

## ARBEIT & MIGRATION. GESCHICHTEN VON HIER

### GLOSSARY

How do we talk about migration? It is a topic with many concepts and terms. What we say and how we say it makes a difference. Talking of a »migration background« or »migration biography«, for instance, evokes different images in our minds. Individuals, the media and politicians may use the same words and, at other times, quite different ones to express their views of migration. Our glossary contains some of the words in public discourse in Germany. We address how we use the terms in our exhibition, in some cases offering explanations and, in others, alternatives.

#### ► GERMAN WORK ETHIC

In general, work is defined as an activity providing a person with a livelihood. Within Germany and abroad, Germans are commonly regarded as hard working, disciplined and meticulous. »Made in Germany« is still seen as signalling reliability and innovation. The stereotypes of »German quality workmanship«, a concept the Nazi regime instrumentalised politically, is still alive. The concept of the »lazy foreigner« is active as well.

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#### ► FOREIGNERS

The word describes people who do not have German citizenship during their stay in Germany. Foreigner is not a synonym for immigrant, although the word is often used that way. People with a migration biography are Germans as soon as they take on German citizenship. People from the most diverse minorities are perceived as »foreigners« and given stereotypical ascriptions that can be racist. The term »foreigners with a German passport« is a contradiction.

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#### ► REFUGEE

A refugee is a person who flees their own country because their life is threatened. That threat can take many different forms, such as persecution for their political opinions, religion, or the colour of their skin. Refugees have a right to international protection. Sometimes, though, the word is used with negative connotations suggesting an »intruder« or even »invader«. An alternative formulation such as people »in need of protection« acknowledges their situation and indicates there is more to a person than just fleeing their homeland.

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#### ► »REFUGEE CRISIS«

In the asylum debate in Germany, this catchphrase gained currency to describe the country taking in around one million refugees as a crisis. At present, there are over 65 million refugees worldwide. »Refugee crisis« puts the responsibility on the refugees, defining them as a »problem« solely by their presence. This avoids identifying causes in policy decisions or structures. It would also be possible to talk of a crisis in asylum policy. A neutral description of the phrase would be the »movement of undocumented migrants«.

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### ► FRAMING

The framing effect refers to a bias in our thoughts. We draw on our experience and knowledge to order our linguistic and conceptual world, highlighting particular aspects and ignoring others. In this way, we interpret and ascribe values to the world. In our minds, linguistic framing plays an active role in shaping our thoughts and actions. How can we counter an unconscious forming of opinions? We can view words critically. We can weigh up how and whether we use them. Perhaps there is a neutral or more appropriate alternative – or perhaps we can think of a new word.

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### ► STRANGERS

People who are not »from here« or look »different« are regarded as strangers. Since they are unfamiliar, we do not regard them as belonging to and being part of our own group. Even as children we are told, »Don't open the door to strangers!« Yet as holidaymakers and travellers, we are interested in the unfamiliar and fascinated by discovering the unknown. In English, »alien« has been extensively taken to describe a person not a citizen or national, and is still used officially in the US. The term is excluding and no longer part of public discourse.

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### ► »GASTARBEITER«

From 1955 and 1973, West Germany responded to a chronic shortage of labour by actively inviting workers from abroad. They were to work as »guests« and then, after a limited stay, return home. The first »Gastarbeiter« (literally, »guest workers«) became semi-skilled workers. They took the unpopular jobs on assembly lines, in piecework or on shifts. As early as the 1970s, the irony of the word was evident since guests do not have to work and are not housed in basic mass accommodation. Today, »Gastarbeiter« is always placed in inverted commas or prefixed by »so-called«. Current discourse talks of migrant workers.

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### ► INTEGRATION

Integration is derived from the Latin »integrare«, to make whole or renew. It describes the reciprocal process of the adaptation of individuals and groups. The debate on integration mixes a number of distinct concepts. The strategies of adaptation and integration range from assimilation to hybridity and inclusion. Each integration strategy has a particular impact on people and their identities. In assimilation, a minority social group fully adopts majority cultural practices. Inclusion aims at integrating people into a group, and often refers to measures helping people with disabilities to participate in daily life. Hybridity involves people blending and combining multiple values, norms and customs from their former and present places of residence, an approach able to overcome the separation between the Self and the Other.

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### ► MIGRATION

Migration is the movement of people away from their habitual place of residence, temporarily or permanently. The Latin verb »migrare« means to change or move from one place to another. People may have many diverse reasons to migrate. Sociology distinguishes between migration for work and education, as well as chain and life-style migration. If a person leaves their homeland, they are emigrating; if they go to a new country to live there permanently, they are immigrating. Through such terms as »poverty immigration«, »parallel society«, or »immigrants refusing to integrate«, the topic of migration can be negatively loaded. For some years now, the focus of discussion is more on the lack of equal opportunities and the greater hurdles in participating in society.

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### ► »ZUWANDERUNG«

This German word has no equivalent in English. In discourse in Germany, it refers to the movement of people to the country to work, study or seek protection. »Zuwanderung« suggests those moving to another country may not intend to stay permanently. The prefix »Zu« seems to emphasise that people »do not belong« and, in the view of some, are »not really« part of this country. »Immigration« is an alternative. This aptly describes »Zuwanderung«, but does not have the German word's negative connotations.

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### ► »MIGRATION BACKGROUND«

In Germany, this phrase originally derived from the terms used by administrative bodies. Today, the Expert Commission on the Framework Conditions for Integration recommends replacing it by »immigrants and their descendants«. People still referred to as having a »migration background« often find it discriminatory. The phrase is seen as reductive and, since migration is still often viewed as a difficult topic in society, negatively connotated. The alternatives in discourse in Germany include »migration biography«, »migration history« or »international history«. Many people with a biography of migration who experience racism or are distinguished from those in society considered white may prefer to refer to themselves as »a person of colour« (PoC).

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### ► OTHERING

This describes the process by which people are defined as being different. The idea of »otherness« is central to understanding how majority and minority identities are constructed. Othering serves to identify and exclude »others« from a group defined as »we«. Constructing the »Other« can be based on a person's social position, religious beliefs, ethnicity, sexuality, gender or disability. Othering usually takes place within power imbalances or where there is discrimination.

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### ► RACISM

Racism is defined as discrimination against individuals based on physical or cultural characteristics such as appearance, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, or language. Racism violates human rights and attacks the dignity of the individual. It often takes the form of discrimination, a word derived from the Latin *discriminare*, to distinguish between or divide. Anti-Muslim racism is evident, for instance, where a job applicant is rejected because she wears a hijab. Anti-Semitism describes all forms of animosity and hostility against Jews and those believed to be Jews. Anti-Ziganism is another form of racism evident when the minority Romani people are described by such discriminatory terms as »gypsy«. Racism is apparent in everyday language as well as micro- and macroaggressions against those affected.