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Research interests: impact of socio-spatial contexts on well-being, attitudes, social interactions and trust-based exchange processes within personal networks, causes and effects of individual social capital

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### **Perceptions and experiences of diversity in German cities**

German cities are nowadays diverse in many respects. With immigrants and their children accounting for almost 20 per cent of the population, Germany is a major European country of immigration. In some cities this group accounts for more than 40 per cent of the population. Thus, the perceptions, experiences and consequences of this diversity on social life and integration are a pertinent issue. How is diversity of the social environment perceived and experienced by the local population in German cities? What's the significance of migration-related diversity for the everyday life of city dwellers? I will present selected results from a large-scale panel study in German cities. The "Diversity and Contact" project investigates perceptions of neighbourhood diversity, the relation between contextual diversity and interaction between residents of immigrant and non-immigrant backgrounds as well as their impact on selected attitudes.

Based on analysis of the survey data, I will present insights into perceptions of diversity and the role of migration-related diversity in particular and in links between contextual diversity, interactions and indicators of social and political integration (e.g. levels of trust). I will show that, altogether, the changing population composition is reflected in local intergroup interaction. Higher diversity is not associated with disintegration. Rather, the presence of people of differing backgrounds within the same neighbourhoods is incorporated into images of normal social life. As distinct from some studies in North America, we do not find a consistent negative impact of high diversity on social interactions and trust levels.

His research interests include the impact of socio-spatial contexts on well-being, attitudes, social interactions and trust-based exchange processes within personal networks as well as the causes and effects of individual social capital. His research projects focus on diverse urban populations in particular.