Supporting Diversity - Strengthening Cohesion - Multiculturalism in Germany

By Manuela Paul

GRIN Verlag. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 24 pages. Dimensions: 8.5in. x 5.5in. x 0.1in. Seminar paper from the year 2009 in the subject Politics - Political Systems - Germany, grade: 1, 0, Bilgi University stanbul (Bilgi University stanbul, Institute for European Studies), course: Politics of Ethnocultural Diversity, 18 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: Germanys discourse about multiculturalism is marked by its contrariness. On the one hand, there are many attempts to implement the theory of multiculturalism in political practice. The slogan of Berlins integration concept in 2007 Vielfalt Frdern - Zusammenhalt Strken (Supporting Diversity - Strengthening Cohesion) aimed at the advertisement of the positive potential of the cities pluralist landscape. On the other hand, the media often issues headlines and statements of politicians who declare multiculturalism in Germany as unsuccessful. The mayor Heinz Buschkowsky of Neuklln, a district in Berlin inhabited by about 30 percent migrants, with his rigorous conclusion Multiculturalism has failed. in 2005 caught the attention of the media. In these contradicting positions - the constant efforts to politically apply multicultural theory and then again the questioning whether multiculturalism is generally applicable in Germany - originates the interest to gain an extensive insight into multiculturalism practiced...

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What is multiculturalism? "Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream." She set out her doubts on multiculturalism in a less subtle way, claiming the country's attempts to create a multicultural society have "utterly failed." They are just two out of the growing number of European leaders who have come to the similar conclusion on the immigrant minorities and their alleged unsuccessful accommodation into European societies. In Germany, the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions is a basis of the cultural policy of the federal, state and local governments. They are structured in the German system of cultural promotion and encourage the participation of civil society actors at all levels. Germany's cultural wealth is based on the diverse, historically grown cultural landscapes in the various regions. In an international comparison, Germany has a particularly dense network of publicly funded cultural institutions and broad international cultural offerings, not only in urban agglomerations. It advocates the strengthening of international cultural cooperation for sustainable development. Multiculturalism, at least on the rhetorical level, gained ground in a number of European countries in the 1980s-early 1990s. However, it soon waned, giving way to disappointment or outright hostility. Was the call for multiculturalism in Europe in fact mimicking a fashion in North America? Was multiculturalist rhetoric backed by systematic policy? And, if so, was it really a failure? Despite its avowed commitment to the ideals of cultural diversity, the United States defines society as a single indivisible nation. The support of multiculturalism is mainly confined to the practice of affirmative action (i.e., positive racial discrimination) in university admissions, as well as changes to the curriculums, which vary greatly from state to state. Angela Merkel in Germany was the first to express such sentiments, and she was quickly followed by Nicolas Sarkozy in France and David Cameron in Britain. Against the background of these political developments in Europe and a similar (including scientific) questioning of multiculturalism, Taras strategically intervened by organizing a scientific workshop called "The Twilight of Multiculturalism: Theory, Empirics and Norms" at MIM in Malmö during the spring of 2011. Germany has never stood as the prototype of a multicultural society and it does not do so now. But empirical assessments of the political practice of cultural diversity management indicate that, over time, Germany has adopted more multicultural policies. Germany's road to multiculturalism was different from the United Kingdom's, although the starting point was the same. Like many countries in western Europe, Germany faced an immense labor shortage in the years following World War II and actively recruited foreign workers. Unlike in the United Kingdom, the new workers came not from former colonies but from the countries around the Mediterranean: first from Greece, Italy, and Spain, and then from Turkey. Today, almost one-third of adult Turks in Germany regularly attend mosque, a higher rate than among other Turkish communities in western Europe and even in many parts of Turkey. Similarly, first-generation Turkish women almost never wore headscarves; now many of their daughters do.