

Bertelsmann Stiftung (Hrsg.)

Städte leben Vielfalt

Fallstudien zum sozialen Zusammenhalt

Autoren:

Dr. Frank Gesemann

Kristin Schwarze

Alexander Seidel

Abstract

Germany is currently undergoing rapid political, social, economic and technological change. Although the fabric of social cohesion that connects people and groups of different backgrounds to each other and creates a sense of community remains tightly woven, the risks to cohesion are increasing. Concerns regarding social cohesion have become a matter of debate in politics in recent years. Many have cited and continue to cite the large number of refugee migrants arriving in Germany, particularly in 2015 and 2016, as a challenge to social cohesion.

This publication documents four in-depth case studies of social cohesion and how diversity is addressed in everyday life in the German cities of Dessau-Roßlau, Dortmund, Lippstadt and Rostock.

The results of this study are based on a multi-methodological approach comprised of a quantitative survey, qualitative interviews, roundtable discussions and events involving various groups that enabled us to collect and evaluate the complexity of experiences with and views on cohesion in each city.

The most important finding is that despite the considerable challenges faced in recent years, social cohesion remains high in all four cities. Indeed, despite increased migration, most respondents feel that social cohesion has remained unchanged. Three out of four respondents see no change brought about in social cohesion as a result of incoming refugees. In fact, a majority of respondents view the reception and integration of the new arrivals as a positive experience.