

# **INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN DRESDEN: HIGHLY QUALIFIED MIGRANTS IN THE CITY – CONCLUSIONS FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

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## ***Abstract***

The interest of planners and politicians about skilled migrants started years ago and became a real global dimension after the end of the cold war. In Germany almost nothing is known about highly qualified international migrants. This is due to an inconsistent way to define a highly qualified international migrant but also to the inadequate data sources especially on the regional and local level.

Who are they? Where do they live? How do they live? Through an empirical study for the city of Dresden in Germany, the researcher attempted to answer these questions. The results are a contribution to the urban development decision making process. But also, they can point out the potential of this population group especially in the background of demographic change.

## ***Keywords***

Germany, international migration, highly qualified, urban development

## ***The relevance of international migration for urban development***

By coping with the challenges of an aging and decreasing population as well as its economic consequences and the international competitions between cities and regions, it seems that cities need to be aware of their strength and weaknesses. Concerning to an aging and shrinking population, the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry already indicated a lack of specialized workforce for the following sectors: engine construction, medical and electronic engineering (DIHK, 2005). Especially for covering the demand on knowledge, innovation and creativity the immigration of qualified workforce leads current discussions in politics, science and public in Germany.

With the immigration of highly qualified people from abroad, it is considered to be possible that the competitiveness of cities and regions will be sustained in a global challenge (Niebuhr, 2007). In particular in East Germany the cities and regions are previously affected by demographic change (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2006). Therefore cities and regions in East Germany need fast answers to cope with the challenge of demographic change.

So, exemplary the city of Dresden in East Germany was chosen to research the current situation of highly qualified international migrants living there for more than one year. At the beginning of the study three main research questions were generated: Who are the highly qualified international migrants? Where do they live? How do they live?

Results are oriented to support stakeholder’s decisions making process concerning a sustainable planning. The integrated city development concept of Dresden refers already to the importance of highly qualified migrants, whose meaning will gain for a sustainable urban development (City of Dresden, 2006). Also this concept advises to recognise rather the resources than the deficits concerning migrants. Therefore the perception of this population group concerning their impacts to the urban development is necessary.

***Highly qualified international migrants and the variety classifications***

Till 2005 in Germany the official statistics separated the population only in Germans (people with the German citizenship) and foreigners (people with another citizenship than German). This definition did not characterize the migration topic comprehensively. This is due to the fact that it is possible to be born in Germany but to have another citizenship than German. But since the micro census 2005 the Federal Statistical Office determines the dimension of the population with migration background instead of separate them by their citizenship.

**Figure 1: Germany’s population structure**

Total Population Germany					
Germans			People with Migration Background		
People with own Migration Experience			People without own Migration Experience		
Foreigners		Germans		Foreigners	
		Naturalized People	German Migrants		
				Naturalized People	Germans with foreign or migrated parent(s)

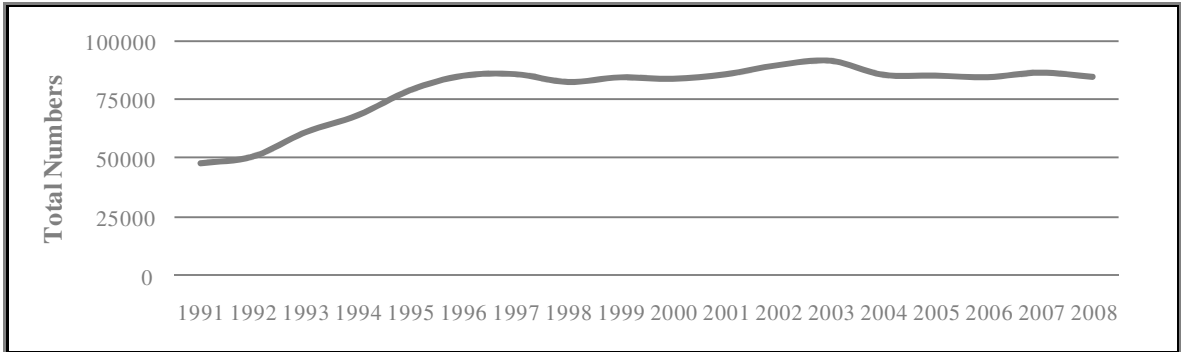
Source: Federal Statistical Office Germany 2008

Figure 1 shows the different groups of people with or without migration background within Germany. For these several population groups, at federal level information about their qualification background is available.

The data of the statistic authorities on the regional level base on the obligation to register in the place of residence and the data of the immigration departments of the communities. Therefore the regional level works with measured information by the local level. Consequently the statistical authority of Saxony publishes only figures about the numbers of move-ins, which are differentiated by movements from abroad and internal movements. But these figures represent only the number of the movements of a person, but not the number of the person itself. Also the statistical authority of Saxony has figures about the amount of foreigners. The group of foreigners include only people with another citizenship than German. But especially the facts, that an international migrant is not necessarily a foreigner and a foreigner is not necessarily an international migrant, limit the value of this information. Both terms do not fulfil the complex situation of an international migrant.

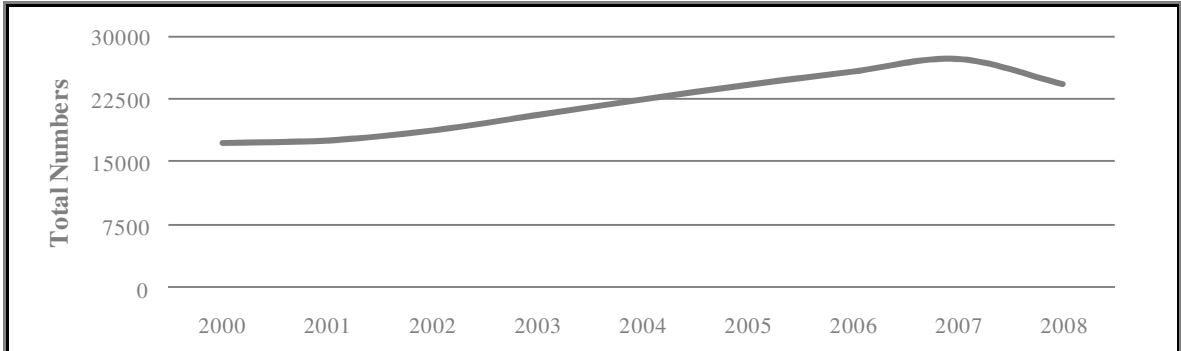
To have an imagination about the dimension of international migrants, the figures of foreigners living in the State of Saxony give a first approach.

**Figure 2: Saxony – Number of Foreigners 1991 - 2008**



Source: Statistical Authority of Saxony 2009

**Figure 3: Dresden – Number of Foreigners 2000 - 2008**



Source: Statistical Authority Saxony 2009

Figure 2 shows the development of the numbers of foreigners living in Saxony. In 2007 only 2.8% foreigners lived in Saxony, which is a quite small number in comparison to other areas in Germany. The situation for the city of Dresden was similar. In 2007 only 4.8% of the total population had a foreign background (Statistical Authority of Saxony, 2009).

Additionally, different opinions about the definition of highly qualified people exist in Germany. On one hand this group includes only people with an academically degree (BAMF, 2007), but on the other hand it is also possible to be a high qualified person with comparable work experience (BMI, 2006). Also work experience in certain branches, e.g. the informatics or microelectronic sector, count rather as a comparable work experience in others. For that reasons it is mostly a decision of the immigration offices, who will count as a high qualified person.

Together with the problems to measure international migrants, it is even more difficult to find data about highly qualified international migrants in Germany. According to the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees, Germany shows enormous deficits in data availability about the professional educations of migrants (BAMF, 2005). Currently the official statistics about professional and academic education for Germany collects only the citizenship, which does not allow conclusions about people with migration background (BAMF, 2009). Referring the micro census, it is possible to get information about people with migration background and their qualifications in Germany. But for other spatial dimensions as the regional or local level, it is not possible to get comprehensive information about education and qualification. Furthermore the data protection complicates the realisation of a study about this topic. So the numerous dimension of international migration of highly qualified people for the country or even local level are hardly known.

Concerning to the discussed inadequate data base, an empirical study was carried out by data collection on the basis of a bilingual questionnaire. Therefore the study can be assigned to fundamental research approaches. Before the study began, it was necessary to define own criteria to identify highly qualified international migrants. Based on the different terminology in the literature the following criteria define the research group:

1. *The person was born abroad.* Therefore the person has own migration experience. This includes foreigners but also people with the German citizenship.
2. *The person works and lives in Dresden for at least one year.* These criteria follow the recommendation of the United Nations, which differentiate short-term migrants (less than one year) and long-term migrants (at least one year).

3. *The person has a degree of higher education.* It includes all people with tertiary education.

Then the questionnaire was quite comprehensive in order to discover an almost unknown population group. The survey was divided into different thematic blocks, including questions about the living situation in Dresden, the use of the urban space, migration background and experience and social networks. Out of 122 listed companies, institutions and organisations from different branches and located in Dresden, the background for the interviews was created. At least 56 enterprises employ highly qualified international migrants concerning the constituted characteristics. Finally the result contains the sample of 832 highly qualified international migrants, who were working and living in Dresden during September and October 2008. After the period of data collection the sample for the data analysis includes 224 responses with complete questionnaires, which means a return rate of 27%.

### ***Who are they? – Diversity as relevant attribute***

The description of highly qualified international migrants living in Dresden is the background for any other thoughts. Referring to the collected data, diversity is the main characteristic attribute for the whole sample and for any descriptive criteria. In summary quite a number of different characteristics reflect the group of highly qualified international migrants. On the one hand the diversity is shown by the fact that almost as much women as men are included. Also the sample presents a wide range of different age groups, from 23 to 61 years. Therefore it is not possible to identify a specific age group for the highly qualified international migrants, because there are people from almost every age. With an average age of 34 years, apparently, the research group is considerably younger than the working population<sup>1</sup> of Dresden with an average age of 39.5 years (Statistic Agency of Dresden, 2009).

Concerning the marital status, nearly the half of the research group is married as well as 52% are single. Only 3% of the respondents are divorced. Finally, it is known that 77% of all respondents live in partnerships. Concerning this group, at least half of them are in partnership with someone from the same origin country, 33% with someone from Germany and 17% with someone neither from Germany nor from its origin country. Consequently half of the highly qualified international migrants share two different cultures.

In relation to the housing characteristics, the average size of household is 2.1 people. 36% of the migrants live in a single-person-household, 33% in a two-person-household and 31% in multi-person-household. So far, different types

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<sup>1</sup> The group consist 18- to 64-year-old people.

of apartments are in demand. The housing tenure shows that 84% of the highly qualified international migrants live in rental apartments, which identifies them as target group for housing companies.

Diversity can also be recognized in the family life of the highly qualified international migrants, especially in the age of the children. Anyhow 30% of the research group lives together with children, whose age ranges from less than one year to 25 years. On the one hand, it shows few families and, on the other hand, it points out the different requirements to childcare and the education system. Nevertheless, in Dresden the highly qualified migrants are mainly in the life-cycle-stage to start a family regarding their age and the numerous people living in relationships. Till now families are still an exception within the research group.

Besides the demographic and social characteristics, the data shows although a diverse structure concerning the job-related information. On one hand the people work in high-tech industries like the microelectronic and biotechnology sector and on the other hand they are employed in cultural fields, which include music and art but also activities concerning language studies. Most of the respondents (29%) work in the medicine and biotechnology sector. This amount of people is caused by several research institutions including among others the TU Dresden and the Max Planck Institute of Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics. But also, 24% of the highly qualified international migrants are employed in the field of natural sciences, which include the areas of biology, physics, chemistry and geosciences. Furthermore the next sector counts 19% of all respondents, who are working in art & culture, language and education. At least 12% of the people are part of the informatics and microelectronic industry, 11% of the people rank among engineering and another 5% belongs to something totally different than previously mentioned. Besides to the working fields of the highly qualified migrants, there are apparently 63% of people, who are employed in the area of research. Even if the number of people within these working areas is probably not statistical representative, it already proves the existence of highly qualified international migrants in a wide range of diverse working areas.

Regarding to the variety of working fields, different qualifications are necessary. Also the widespread age distribution of the research sample reflects the various qualification backgrounds. Therefore highly qualified international migrants can be separated into three different groups: Firstly, the ones, who have a bachelor degree (8%), secondly, the ones, who have a master or diploma degree (58%) and at least the ones, who are in the doctoral level (38%).

Another attribute, which is describing the diverse economic situation of the sample, is the current monthly net-income per person. Also more than one value characterizes the income situation of the highly qualified international

migrants. Three main groups could be identified. Most of the highly qualified migrants (56%) earn up to 2,000 Euros per month, followed by 31% of people with more than 2,000 Euro and 13% with less than 1,000 Euro. Apparently, it shows, that high qualification is not necessarily related to high income or richness. In Germany people with more than 3,268 Euros net-income per month and person are so called rich people (BMAS, 2008).

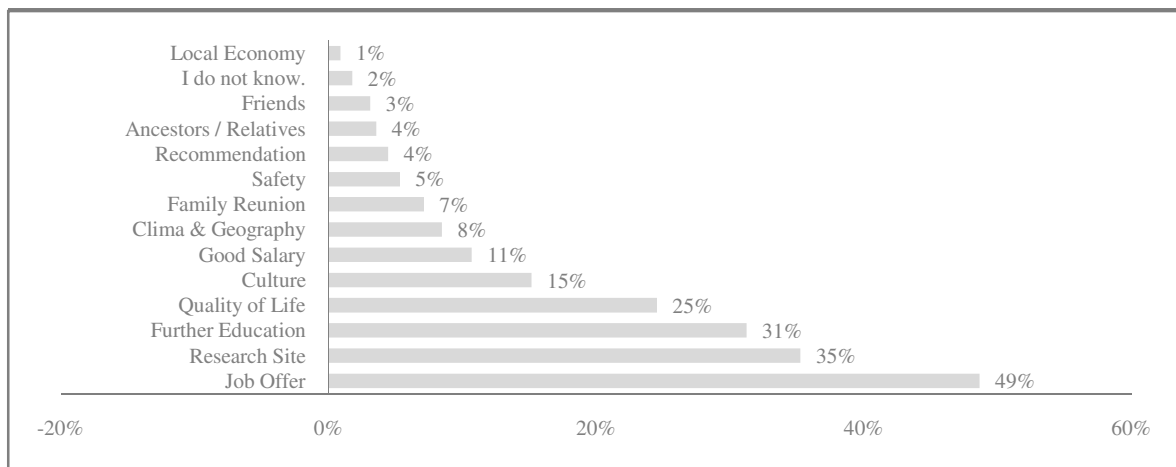
Anyhow, not only the ordinary population attributes are characterized by diversity but also the migration background and the migration experience are substantially different within the research group. Especially the 59 different countries of origins point out a various sample. The highly qualified migrants came from allover the world. In particular, there are representatives from every continent and even from almost every country in Europe. It means that every fourth highly qualified international migrant is originally from another country. At least 48% of the migrants are from a non European country. Most of the people have their origin in the United States of America (22), followed by the groups of people from Russia (16) and India (14). In comparison to these facts, the sample is different to the group of foreigners of Dresden. At present, 19.711 foreign people from 120 different countries live in Dresden. This represents that every 164<sup>th</sup> person is from a different country (Dresden 2007, 12). Concerning the country of origin, most of the foreigners are from Vietnam. They work mainly in low-skilled areas, especially in retail trade. This is due to the migration history during the GDR times, when many Vietnamese people migrated to Dresden. After the reunification of Germany the working areas of these people were irrelevant for the local economy and they had to orientate in something different.

Even if most of the people (25%) have only been in Dresden since 2007, the immigration period to Dresden ranges from 1976 till 2008. But till the year 2000 the immigration to Dresden can be described rather low. Only few people could be registered before this year. The reason for this situation might be that the half (50%) of the interviewed people do not want to stay longer than five years in Dresden. Other reasons might be the immigration limitations till the reunification of Germany and the following rehabilitation of the political, economical and social structures in Dresden.

Concerning their international working experience, it is also known that almost three quarter of the interviewed migrants do not have any work experience abroad. For them, Germany is the first country abroad for more than one year. But also the responses show, the older the migrants the more they have international work experience. This fact and the situation, that the majority of interviewed migrants will not stay longer than five years in Dresden, allows the conclusion, that Dresden will be the departure for further migration flows.

This leads to the point, why the people came to Dresden (Figure 4). Firstly, half of the people (49%) came to Dresden, because they got a job offer. Secondly, the further education possibilities and the research sites draw highly qualified migrants. Also, this is related to the fact that research and science is the main employment sector for this sample. At least, the quality of life and the cultural offers in Dresden are significant reasons to move to Dresden. Concerning the age of the migrants, in average, rather young migrants move to Dresden, because of local conditions (quality of life and culture) and relationships (friends, ancestors, recommendations) than migrants older than thirty. Otherwise, the older the migrants the importance of good salary increased.

**Figure 4: Dresden – Reasons for Immigration 2008**



Source: Survey 2008, Sample 224

In summary it is hardly possible to find an attribute, which applies to all the highly qualified migrants. Indeed they are all so different, that general conclusions are almost impossible.

### ***Where do they live? – The preference of centrally areas***

The spatial distribution of the highly qualified international migrants within the city of Dresden shows the preference to live centrally considering that the sample cannot be representative (Figure 5).

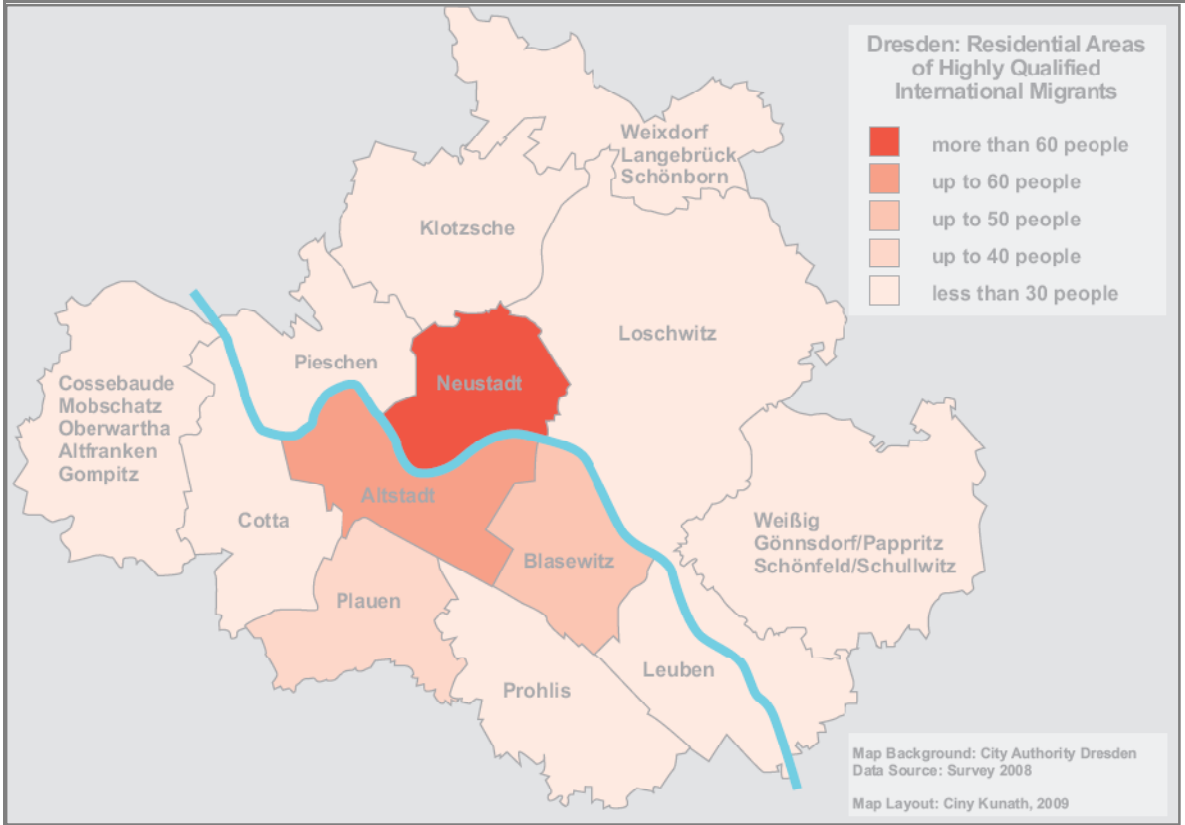
Between the different districts in Dresden, three main favored areas can be identified: Dresden Neustadt, Dresden Altstadt und Dresden Blasewitz (Figure 5). Neustadt is one of the liveliest areas within Dresden. It is also known as trendy neighborhood with stylish clubs and bars as well as a neighborhood with an alternative lifestyle. Mostly students but also young professionals enjoy living there. Maybe due to this, the average of the residence time is quite low. So the Neustadt is affected by a high turnover of people moving in and out. This neighborhood belongs to the historical suburbs of Dresden outside of the ancient medieval city wall. There the street scenery and the existing

buildings are mainly in Wilhelminian style, which is due to less destruction through the Second World War.

Secondly, the so called Altstadt is also a central situated neighborhood in the opposite of the Neustadt across the river Elbe. On one hand, this area can be characterized as the historic city center of Dresden with the typical baroque buildings. But on the other hand, in this area, which was mainly affected by destructions due to the Second World War, still the actions of the urban development during the GDR times are visible. Certainly the Altstadt contains most of the touristic attractions and the well known symbols for the city. More than other areas, this neighborhood combines living areas and cultural heritage. Indeed with the TU Dresden and many student accommodations, the Altstadt can be possibly a neighborhood for young people. But actually this area can be more characterized by people with an average age over 50 years.

The third favored residential area is Blasewitz, which is known as an often preferred multiple dwelling villa quarter with appealing architecture. It is situated next to the green meadows of the river Elbe. According to Dresden Neustadt and Altstadt, a high amount of married people live in this area. The average age of the local population is in between the two other identified residential areas. Also it is rather a neighborhood with high standards as well as up scaled living conditions.

**Figure 5: Dresden – Evidence of Spatial Segregation**



Source: Survey 2008, Sample 224

Concerning the diverse population structure of the highly qualified international migrants, different subgroups prefer the several neighborhoods. Therefore it could be discovered that the people, who live in Dresden Neustadt, are mainly from North America, Australia and Europe. They are rather single than married and only few highly qualified international migrants with children live in the Neustadt. Also the number of single-households among the sample is the highest in the area of Neustadt. With these named characterizations, the highly qualified international migrants match with the common local population structure. Due to the frequent changing local population, it can be assumed that this neighborhood is accustomed to modification processes.

Concerning leisure activities, the area of Neustadt is a favorite place of highly qualified international migrants to spend the time in bars, clubs and cafes. Also most of the resident highly qualified international migrants prefer to go shopping rather in the Neustadt than in other parts of the city. Additionally the Neustadt can be identified as place, where 97% of the sample knows someone who lives there. In summary, these facts strengthen the importance of the neighborhood Neustadt for the sample as place to live, to interact and to communicate.

Another preferred living area is the Altstadt. Based on the survey, people from Asia prefer to live there. Concerning to the partly simple housing supply, above all interviewed highly qualified international migrants, most people with an income fewer than 1,000 Euros live in the Altstadt. In general the Altstadt is one of the most preferred areas for shopping. Independently where the people live in the city, they like to use the shopping facilities of Altstadt. Furthermore, the Altstadt is not only a favored place to live. The majority of the highly qualified international migrants would recommend this area to visit and to enjoy the variety of cultural heritage sites. Especially the Church of Our Lady (Frauenkirche) represents for 79% of the sample the most important landmark for Dresden, which represents the beauty of the downtown scenery mostly. In general, the highly qualified international migrants perceive rather the historic symbols and sites with the city of Dresden than current developments like research success in the microelectronic sector.

Finally, Blasewitz can be also identified as living area of highly qualified international migrants. Among all of them, migrants with the highest average income are located here. Also this area can be characterized by the highest amount of married people and families with children. Remembering the small number of families among the research group, this district can be identified especially for families. But in comparison to the other areas, Blasewitz is the only one, which is almost exclusively used as residential neighborhood. Other activities of the highly qualified international migrants, especially shopping and meeting friends, take place in different areas of Dresden.

These results show the demand on different requirements to housing of a diverse population group, which varies between convenient and sophisticated as well as family-friendly and hip neighborhoods. Besides this, in 68% of the cases, there live people from abroad in the direct neighborhood of the interviewed people. Also the three named living areas mostly represent a certain meaning for the highly qualified international migrants. On one hand, there is the district Neustadt as a trendy neighborhood with the best supply to go out. Also, there is the area Altstadt, where the cultural heritage represents the history of Dresden. At least there is Blasewitz, the neighborhood, which can be characterized by high living quality with an upper price level.

In general the highly qualified international migrants like to live in Dresden and even 78% of the sample would recommend Dresden as a place to live and work. Especially they appreciate the high quality of life in Dresden with the natural environment in and around the city. Unfortunately, a less cosmopolitan local population complicates the living conditions of the highly qualified international migrants. Concerning the global context of urban development, the stakeholders could realize this population group as their customers but also react to their special needs in sense of language and cultural traditions.

### ***How do they live? – The ways of involvement in the urban development***

To answer this question, several attributes were chosen to indicate the participation of the highly qualified international migrants in the social life in Dresden. Resultant, the involvement of highly qualified international migrants in the urban development can be concluded.

Firstly, the composition of the social networks of the highly qualified international migrants was investigated. Almost half of the highly qualified international migrants knew someone in Dresden before they arrived there. Also 81% of the migrants were supported by colleagues or the employee to settle in the city. Therefore the important impact of the working environment is visible.

Also 65% of the interviewed people were supported by friends or colleagues to find an accommodation, and only 29% of the cases found the accommodation by their selves. On one hand this shows the previously existence of social networks before the arrival and during the first period in Dresden. On the other hand the compositions of the networks are more or less characterized by the professional surrounding of the migrants.

Additionally, the partnership describes the social network with the strongest ties. Here, 50% of the people in relationship are together with someone from the same origin country. The partnerships of the other half of the sample are characterized by a partner from Germany (33%) or a partner neither from

Germany nor from the country of origin (17%). Therefore half of the migrants live in cross cultural relationships, which allow the participation in at least two different cultures.

The next meaningful connections are those of the family and relatives. For almost all the interviewed people, the relatives live abroad. In average the international migrants visit their families once or twice a year. In several cases the migrants live in Dresden since a long time, but they still are connected to their families abroad and visit them frequently. This shows also the importance to the origin of the people and the attempt to keep their roots.

Finally, the social network is completed by the circle of friends. Those circles of friends can be separated in three groups: 1. more friends from abroad than from Germany (48%), 2. more friends from Germany than from abroad (27%) and 3. as many friends from Germany as from abroad (15%). Additionally a correlation is obvious between the structure of the circle of friends and the German language skills. The highly qualified international migrants with less than intermediate German language skills have in 81% of the cases more people from abroad than from Germany as friends. But anyhow, the tendency can be recognized that highly qualified international migrants like to live especially in an international shaped environment.

In summary the social networks of the highly qualified people are mainly characterized by an international composition. But also in many cases they are connected to Germans. Due to this, general separation between migrants and Germans can not be recognized. Especially the job-related environment is very important to them, which leads to the conclusion that highly qualified migrants are rather connected with their job than with the city itself. Therefore the involvement in urban development assumes to be quite low.

Information about the attributes trust in people and volunteerism of the international migrants can give further evidences about involvement of migrants in urban development. Obviously volunteerism can be neglected, because only 18% of the interviewed people are volunteering. This also strengthens the assumption of a minor participation of the migrants in the local social life.

Also the trust situation reflects again the strong connections to colleagues, who are in most of the cases the friends of the high qualified international migrants. In total just 4% of the cases trust nobody within the city of Dresden. At least it is good to know that almost everyone has somebody to trust in problematic situation.

Another attribute, which can point out the dimension of involvement in urban processes, is the mostly spoken language of the highly qualified international migrants. Due to the collected data, English is the language the people use most commonly at home and at work. According to this, German is irrelevant

for one third of the interviewed people, who do not speak German at all. Referring to this, it can be assumed, that in certain working areas, it is not necessary to speak German.

The described situation can be connected to their German language skills. Anyhow 52% of the sample assumes its own German language skills not less than good. Therefore almost the half of the interviewed people is limited to realize a German conversation. At least these people want to improve their German language skills. Due to this and the fact that in Dresden German is the official language, the involvement in urban development processes is quite difficult.

Even if the highly qualified international migrants are rather low involved in local actions so far, their comprehensive use of the offered public transportation system shows something different. Most of the people (46%) use the public transportation system. Also the possibilities to walk (25%) or to go by bike (13%) were named often. Only 23% of the sample moves within the city usually with the car. Due the mostly centralized interaction places of highly qualified international migrants, everything is accessibly by the public transportation opportunities. So far it is interesting to recognize, that the migrants adopt these offers.

Furthermore, no more than 43% of the people read a local newspaper once a week. Together with the length of their stay in Dresden, it could be recognized the longer they live in Dresden the more often they read local newspapers. Probably, this is due to fact that speaking German is their greatest challenge in their daily life in Dresden. But also bureaucracy and the opening hours of supermarkets complicate the daily routine of highly qualified international migrants in Dresden.

In summary the highly qualified international migrants are mostly affected by their professional and international networks. Furthermore, English could be identified as mostly spoken language, which separate them from the local community. Also information access through local newspapers and volunteering can be neglected as connection to the local community. The only one thing to find a relation to the locals can be shown by the well used public transportation offers. Referring the collected information, less involvement in urban development can be concluded. Therefore it can be recognized that though the highly qualified international migrants enjoy living in a beautiful city like Dresden, they tend to live in a parallel society.

### ***Reflexion of the situation***

This study is the first attempt to identify highly qualified international migrants on the local level in East Germany. Difficulties in defining the sample

point out the necessity to clarify what means to be an international migrant. Standardized criteria are essential to monitor and measure international movements and the people behind.

Highly qualified international migrants in Dresden show an average age of 34 years and came from all over the world. They moved to Dresden due to a job offer and the high quality preconditions for further qualification and research. The majority does not want to stay longer than five years in Dresden and most of them do not have any other international working experience abroad. Regarding to this, it can be concluded that Dresden could be the starting point for further movements.

Therefore the city of Dresden can lose a qualified and cultural diverse population group in the stage of life to start a family. But actually people with these characteristics can help to fight the challenges of the demographic change and the global competition within cities and regions.

In fact, in Germany international migration can be afflicted by problems concerning districts with a high percentage of foreigners and difficulties in integration (Jacob/Knieling, 2008). But the examined people offer a variety of different spoken languages, professional backgrounds and origins from all over the world. They are impressed by the beauty of Dresden and interact in complex social networks. Their international flair and their verve for the city can enrich the image of Dresden mainly. The linkage to countries all over the world present economic opportunities outside of Germany but also the possibility to attract people to come to Dresden.

It is necessary to notice this population group and to discover their needs. That includes the different requirements to housing, children education, cultural offers but also tolerance towards other languages and cultures. But also it is necessary to increase their involvement in the local society to find access to the potential of this population group. The challenges to a sustainable urban development can be managed by using the potentials and overcome the weaknesses with the involvement of all citizens. The perception of highly qualified international migrants within this process is one potential. How far the highly qualified international migrants really affect urban development can be a future one.

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