



**Stadt Leipzig**

# Integrating Refugees: The Central Role of Cities

October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Thomas Fabian

Deputy Mayor, City of Leipzig

Chair of EUROCITIES Social Affairs Forum



# Shaping the Arrival and Integration of Refugees



- Cities are places where integration fails or succeeds.
- Cities develop and implement key activities furthering the integration of asylum seekers.
- Cities have an interest to play a coordinating role in cooperation with other responsible actors.



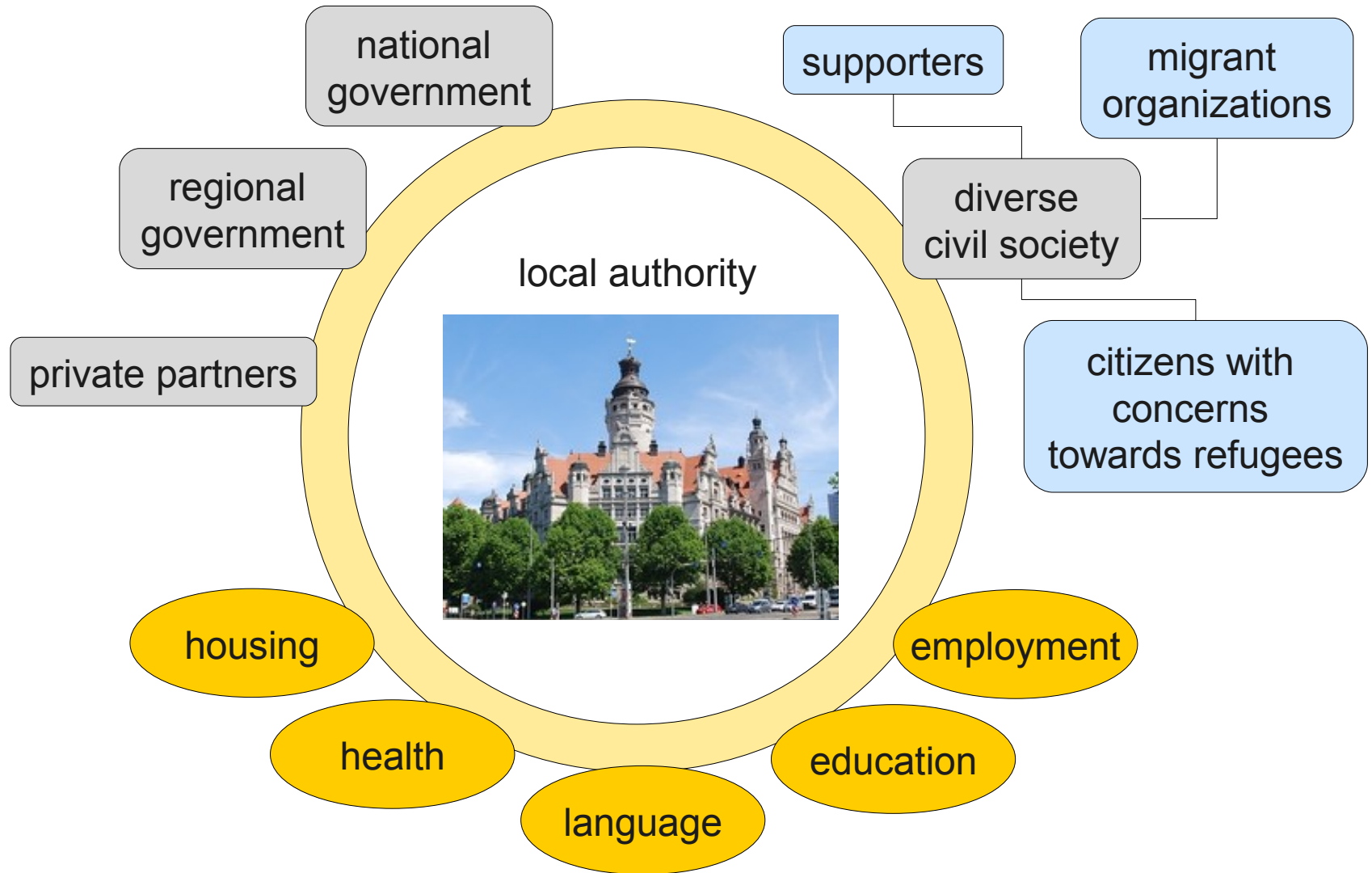
Mural in Tarifa, Spain  
photo: Thomas Fabian



- In their 2015 statement, EUROCITIES members stress the key role cities have in managing the integration of refugees and asylum seekers and call for, among others:
  - a comprehensive EU migration policy that recognises the challenges faced by cities and local level solutions,
  - measures to improve the integration of asylum seekers and refugees at local level,
  - a better sharing of responsibility and solidarity across Europe,
  - adequate European and national funding for cities to support services provided to asylum seekers and refugees at local level, e.g. for language training,
  - involvement of city authorities by the EU and national governments in the implementation of the Common European Asylum System.



# Integration of Refugees: Many Issues, Many Players



# Local Authority Plays Key Role



- communicates with citizens
- provides services to refugees (housing, welfare assistance)
- defines own integration standards
- cooperates with other authorities and private partners
- supports civil society – enables engagement
- fights racism and solves conflicts

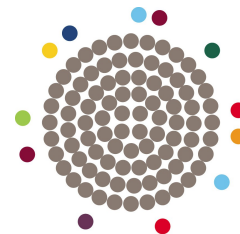


source: key for an electrical enclosure;  
Wikimedia Commons; photo: Harke

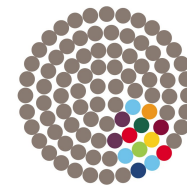
# Principles to Promote Refugee Inclusion



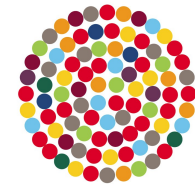
- Be inclusive!
  - Special services for refugees might be helpful at the start – but are not a long-term solution.
  - Existing services should be open and accessible to all.
- Provide help for people to help themselves!
  - Strengthen personal responsibility and self-reliance of refugees.
- React immediately to conflicts – with a clear position!



Exklusion



Integration



Inklusion

# Strategies to Promote Refugee Inclusion



- Show a positive attitude
- Engage in active communication
  - as early as possible
  - take questions seriously
  - involve supporters
  - various target groups:
    - public
    - stakeholders
    - neighbours of houses for refugees



Mayor Thomas Fabian informs neighbours about a new home for refugees opening up soon  
photo: City of Barcelona

# Strategies to Promote Refugee Inclusion



- Support civil engagement
  - example: mentoring programme for refugees
- Involve the whole community
  - example: cultural initiatives or sports clubs



Poster, photo: Thomas Fabian



Youth at Leipzig football club SV Lindenau 1848 e.V., source: <http://fussball.lindenau1848.de/news/allgemein/>



# Strategies to Promote Refugee Inclusion



- Make services accessible to all
  - include the goal of integrating refugees and migrants in local planning strategies
  - train your staff in intercultural competences
  - employ people with migrant background
  - open institutions, such as libraries, to new users



meeting at the senior club  
photo. Seniorenbüro Leipzig Ost

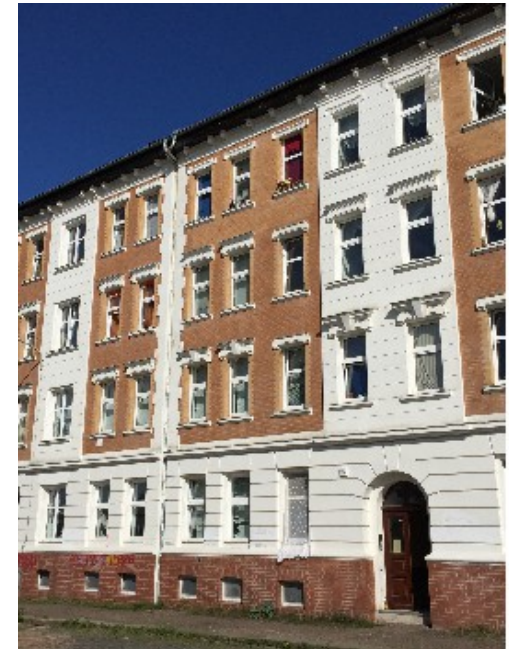


German language course; Flüchtlingsrat Leipzig e.V.  
photo: Mahmoud Dabdoub

# Strategies to Promote Refugee Inclusion



- Invest in preventative measures such as social work in refugee houses



house for refugees in Leipzig, Markranstädter Straße  
left: office of social workers; middle: play room; right:  
streetview  
photos: Thomas Fabian

# Our Task: Arrival Cities



- Refugees shall arrive well in our cities.
- It is our duty to accompany them on their way into our urban societies.
- This will be achieved in joint efforts of administration, politics and civil society.



Leipzig's mentoring programme "Ankommen in Leipzig"  
photo: Eric Kemnitz



# Stadt Leipzig

Dezernat Jugend, Soziales, Gesundheit  
und Schule

[dezernat5@leipzig.de](mailto:dezernat5@leipzig.de)

Tel.: +49 (341) 123-4309

Fax.: +49 (341) 123-4305

[www.leipzig.de](http://www.leipzig.de)

