dimensions, and alliance structures (*ibid.*, pp. 33-35).

First, national cleavage structures are already existing politicized conflicts about e.g. national identity, class, race, center and periphery within one society based in social and cultural cleavages in the society (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. xiv). They determine the potential for conflict and the space available for new political topics to be introduced into the political discussion (Koopmans & Statham, 2000, p. 33). Second, formal institutions and legal structures, such as the degree of centralization, the type of electoral system, the make-up of political institutions, etc. are another category of POS (Kriesi et al., 1995, pp. 26-28). Koopmans and Statham include here the legal arrangements between institutional actors, as they define "their relationship and competencies" and determine access channels within the political entity (2000, p. 34). Third, informal dimensions also play a role. While the factor formal institutions and legal structures looks at hard structures, the informal dimension focuses on rules and procedures used within the political entity to manage and resolve conflicts, as well as common ideas and approaches of dealing with challengers in the system (*ibid.*; Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 33). The fourth aspect of the POS is alliance structures, being the "special balance of power relationships between actors at a given time and space" (Koopmans & Statham, 2000, p. 34). For instance, if elites in the society are divided, some elite actors might be willing to engage in an alliance with a challenger in order to keep their elite status (*ibid.*, pp. 34-35). Based on these four categories, one can analyze the likelihood of political action, because they show the available channels of access for political action and determine how immigrants can express their interest within society (Research Design see Figure 1, p. 54). Depending on these factors, actors then form their strategies and face

available means for participation, as some ways are more open for migrants to express interests.

This thesis looks specifically at welfare policies and to which degree welfare policies can account for differences in political participation of migrants. Therefore, in the analysis of the different categories of POS, this thesis will specifically address the role that the welfare state plays.

### **4.3 The Welfare State as Part of Political Opportunity Structures**

In regard to the two cities in the countries analyzed, the U.S. and Germany belong to different types of welfare states. Thus far, several scholars have developed typologies of welfare states, the most famous being Esping-Andersen's seminal one from 1990 for modern western countries based on decommodification. In his work, Esping-Andersen (1990) divides welfare states in post-industrial capitalism into three different regimes, the liberal welfare with the prototype U.S., the conservative-corporatist welfare state with the example of Germany, and Sweden as the social-democratic regime type, based on a state's "own discrete logic of organization, stratification, and societal integration" (Arts & Gelissen, 2002, p. 139). In consequence, his model has been criticized for being too simplistic and overlooking important differences between countries within one of his categories like the welfare regimes of Mediterranean countries (ibid., p. 137), variations due to Protestantism (Manow, 2004), and the gender dimension of the welfare state (Lewis, 1992). Despite criticism of the model, following the publication of the book, his concept has become the founding stone for analysis related to comparative welfare regime studies.

With the analysis of a city in Germany and one in the U.S. in this study, two of the welfare regimes of Esping-Andersen's basic typology are represented. Due to time and space limitations, this paper confines itself to two of the models and does not look at a social democratic welfare state.

In the U.S. as a liberal welfare state, there are only modest transfers and limited social insurance plans. It is seen as weak welfare state with a strong *laissez-faire* tradition (Hollifield, 2000). This means that benefits are "associated with stigma" and legally strictly limited (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 26). The liberal welfare state is characterized by a low level of decommodification and at the same time strong individualistic self-reliance (Arts & Gelissen, 2002, p. 141). Instead of providing large public welfare, the state supports the market and encourages private welfare (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 27), keeping welfare

payments very low, i.e. social rights are limited (Arts & Gelissen, 2002, p. 141). The state also does not administer redistribution and large transfer payments (ibid).

In Germany, as a conservative welfare state, market efficiency was never as dominant a theme as in liberal welfare states and decommodification was more significant than in the U.S. (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 26-27). Germany is more corporatist<sup>2</sup> and etatist. It is characterized by expansive social spending (Banting, 2000, p. 17). Also, in a corporatist-conservative welfare state, granting social rights is usually not controversial (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 27). Solidarity in the conservative welfare state is based on occupational status as benefits are grounded in previous occupational status (Arts & Gelissen, 2002, p. 142). The welfare state only steps in, when the family cannot support relatives anymore (ibid., p. 141; Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 27). In a model conservative welfare state, women are not encouraged to work, as the welfare state is influenced by the church.

Countries of the social democratic regime type are highly decommodified (Arts & Gelissen, 2002, p. 142). This model is based on universal solidarity and does not leave pensions, etc. to the market (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 28). In social democratic welfare states, like Sweden, benefits are given out independent from individual contribution (Arts & Gelissen, 2002, p. 142). However, this study limits itself to the conservative and the liberal welfare state regimes and does not look at the social democratic regime type.

While Esping-Andersen's groundbreaking typology is still important, it has come of age. Especially in regard to Germany as a conservative welfare state, many things have changed since Esping-Andersen developed his typology in 1990, disproving his statement that the continental European welfare state is resistant to modification (1996, p. 24). With respect to the role of women in the labor market, the German welfare state does not discourage participation of women in employment openly anymore (Lewis, Knijn, C. Martin, & Ostner, 2008, p. 268). Additionally, Germany has in the past years reformed the welfare system so that benefits are less tied to occupational status (Fleckenstein, 2008, p. 179). While some already theorize about the German departure from the conservative welfare state tradition (ibid), nevertheless one can make the distinction between Germany and the U.S. according to welfare state regimes, as more recently developed typologies than Esping-Andersen's have done and which also see those two countries as a prototype for their cate-

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<sup>2</sup> Corporatism can be viewed as "system of interest intermediation (typically in industrial relations) where organizations based on voluntary membership negotiate public policies" (Bode, 2006, p. 356). As Bode points out, this plays not only a role in industrial relations, but also in the social welfare sector (ibid).

gory (Korpi & Palme, 1998; Leibfried, 1992). Germany still has a larger governmental sphere; in the U.S., the state plays a smaller role when compared to the European-style welfare states (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 241). The main dividing lines (social rights, social spending, decommodification) between the two welfare regimes still exist. The two types of welfare states also remain different in respect to their main goals: A liberal welfare state such as the U.S. aims at reducing poverty, whereas a conservative welfare state like Germany wants to promote social integration, social peace, and stability (Arts & Gelissen, 2002, p. 155; Banting, 2000, p. 17).

The approach to look at the welfare state to explain differences in an cross-country comparison from an institutional perspective is not only supported by Esping-Andersen himself, who believes that “existing institutional arrangements heavily determine [...] national trajectories. More concretely, the divergent kinds of welfare regimes that nations built over the post-war decades have a lasting and overpowering effect on which kind of adaptation strategies can and will be pursued” in regard to adapting to changes in the “‘postindustrial’ transformation” of economies (1999, p. 4). This approach is also used by Ireland (1994, 2000) in explaining participation of migrants in welfare states. The welfare state is one aspect of the POS in the two countries; together with other external factors, it may potentially explain ways of migrant participation in politics. As Bommers and Geddes point out “[n]ational welfare states can be viewed as political filters that mediate efforts by immigrants to realize their chances for social participation” (2000, p. 2). Social participation, however, is seen as a prerequisite for political participation (Putnam, 2000, p. 37). Like the political process approach suggests, behavior of actors (for instance in the form of patterns of participation) depends on POS. Based on the interviews conducted in Essen and Newark, I will examine the role of the welfare state regime in determining patterns of political participation in each of the four categories of POS: national cleavage structures; formal institutions and legal structure; informal dimensions of solving conflicts; and alliance structures. I will also look at other factors in the categories of POS in order to evaluate which other factors play a role.

## **5. Results of the Study: Migrants and Political Participation in the Cities of Essen and Newark**

### **5.1 *The Empirical Study***

This empirical study includes field research in Essen, NRW, Germany and Newark, NJ, U.S. conducted between August and October 2009 in those two cities. As part of the interview process, representatives from immigrant organizations, community organizations, charities working with immigrants, unions, and local governments (executive as well as legislative bodies) were interviewed. These different actors were targeted as they all are involved in the local political environment, e.g. as migrants trying to present their interest, or work in a charity, union, or community organization to support migrants, or have an insight in how migrants participate. Since the topic of this thesis is *political* participation, and not *social* participation, actors focusing exclusively on social participation were excluded. Additionally, this study focuses on political participation in regard to host society politics. Thus, groups that only aim at influencing politics in the sending society were not included either. All in all, in Newark, eight interviews were conducted, in Essen seven.

As POS can be modeled with the above-mentioned four basic characteristics, (i.e. national cleavage structures, formal institutional structure, informal dimensions, and alliance structures), questions were based on these four clusters. The impact of national cleavage structures was accounted for by referring to relationships with the majority population. Formal institutional structures were addressed when asking about relations to institutions, formal procedures, and the importance of political parties. Informal dimensions were included by inquiring about the approaches towards problems and the (informal) relationship towards government. Alliance structures were taken into account by asking the interviewees about their relationship to the local government, migrant organizations, and organizations working with migrants.

### **5.2 *Political Opportunity Structures of Political Participation by Migrants in Essen and Newark***

#### **5.2.1 *Differences in the Form of Participation***

Comparing the means of participation that migrants refer to when presenting their interest shows differences between the two cities (for an overview see table 2, p. 55). Interviewees

in Newark emphasize participation and activism of migrants in demonstrations and rallies, for instance in organizing a vigil to show support for rights of undocumented migrants (community organization, interview, Sep. 21, 2009), in participating in union rallies to demonstrate against the closing of hospitals (health workers' union, interview, Sep. 18, 2009), and in support of an extension of the Liberian Temporary Protected Status<sup>3</sup> (African Commission, interview, Sep. 14, 2009). A pastor of a mostly immigrant community describes similar experiences regarding demonstrations on the issue of discrimination by the local police (interview, Oct. 22, 2009). Aside from demonstrations and rallies, one interviewee also mentions petitioning letters and legislature visits as a mean to present migrant interests to the local and state governments (American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), interview, Sep. 13, 2009). These rallies are non-state, non-institutionalized means of participation by migrants. Even though rules on demonstrations exist, demonstrations are less legally rigid and less regulated than voting procedures; therefore, political participation in Newark can be seen as less legally constituted, compared to Germany. This is despite the fact that political rights are conferred before social rights are conferred.

In contrast to the rallies being utilized in Newark as a means of participation, in Essen, immigrants use more institutionalized political forms of participation, like participation in elections to the *Integrationsbeirat* and running for election in this body (*Libanesischer Zedernverein*, interview, Aug. 5, 2009). Interviewees stress the importance of the *Integrationsbeirat* as a form of participation, despite the fact that electoral participation is low (*Integrationsbeirat/Federation of Immigrant Associations*, interview, Aug. 18, 2009). However, the persons interviewed are mostly connected to the *Integrationsbeirat* and are highly politically active. Still, in Newark highly active people were interviewed as well and institutionalized participation is not mentioned at all; this difference is critical. Additionally, non-institutionalized means of participation like rallies and demonstrations are not stressed at all by *any* interviewee in Essen and can, therefore, not be seen as playing an important role. Other interviewees, for instance the employee of the Confederation of German Trade Unions (interview, Aug. 11, 2009), confirm the importance of the *Integrationsbeirat*. In order to reach out to Essen migrants, the Confederation as an external group as well as the RAA recognize the *Integrationsbeirat* not only as a political mediator within society, but also as an institutionalized form of participation of immigrants. Another place of institu-

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<sup>3</sup> A Temporary Protected Status is issued in the U.S. if a migrant is unable to safely return to his/her country. Therefore, this country has to be designated for this status (USCIS, 2010).



tional political participation is the Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, an umbrella organization that works together with city council and the *Integrationsbeirat*, uniting most local organizations (over 70) by immigrants. The advantage the employee of the RAA (interview, Aug. 10, 2009) sees is that the local government can contact migrants through the Federation, because the Federation has the necessary infrastructure, and, thus, the local government does not have to contact associations or migrants individually. There is, therefore, a hierarchical relationship in Essen with the migrant self-organizations as the constituency for two umbrella organizations (one of them regionally organized, the other one locally), which communicate more directly with the local government than any single migrant organization, because of the greater legitimacy as an umbrella organization. This is amplified by the fact that the Federation of Immigrant Associations has been supported in its foundation by the City of Essen and also administrates financial support for migrant self-organization by the city (Stadt Essen, n.d.). Furthermore, among the institutionalized means of political participation, the interviewees in Essen stressed the participation in parties. Party participation is supported by the *Integrationsbeirat* and the Federation. These two bodies say they inform independently about the elections and parties, even for migrants who cannot vote because of the lack of citizenship, but to get them more involved in party politics (*Integrationsbeirat*/Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, interview, Aug. 18, 2009). Even though there are few migrants in political parties, especially in higher positions, the goal of party participation is mentioned by most interviewees in Essen. The interviewed councilman from Essen mentions that parties need to learn that migrant participation and migrants on promising position on election lists are in their own interest (interview, Oct. 23, 2009). Again, political participation in parties is an institutionalized way of participating in a liberal democracy.

In Newark, the interviewed employee of the AFSC mentions the existence of informal and grassroots organizations, which sometimes are just one activist or church leader with a small group of people (interview, Sep. 13, 2009). Grassroots and informal organizing was not mentioned at all in Essen as a form of presenting interests; institutionalized, structured organizations are far more important. Compared to Essen, in Newark the different organizations representing migrant interests are, therefore, often less formal and connected more in an informal network of personal relations between active members. Interviewees referred to each other and their organizations and how they cooperate in common goals (Af-

rican Commission, interview, Sep. 14, 2009; community organization, interview, Sep. 21, 2009). In contrast, in the city of Essen, interviewees related not so much towards other immigrant groups and activist members in person, but to government bodies and institutions or the umbrella organization (*Libanesischer Zedernverein*, interview, Aug. 5, 2009). This shows a more dominant role of the institutionalized relations based in state politics and legally constituted forms of participation to government in presenting claims in Essen, in contrast to informal, non-institutionalized means of participation by migrants in Newark. The differences in the way migrants advance their interests can be explained by looking at those POS, following the four categories of POS in the above-presented model.

### ***5.2.2 Political Opportunity Structures explaining Differences in Participation***

#### ***5.2.2.1 National Cleavage Structures***

The aspect of national cleavages as part of POS assumes that established conflicts like the traditional cleavages within society (center-periphery, class, urban-rural and Protestant-Catholic) translate into politics and impact the presentation of new conflicts in society (Bartolini, 2007, p. 19; Kriesi et al., 1995, pp. 4, 10). Migrants who want to present their issues face these already existing conflicts, which they need to take into account, in order to receive support for their claims.

For the explanation of political participation of migrants in Essen and in Newark, the traditional cleavage of urban-rural is not important, because this study focuses on the urban environment. Similarly, the national cleavage structures of center and periphery are not significant in the cities, as they are located in federal countries with a congruent type of federalism (ibid., p. 11). In congruent federal countries with similar social and cultural character in different regions, this cleavage is not salient enough for supporting mobilizations (Lijphart, 1999, p. 195). Looking at religion and class as the two other traditional cleavages influencing new political engagement shows more diverse results. Kriesi et al. see the traditional cleavage of religion as the conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Western societies which still influences political behavior today (1995, p. 12); however, the religious cleavage between Muslims and Christians has to be taken into account in Germany as well.

Participation in Newark is influenced by the religious cleavage between Protestantism and Catholicism in the way that many immigrants are Catholic. A Hispanic activist stresses that the Democratic party, often supporting abortion, is for that reason not an obvious choice for

Catholic immigrants (New Labor, interview, Sep. 22, 2009). While clearly also religious Protestants often have reservations about abortion, for Catholic immigrants, the U.S. party system bears the problem that political parties' agendas on migration do not coincide with political parties' agendas on religious values. This is because the Democrats are sometimes seen as being slightly more pro-immigration, even though also the Democratic party is deeply divided on the issue as well (New Labor, interview, Sep. 22, 2009). This helps explain why interviewees do not stress parties at all as a mean to present interests, in contrast to Essen (*Türkische Gemeinde Rhein Ruhr*, interview, Aug. 21, 2009; *Integrationsbeirat*/Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, interview, Aug. 18, 2009; councilman, Essen, interview, Oct. 23, 2009).

However, the religious cleavage of Protestantism and Catholicism in Newark is weak compared to Essen, where a religious cleavage is also present, because many immigrants in Essen are Muslim, while the majority society is Christian. Even though the local government underlines how it relates to the mosques in a way to address migrants in the city (RAA, interview, Aug. 10, 2009), due to the religious cleavage between Islam and Christianity (Hollifield, 2007, p. 73), the relationship between government and migrant religious organization is more distant and interviewees did not mention mosques as a mean for claims-making in Essen. This is very different in Newark. Churches in Newark are also a center for political activity of migrants, e.g. the Lutheran Church fights for immigration rights (Lutheran Church, interview, Oct. 22, 2009), but also a Catholic priest has supported migrant claims (health workers' union, interview, Sep. 18, 2009).

Furthermore, the more important role of religious institutions in claims-making by migrants due to differences between the strong religious cleavage in Essen and the weaker Protestant Catholic cleavage in Newark is underscored by variations in the role of the welfare state. Because welfare in the U.S. is predominantly the task of business and not of government (Briggs, 2000, p. 28), the problems affecting immigrants become obvious to civil society and especially religious groups, who step in and support immigrants in their social needs and represent those needs to the local government. A pastor from Newark explains how distribution of groceries to needy people contributes to building relationships and organizing, which is one of the goals of the church in order to solve problems of the community (Lutheran Church, interview, Oct. 22, 2009). Political activism within the framework of churches is based here on the social needs of immigrants, who do not have much access to

welfare benefits, especially since the welfare reform in 1996 (Hansen & Lofstrom, 2003, p. 75; S. Martin, 2002, pp. 216, 225; Meyers, 2007, p. 48). In contrast, in the German city, migrants do have this access to the welfare state, as social rights are conferred onto them (Santel & Hunger, 1997, p. 126). A large part of welfare is in the responsibility of the state and not left to the market. Non-state sector groups take care of welfare, additionally to the state, but like the interviewee of the Christian social service organization in Essen, they are financially widely supported by the state and given the task by the government to provide these services based on the 'concordat' between the state and those social service providers (Bode, 2006, p. 349). As migrants in Essen have access to welfare through the state and not through their religious organizations, and as mosque associations do not have the same legitimacy in Essen politics as churches do in Newark, it can be explained that political activity of migrants in Essen does not take place largely within mosques, but secularly within other institutions, e.g. parties, whereas in Newark churches do play a large role in political participation.

The class cleavage Kriesi et al. mention as a traditional cleavage could help explain in Essen the party affiliation of the interviewees with the SPD as left-wing parties, which are more popular with the working class, in contrast to the conservative CDU. Migrants are often part of the working class. Nonetheless, the evidence found in this study is not sufficient to explain party affiliation, even though one interviewee's membership in the SPD was connected to his work experience as a guest worker. However, he also believes that he could work equally well with the CDU or another party (*Türkische Gemeinde Rhein Ruhr*, interview, Aug. 21, 2009). Therefore, it cannot conclusively be said that the class cleavage explains party membership as a form of participation. Furthermore, like Kriesi et al. point out, also the class cleavage has been pacified through the implementation of a welfare system in Germany and, therefore, does not offer strong identities for political participation anymore (1995, p. 15). Even though migrants are mostly structurally working class, the common class only strengthens the modern cleavage of migration by supporting an anyhow existing common identity, which will be explained in the following section.

Looking at Newark, the structural factor of poverty affects participation as migrants complain that politicians do not listen to them as much as they cater to the needs of richer people (health workers' union, interview, Sep. 18, 2009). The liberal welfare state regime in the U.S. does not include some social services like healthcare to the same degree as the

conservative welfare state does. In Germany, the state weakened the class cleavage, because it mitigated the conflict through the introduction of the welfare state. On the other hand, the liberal welfare state in the U.S. proves not to do that as much, and thus has not pacified the class conflict to the same degree. While the local government provides some social services also to migrants (local government official, interview, Sep. 22, 2009), the lack of access to other social services and welfare is still an issue for migrants. Therefore, because of being mostly working class, collective claims-making by migrants is based more on material disadvantages than in Germany, where social exclusion is more important as the basis of claims-making.

Both the traditional cleavages of religion and class impact political participation and help explain why migrants in Newark participate in religious groups also politically and those in Essen not. In the U.S., the weaker welfare state has not redistributed towards the poor as much (Alesina & Glaeser, 2004, p. 16) and has not reduced the stratification in society as has the conservative welfare state in Germany (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 14). As religious organizations are a provider of welfare, they take up the topic and also politically support migrants' claims. Conversely, in Germany, the welfare state includes also immigrants to a higher degree. Therefore, political participation is not founded in the class cleavage as much because social rights work as an integrator and the welfare state has mostly pacified this cleavage. As the state takes over most welfare, religious groups do not play as important a role in providing welfare for migrants either and do not take this up as an political issue they have to defend.

However, aside from these traditional cleavages, other cleavages have developed in modern societies and the cleavage between immigrants and majority population can be seen as a new political cleavage as well. Political conflicts are based on structural and cultural cleavages, i.e. societal groups are opposed for structural and cultural reasons (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 2). Migrants are also a societal group facing non-migrants and encountering structural and cultural opposition in the host society, as they are culturally distinguishable and they structurally face different rights discrimination. Migrants meet difficulties as a minority to represent their interest, also because they are often lack of citizenship and are not allowed to vote. Cleavages are based on identities, which have to be politicized in order to develop political cleavages (ibid., p. 3). If a large enough group of migrants exists that feels distinct or even marginalized, the construction of a common identity can be based on the

common experience of migrating and can be politicized; in this way, it begins to establish a cleavage. Following Kriesi et al. (ibid., p. 8), government's approach of dealing with a cleavage, e.g. through pacification, determines the way political actors make claims and become involved in the political system.

In both cities, Essen and Newark, interviewees imply a common identity as migrants, based on the migration experience and on the feeling of discrimination (*Libanesischer Zedernverein*, interview, Aug. 5, 2009; *Türkische Gemeinde Rhein Ruhr*, interview, Aug. 21, 2009). In the Newark case, there are claims by organizers that documented immigrants



Figure 1: Local Election Campaign Poster, Green Party, Essen

The campaign poster reads: "I have 9 employees, 1 tax number, 0 voting rights." The poster then says, "Time for equal rights. Time for Green" (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, 2009).

should stand up in political action for undocumented ones who could be endangered by political action (community organization, interview, Sep. 21, 2009). Likewise New Labor, which is an organization for low-wage immigrants (New Labor, n.d.), represents people based on a common experience with migrating, but also common problems encountered in Newark and New Jersey. Additionally, common identity of migrants in Germany is also strengthened by the fact that many of the immigrants are Muslim; a religious cleavage amplifies common identity and supports the migration cleavage.

Not only must there be a common identity, but it also needs to be politicized and there have to be organized groups that take up this topic, for a cleavage to exist (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 4). In Essen, immigration has been an issue in local campaigns as for example in the election campaign for immigrant rights by the Green

Party in Essen (see figure 1, p. 31) and migration is a politicized issue, especially the political participation and social integration of Lebanese immigrants ("Essen fördert Integration von Libanesen," 2008; Zuuring & Szymaniak, 2009). In Essen, migrant self-organizations and their umbrella organizations become politically involved and make claims to the government, such as jobs within the local government for migrants (*Integrationsbeirat*/Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, interview, Aug. 18, 2009). The

same is true in Newark. Rights of immigrants are discussed, especially the ones coming without papers into the country (Rispoli, 2009) and migrant organizations take up issues of immigrants' interests and try to achieve political goals, like easy access to permits for street vendors (New Labor, interview, Sep. 22, 2009). This shows that in both cities, migration is a politicized issue with groups taking up the issue of migrant claims-making. As this study looks specifically at two cities with large migrant populations, the migration cleavage can be expected to be particularly strong. Having established that migrants are not just influenced in their participation by traditional cleavages, but that migration itself is a cleavage, one can analyze the cleavage following Kriesi et al.'s model (1995). In order to look at explanations for means of political participation, it is helpful to focus on the second dimension of mobilizing potential as outlined by Kriesi et al. (*ibid.*, pp. 5-6, 8), the salience of a cleavage (see table 3, p. 55).<sup>4</sup> The salience of cleavages refers to the degree to which the cleavage continues to dominate conflicts in political arenas. This degree is based on the aspect whether it has been institutionalized or not. An institutionalized conflict loses its salience as it is pacified by institutionalization, but it, nevertheless, can still be a cleavage of political competition. However, once a cleavage has been pacified, participation of this group takes place more by "conventional" means than through "unconventional" means as in still-salient cleavages, which have not been pacified (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 6). The today not so much used term of "conventional" means can here be understood as participation in state politics and those institutionalized forms of participation, in contrast to "unconventional" means, which Kriesi et al. use to refer to demonstrations, and confrontational and violent protest events (*ibid.*, p. 19). This is because "when authorities offer a given constituency routine and meaningful avenues for access, few of its members protest because less costly, more direct routes to influence are available" (Meyer, 2004, p. 128).

Looking at the salience of the cleavage of migrant involvement in the two cities in the U.S. and Germany, the difference becomes obvious. While in Essen the migration cleavage has been pacified and participation consequently takes place in an institutionalized way, in Newark this is not the case.

A main point in patterns of political participation stressed by interviewees in Essen is the close relationship to the local government and their good cooperation, mentioning institu-

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<sup>4</sup> The first dimension according to Kriesi is the openness of a cleavage, depending on the degree of group homogeneity and organization (1995, p. 8). This distinction is not so important for my analysis, as it only points towards overall *effectiveness* of claims-making by one group because of its characteristics. However, it does not explain different *forms* of participation.

tionalized means of participation like promoting their interest by addressing political representatives rather than mentioning rallies as a mean to present their interest as in Newark (*Türkische Gemeinde Rhein Ruhr*, interview, Aug. 21, 2009). In respect to the several formal institutions that have been created in Essen to address migrant related issues, migrants point to them as a way to participate (*Libanesischer Zedernverein*, interview, Aug. 5, 2009) and the RAA and the *Integrationsbeirat* interact in offering a way to participate. As stressed throughout the interview by the RAA employee, the migrant self-organizations also play a salient role in involving migrants (RAA, interview, Aug. 10, 2009). For this reason, they are also financially supported by the city (Stadt Essen, RAA, Dercks, & Schweitzer, 2008, pp. 5, 25) and they represent a way to pacify the cleavage. This way the cleavage has been institutionalized and pacified by local politics. These findings are confirmed by previous research on migrants in Germany. Ireland believes that “German institutional gatekeepers promoted the interests of migrants, who had little choice but to accept the role of the ‘helped’ and thus controlled populations” (2000, p. 259). Despite pacification through the implementation of the *Integrationsbeirat*, this is still a cleavage of political competition, as the topic of relationship between migrants and non-migrants remains highly important in the political arena and highly politicized. However, not only by creation of formal institutions did the German state try to pacify the migration cleavage, but also research points to the pacification of the migration cleavage through the welfare state within the class cleavage. From the beginning, the German system gave, social rights, i.e. welfare and assistance to immigrants and guest workers. Therefore, Brubaker has called the German system of dealing with migrants “benevolent” and “paternalistic” (2001, p. 538). Treating migrants in this way as passive clients, no political activity – outside of this framework – was necessary for immigrants to present interests (*ibid.*, p. 537). Ireland believes that “the German institutional setup still retains enough structuring power to hinder a true social movement or widespread rioting, but German authorities have not been able to structure ‘minority communities’ dependent on them and thus under their manipulation and control” (2000, p. 262). In a wider case study with more examples, the often-mentioned lack of mobilization and activism of migrants in Germany could be investigated by looking at the pacification overall; nevertheless, this explanation is definitely valid in Essen, because participation happens largely within the presented institutions.



In contrast, people actively working with immigrants in Newark underline their distance in relations to the local government (community organization, interview, Sep. 21, 2009) and do not mention institutionalized patterns of engaging migrants in the city. This is supported by an employee of the City of Newark, explaining that the local government does not specifically approach migrants to incorporate them (local government official, interview, Sep. 22, 2009). There are small approaches to institutionalize the cleavage in Newark, like the recent establishment of the African Commission, which a board member of the African Commission explains, “Basically it was the mayor who founded it, but the people that really requested it. Because the African Commission basically was created to bring the African community together, also along with people from African descent, African American and so forth” (interview, Sep. 14, 2009). Nevertheless, this is only pacification and institutionalization of political participation of immigrants on a small level and limited to one group of immigrants, as no similar commission exists, e.g. for the important group of Hispanic immigrants and heritage. As a conclusion, one can say that the local government in Newark did not pacify the migration cleavage like the Essen local government did and, therefore, participation does not take place in state politics to the same degree and as institutionalized as in Essen. In this way, the salience of the cleavage helps explain differences in means of participation, as the salience has been decreased in Essen through pacification. In developing Kriesi et al.’s POS approach, it can be assumed that because Germans have a way to channel immigrants’ political protest through institutions and incorporation into the welfare state, migrants in Germany use institutionalized means, because institutional means are what the POS offer to them as a way to present interests and take part therefore in a more state-based politics. This is in contrast to immigrants in the U.S., where non-state politics, which are less legally constituted, like rallies and demonstrations, are a way to participate. This is because those institutionalized means, created to pacify the cleavage, do not exist in Newark.

### ***5.2.2.2 Formal Institutions and Legal Structures***

Formal institutions and legal structures are considered as given and groups in the political system have to accept them and act accordingly. These fairly stable structures have been developed from history in society (path-dependency). They determine how access to government is possible for non-governmental actors (Kriesi et al., 1995, pp. 26-27). If one way of access is open, actors will more likely choose that type over another, because they are

able to accomplish something this way. In regard to this aspect of the POS, the authors distinguish between the democratic arena, centralization of the country (territorial), separation of power (functional), parliamentary arena (decision-making), and the administrative arena (implementation) (ibid., pp. 26-28).

The **democratic arena** includes the means of direct democracy available to contending groups (ibid.). If those means exist, they can replace more contentious means of participation. However, none of the interviewees, neither in Newark nor in Essen, mentioned means of direct democracy. This is also because in both countries initiatives and referenda do not play such an important role, even though the countries have introduced more means of direct democracy in the last 20 years, especially on the local level (Feld & Kirchgässner, 2001, p. 331).

As part of the POS approach, Kriesi et al. see **centralization** of a country, e.g. federalism, as another factor that might affect political behavior (1995). In this comparison, both case cities are located in a federal state. In both Essen and Newark, interviewed migrants assert that they make claims on various levels of government (New Labor, interview, Sep. 22, 2009; health workers' union, interview, Sep. 18, 2009; *Integrationsbeirat*/Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, interview, Aug. 18, 2009). This is related to the issues addressed, as migration policy, for instance, is a federal responsibility. However, the form of participation does not differ between different levels of government. It differs between the two countries. On all levels, informal contacts of individual organizations and rallies and demonstrations are more important for migrants in Newark. In Essen, an umbrella organization and institutionalized participation through the government plays a more significant role. Therefore, centralization and the democratic arena are not aspects that help explain differences in ways of political participation.

The effect of **legal regulations** as part of the POS is two-fold. First, immigration and naturalization regulations determine who is eligible for citizenship. Together with the electoral law, this affects the ability to use electoral means of participation for immigrants. Whereas citizenship is easier to receive for migrants in the U.S., opening up channels of electoral political participation, these means are actually not stressed by interviewees in Newark. These can also be explained by the importance of undocumented migrant participation, as undocumented migrants do not have the option of citizenship, as well as the previously

mentioned disharmony between political ideas of mostly Catholic migrants and party positions in the U.S. (New Labor, interview, Sep. 22, 2009).

Second, legal regulations about access to the welfare state exist. In the U.S., social rights are not conferred on migrants directly after migrating and come only with citizenship. They have been limited since the welfare reform in 1996 (Hansen & Lofstrom, 2003, p. 75; S. Martin, 2002, pp. 216, 225; Meyers, 2007, p. 48). As described above, access to the welfare state influences where participation takes place. Therefore, in Newark, churches are also a place for political activism, because they take up social service provision for migrants and political claims-making in Newark is based in this group as well. In Essen, welfare is to a larger degree provided through the state and institutions, which are also co-financed and strongly regulated by the state (Christian social service organization, interview, Oct. 23, 2009). These organizations are not aimed at political change and especially the Christian organizations do not fit the framework for Muslim immigrants to organize. Therefore, legal rules about access to welfare in Newark support churches as place of political participation. Looking at the **parliamentary arena** can explain the higher and growing importance of parties in migrant participation in Essen compared to Newark. A larger number of parties in parliament implies more access points to the deciding elites in society (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 29), because more potential partners for negotiations are available and more parties, in which participation is possible, exist. In Essen, nine parties are in city council since 2004 (Stadt Essen, 2004, 2009d). Here migrants stress their good relations to parties, e.g. meeting them to negotiate a number of candidates with a migration background on the party slate (*Integrationsbeirat*/Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, interview, Aug. 18, 2009; *Türkische Gemeinde Rhein Ruhr*, interview, Aug. 21, 2009). In contrast, in Newark, cooperation with parties and participation in party politics do not seem to play such an important role, which can be traced back to the difficulty for the mostly Catholic migrants to associate with both the Democratic and the Republic Party (New Labor, interview, Sep. 22, 2009) and the significance of persons in politics (Lutheran Church, interview, Oct. 22, 2009). Generally, in the U.S., with only two big parties, there are fewer access points for presenting interests by migrants in parties, especially when migrants are not happy with either of the parties' policies. Therefore, the importance of participation in parties is limited. Within the City of Newark, parties also do not play such an important role, because elections to city council in Newark are based on petitions, i.e. candidates are not

necessarily rooted in parties or this is not relevant for their campaign.<sup>5</sup> While there are indications that participation in political parties is developing and becoming more important in Essen, in Newark, migrants' political participation so far is not rooted much in party participation, as access to the Municipal Council is not grounded on party affiliation, but rather on informal network-like relationships between migrant actors and members of the local government.

A party system with a large number of parties like in Essen makes access available also for new parties based on cleavages (like the migration cleavage) due to a higher degree of competition between the parties (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 29); this is not so likely in an environment like Newark. First, parties do not play such an important role for migrants; second, new parties are much less able to catch votes in a party system with a limited number of parties. The large number of parties in Essen makes it possible to approach several parties and a promise by one party can be used to receive concessions from another one. As soon as one party put a candidate of Turkish origin on the slate, other parties followed suit (Councilman, interview, Oct. 23, 2009). It is also true that in some towns in Germany, local migrant parties exist, such as the *Bürgerinitiative* Gelsenkirchen (citizens' initiative) in Essen's neighboring town (*Integrationsbeirat*/Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, interview, Aug. 18, 2009). However, in Essen, so far no group like that has taken part in the local elections, even though this option had been discussed by a migrant group and is planned for the next election (*Libanesischer Zedernverein*, interview, Aug. 5, 2009). Even the threat of potential competition by such a party can help migrants negotiate with other parties. As Kriesi et al. point out, in a system with many parties and especially also proportional representation, parties might change their position to accommodate newcomers in order to prevent them from becoming a threat to their position (1995, p. 29). All in all, a larger number of parties in Essen is a factor explaining political party participation of migrants in Essen and also negotiations with parties, which is not the case in Newark.

Looking at the **administrative arena** can help explain why migrants organize hierarchically in umbrella organizations in Essen in contrast to small, informal organizations connected with each other in a network structure like in Newark. Kriesi et al. assume that if negotiations between interest groups and government are highly institutionalized, it is more difficult to get in touch with the administration through other channels (ibid., p. 31), be-

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, councilman Ramos is a member of the Democratic Party, but only mentions this in a side note on his homepage (2008).

cause the government focuses on this kind of institutionalized participation and the actors are already involved there. One also has to consider that if participation of a group is institutionalized, participation through other means might not be as attractive for the group, because other means might be less effective and more costly (Meyer, 2004, p. 128).

On the local level in Essen, specific institutions (like the RAA, the *Integrationbeirat*) have been created to serve migrants, each of which has its own goal and focus, for instance integration, education, political participation. Furthermore, the City of Essen has an office dealing with the legal status of foreigners (*Ausländerbehörde*), and the local government of Essen supported the foundation of an umbrella organization of immigrant self-organizations, the Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, which administers financial support for those sub-organizations. Additionally, the city works together with social service organizations to provide services to migrants like counseling, language support, administrative support, and programs for better integration in the local society<sup>6</sup> (RAA, interview, Aug. 10, 2009). This institutional framework offers ways for migrants to express interests, especially through the *Integrationsbeirat* and the Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations. Since the Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations has been founded by the local government and migrant organizations, the local government refers to it for problem-solving involving immigrants, because the organization can contact sub-organizations easily (RAA, interview, Aug. 10, 2009). However, access to the government in conflict-laden cases and cooperative problem-solving is restricted to a certain degree to heads of the *Integrationsbeirat* and the Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, which is actually the same person. As the cleavage between migrants and majority population has been pacified and institutionalized, it has moved more towards a formal dimension of conflict solving in this way, i.e. conflicts are addressed through these government supported institutions, which negotiate changes with the local government (*Integrationsbeirat*/ Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, interview, Aug. 18, 2009). This mean of conflict-solving is limited to migrants who are already active within the institutional framework of the *Integrationsbeirat*, which makes it more difficult for other migrants to become involved, as the umbrella organization of migrant associations has already taken the spot of representing the migrant population. These umbrella organizations and migrant leaders who are already involved within the provided institutional structure do have broad access to community

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<sup>6</sup> Some of these programs are also financially supported by the federal government (Christian social service organization, interview, Oct. 23, 2009).

leaders in Essen. Therefore, once initiated, this system of claims-making through an umbrella organization is a self-sustaining system. As it becomes more difficult for small, independent organizations to access the local government, they have an interest to join the umbrella organization. The other umbrella organization, *Türkische Gemeinde Rhein Ruhr* (Turkish Community Rhein Ruhr), is an example of the creation of an umbrella organization without governmental support. Combining several other Turkish organizations, it tries to achieve legitimacy for cooperation with the local government, but is less recognized.

In contrast, in Newark, the informal dimension of conflict solving within the administrative arena is much more important and open to a wider array of actors. As the cleavage has not been pacified through institutionalization in the same degree as it has been in Essen, in Newark, informal negotiations are more common. Migrants are able to address their councilman more directly, as suggested by the Pastor, even though they often need to be supported in this process (Lutheran Church, interview, Oct. 22, 2009). Claims-making towards the local government is more direct and not only intermediate through common umbrella organizations like in Essen. The idea that anybody in the migrant community can come to the city government and present an idea and participate is much more present. This idea has been stressed by city officials (Councilman, Newark, interview, Sep. 24, 2009; local government official, interview, Sep. 22, 2009), as well as by migrant community members (New Labor, interview, Sep. 22, 2009). The City of Newark seems to be open to those ideas informally presented by migrants, as the foundation of an African Commission based on the idea of some African community members demonstrates (local government official, interview, Sep. 22, 2009; African Commission, interview, Sep. 14, 2009).

This openness for all kinds of actors helps the establishment and activeness of grassroots and small organizations, because they also have a chance at addressing the government and having their voice heard in highly conflictual issues like the business of irregular immigrants as street vendors and the licensing process. In contrast, for small organizations in Essen it is more difficult to be involved with the local government in problem-solving, because pre-institutionalized channels of claims-making exist. Therefore, new groups of migrants will likely become part of the existing umbrella organizations in Essen, and this hierarchical structure of migrant organizing reinforces itself.

In conclusion, looking at the POS of the administrative arena, claims-making in Essen and Newark differs organizationally, because the local administration set up an institutional

system of negotiating immigrant interests based on combined migrant interests in umbrella organizations. In Newark, such an institutional system does not exist; therefore, migrant organizations have to resort to individually addressing the local government. As the Newark local government is open to approaches by small organizations or individual ideas, migrant organizations do not have to come together in umbrella organizations to present their interests when addressing the government.

### **5.2.2.3 Informal Dimensions**

In this category, Kriesi et al. look at ways conflicts are dealt with from the side of the government through informal procedures and a shared understanding about the political process (1995, p. 33). This takes place within a spectrum ranging from exclusive to integrative ways of dealing with other people's opinions (ibid., pp. 33-34). By either refusing cooperative conflict solving or supporting it, exclusive or integrative strategies of the government determine ways political participation takes place.

Kriesi et al. see Germany historically tending more towards an exclusive way of approaching conflicts (ibid.). That means that Germany could be expected to suppress participation by migrants. However, their idea from research on the labor movement cannot be confirmed without reservations for the local level in Essen. Like in many countries, immigrants were initially not expected to show political participation, either (Martiniello, 2006, p. 83); however, slowly this has changed and Essen does not suppress political participation of migrants. Similarly, in Newark, migrant participation is not actively suppressed and in the form of the African Commission even supported by the local government.

However, informal ideas about how migrants should be integrated into the political system and the role of the state in this respect influence participation, as they impact the options available to migrants to access the local government. The more prominent role of institutionalized participation of migrants in Essen can be explained not only by the pacification aspect of the migration cleavage as outlined above, but also by the idea about the active role of government, which here implies that the government should promote migrant political participation and, therefore, develop ways of participation for them. These differences in the perception of the role of the local government became obvious in the interviews with local government officials as well as with the members of migrant self-organizations and community organizations. While the local government of Essen implicitly saw it as its task to be involved with immigrants, the local authorities in Newark did not regard it their job to

actively approach immigrants in order to get them politically involved (local government official, interview, Sep. 22, 2009). Differently, the employee of the city of Essen outlined several projects that the city has developed in order to support integration and participation of immigrants, like the *Integrationsbeirat*, language and cultural integration classes, not only with the purpose of conferring abilities necessary to earn a living in German society, but also to be able to take part politically, because as he mentions, political participation without appropriate knowledge of German is not possible (RAA, interview, Aug. 10, 2009). The interviewees from community and migrant organizations also saw the role of the local government similarly, the *Integrationsbeirat* (interview, Aug. 18, 2009) and the *Türkische Gemeinde Rhein Ruhr* (interview, Aug. 29, 2009) stress their good cooperation. A board member of the *Libanesischer Zedernverein* points out that he does not have the impression that the City of Essen promotes political activeness of migrants enough (interview, Aug. 5, 2009), but still sees the desired role of the local government as more active in working together with migrant organizations. This is different in Newark. Not only does the local government not see it as its task to promote immigrant political participation, but the interviewed representatives of the immigrant community also do not believe that is the role of the state. No interviewee, neither migrants, nor local government, in Newark assumed the local government should actively approach immigrants and advance political participation of immigrants. This shows that the idea of the role of the local government differ to Essen, where both local government and immigrants believe that the local government should promote political participation of immigrants.

These ideas about the role of the government are related to the welfare state concepts as outlined in the theoretical section of this paper and categorized by Esping-Andersen in 1990. According to Esping-Andersen, Germany as a conservative welfare state has a larger public sphere and is seen as etatist (1990, p. 77). From its beginning, its main goal is the social integration of residents, i.e. in regard to immigration in Germany, the granting of social rights to immigrants before receiving political and civil rights. As Esping-Andersen points out, “the granting of social rights was hardly ever a contested issue” in corporatist-conservative welfare states (ibid., p. 27), as they are considered necessary to prevent social division (Castles, 2007, pp. 46-47). Since citizenship and political rights could for a long time hardly be achieved and receiving citizenship is still not easy, the local government promotes political integration through institutional substitutes to support incorporation and



social peace and sees that as one of the goals of its intercultural concept (Stadt Essen, 2009b). In contrast, the liberal welfare state does not provide redistribution to the same degree and contains (especially for immigrants) the realm of social rights by keeping “de-commodification-effects” low (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Therefore, the local government in Newark focuses in its work on some service provision, e.g. sanitation, schools, in which it includes immigrants (Councilman, Newark, interview, Sep. 24, 2009), but it does not see it as its task provide extensive aid and to integrate them politically, unless they approach the government themselves (local government official, interview, Sep. 22, 2009). This is because a liberal welfare state is less etatist than a conservative-cooperatist one and has an idea of individualistic self-reliance (Arts & Gelissen, 2002, p. 141). As a less etatist state, it does not offer institutionalized means of participation for migrants.

With this more state-based idea of the role of government in Germany, which expects the local government to provide help to migrants, migrants have several (institutionalized) ways to address the local government. These channels are already offered by government; therefore, non-state-based and non-institutionalized means of political participation do not play such a strong role. The government has supported and sometimes created institutions catering to migrants, who can be address regarding social services (e.g. RAA in the field of education), but some of these, like the *Integrationsbeirat* or the Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations, mainly serve to address political issues. Additionally, as part of the German corporatism (Bode, 2006, p. 350), the welfare organizations receive government money to provide services to immigrants (Christian social service organization, interview, Oct. 23, 2009).

All together these organizations – public and private with government finance – construct a tight institutionalized network. This points back to Meyer’s assertion that “when authorities offer a given constituency routine and meaningful avenues for access, few of its members protest because less costly, more direct routes to influence are available” (2004, p. 128). In Newark, where this tight institutional network does not exist, and participation cannot take place within institutions determined for political participation of migrants, migrants find other ways to approach the local government. These are rallies, demonstrations, and less formalized negotiations.

#### **5.2.2.4 Alliance Structures**

Alliance structures are not as stable as the three previous aspects of the POS. They include the conditions of political power at the moment, shifts in ruling alignments, and the availability of influential allies (Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 53). This category of POS looks at alliances and how influential allies facilitate collective claims-making and support those groups (ibid., p. 55). Kriesi et al. focus mostly on elites as alliances (ibid.). Nevertheless, one can also consider alliances among migrant organizations in order to understand how claims can be made in the local environment.

The alliance structure helps understand the differences in organizational forms of migrant organizations. In Essen, migrant self-organizations are subsumed into an umbrella organization, the Essen Federation of Immigrant Association. This umbrella organization is specifically supported by the local government, and the local government focuses on this body in negotiations with migrant organizations. Alliances between government and migrants are, therefore, based on the relationship between the umbrella organization or the *Integrationsbeirat* and its leaders with the local government, but contacts among migrant groups and of migrant groups directly with the local government do not take place to a high degree. This system reinforces itself, because for new groups to be able to successfully influence politics on the local level, participation within the umbrella organization and/or the *Integrationsbeirat* is necessary. This approach of organizing political participation goes back to the above-mentioned informal understandings of the role of the state and problem-solving. Within the culture of the corporatist-conservative welfare state, relations between different political actors are often based on formal negotiating. This approach to problem-solving is also the basis of the set-up of institutionalized political incorporation of immigrants in Essen and alliance formation. As Sackmann points out, in corporatist political systems like in Germany, migrant organizations can play a significant role, because such a system – if they are recognized by the government (which they are in Essen) – gives resources to those groups and allows them to participate in agenda setting (2004, pp. 194, 220). It also involves them in negotiations and grants them access to the local government. Therefore, informal alliances with other small organizations in a network-like system like in Newark are not necessary for interest representation, as alliances already exist between umbrella organization leaders and the local government.

In contrast, in Newark, we see a network-like organization, i.e. several small organizations which are then connected to other small organizations. All of these organizations have allies in other civil society organizations and in the local government. They refer to each other in the interviews, often by name. This is not the case in Essen. In Newark, migrants and their organizations lobby the local government often individually or as part of changing alliances. Even though some organizations have similar political interests, they also see each other as competitor (New Labor, interview, Sep. 22, 2009). Therefore, alliances are not always the same. However, for New Labor other organizations with similar interests but different organizational base are allies in their struggle for vending license distribution in Newark (field notes). They are connected in an informal network structure based on changing alliances. In Newark, as a city where the government does not provide a structural framework for participation, organizations do not come together within an umbrella organization, but they renegotiate alliances according to advantages assumed from such an alliances (health workers' union, interview, Sep. 18, 2009). These groups often approach the local government independently from one another. Referring to the political system, in Newark, the first-past-the-post system encourages informal ways of problem solving. In wards with one predominant ethnicity, migrants can vote minority candidates into city hall. Here then alliances develop based on that ethnicity. These alliances are used for informal negotiating and claims-making. For instance, the councilman in Newark, who was elected in a predominantly Hispanic ward, mentions that in relating to the population it helps speaking Spanish and being of Hispanic decent, because it is easier to communicate with immigrants (interview, Sep. 24, 2009). Organizations, therefore, contact politicians also on this basis. In Newark, conflicts between different societal groups are not usually negotiated between representations in a kind of "collective bargaining" in formalized processes like in the corporatist Germany, where the corporatist bargaining approach carries over into the field of immigration conflict-solving as well. So the common ideas of problem-solving and the role of the state also influence the way problems are approached and alliances developed in the area of immigration.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has analyzed the differences in forms of political participation in two cities, Newark in the U.S., within a framework of a liberal welfare state, and in Essen, in Germany, in a corporatist-conservative welfare state regime, according to the typology of Esping-Andersen (1990). It looks at external factors through the POS approach to explain those differences. In the analysis, it focuses on one aspect, differences in the welfare state regime, to specifically evaluate and answer the question whether the welfare state regime has any impact on the forms immigrants choose for claims-making.

Examining political participation of migrants Essen and Newark, differences could be shown between forms of participation by migrants, which was expected. First, migrants in Newark use rallies, demonstrations, and petitions to bring forward their interests in the local context, whereas in Essen, migrants use the elections to the *Integrationsbeirat*, membership in parties and other organizations to advance political claims. This means that participation in Newark is less institutionalized and state-based as well as forms of participation are less legally constituted compared to Essen. Second, organizational forms differ as well. In Newark, informal, small organizations prevail, which work together in informal networks, and political participation also takes place in churches. Conversely, in Essen, hierarchically organized umbrella groups dominate the scene. One of them is government-initiated and the government supports other migrant (self-) organizations as well.

These differences in means of political participation can be explained by using the POS approach as a way to analyze the influence of external factors on actors' behavior. This thesis shows the importance of institutions in regard to migrant political participation and organization in contrast to theories explaining forms of participation based on ethnicity, race, and culture. In both cities, the forms participation took varied despite different countries of origins. While most of the migrants had a working class background, differences in means of political participation exist between the immigrants in the two cities, disproving the neo-Marxist theory, which would expect a convergence of forms of participation based on the common class aspect (Koopmans & Statham, 2000, p. 15).

In the German city, the government pacified the existing cleavage of migration, i.e. the government implemented institutions for participation and incorporation of migrants. This pacification was strengthened from the beginning of the guest worker program by the conferral of social rights on migrants; i.e. the incorporation of immigrants into the welfare

state. Here the ideas of the role of the state related to corporatism in the two societies are a key factor in explaining the variations in forms of political participation of migrants. In the U.S., the government is not expected to actively motivate residents to become involved, unlike in Germany, where the corporatist idea of collective bargaining is used also in regard to incorporation of migrants into the local political system, developing institutions for them to participate in. The migrants use these means of participation in the city, but, therefore, because these institutions guarantee a way of access to the local government and decision-making processes, other ways of claims-making like demonstrations and rallies as in Newark, are not necessary to receive attention; migrants, therefore, mainly rely on these institutionalized created ways of access and political participation. While the German local government is willing to hear the opinion of migrants in local politics, it determines the way this dialog takes. Therefore, the thesis confirms the original expectation that institutionalized means of political participation are more important in the German city.

Looking at the initial research question of the degree to which the welfare state influences forms of political participation, one can say that the welfare state impacts the place of political participation, i.e. political participation takes place in Newark also in churches and differs in that from participation in Essen, because of the importance of social service provisions through churches in Newark. Additionally, incorporation of immigrants into the welfare state is in Germany also a way of pacifying the migration cleavage, working against participation in form of demonstrations and rallies, which are more common in Newark. Other than that a correlation exists between the welfare state as well as political participation, because both are affected by ideas of the state. The conferral of social rights to immigrants and the idea of a state that should incorporate its residents through welfare and social rights in order to fight social inequality and social division is related to the idea that incorporation of migrants should be a goal of the state. Therefore, the local government tries to promote this through institutions and offers an institutional possibility for problem-solving in the migration issue, as institutionalized negotiations and collective bargaining are also ways of problem-solving between different parts of society in the corporatist welfare state. Therefore, this thesis confirms the idea that the welfare state plays a role in influencing political participation. However, it is not a direct relationship, rather the ideas of the role of the state and corporatist ideas are relevant in impacting political behavior of local government and in influencing expectation of migrant actors in regard to the

government. This thesis, therefore, does not put forward the idea that the welfare state directly through certain benefits affects participation, but that ideas that are the foundation of the variations of the welfare state also can be found in approaches of government in how to deal with immigrants, which then influence means of participation.

Other than the importance of informal ideas of the state, also other factors influence forms of political participation. While POS theory points to ideas of the state and the party system, as well as the distinction between welfare provision by the state and the private sector (e.g. churches) as factors playing a role in these two cities for immigrant participation, the results cannot be conferred directly on other cities, as the POS are unique in the local situations discussed. In other cities, other factors might be more important. Nevertheless, these results can be a starting point for further research that discusses a wider selection of cities in the two countries in this respect and tries to evaluate whether these results are typical. So far, it is one of the few empirical studies taking a cross-national approach in looking at political participation at the local level. This thesis has given new insights about the importance of external factors on actors' behavior. POS are definitively important in shaping migrant political participation and which means for claims-making they choose. As far as the role of the welfare state goes, the relationship is a correlation: Ideas of the role of the state that are the basis for the different welfare regimes impact also local governments in their approaches towards political incorporation of migrants.

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## Appendix 1: Figures and Tables

Figure 2: Research Design

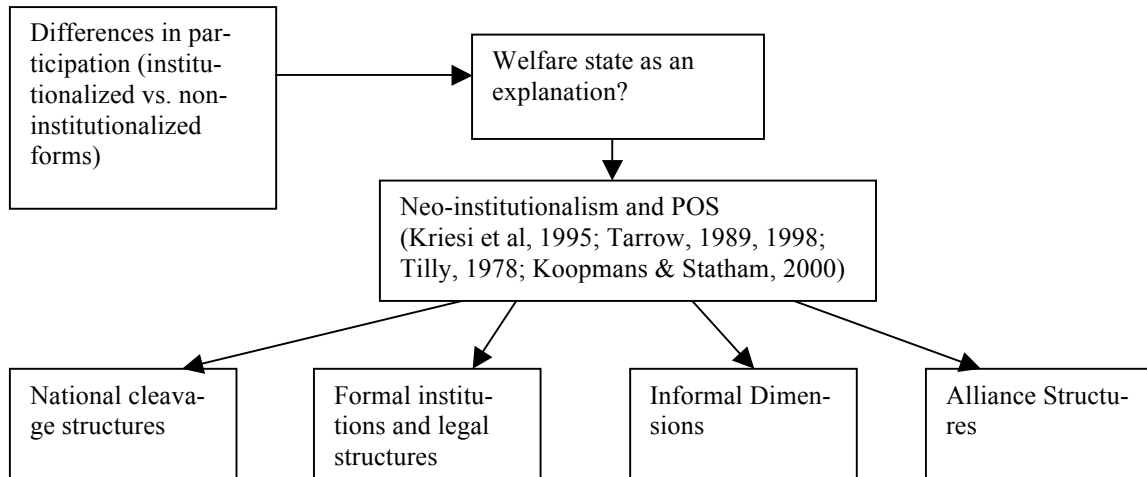


Table 1: Statistics on Essen and Newark

	<b>Essen, NRW, Germany</b>	<b>Newark, NJ, USA</b>
<b>Population</b>	571.055 in Sep. 2010 (Stadt Essen, 2010)	266,736 in 2006 (SOCDS, 2006)
<b>Immigrant Population</b>	58.051 foreigners in Sep. 2010 (Stadt Essen, 2010)	71,794 foreign born in 2006 (SOCDS, 2006)
	10.2% foreigners in Sep. 2010 (own calculations)	26.9% foreign born in 2006 (SOCDS, 2006)
<b>Unemployed Population</b>	54.423 in Oct. 2010 (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2010)	No data available
<b>Unemployment</b>	11.8% in Oct. 2010 (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2010)	12.5% in 2006 (SOCDS, 2006)
<b>Demographic Development</b>	-0,6% (2003-2005) (own calculation based on data from Landesdatenbank NRW, n.d.)	-8.7% (2003-2005) (SOCDS, 2006)
<b>Poverty</b>	91.995 welfare receivers in Dec. 2008 (Stadt Essen, 2008), i.e. 15.9% of the population (own calculations)	24.2% in 2006 below poverty line (SOCDS, 2006)

Data between Essen and Newark is not necessarily directly comparable because of different ways of calculation used; nevertheless it gives an impression of similarities of problems affecting the city: unemployment and poverty. Both cities are home to a significant number of immigrants/foreigners.

Table 2: Differences in Political Participation: Newark and Essen

	<b>Essen, NRW</b>	<b>Newark, NJ</b>
<b>Form of Participation</b>	Elections to <i>Integrationsbeirat</i> , Membership in Organizations, Parties (more institutionalized, more state based participation, heavily legally constituted forms of participation)	Rallies, Demonstrations, Petitions (less institutionalized, less state based participation, less legally constituted forms of participation)
<b>Type of Organizations</b>	Formal, sometimes government-initiated groups, organizations combined in hierarchically in umbrella organizations	Informal and small organizations connected in informal networks, sometimes through churches

Table 3: Typology for the Mobilizing Potential of Traditional Cleavages

	<b>Salience</b>	
<b>Closure of the Cleavage</b>	<b>Pacified</b>	<b>Not pacified</b>
<b>Closed</b>	Latent potential	“Exclusively” mobilized potential
<b>Open</b>	Available potential for new mobilization	“Inclusively” mobilized potential

Kriesi et al., 1995, p. 8.

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## Appendix 2: List of Interviewees

### Essen

- Employee, Local Office of the Regional Office for the Support of Children and Youth from Immigrant Families/Office for Intercultural Work (RAA) (Aug. 10, 2009)
- Councilman, Committee for Integration and Immigration (Oct. 23, 2009)
- President of the *Integrationsbeirat* and President of the Essen Federation of Immigrant Associations (Aug. 18, 2009)
- Employee, Christian Social Service Organization, Migration Counseling (Oct. 23, 2009)
- Employee, Confederation of German Trade Unions (Summary) (Aug. 11, 2009)
- Member of the Board, *Libanesischer Zedernverein* [Lebanese Association] (Aug. 5, 2009)
- Member of the Board, *Türkische Gemeinde Rhein Ruhr e.V.* [Turkish Community Rhine Ruhr] (Aug. 21, 2009)

### Newark

- Local Government Official (Sep. 22, 2009)
- Councilman (Summary) (Sep. 24, 2009)
- Member of the Board, African Commission (Sep. 14, 2009)
- Employee, American Friends Service Committee, Christian Charity Organization (Sep. 13, 2009)
- Employee, Health Workers' Union (Sep. 18, 2009)
- Pastor, Lutheran Church (Oct. 22, 2009)
- Employee, Community Organization (Sep. 21, 2009)
- Activist, New Labor (Sep. 22, 2009)