Governing Urban Diversity:
Creating Social Cohesion, Social Mobility and Economic Performance in Today’s Hyper-diversified Cities

Report 2g

Fieldwork inhabitants, Zurich (Switzerland)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work package 6:</th>
<th>Fieldwork inhabitants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deliverable nr.:</td>
<td>D 6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead partner:</td>
<td>Partner 10 (EKKE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors:</td>
<td>Anna Babel, Patrick Abegg, Larissa Plüss and Walter Schenkel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature:</td>
<td>Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination level:</td>
<td>PP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status:</td>
<td>Final Version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>7 July 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This project is funded by the European Union under the 7th Framework Programme; Theme: SSH.2012.2.2.1; Governance of cohesion and diversity in urban contexts
Grant agreement: 319970

This report has been put together by the authors, and revised on the basis of the valuable comments, suggestions, and contributions of all DIVERCITIES partners.

The views expressed in this report are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of European Commission.
# Contents

1. **Introduction** ........................................................................................................... 5

2. **The interviewees** .................................................................................................. 8
   2.1 *Selection procedure: how did we select our interviewees?* ............................... 8
   2.2 *Which groups did we miss* ................................................................................ 8
   2.3 *Some general characteristics of the interviewees* ............................................ 9

3. **Housing choice and residential mobility** ............................................................ 10
   3.1 *Introduction* ..................................................................................................... 10
   3.2 *Why did the residents come to live here?* ......................................................... 11
   3.3 *Moving to the present neighbourhood: improvement or not?* ......................... 14
   3.4 *Conclusions* .................................................................................................... 15

4. **Perceptions of the diversity in the neighbourhood** .............................................. 16
   4.1 *Introduction* ..................................................................................................... 16
   4.2 *Perceived boundaries of the neighbourhood* ..................................................... 16
   4.3 *Perceptions of neighbours* ................................................................................ 18
   4.4 *Perceptions of the neighbourhood: positive and negative aspects* .................. 20
   4.5 *Conclusions* .................................................................................................... 23

5. **Activities in and outside the neighbourhood** ...................................................... 23
   5.1 *Introduction* ..................................................................................................... 23
   5.2 *Activities: where and with whom?* ................................................................... 24
   5.3 *The use of public space* ..................................................................................... 25
   5.4 *The importance of associations* ........................................................................ 28
   5.5 *Conclusions* .................................................................................................... 29

6. **Social cohesion** .................................................................................................... 29
   6.1 *Introduction* ..................................................................................................... 29
   6.2 *Composition of interviewees’ egocentric network* .......................................... 30
   6.3 *Living together with neighbours* .................................................................... 32
   6.4 *Conclusions* .................................................................................................... 36

7. **Social mobility** ..................................................................................................... 36
7.1 Introduction .............................................................................................................. 36
7.2 Current and previous jobs ......................................................................................... 37
7.3 Using neighbours and others to find a job ............................................................... 38
7.4 Neighbourhood reputation as an asset in upward social mobility? ......................... 39
7.5 Conclusions ............................................................................................................. 40

8 Perceptions of public policies and initiatives ............................................................. 41
8.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................. 41
8.2 Perception and evaluation of existing policies and initiatives: what do residents know? 41
8.3 Policy priorities proposed by interviewees: what do residents want? ....................... 43
8.4 Conclusions ............................................................................................................. 44

9 Conclusion ............................................................................................................... 44
References ..................................................................................................................... 48
Appendix ....................................................................................................................... 50
1 Introduction

There is a growing conventional wisdom in writings on European cities that presents them as centres of ‘super-diversity’ (Vertovec, 2007). This refers specifically to their increasing ethnic diversity and to the demographic diversity between and within such ethnic groups. However, cities are becoming increasingly diverse, not only in socio-economic, social and ethnic terms, but also with respect to lifestyles, attitudes and activities. To indicate this enormous diversity, we proposed to use the term hyper-diversity (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013).

Within cities, groups can live segregated or rather mixed. Urban neighbourhoods may be fairly homogeneous residential areas in terms of housing and population, but they may also be heavily mixed with respect to types of housing (tenure, type, price) and population categories (income, ethnicity, household composition, age). In addition, individuals who belong to the same ‘official’ demographic category may possess quite different lifestyles and attitudes and involve themselves in a wide range of activities. Some may for example have a very neighbourhood-oriented life, with all their friends and activities in a very small area, while others may have their social activities stretched over the whole city or even beyond. Residents of mixed urban neighbourhoods may happily live together, live parallel lives, or be in open conflict with each other (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013).

This report is written as part of the EU-FP7 DIVERCITIES project. In this project we aim to find out how urban hyper-diversity affects social cohesion and social mobility of residents of deprived and dynamic urban areas and the economic performance of entrepreneurs with their enterprise in such areas. In this report we focus on the findings from our interviews with residents in which we explored their experiences of living with hyper-diversity and how it affects their lives.

This general aim can be broken down into more detailed and concrete research questions. They are central in the chapters of this report:

1. Why did people move to the diverse area they live in now? To what extent has the diversity of the area been a pull-factor? Or were other aspects (such as the availability of inexpensive dwellings) a much stronger motive to settle in the present area? (Chapter 3)
2. How do residents think about the area they live in? Do residents see their neighbourhood’s diversity as an asset or a liability? (Chapter 4)
3. How do residents make use of the diversified areas they live in? Do they actively engage in diversified relations and activities in their neighbourhood? To what extent is the area they live in more important than other areas in terms of activities? (Chapter 5)
4. To what extent is the diversity of the residential area important for social cohesion? Which elements foster social cohesion, which elements hinder the development of social cohesion in the area? (Chapter 6)
5. To what extent is the diversity of the neighbourhood important for social mobility? Which elements foster social mobility and which elements hinder social mobility? (Chapter 7)
6. How are diversity-related policies perceived by the inhabitants of the area? (Chapter 8)

The research in this report focuses on the city of Zurich. Zurich – as other larger cities in Switzerland – was always directly confronted with steady immigration. Since the Second World War, Switzerland witnessed different waves of immigration. The strong economic development after the war stimulated the demand for foreign employees – especially from Italy. In the 1970s, the oil crisis then led to a decrease in the number of foreign workers, but as the economic situation recovered, new seasonal workers were recruited from Spain, Portugal and Turkey (D’Amato, 2008). In the 1990s, Switzerland experienced a new substantial wave of immigration: a comparably high
number of refugees and immigrants from the countries of former Yugoslavia arrived. With the beginning of the 21st century and the ‘Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons’ between the European Union and Switzerland, immigration changed: a substantial part of the foreign population in Switzerland is now well trained and highly qualified – coming mainly from Germany.

The city of Zurich – the biggest city in Switzerland – currently has around 400,000 inhabitants (City of Zurich, 2014a, p. 28). It is a highly diverse city in terms of population: 31.6% of the city’s population are foreign nationals (City of Zurich, 2014a, p. 28) coming from 169 nations (City of Zurich, 2014b). 38.8% of Zurich’s residents are born abroad and 60.6% of residents over 15 years have a migration background (i.e. they are either born abroad or have at least one parent who was born abroad) (City of Zurich, 2012). So, Zurich is a melting pot of different cultures, languages and religions. Diversity is a reality, a matter of course, and it has shaped city life for several decades.

The case study area in Zurich involves the two neighbouring city districts 4 and 9 (see figure 1) and represents an ethnically and culturally very diverse and dynamic environment. This area has around 80,000 inhabitants and a share of foreign nationals of 39.7% in district 4 and 31.7% in district 9 (City of Zurich, 2014a, p. 32). District 4 lies in the middle of the city between the Sihl River and the train tracks leaving Zurich railway station. In the west, it borders downtown district 1. District 9 is located in the west of the city between the Limmat River to the north and the Üetliberg Mountain to the south. In the west, it borders district 4.

District 4, known as Aussersihl, was built up during the 18th century and quickly grew into a town during industrialisation, mostly inhabited by factory workers. It was incorporated into the Zurich municipality in 1893. The area has undergone some significant changes in the last years and gentrification processes currently take place. District 4 contains the neighbourhoods of Werd, Langstrasse and Hard. Werd is the smallest neighbourhood in the south of district 4. Hard is a rather residential area – striking features are the four skyscrapers of Hardau and the housing estate of Lochergut. The Langstrasse area is a well-known city district of Zurich, present in media and subject of discussions. It remains notorious for its high quota of foreign nationals, prostitution and drug dealing. In the last years, the red-light district was more and more displaced and the area has been gentrified – which was also pushed by the city of Zurich with projects such as ‘Langstrasse PLUS’ running from 2001 to 2010. Today, the area is not only a popular residential district but also a popular nightlife district.
District 9 is officially divided into the two neighbourhoods of Altstetten and Albisrieden. Both entities were formerly small farming villages and municipalities of their own, but were incorporated into the Zurich municipality in 1934. The district can be divided into the three areas of Albsrieden, Altstetten and Grünau. Albsrieden, located in the south of district 9 in the foothills of Uetliberg Mountain, remains a rather residential area. Altstetten is an urban and diverse neighbourhood with a high quota of social housing\(^1\) and a comparably high percentage of foreign nationals of 35.6% (City of Zurich, 2011, p. 10). The area of Grünau – officially part of Altstetten – is sometimes considered as ‘district within the district’ as it is separated from the rest of Altstetten through railway tracks and the motorway.

\(^1\) Social housing includes housing owned by the public i.e. the city of Zurich, a cooperative, or a public or private foundation

The report is divided into nine chapters. The next chapter presents an overview on the applied methodology and the characteristics of the interviewees. In the following six chapters, we will answer the research questions as outlined above. In the conclusions we summarise the main results and address our main questions. We will also give some broader guidance for policy-making.
2 The interviewees

2.1 Selection procedure: how did we select our interviewees?

Between October 2014 and May 2015, we conducted 49 interviews with residents of district 4 and 9. Thereby, the sampling was not representative, but theoretically founded. The main rationale behind the sampling procedure was to have a diverse selection of interviewees – mainly with respect to their ethnic and cultural background. We intended to find interviewees from all before-mentioned waves of immigration (i.e. from Mediterranean countries, former Yugoslavia and the European Union) as well as native-born residents.

Additionally, we took into consideration that the sample of interviewees should also be diversified with respect to individual factors such as gender, age, level of education, socio-economic status, profession and family status. With respect to spatial factors, the interviewees should be rather equally distributed among the two districts and the five neighbourhoods of our case study area (Werd, Langstrasse and Hard in district 4 as well as Altstetten and Albisrieden in district 9).

The selection procedure involved different steps. In a first step, we contacted possible interviewees through different entry points, namely the ten bottom-up initiatives investigated in the previous stage of the project, migrant associations, other local associations, community centres, district associations, religious institutions and personal contacts. From this sample, we continued searching interview candidates by using snowball sampling. We also went to community centres and gatherings of migrant associations to get directly in contact with possible interview candidates. Furthermore, the information was also put on the website of the district association of district 4 though without success. Not all entry points proved successful to the same extent. Especially the community centres and churches were very supportive. Furthermore, the snowballing method did not always work as expected as only some interviewees brought us in contact with new candidates.

The interviews were conducted either at the respondents’ home, the working place, or a café the interviewee could choose. The interviewees received a box of chocolate as appreciation and if the interview took place in a café they were invited to drink something.

The interviews were conducted in Swiss German (35), German (12) or English (2) and transcribed in German resp. in English. Only the statements used in this report were translated into English.

2.2 Which groups did we miss

Despite continuous efforts, interviewees with certain characteristics are underrepresented in the sample. There are twice as much female respondents as male respondents. Furthermore, educationally deprived groups are not adequately represented in our sample. From the group of immigrants, people with a background in a Mediterranean country or in former Yugoslavia are underrepresented in the sample.

There are several reasons why we partly missed these groups. Some groups are difficult to reach, especially the most deprived. We tried to reach this group through a social institution for marginalised people though without success.
In addition, the willingness to participate in a research project varies. This might be related to a lack of interest but also due to a lack of time. Especially full-time working interviewees were difficult to reach due to their busy schedule.

2.3 Some general characteristics of the interviewees

The respondents are not equally distributed between the two districts, but reflect the number of inhabitants. 29 respondents live in district 9 and 20 respondents live in district 4.

There are 33 female and 16 male interviewees.

The age of the interviewees ranges from 27 to 84, whereby the largest group of interviewees belongs to the age group 31-45 (18 interviewees).

The respondents can be divided in 26 native-born residents and 23 with migration background. From the interviewees with migration background,

- 4 come from Mediterranean countries representing the first and second wave of immigration;
- 1 comes from a former Yugoslavian country representing the third wave of immigration;
- 9 are high-skilled migrants form Europe or Asia representing the forth wave of immigration;
- 5 are second generation migrants with roots in Mediterranean countries;
- 4 come from other countries.

Homeownership is rare in Zurich that is why this group is also not strongly represented in the sample. Four respondents are homeowners and 45 respondents live in rented housing, which includes 19 who live in social housing.

Concerning the time the interviewees already live in the district, there is a high diversity in the sample; it ranges from 1 to 71 years.

The interviewees were assigned to the following household forms:

- Single household: 14 interviewees
- Couple household: 8 interviewees
- Two-parent household with one or more (grown-up) children: 15 interviewees
- Single-parent household with one or more (grown-up) children: 4 interviewees
- Three generation household: 1 interviewee
- Shared flat: 7 interviewees

In terms of various income groups, we managed to find interviewees from all defined categories; the largest group of interviewees belongs to the middle-low income group. The interviewees’ households were assigned to the following categories (4 interviewees are unassigned):

- Low <3,830 Euro (<4,000 CHF): 9 interviewees
- Middle-low 3,830-6,710 Euro (4,000-7,000 CHF): 24 interviewees
- Middle-high 6,710-9,580 Euro (7,000-10,000 CHF): 9 interviewees
- High >9,580 Euro (>10,000 CHF): 3 interviewees
The majority of the interviewees are well educated. Based on the classification of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO, 2008) and the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), the interviewees were assigned to one of the following groups:

- No post-compulsory education (ISCED 0-2): 3 interviewees
- Secondary level II (ISCED 3-4): 19 interviewees
- Tertiary level (ISCED 5-6): 27 interviewees

In terms of religious affiliation, a large proportion of the interviewees consider themselves as of no religious belief (18 interviewees). The other interviewees are Protestants (12 interviewees), Catholics (11 interviewees), Orthodox Christians (3 interviewees), Muslims (2 interviewees), and Hindus (2 interviewees). 2 interviewees are unassigned.

3 Housing choice and residential mobility

3.1 Introduction

A housing career can be defined as ‘the sequence of dwellings that a household occupies during its history’ (Pickles and Davies, 1991, p. 466 in Bolt and van Kempen, 2002, p. 402). It has been shown in literature, that advancement from dwellings of poor quality to such of better quality – the term of ‘housing ladder’ is often used in this context – is rather normal in the housing career (Bolt and van Kempen, 2002, p. 403).

Why people move to a particular area or a particular dwelling depends on a combination of factors. According to Mulder (1996, p. 214), there are two kinds of triggers for moving which can be distinguished: the existence of a certain state (dissatisfaction with the current housing situation) or the (future) occurrence of an event (e.g. marriage, divorce, education, job, leaving parents home). Similarly, Clark and Onaka (1983) distinguish between adjustment moves and induced moves (and forced moves). An adjustment move is characterised by the motivation to change the housing situation in terms of the housing unit, the neighbourhood, or the accessibility. An induced move is initiated by changes of economic (e.g. changes in employment) or demographic characteristics (e.g. a new household formation) (Clark and Onaka, 1983, pp. 49-51). What kind of housing in which area is considered to be suitable in the current life situation depends furthermore on personal characteristics such as age, income, education or the household situation.

When looking at why people move or have moved, it is important not only to look at their intentions but also on other factors which might facilitate or hinder their decision, such as housing opportunities and individual resources (Mulder, 1996, p. 216). Individual resources might be a strong limiting factor in improving the housing situation (Bolt and van Kempen, 2002, p. 413). Housing opportunities in the city of Zurich are limited as the conditions in the housing market are tense. Land property in the city of Zurich is rare and expensive. That is why home ownership is rather exceptional – three out of four households in the city of Zurich live in rented flats (Statistical Office of the Canton of Zurich, 2014, p. 6). Furthermore, Zurich has a high quota of cooperative housing; 15% of the households live in cooperative flats (Statistical Office of the Canton of Zurich, 2014, p. 6), compared with only 2.8% throughout Switzerland (FSO, 2015).

In the present chapter, we will investigate the following research questions:

- Why did people move to the diverse area they live in now?
- To what extent has the diversity of the area been a pull-factor?
- Or were other aspects (such as the availability of inexpensive dwellings) a much stronger motive to settle in the present area?
In the following, we will first discuss some important pull-factors for moving to the area. We will then address the question if moving to the present neighbourhood was an improvement for the respondents or not. Finally, we will draw some conclusions and answer the aforementioned research questions.

3.2 Why did the residents come to live here?

The interviewees have been living in the case study area for varying periods of time. The decision of moving and where to move is always a combination of various factors and external circumstances.

Many respondents pointed out that finding a dwelling in the city of Zurich is not easy. It is generally known that there is a housing shortage in Zurich. Especially areas close to the city centre of Zurich – which includes particularly district 4 – are very popular. Housing shortage limits the possibility of actively choosing a particular neighbourhood, as the following statement nicely illustrates:

“Actually it was not like a choice because finding a flat is really difficult in Zurich.” (R4, male, 28, PhD student, Iranian)

Various factors influence the decision of moving which include characteristics of the neighbourhood as well as factors without reference to the neighbourhood. For some respondents the structural characteristics of the dwelling was one of the crucial factors (e.g. wheelchair accessible). Other respondents moved in with a person living already in the neighbourhood, which means that the connection to this person was decisive. Few respondents had a job in the particular neighbourhood and stated that the proximity to the working place was an important factor to move to the neighbourhood. In the following, we will not discuss these factors in detail but focus on factors, which are related to the characteristics of the neighbourhood.

In terms of motivations to move to the particular neighbourhood, respondents can be divided into two categories. About half of the respondents were explicitly looking for a dwelling in a particular neighbourhood, whereas the other half of respondents was looking for a dwelling in the city of Zurich, but not in a particular neighbourhood. These two categories correspond to a large extent to the distribution across the two districts of the case study area. The majority of respondents of district 4 were actively looking for a dwelling in district 4, whereas the majority of respondents of district 9 were looking for a dwelling in the city of Zurich. Structured along these two categories, we will now discuss different pull-factors, which came up in the analysis.

Looking for a dwelling in a particular neighbourhood
Looking for a dwelling in a particular neighbourhood requires previous knowledge about the city and its neighbourhoods. This might be a reason why people looking for a dwelling in a particular neighbourhood were moving within the city or from other parts of Switzerland rather than coming from abroad. In the following, we will discuss two aspects, which turned out to be important in respondents’ preference for a particular neighbourhood.

District 4 as a central, urban and hip neighbourhood was a main attraction for some respondents. This includes especially young (age group 18-30 and 31-45) and well-educated (tertiary education) people who are relatively new in the neighbourhood (less than ten years). They mostly have a Swiss or German background and can also be described as ‘gentrifiers’. They were actively looking for an urban, lively area and did not want to live in a ‘sleeping’ neighbourhood.
The attitude of people living in the neighbourhood was relevant for some interviewees. A respondent stated that she considers it important that people in her neighbourhood have a similar political attitude. Voting results of her constituency served as basis to assess the political views of neighbours. Interestingly, the respondent herself does not have the Swiss citizenship and can therefore not vote:

"I have to say, an important reason to live in district 4, was that considering all voting and election results in Switzerland, the results of my constituency of district 4/5 suit me most. [...] It shows that I am living among like-minded people and for me personally, this is very important, it is a crucial factor when choosing a place to live." (R8, female, 41, executive secretary, German)

The attitude and way of thinking of people living in the neighbourhood also mattered for some middle-aged respondents (age group 31-45 and 46-60) who already live in district 4 around twenty years. In some cases, the decision to move was influenced by the way of living and the motive to be among people with a similar attitude, as the following statement illustrates:

"Of course you like to settle in an area, where your cultural group resides. I attended the Zurich University of the Arts." (R13, female, 48, freelance filmmaker, Austrian)

The central location and, therewith associated, the possibilities to go out were especially important for younger respondents. A respondent, who already lived in the neighbourhood before, was willing to pay more than she actually wanted to pay only so that she could stay in the area:

"The neighbourhood was important and I wanted to stay in district 4. Well actually I didn't want to move to such an expensive flat as the one I found now. But I absolutely wanted to stay in the neighbourhood. I think this neighbourhood is especially cool for young people. It is central and there are a lot of places to go out. I just didn't want to give this up." (R23, male, 28, manager communications, Swiss)

The rootedness in the neighbourhood was an important factor for some respondents who were explicitly looking for a dwelling in district 4 or 9. They either grew up there or already have lived in the area for a long time (more than thirty years). This includes people with different backgrounds from 28 to 71 years and different educational levels. In district 4, they all have a migration background in southern Europe (2nd or 3rd generation), which can be attributed to the history of the district. The following statement of a respondent from district 9 illustrates the emotional attachment to the neighbourhood:

"The neighbourhood was especially important when we were looking for a dwelling. I grew up here and it was always clear, that I want to raise my children here. From this point of view, it is no coincidence that we live in Albisrieden." (R20, female, 44, employee in school administration, Swiss)

Not only people who grew up in the neighbourhood developed an emotional bond with the neighbourhood. Also people who initially came to the neighbourhood out of other reasons now feel emotionally attached. A first generation migrant who came to Switzerland 14 years ago also has strong links to the neighbourhood:

"Since 2001 we live in Switzerland, in Altstetten. If I had to go somewhere else, this would also be a new place for me. I am away from my home country and in the meantime I know a lot of people in Altstetten. I am not the foreigner anymore. I have a lot of friends from my home country but also from Switzerland. This is why I don't want to change the situation. If
I would go somewhere else, I could also find a flat there. But I would have to find new friends. That is why I like to live here.” (R24, female, 37, childcare worker, Indian)

Looking for a dwelling in the city of Zurich, but not in a particular neighbourhood

The majority of respondents from district 9 were looking for a dwelling in the city of Zurich and not in a particular neighbourhood. The small-scale nature of the city might be a possible explanation for the secondary importance of the neighbourhood. Furthermore, the tense housing market ‘forced’ some respondents to look in the whole city. In the following, we will discuss some aspects, which were important when respondents were looking for a dwelling in the city of Zurich.

An open-minded neighbourhood in the city was an important pull factor for few respondents of district 9. They came to the neighbourhood because they were looking for a culturally diverse neighbourhood, which they expected to find in the city rather than outside of the city. They might have also ended up in another diverse neighbourhood of Zurich, as they had no specific preference for district 9. The motivation to look for a culturally diverse neighbourhood was the idea of better fitting in either because of their own foreign background or because of the foreign background of their partner.

For a Swiss female respondent – originally from an agglomeration municipality – a diverse neighbourhood was an important pull-factor. She was actively looking for an area where foreigners are present when she moved to the area 25 years ago. As she was married to a foreigner at that time, she preferred to live in an environment where they would not stand out. The statement allows the conclusion that the decision to move to an area with many foreigners was also linked to the hope of receiving more tolerance and acceptance for her own life situation. She explained:

“I was married to a foreigner [when we moved to the area]. I thought it would be better to move to the city, as there were generally not many foreigners living here at that time. He was African so you could see immediately that he is a foreigner. That is why I thought it would be better to be in the city.” (R30, female, 48, secretary, Swiss)

Years later, the same respondent moved within district 9. Separated from her partner in the meantime, she was then looking for a neighbourhood with fewer foreigners. She said:

“The flat did anyway not fit my needs but I have to say I would have been probably the only Swiss far and wide. This would have been a reason for me not to move there. I did not want to live again amongst so many foreigners” (R30, female, 48, secretary, Swiss)

A first generation, non-European migrant, who came to Switzerland as a refugee, was also actively looking for an environment with more foreigners. For her, a culturally diverse neighbourhood meant more opportunities, greater acceptance and a better chance to integrate as people are used to foreigners:

“In 2005 we were living in the agglomeration of Zurich. [….] Then we came to Zurich, because we realised, our place of living was a small village where it is difficult as a foreigner to integrate. You have limited opportunities. But Zurich is big and there are many foreigners living here. This is why we moved to Zurich.” (R46, female, 35, translator and childcare worker, Eritrean)

The availability and affordability of housings at a good location was important for many respondents, especially for respondents living in district 9. Especially respondents who moved to the city from abroad belong to this category. But also respondents who moved to district 9 from other parts of Switzerland or other parts of the city made use of the availability and affordability of dwellings in
Several respondents perceived it as coincidence that they ended up in district 9. However, if people are looking for affordable dwellings in the city of Zurich, the probability is high to end up in district 9. The following statement clearly shows, that the availability of an affordable dwelling was decisive:

“No, it was coincidence. We were looking for a dwelling and in this neighbourhood there were available dwellings. And then we got one. But it did not have to be in Albisrieden or in another particular district.” (R6, female, 40, lawyer, Swiss)

Respondents with children looking for a bigger flat said that district 9 was a good option, as it is an area where affordable dwellings are still available in comparison to other areas in the city. The following statement just serves as illustration; there were many interviewees with similar statements:

“We were first living at another place and then due to familiar reasons, the birth of our children, we needed a new respectively a bigger dwelling. And then we moved within Altstetten.” (R28, male, 41, service worker, German)

Summing up, we can say that diversity was not that important as a pull-factor. For respondents, who were actively looking for a particular neighbourhood, the character of district 4 as a central, urban and hip neighbourhood and the rootedness in the neighbourhood were crucial factors. Respondents who were looking for a dwelling in the city of Zurich were looking for an open-minded neighbourhood in the city and available and affordable housing at a good location.

3.3 Moving to the present neighbourhood: improvement or not?

The analysis showed that it is not always easy to assess if moving to the present neighbourhood is an improvement or not for the respondents. In most cases, the move can be described as what Clark and Onaka (1983) call adjustment move, as the current housing situation better suits their current life situation and better corresponds to their needs e.g. the need for a bigger flat because of children, the need for a wheelchair accessible flat, or the need for a flat which meets the requirements of older people. In other cases, it can be considered as an induced move as described by Clark and Onaka (1983) as it is a step in their life, e.g. moving out from their parents place, moving in with a partner, or moving to the city (from abroad or from other places in Switzerland) because of a job.

As there are always different factors coming together, it is sometimes not clear if moving is an improvement or not. Some aspects might have improved; other aspects might have not or might have even gotten worse. In the case of a respondent and her family, moving to the present flat can partially be considered as an improvement, as the bigger flat better suits their life situation with a child. However, it is also deterioration as they were not anymore able to afford a flat in the area they lived before and where they would have preferred to stay. For another respondent it is just the other way round, as he had to move from a 2.5-room flat to a 1-room flat. The following statement shows that the respondent accepted a smaller flat so that he could stay in the neighbourhood he preferred:

“I had to swallow the pill of a 1-room flat. But the location is absolutely perfect for me.” (R34, male, 70, freelance consultant, Italian (2nd gen.))

The only group of respondents for whom moving can clearly be considered an improvement, were respondents with housing property. This is hardly surprising, as it might be assumed that
they were actively looking for housing property and they were looking only in preferred areas. The following statement of a homeowner nicely illustrates these two aspects:

“We were always and very eagerly looking for an own house. [...] I really have to say it was better than winning the lottery jackpot. The place where we lived before was nice and we had a great flat. But we always wanted to come back to this neighbourhood.” (R21, male, 75, retired, Swiss)

Only few respondents mentioned problems other than the tense housing market in finding a suitable dwelling and improving their housing situation. A respondent of Indian origin mentioned some problems in improving her housing situation due to her background:

“It is very difficult to find a flat in Altstetten. It is even more difficult for foreigners. My husband works as computer scientist and we can afford to pay a bit more. Once we found a better flat and we also applied for it. But we were told that the flat is not given to Indians.” (R24, female, 37, childcare worker, Indian)

However, most of the respondents with a migration background did not refer to any problems they faced due to their cultural or ethnic background in improving their housing situation.

Most of the respondents are overall very satisfied with their present housing situation. Some respondents are not satisfied with particular aspects of their housing situation such as the price, the location or the characteristics of the housing unit. Depending on individual characteristics such as age or the fact if it is a temporary or long-term solution, other aspects are important when assessing the present situation. Especially for some young respondents (age group 18-30 and 31-45), the location is an important factor. It can be assumed that in order to live in a dwelling at a preferred location, they are willing to accept disadvantages in other areas. The following statement of a respondent nicely illustrates the importance of the location for younger people in comparison to other aspects:

“But for me, the location is sometimes even more important than the flat itself” (R14, female, 28, employee in publishing management/marketing, Swiss)

In conclusion it can be said that for most of respondents their current housing situation – irrespective of whether it is a short-term or long-term solution – better suits their life situation and can therefore be considered an improvement. However, as there are different factors coming together, it is sometimes not possible to assess if it is an improvement or not. Some factors might improve while some might get worse.

3.4 Conclusions

Respondents moved to the diverse area they live in out of various reasons. Besides factors, which are independent of the neighbourhood, such as the characteristic of the dwelling, we were able to identify different pull-factors, which are differentiated at the level of neighbourhood and at the level of the city. Some respondents were explicitly looking for a dwelling in a particular neighbourhood. For some of them the urban characteristic of the neighbourhood was a decisive factor, others already grew up in the neighbourhood and feel emotionally attached to it. Other respondents were looking for a dwelling in the city of Zurich, but not in a particular neighbourhood. Some of them were looking for an open-minded neighbourhood and hoped to find it in the city of Zurich. For many the availability and the affordability of dwellings in the city of Zurich was determining.
The diversity of the area was not a main pull-factor. Only a limited number of respondents were actively looking for cultural diversity. They were looking for an environment in which they would not stand out because of their background or their life situation. This means that even though they were looking for a culturally diverse neighbourhood, they were looking for similarity in terms of life situation or background so that they would ‘fit in’. The analysis furthermore showed that some respondents were actively looking for similarity in terms of attitude and lifestyle.

Concerning their current housing situation, we conclude that the majority of respondents are very satisfied, whereby it has to be considered that people with very low incomes are underrepresented in our sample. Even though it is not always clear, if the housing situation improved as different factors come together, in almost all cases the dwellings suit current needs and requirements.

4 Perceptions of the diversity in the neighbourhood

4.1 Introduction

From literature we know that people’s perception of diversity in the neighbourhood depends on where they meet other people, i.e. in public space, semi-public space or private space (Wessendorf, 2013). People also deal differentially with diversity depending on the spaces in which they interact with others. Wessendorf (2013, p. 393) found that in public spaces, people acknowledge cultural differences and perceive ‘diversity as a normal part of everyday life’. Literature furthermore shows that there might be a discrepancy between the perception of individuals and groups; stereotypes about certain groups can coexist with everyday friendly interactions in a diverse neighbourhood (Wessendorf, 2013, p. 394). ‘Positive encounters with individuals from minority groups do not necessarily change people’s opinions about groups as a whole for better’ (Valentine, 2008, p. 332).

As outlined above (see chapter 1), the two case study areas in Zurich were chosen because of their diverse and dynamic environment. The characteristics in the neighbourhoods within the districts vary considerably. Some neighbourhoods have a rather village-like character while others are well known for their nightlife. Furthermore, the share of foreigners ranges from 18.1% (Dunkelhölzli, district 9) to 53.2% (Hardhof, district 9) (City of Zurich, 2011, p. 10).

In the present chapter, we explore the following research questions:

- How do residents think about the area they live in?
- Do residents see their neighbourhood’s diversity as an asset or a liability?

In this chapter, we will first go into the question of where the respondents perceive the boundaries of their neighbourhood in order to better understand what they mean when they talk about their neighbourhood. Second, we will present interviewees’ perception of their neighbours. Then we will discuss interviewees’ perception of their neighbourhood, what positive and negative aspects they see and if diversity plays a role. In the end, we will arrive at some conclusions.

4.2 Perceived boundaries of the neighbourhood

Before talking about perceived boundaries, the meaning of some German terms and their respective English translations needs to be clarified.

The German term ‘Kreis’ – translated as district – describes especially an administrative unit. In district 4, the term is used in everyday language and residents also refer to ‘Kreis 4’. In district 9, the term refers to the administrative unit and ‘Kreis 9’ is not very present in people’s perception.
The German term ‘Quartier’ – translated as neighbourhood – describes on the one hand an administrative unit below the level of Kreis and on the other hand it is often also an important reference point; people would talk about or refer to their ‘Quartier’ when talking about the area they live in. In district 9, the neighbourhoods of Altstetten and Albisrieden are rather present. In district 4, the neighbourhoods of Werd and Hard are less present, which might be due to the small-scale structure of the district. The neighbourhood of Langstrasse however is often used as a synonym for the whole district.

The German term ‘Nachbarschaft’ – translated as vicinity – not only refers to the geographical space such as Kreis and Quartier, but also to the community living in the same area. Thereby, it describes not only all neighbours in a certain area but also the relationship among neighbours (Duden, 2015).

What interviewees perceive as boundaries of their neighbourhood varies. In terms of spatial extension it covers a wide range, from rather small-scale to large-scale perceptions. Figure 6 illustrates the spatial expansion of perceived boundaries. For an interviewee working full-time in another area of the city only the area between the location of the dwelling and the next bus station counts as neighbourhood, which is around 100 meters (marked red in figure 6). Most interviewees perceive the boundaries of their neighbourhood broader, but still smaller than the administrative borders of the district (marked orange, green and purple in figure 6).

For one interviewee the neighbourhood is even broader and includes the area around the Limmat River between the lake and the city boundary and thereby goes far beyond the official borders of the district the person is living in. In contrast, a full-time working respondent living between a busy road and the railway tracks on the outskirts of the city does not consider it as neighbourhood at all:

“*There is no neighbourhood, there is nothing for me there. […] Where I live is nothing but a street.*” (R48, female, 27, kindergarten teacher in training, Swiss)

In both districts, some people know where the official borders are and others were not always sure. Knowingly or unknowingly, the perception of the neighbourhood is not always bound to official district boundaries, as the following statement shows:

“*Theoretically, I know where the district borders are, but I don’t perceive it like that.*” (R20, female, 44, employee in school administration, Swiss)

The analysis furthermore showed that for some respondents with various backgrounds the built environment plays a crucial role as reference points and in defining the boundaries of the neighbourhood. An example mentioned by several persons is the Langstrasse railway underpass, which
separates district 4 from 5. As district 9 lies at the city border, natural boundaries such as forest play an important role in that area. The area of Grünau is separated from surrounding area through built (railway tracks) and natural boundaries (river). Several inhabitants described these boundaries as ‘given’ and describe their neighbourhood accordingly (marked blue in figure 7). The majority of inhabitants do not see Grünau as part of Altstetten, as the following statement illustrates:

“Actually, for a long time I didn’t realise, that we belong to Altstetten. I even never had the feeling that we belong to Altstetten, district 9 yes, but not Altstetten.” (R33, female, 50, disabled, Swiss)

Elsewhere, inner-city boundaries to other districts seem more permeable. District 4 and 5 are often mentioned together, they somehow ‘belong’ together. The analysis furthermore showed that for some interviewees the two neighbouring districts 3 and 5 belong more to their neighbourhood than other adjacent districts (such as district 1). Some of the interviewees living in district 4 consider some parts of district 3 or 5 as part of their neighbourhood, but the border between district 4 and 1 seems to be rather fixed. As an interviewee of district 4 explained:

“District 5 is our neighbouring district. I would define it as neighbouring district in contrast for example to district 1, even though they are also neighbours.” (R11, female, 45, stagehand, Swiss)

The spatial proximity of the place of living to these neighbouring districts might be an important factor, as some of the inhabitants live rather close to district 3 or 5. Furthermore, the similarity of district 4 with district 3 and 5 – hip, central neighbourhood with a lively cultural scene – certainly also has an effect.

Several interviewees gave some explanations on why they perceive the boundaries at a particular place. The space they make use of for everyday practices and the radius of movement in the neighbourhood turned out to be a crucial factor. A respondent explained:

“This is as well the area I use most and thus this is my neighbourhood.” (R3, female, 36, employee in a radio station, Swiss)

Some respondents explained that they perceive the area as neighbourhood, which lies within walking distance or is accessible by bike. For an interviewee with children the limits of the neighbourhood changed according to where the children went to school. Daily shopping or walking around in the neighbourhood are other everyday practices influencing the perceived boundaries. According to the range of movements, the neighbourhood is perceived bigger or smaller. For a respondent, everyday practices in the neighbourhood are often limited to the way from the house to the next bus station. He perceived the neighbourhood rather small. Other respondents who regularly make use of the area in the neighbourhood for everyday practices perceive the boundaries broader.

4.3 Perceptions of neighbours

As outlined above, diversity as defined in this project not only refers to an intense diversification of the population in socio-economic, socio-demographic, ethnic and cultural terms, but also with respect to lifestyles, attitudes and activities. In analysing the interviews, we tried to look at, which categories emerged more strongly in interviewees’ description of neighbours. In most of the statements a combination of categories came up.
Socio-demographic aspects were present and especially a lot of respondents referred to the age of neighbours. Especially inhabitants of district 9 often referred to many older people and many children in the neighbourhood. An interviewee said, after referring to the socio-economic and the cultural background:

“The age mix is, the younger couples are often in my age, in their mid-thirties, this is very nice. And then there are these other renting parties, they have already lived in Albisrieden for a long time and are rather older.” (R9, female, 37, lecturer, German)

Ethnic or cultural aspects turned out to be rather present when describing neighbours. Especially in district 4, many inhabitants notice a lot of foreigners. Interviewees often mentioned the origin or the migration background of their neighbours. Some knew from what countries their neighbours are from, others could not tell exactly. Countries frequently coming up were Germany, Italy, Spain and the Balkan countries, which reflects the composition of the population in Zurich. Almost no interviewee referred to religion when describing the neighbours. The following expressions from various interviews show the wide range of how cultural diversity was referred to:

“a lot of migrants”, “no asylum seekers”, “Swiss mostly”, “people with migration background”, “a lot of bi-national couples”, “people from different countries”, “a bunch of Swiss”, “in the meantime Swiss citizens”, “low ratio of foreigners”

The living situation of neighbours was also present in the statements. Almost every statement included something about single households, shared flats or families. The socio-economic aspect was less present in the description of neighbours. Few interviewees referred to attitudes and lifestyles of the neighbours. Few inhabitants of district 4 consider the presence of creative industries in the neighbourhood an important factor constituting the urban lifestyle, as the following statement illustrates:

“I think there is no one living here with the wish to have a house in the countryside, more the urbanity and being rooted in the city. There are also a lot of people who have something creative as sideline or even as main profession. Actually a real big city life, if you can call Zurich a big city.” (R3, female, 36, employee in a radio station, Swiss)

The analysis showed that not all aspects emerged to the same extent when describing neighbours. Socio-demographic aspects were rather dominant, which might be related to the fact that some of these characteristics are easily visible. The strong presence of ethnic and cultural aspects might be influenced by other factors. As the results in previous stages of the project showed, the concept of diversity in Switzerland is mainly associated with ethnic and cultural aspects (see Plüss and Schenkel, 2014). Furthermore, especially district 4 is generally known as a multicultural neighbourhood with a lot of foreigners. A possible explanation for the rare occurrence of socio-economic aspects might be that this characteristic is less visible at first sight than other characteristics.

The analysis showed that there are some important factors influencing the perception of neighbours. How much time a person spends in the area, where and when might have an influence on what groups of persons are taken notice of. Several interviewees pointed to the fact that who they notice depends to a large extent on what places in the neighbourhood they use and in what activities they participate. It can be assumed that people with similar lifestyles participating in similar activities will be stronger taken notice of as they use the same space at the same time. Respondents with children make use of the same space (e.g. children’s playground) as other families and are therefore likely to notice them. People going to a bar in a neighbourhood meet other people using the same bar, therefore they are likely to notice people with a similar lifestyle.
An issue that came up in district 4 was that it is often not clear, who is actually living in the
neighbourhood and who is not. Especially the very central area of Langstrasse in district 4 is a
very popular shopping and nightlife district, with a lot of restaurants, bars and small shops. Some
inhabitants of district 4 pointed to the fact that it is not always possible to distinguish between
inhabitants and others. A respondent living in district 4 explained:

“There are for example several places to go out around here, a bar [...]. I don’t know, if
they just come here to drink something or if they also live here.” (R7, male, 35, PhD stu-
dent, Swiss)

In summary, it has been found that various aspects of diversity are important for inhabitants of
both districts when describing their neighbours. Ethnic and cultural diversity is especially taken
notice of in district 4. In district 9, socio-demographic aspects were more dominant when de-
scribing neighbours. Socio-economic aspects were less present in both districts.

4.4 Perceptions of the neighbourhood: positive and negative aspects

Asked about positive and negative aspects of the neighbourhood, only few interviewees sponta-
eously mentioned aspects, which are directly linked to the diverse composition of the inhabit-
ants. Many interviewees first mentioned other issues such as the location or the infrastructure of
their neighbourhood. Therefore, in this chapter we will first shortly outline the positive and nega-
tive aspects interviewees think are important, before looking at the perceptions related to diversi-
ty.

Positive aspects
The location and the surrounding of the living area turned out to be important positive aspects for
the interviewees. Many respondents living in district 9 consider it an advantage to live close to
recreation areas but still central and close to the city centre. In district 4, the positive aspect of
location is especially related to the centrality of the neighbourhood.

Besides the location, the infrastructure and the wide range of cultural events play a crucial role for many
interviewees. Inhabitants of both districts assess shopping facilities positively as everything for
their daily needs is available in their neighbourhood. Especially in district 4, the wide range of
cultural events, restaurants, and places to go out is a central element for several interviewees. Es-
specially families from district 9 see the availability of schools, day nurseries and children play-
grounds as a big advantage.

The urban flair and the lively neighbourhoods of district 4 turned out to be other relevant aspects. For
the majority of the interviewees it is important to live in a lively area with an urban atmosphere,
where ‘life really takes place’. Several respondents mentioned that they prefer to live in an area,
where people not only live but also work in comparison to a ‘sleeping district’.

Negative aspects
For some interviewees of district 9 the location of their neighbourhood is a slight disadvantage, as
the neighbourhood is perceived to be not really central. However, most of the interviewees who
criticised the location added that it is not a big issue as there are very good connections to the
centre of the city.

Asked about disadvantages in their neighbourhood, many interviewees of district 4 referred to
noise. The issue of noise is mainly related to the fact that district 4 is used in different ways: it is at
the same time living, working and nightlife district. Even though a lot of interviewees referred to
noise as a negative aspect, many added that it is not a big problem and that it just belongs to the neighbourhood.

The analysis showed that the drug- and alcohol scene, the red-light district and the high presence of police is not in the foreground when talking about negative aspects. Only one interviewee with children mentioned that the drug- and alcohol scene in the Bäckeranlage is an explicitly negative aspect, as it is also a place where children play.

Perceptions related to diversity
 Asked directly about diversity in the area and if they perceive it as a positive or negative characteristic, the interviewees of both case study areas stated that in their opinion it is predominantly positive. Many of the interviewees did not refer to any concrete positive or negative experiences, but explained that a diverse population keeps life “exciting”, “interesting”, “lively” and is “not boring”. Some respondents explained that they assess it positively, as they see no problems particularly related to diversity in the neighbourhood. The overall positive perception of diversity reflects therefore a cultural value or attitude rather than some personal experiences.

For many interviewees with various characteristics diversity is an aspect of consumption practices; they appreciate the opportunity of having restaurants and shops from all around the world in the area, but also a mix of old cafes and new hip places.

The multifaceted composition of people in public spaces was mainly perceived positively. Several people mentioned the Bäckeranlage as a good example for a public space where it is possible for different groups to come together such as families or young people and people with various backgrounds. An inhabitant of district 4 sees it more critically and perceives the Bäckeranlage as an example for a lot of diversity but not much mixing. The respondent explained that in her experience many different groups come together in the Bäckeranlage but they do not mix, every group has its own space in the park (see also chapter 5.3).

Several interviewees see it as an advantage that the diverse neighbourhood allows them to get in contact with people – with a different origin, culture, lifestyle or attitude of life – they would not meet elsewhere. Some parents see diversity in the neighbourhood as an opportunity for children to get to know different cultures and make valuable experiences. The diverse composition is therefore considered to have the possibility of broadening the horizon and promoting tolerance, as the following statement illustrates:

“*I think it is really nice to see that tolerance is built. I think this is a very valuable characteristic of a diverse neighbourhood. To learn tolerance and also to get to know a lot about others.*” (R14, female, 28, employee in publishing management/marketing, Swiss)

Furthermore, an inhabitant explained that you need an attitude of “live and let live” if you are living in district 4. Some interviewees with migration background and some young, well-educated, Swiss respondents explicitly said that they would not feel comfortable living in a less diverse area. Especially inhabitants of district 4 consider it an advantage that they can be how they are and look how they want without attracting any attention as the following statement shows:

“*I have less a feeling of being measured on the basis of what I wear or how I behave. I feel kind of less observed or more free and at the same time very comfortable.*” (R13, female, 48, freelance filmmaker, Austrian)

Some respondents – especially older respondents with Swiss background – pointed to some problems they see in terms of diversity in the neighbourhood. Social manners in terms of waste
disposal, greeting each other, or clothing habits were issues that came up. An older respondent considers the strong presence of foreign languages as rather negative, as it triggers a feeling of “not being home anymore”. Some interviewees demurred that the school system might suffer from too much diversity. They hold the view that at the moment the social mix is good and everyone feels fine with it. But the balance seems to be fragile; a mother demurred that with a more diverse composition in schools in the future there would also come a lot of problems.

Another issue related to diversity, which turned out to be central for many inhabitants of district 4, was the on-going process of gentrification. It seems to be a current issue and very present in the interviewees’ perception of their neighbourhood, as the following statement illustrates:

“In this street, there are I don’t know how many new bars and new galleries. The gentrification coming from the train station is enormous. It is also coming from the Bäckeranlage. There are a lot of houses, which have been renovated and right here they also build a new house. You can also read about it everywhere.” (R15, male, 30, consultant, Swiss)

Many respondents – especially those with a high level of education – assess the persistent gentrification as a loss of diversity in the district. Increasing housing costs are a barrier to sustain diversity in the neighbourhood. The gentrification leads to fewer low-income persons and fewer people with migration background. It is maybe also linked with the fear that someday one might also not be able to stay in the neighbourhood anymore. The district becomes more attractive, the area becomes hip, chic, more organised, old shops or cafes disappear and new shops open. Some interviewees pointed to some concrete examples where the gentrification becomes visible, like a sauna that became a hamam, or the Bäckeranlage. As Talen (2010, p. 504) wrote ‘[…] diverse neighbourhoods could become the victims of their own success – i.e. that people moving to a place because of its diversity would ironically end up making the area less diverse’.

But some respondents also see that something has to be done to preserve the buildings. The newly built housing complex of Kalkbreite is mainly assessed positively and often served as a good example. The following statement of an interviewee living close to the Kalkbreite shows that there are two sides to this development. On the one hand, she appreciates what has been built there. But on the other hand, she emphasises that it is clearly an object of gentrification:

“Personally I think it is a predicament. The Kalkbreite newly opened and I was really interested what they did there. […] I know, what was built there is in principle a good thing. […] It [Kalkbreite] is actually great, everything is nice, but it is actually also a step away from the district 4, which I really like. And that is difficult. On the one hand, there is probably my personal sense of nostalgia and on the other hand I know, that it could be much worse if a private company would have built something there. It is really not bad but it is clearly an object of gentrification.” (R8, female, 41, executive secretary, German)

As presented above, diversity is considered to be a positive aspect by most of the interviewed people in both district 4 and 9. However, other aspects are paramount when assessing the neighbourhood, such as the infrastructure and the location. Furthermore, one needs to keep in mind that the areas in the two districts vary considerably in terms of diversity. Some areas in the districts show a high social, cultural and economic diversity whereas other areas especially at the city border are less diverse and have a village-like character.
4.5 Conclusions

In this chapter we wanted to find out how residents think about the area they live in and how they see diversity in their neighbourhood. It has been shown that most residents think very positively about the area they live in and do not want to live elsewhere. As outlined, diversity is a reality and clearly present in people’s perception of their neighbours and neighbourhood. Especially socio-demographic aspects are taken notice of, as these characteristics are easily observable. Ethnic and cultural characteristics were also often used to describe neighbours – especially in district 4, which is known as multi-cultural neighbourhood. Furthermore, the diversity in terms of lifestyles, attitudes and activities is important for some respondents as it also allows them to live the life they want. Socio-economic characteristics were mentioned less often, possibly because they are less apparent.

Generally, the majority of the interviewees assessed the intense diversification of the neighbourhood very positively. Many see it as an asset to get in contact with people with other backgrounds, views or ways of life, which can help to broaden one’s horizon and promote intercultural learning and tolerance. These results support the contact theory, which assumes that ethnic diversity has a positive effect on intergroup relationships due to the continuous intercultural contact that initiates a learning process correcting negative views on other ethnic groups and reducing prejudices (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998).

Despite the overall positive assessment, one needs to keep in mind, that the sample areas of district 4 and 9 vary considerably in terms of diversity. Some interviewees are confronted with a much more diversified neighbourhood than others. The question remains open whether inhabitants of less diversified areas would have assessed diversity differentially if they were confronted with more diversity.

5 Activities in and outside the neighbourhood

5.1 Introduction

Public space is where the diverse composition of an area becomes visible and where people are confronted with it and have to deal with it (Peters and de Haan, 2011, p. 172). A central characteristic of a public space is that it is open and accessible for all. Public space includes different kinds of spaces such as streets, parks or public squares. In broader sense it also includes semi-public spaces such as public transport or restaurants. The different kinds of public are used in different ways namely for leisure or for everyday practical purposes. Furthermore, various people or different groups of people often use public spaces at the same time. The interaction in public space is multifaceted. In the words of Peters and de Haan (2011, p. 172): ‘In public spaces, forms of contact range from purely visual interaction as a result of co-presence on streets, in stores and in parks, to friendly conversations and communal activities’.

In earlier times the neighbourhood was important for activities. In an era of increased mobility with better transportation facilities and growing incomes the role of the neighbourhood changed, as other areas become easily accessible. However, literature suggests that the neighbourhood is still important for residents – for some to a greater for other to a lesser extent – and a unit through which residents structure their actions (Van Kempen and Wissink, 2014, p. 95). The neighbourhood provides important facilities such as schools, grocery shops or community centres. As literature shows the neighbourhood is especially important for some specific groups. This includes especially people with a low-income, immigrants, children and parents and older people (Van Kempen and Wissink, 2014, p. 98).
In this chapter, we will investigate the following research questions:

- How do residents make use of the diversified areas they live in?
- Do they actively engage in diversified relations and activities in their neighbourhood?
- To what extent is the area they live in more important than other areas in terms of activities?

In the following, we will first look at where and with whom the respondents spend their free time. We will then look at the use of public space in the case study area and illustrate the different kinds of use and interaction based on three concrete places. After that we will discuss the importance of associations for interactions in the neighbourhood before drawing some conclusions.

5.2 Activities: where and with whom?

Respondents engage in various activities, which take place at various places. This includes activities, which take place outside of the neighbourhood or the city such as hiking or travelling. Respondents also stated that they spend time at home, reading, cooking, or inviting friends. Living in a diverse neighbourhood does not matter for free time spent outside of the city or at home. Only free time spent in the neighbourhood might be relevant in this context. Activities in the neighbourhood include on the one hand the use of commercial services such as going to a café, a restaurant, a bar, the cinema or using daily shopping facilities. On the other hand, it includes the use of public local facilities in the neighbourhood such as community centres, children’s playground or green spaces.

Interviewees stated that they usually spend their free time together with friends and family. The analysis showed that for respondents with children, spending time with family and children is especially important. To meet friends turned out to be important for almost all respondents. The following statement serves as example:

“I like to spend time with people I like, this is primarily my partner but also friends” (R7, male, 35, PhD student, Swiss)

Respondents use commercial services and local facilities in the neighbourhood particularly together with friends and family. This means that for most respondents the diverse composition of neighbours is only marginally relevant in terms of with whom they meet in their free time and undertake activities. In general, activities with family and friends are of primary importance and as the next chapter on social cohesion will show, these connections exist independently of the neighbourhood.

Therefore, most respondents appreciate what Blokland and van Eijk (2010, p. 323) call functional diversity (e.g. the range of shopping facilities or cultural offers) rather than the demographic diversity. Even though the demographic diversity is of limited importance for most respondents, the neighbourhood itself plays a crucial role in their everyday life. There are though some differences between district 4 and 9.

District 4 has a high functional diversity. Several respondents living in district 4 stated that they spend most of the time in the neighbourhood:

“I predominantly spend my free time in the neighbourhood. You become kind of very lazy if you have everything just close by.” (R23, female, 28, manager communications, Swiss)
District 9 is to a large extent a rather residential area. There is not a huge range of cafés, restaurants or bars and especially in Grünaun neighbourhood shopping facilities are limited. Nevertheless, especially respondents with children stated that they spend a lot of time in the neighbourhood. Important places are the community centres (Bachwiesen, Loogarten, and Grünaun), children’s playgrounds and green spaces. A respondent with children explained:

“I regularly visited the community centres and profited a lot. The city garden in the neighbourhood is also a place where we have often been. And of course the numerous children’s playgrounds in the neighbourhood.” (R20, female, 44, employee in school administration, Swiss)

The different types of activities in district 9 are certainly related to the different characteristics of the neighbourhood but also to the characteristics of the inhabitants. There are more families and older people living in district 9 than in district 4. Other places in the city of Zurich are also important. When respondents of district 9 go out and meet friends it is also often outside the neighbourhood.

In summary, it can be said that it is especially the functional diversity in the neighbourhood, which matters. Most of the respondents do not practice diversity in their everyday life as they spend their free time with family members and friends.

5.3 The use of public space

All respondents use public space and semi-public space though to a different extent and for different purposes. Some spaces are used especially for leisure whereas other public spaces are used for everyday practical purposes.

Important public and semi-public spaces which respondents use for everyday practical purposes include streets, public transport, the train station as well as shopping facilities. Furthermore, several respondents make use of the local market, in district 9 on Lindenplatz and in district 4 on Helvetiaplatz. In terms of leisure, respondents make use of green spaces, such as the forest, children’s playgrounds, public parks, or the community centres and other local facilities such as indoor swimming pools. Many respondents also regularly use restaurants, bars, and cafés in the neighbourhood.

The public space in the neighbourhood seems to be generally more important for respondents than public space outside the neighbourhood. Respondents go out of the area if they cannot find the facilities within the neighbourhood and make especially use of public space in neighbouring districts, the city centre or the nearby nature. In terms of neighbouring districts, especially places in districts 3 and 5 turned out to be important, which reflects the findings of chapter 4, as this area is partially perceived as neighbourhood. The city centre of Zurich is mainly used for non-daily shopping, to meet people, or to show guests around. The local mountain Üetliberg as well as the lake are particularly important for leisure. Public spaces in other areas of the city, such as Zurich-North (i.e. Oerlikon, Seebach, Schwamendingen) seem to be less important.

In the following, we want to illustrate the different kinds of use of public space in the neighbourhood on the basis of three concrete examples.

Bäckeranlage – ‘mixing but no mixing’

A public space that attracts a variety of people is the public park ‘Bäckeranlage’ in district 4 – one of the few green spaces in the area. The majority of respondents living in district 4, which in-
Includes people of different age, cultural background and in various life situations, referred to the ‘Bäckeranlage’ and said that they make use of it. According to Kaspar (2012, p.17), urban green spaces have among other things a social function as local meeting points or places where cultural diversity is perceptible. An interviewee described the mix of people in the Bäckeranlage as follows:

“I think the Bäckeranlage is a nice example to represent district 4, because all kind of people are there. Young people, hip families, Dominicans, beer drinkers etc.” (R14, female, 28, employee in publishing management/marketing, Swiss)

Not only people from the neighbourhood use the Bäckeranlage but also other people from surrounding areas. Even though used by many different people, an interviewee perceived it as mixing but at the same time no mixing, as the park is used by a variety of groups but without having a lot of contact points:

“The Bäckeranlage is good example for mixing or less mixing. There is a lot going on there and there are many different ethnic groups. But I have the impression that they do not mix at all.” (R13, female, 48, freelance filmmaker, Austrian)

Most of respondents did not mention any problems they face when using the park. A young respondent considers it as nice that a side by side of so many different groups of people in the park is possible. However, the coming together of various people who use the public space in different ways also holds a potential for conflict. A father of two young children who regularly uses the park sees especially a potential of conflict between the drug- and alcohol scene and families with children. He stated:

“I think the Bäckeranlage is an on-going issue in the neighbourhood. There is this latent conflict between alcohol and drug addicts on one side, the strong presence of police in the middle and then the families and other people.” (R5, male, 35, employee at university and PhD student, German/American)

Kaspar (2012, p. 240) found in her study about the use and perception of urban public green areas in Zurich that generally a tolerant co-existence of very different groups is possible. She stated however, that in the Bäckeranlage a regular intervention of security and social services is necessary to maintain the balance between the different groups (Kaspar, 2012, p. 240).

**Langstrasse – ‘multifunctional public space’**

A public space used by a large variety of people is the street ‘Langstrasse’ in district 4. The Langstrasse has a multifunctional role, as it is at the same time a living area, an important transport axis, a multicultural shopping street, and a popular nightlife district. Depending on the type of user and the time of day, it is used either for leisure or for everyday practical purposes. Most of respondents living in district 4 make use of the Langstrasse in different ways. It serves as important connecting road and is used for everyday practical purposes. But respondents of district 4 also use the facilities in the Langstrasse area for leisure in making use of the variety of bars and restaurants to go out.

The area of Langstrasse has undergone some significant changes in the last years. The gentrification had an influence on how and by whom the Langstrasse and the surrounding area is used. People not living in the area see the public space in and around Langstrasse particularly as a nightlife district. But for residents it is also a living and working area. These different usages can lead to conflicts between residents and outsiders. A respondent living in close proximity to the
Langstrasse perceives the usage of the public space by outsiders as ‘consuming the neighbourhood’:

“This neighbourhood is certainly an exception, because so many people from outside come here to party. [...] This is a huge number of people, who come here every evening between Thursday and Saturday and populate the streets. [...] They come to consume and then leave again. They are not aware that there are also people living here.” (R25, female, 44, freelance journalist, Swiss)

Furthermore, several respondents observe a discrepancy between the public perception and their own perception in terms of security in the area. Most respondents living close to the Langstrasse emphasised that they feel very safe in the area, even though the Langstrasse area partially has the image of not being safe. Some respondents tried to explain, why they feel safe in the area. It is mainly related to the fact that there are other people using the public space around Langstrasse area at any time at day and night:

“I am really not afraid. I would be more afraid if I had to walk around alone at the ‘Stettbach’ train station, because there are no other people there. Here, no, well really not. Maybe it’s also because I know every corner here.” (R14, female, 28, employee in publishing management/marketing, Swiss)

As shown above, there are many different people using the Langstrasse. But as in the case of Bäckeranlage, there are also indications that the different groups of people do not really mix and get in contact with each other. An interviewee pointed to the unique character of a crossroads in the Langstrasse area. In every corner of the crossroads, there is a bar with its own individual customers. The corner is mainly perceived positively. But the statement also indicates that there are different groups of customers using public or semi-public space next to each other but hardly any mixing. The interviewee explained:

“Right back here is the best crossroads I know in Zurich. In every corner there is a bar and every bar is doing well and every bar has complete different customers. I love this corner, it’s great.” (R25, female, 44, freelance journalist, Swiss)

Community Centres – ‘local meeting points’
The community centres (Gemeinschaftszentren GZ) in district 9 are an important public space for different groups of people. The community centres are socio-cultural institutions, which provide space for exchange and encounters. Supported and commissioned by the city of Zurich, they aim at fostering social participation, equal opportunities and integration of all groups of society (Community Centres Zurich, 2015). All three community centres in district 9 – GZ Bachwiesen, GZ Loogarten and GZ Grünau – are important neighbourhood meeting points. As an interviewee explained:

“There are not enough meeting points in the neighbourhood, actually there is only the GZ.”
(R33, female, 50, disabled, Swiss)

The community centres offer space for new ideas and organise various activities for the inhabitants of the neighbourhoods respectively the city of Zurich. They address different groups of people, such as children, seniors or foreigners and offer a variety of activities such as language courses, midday meals, or a café. As the community centres emphasise, the institution is open for everyone. This principle also came up in the statement of an interviewee:
“For me, GZ Loogarten has kind of an alternative charisma, community, also doing something for the community. All offers are very cheap, I think a wide range of people can afford it.” (R30, female, 48, secretary, Swiss)

For some first generation migrants, the GZ was an important place during their initial time in Switzerland. They started to learn German or improved their German language skills in a community centre and made contacts with other people living in the neighbourhood. The analysis showed that especially interviewees with children and seniors make use of the community centres. On the other hand, young, especially full-time working interviewees attend these centres less frequently. Some explained that they know the GZ but do not go there as their daily life is already filled with other commitments.

Summing up, we can say that most respondents use public space in the neighbourhood for everyday practical purposes as well as for leisure. The example of Bäckeranlage showed that various groups use the same public space without much contact across groups. The different groups make use of the park side by side. The example of Langstrasse showed how the use of public space changed in the last years. It furthermore showed, that the simultaneous use of residents and outsiders also means a potential for conflict. The community centres have a real potential to and explicitly have the aim to foster diverse relations and activities. Despite some contact points or interactions, we couldn’t find evidence that living in a diverse neighbourhood fosters contact across different groups. The description of ‘live apart together, in their own smaller social circle’ (Blokland and van Eijk, 2010, p. 323) fits the situation rather well.

5.4 The importance of associations

Associations have a long tradition in Switzerland. Conservative estimates suggest that there are about 100,000 associations in Switzerland and that 50% of Swiss residents above 14 years actively participate in at least one association or organisation (Migros-Kulturproduzent, 2010, p. 21). Accordingly, approximately half of respondents participate in an association. The associations cover a broad spectrum in terms of interests and activities they organise, such as cultural or sports associations, associations representing different interest groups, or religious institutions.

There are some associations, which actively aim at bringing different people together. These include the bottom-up initiatives investigated in the previous stage of the project such as the MAXIM Theatre, the Neighbourly Help or urban agriculture in ‘Brauergarten’ (Plüss et al., 2014). An interviewee explained, that she is regularly in contact with people with another background due to her participation in an association. She stated:

“As I participate in the MAXIM Theatre, I am regularly in contact with people with another nationality. A close friend from the MAXIM Theatre is for example from Colombia.” (R3, female, 36, employee in a radio station, Swiss)

Associations are based on a common interest. A common interest can be a good basis to bring together people, who are different in other aspects. In some cases, the individual interest is clearly paramount and coming together is less important, as the following statement shows:

“My partner and I are in a dance association. But there are no association meetings. You just have a ticket and there is a rehearsal room and we meet to dance. It is not a typical association, the people there are rather individualists.” (R9, female, 37, lecturer, German)
Besides the own interest, the interests of a group can be a decisive factor for an association. To strengthen the position of a group with a particular characteristic can be the aim of an association. Examples in our interviews are an association for the rights of LGBT people or an association for Somali children.

We assume that there are some associations, which have more potential than others to foster diversified relations. Some associations target a very particular group of people (e.g. Somali children), which might be a hindrance for diversified relations. On the other hand, it is generally known that sport associations have a high potential to bring together people with different backgrounds. Even though the main reason to join an association is often a common interest and not diversified relations or activities in the neighbourhood, associations have a potential to bring different people together. Associations bring people with similar interests together and – as by-product – can help to build a social network in the neighbourhood.

5.5 Conclusions

As the analysis showed, interviewees mostly spend their free time with family members or friends they know independently of their neighbourhood. Where activities take place depends very much on the activity itself. Most of the interviewees spend a lot of time in the neighbourhood, making use of commercial services, such as restaurants or shopping facilities, or public local facilities, such as public parks or community centres. As most of the interviewees spend their time in the neighbourhood with friends and family, we conclude that people make especially use of the functional diversity in the neighbourhood, rather than of the demographic diversity.

Public space in the neighbourhood is important for the majority of interviewees, for leisure as well as for everyday practical purposes. Many respondents spend a lot of time in the neighbourhood, which indicates that the area they live in is rather important in comparison to other areas. The respondents use the area in the neighbourhood because they want to and not because they are forced to due to a lack of economic or cultural resources. Many different groups of people use the same public space. However, using the same public space does not necessarily lead to more contact with other people or other groups of people, as the example of Bäckeranlage showed. But there are places such as the community centres or children’s playgrounds, which have particularly the potential of fostering diversified relations.

Associations have the potential of bringing different people together. A common interest is paramount to join an association. As a by-product it is possible to get to know other people and expand its social network in the neighbourhood. However, as the analysis showed, it was not a crucial factor in our case study area.

6 Social cohesion

6.1 Introduction

According to the literature, the key element of social cohesion is the idea of a society that ‘hangs together’ (Kearns and Forrest, 2000; Maloutas and Malouta, 2004). However, the concept of social cohesion has been criticised for not being clearly defined (Kearns and Forrest, 2000; Maloutas and Malouta, 2004). According to Maloutas and Malouta (2004, p. 450) the term social cohesion as it is used today ‘refers to current problems of holding society together […].’ They furthermore highlight that social cohesion is understood as antonym of the concept of social exclusion (Maloutas and Malouta, 2004, p. 450).
Kearns and Forrest (2000) identify several elements of social cohesion: common values and a civic culture; social order and social control; social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities; social networks and social capital; place attachment and identity. In this chapter we will especially focus on the aspect of social networks as an integral part of social cohesion. According to Granovetter (1973), social ties can be categorised as either strong, weak or absent, depending on a ‘combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding) and the reciprocal services’ (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1361). Weak ties include especially relations in the neighbourhood, which are often on a superficial but rather frequent basis. Henning and Lieberg (1996) found that weak ties and superficial contacts in the neighbourhood are important for inhabitants for – among other things – a ‘feeling of home’ or the ‘people’s identity as social beings’. The neighbourhood is important for weak ties, but Henning and Lieberg (1996, p. 22) also found that ‘[…] people commonly have more strong ties outside than in the neighbourhood’.

The ideas about urban neighbourhood and social ties within the neighbourhood changed over time. In the 1920s the neighbourhood was perceived as centre of social life, whereas in the post-WWII period functional relations were emphasised (Guest and Wierzbicki, 1999, p. 94). Today, the availability of electronic communication and better transportation facilities allow social networks over long distances (Guest and Wierzbicki, 1999, p. 92) and the increased participation in the labour market – especially of women – foster social ties outside the neighbourhood (Guest and Wierzbicki, 1999, p. 96). However, this does not automatically mean that the neighbourhood is less important for social interactions.

According to Forrest and Kearns (2001, p. 2130), neighbouring is more important in disadvantaged neighbourhoods than in better off areas. For some groups of people social ties in the neighbourhood are more important than for others, such as older, poorly educated or unemployed people as well as people with children (Forrest and Kearns, 2001, p. 2130; Guest and Wierzbicki, 1999, p. 105). Guest and Wierzbicki (1999) furthermore found that people either specialise in local or non-local ties and can thus be categorised as locals or cosmopolites.

In this chapter, we will explore the following research questions:

- To what extent is the diversity of the residential area important for social cohesion?
- Which elements foster social cohesion, which elements hinder the development of social cohesion in the area?

In this chapter, we will first draw attention to the interviewees’ networks and analyse what type of contacts are most important. Then we will address the issue of bonds with neighbours and if neighbours in the case study area trust and support each other. Finally, we will draw some conclusions and answer the research questions mentioned above.

6.2 Composition of interviewees’ egocentric network

We wanted to find out if the diverse composition of the neighbourhood has an influence on respondents’ network. We found that most respondents’ network is without reference to the residential area as it is mainly based on family and friends they know regardless of their neighbourhood. Most respondents have more strong ties outside the neighbourhood, which reflects what was also found by Henning and Lieberg (1996). Only few respondents have strong ties in the neighbourhood, which includes especially respondents with children, older respondents and interviewees who already live in the neighbourhood for a longer period of time.
Independent of respondents’ cultural background, their socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics, we couldn’t find any evidence that diversity of the residential area is important for their personal network. Respondents’ strong ties mostly include people of the same social class or socio-economic background, even if respondents found friends in the neighbourhood. Interviewees became especially friends with people with similar backgrounds, similar interest or a similar life situation. In the following, we will have a closer look at the composition of respondents’ networks, which consist of family members and friends.

**Family**

For most respondents, relatives play an important role in their network. This can include parents, (grown-up) children or siblings. Regardless of their background, the majority of interviewees mentioned at least one family member when asked about the persons they feel most close to. Geographical distance does not necessarily have a negative influence on the strength of a relationship. Many of first generation migrants have family members living in their country of origin but despite the geographical distance, most of them consider their relationship as strong. Only the mode of contact has changed; Face-to-face contact is rare but due to the availability of new forms of communication technologies close contact is still possible. Also the frequency of contact does not necessarily define the characteristic of a relationship.

Especially for respondents with children it is important or it would be desirable to have the family nearby. Central issues are a close contact between grandchildren and grandparents and support in childcare. Swiss respondents more often have relatives around – if not in the neighbourhood then somewhere else in Switzerland – whereas family members of first generation migrants often live in their country of origin. That is why especially families with migration background stated that they would wish to have relatives (especially their own parents) closer by, as the following statement shows:

> “Since we have children, yes it is important [to have family members close by], very much. It is something we would really appreciate. But unfortunately, it is not possible. But it is something we miss. But only since we have children, before that we didn’t care.” (R5, male, 35, employee at university and PhD student, German/American)

In contrast, some younger respondents (age group 18-30) living in single households also appreciate not to have relatives in the neighbourhood. They like the feeling of being more independent and less observed. For people with migration background, the situation in the country of origin might be a decisive factor. A first generation migrant from a third country considers the social control in his country of origin much stronger and said that he appreciates the independence he has now. But also an interviewee without migration background likes not having relatives in the neighbourhood in her current life situation, as the following statement shows:

> “No (laughing). I prefer if they don’t live here so they will not know everything about me, when I come home, or when I go out. And they don’t just drop in unexpectedly.” (R23, female, 28, manager communications, Swiss)

Regardless of distance and frequency of contact, family members are important reference persons for the majority of the interviewees. Many of them also rely a lot on the family network in terms of support.

**Friends**

Besides family, friends are an important part of people’s networks. Many interviewees, especially younger people and respondents living far from their relatives, meet friends more regularly. Friendships might emerge out of very different reasons or points of connection.
Independent of the neighbourhood, common interests or a similar life situation turned out to be important starting points for friendships. Several respondents met their close friends because they like the same leisure activities or are members of the same association. Having a similar job often also means having common interests or attitudes and a similar education level. Colleagues are important for some respondents’ network, especially for respondents who participate in working life and spend a lot of time with workmates. The analysis furthermore showed, that having a similar life story or life situation, such as having a migration background or coming from the same country or region, could also be a point of connection to start a friendship. An interviewee with migration background explained:

“She is a good friend and she helps me with a lot of things. In the beginning, everything is so complicated: health insurance, residence permit etc. She has more experience here. Her story is similar to mine. She has also moved here because of her partner and cannot find a proper job.” (R1, female, 33, employee in a cinema, Spanish)

There were also interviewees who found friends in the neighbourhood, especially through their children or through their dog. According to Peters and de Haan (2011, p. 173), children and dogs can take up the position of an external stimulus and initiate the interaction between two strangers. The analysis showed that going for a walk with a dog has a high potential of bringing people together. It might be assumed that most of these contacts are on a superficial basis. But as an interviewee stated, she became friends with someone she knows through her dog. The statement shows that through regular contact in the neighbourhood the relationship became closer:

“Someone who also lives here, she has a dog, and I got to know her because of the dog. I really like her and she almost became a friend. But I never visited her at home and she never came to my home. We meet regularly outside and she is really kind of a friend.” (R35, female, 54, hairdresser, Italian)

Children also have a high potential of bringing people in contact. Having children often means to use similar places (e.g. children’s playground), to participate in similar activities (e.g. toddler group) or to have to do with the same institutions (e.g. day-care centres, kindergarten, schools). Furthermore, families also often have similar ‘needs’ and interests. The following statement illustrates the importance of children as external stimulus:

“I met her in the toddler group, just through our daughters. I also made friends on the children’s playground, also because of my daughter, and we are still friends.” (R26, female, 47, bank employee, Spanish (2nd gen.))

Concluding, it can be said that most people are very family-centred, especially families with children. Regardless of geographical distance and frequency of contact, many consider family members as an important part of the social network. Friends are the other important part of people’s personal networks. As shown, many different points of contacts can lead to friendships. Regular contact and common interests help to build friendships.

6.3 Living together with neighbours

“Actually, because you see each other again and again and you live very close, you feel much closer to these people than you would probably to a stranger.” (R19, female, 34, employee in marketing and communication, Swiss)
As this statement shows, the neighbourhood may be an important source of social relations. In the following we will examine the relations among neighbours, which are defined in this section as people living in the same house or in the immediate vicinity.

Bonds

Most respondents said that they have a good relationship with their neighbours. Only very few mentioned some problems they face or faced in previous dwellings. Bonds with neighbours cover the entire spectrum from very little contact to everyday coincidental contact and friendly relationships. Furthermore, respondents often have different kind of bonds with different neighbours, as the following statement illustrates:

“Well, I would describe it as follows in our house: We have a chat, we are in contact and some of them we meet to eat or drink something or to go out.” (R9, female, 37, lecturer, German)

Only a limited number of respondents, with very diverse backgrounds, meet their neighbours to have dinner together or to go out. The most common activity mentioned by respondents was drinking a coffee or having dinner together. Also only very few interviewees have very little contact or hardly know their neighbours. Most of the respondents said, that they are not in close contact with their neighbours, but that they greet each other and talk about everyday things in the hallway. This positive experience of friendly interaction applies to both residential areas with single-family homes and the city centre with larger houses and more renting parties. The following statement serves just an example; there are many other similar statements:

“I know my neighbours, but yes, we just say: ‘hi, how are you?’ Or we meet when we use the washing machine, but not more.” (R1, female, 33, employee in a cinema, Spanish)

Some of the neighbours also have longer or more personal conversations when they meet but most of the respondents said that they are only in contact with their neighbours if they meet coincidentally. Most of the respondents are happy with the contact they have, even if it is only greeting each other. Some explained that the weak contact with their neighbours is not the result of antipathy, but that – due to the considerable amount of neighbours in an urban environment – there just wasn’t an occasion to strengthen the relationship. Few respondents criticised that people in the neighbourhood do not greet each other and that they would appreciate more friendly interaction in the neighbourhood. The importance of these everyday, coincidental contacts should not be underestimated. Many respondents consider saying hello and talking about everyday things as an important element for a friendly environment.

Few respondents mentioned some difficulties of getting in contact with neighbours. According to a first generation migrant living in Switzerland for only one year, it is rather difficult to get in contact with neighbours “because Swiss people are quite closed” (R13, female, 48, freelance filmmaker, Austrian). A Swiss interviewee considers the reserved mentality as rather Zurich specific, as her statement shows:

“Yes, it is definitely also related to the mentality of Zurich’s inhabitants. They are rather reserved and not just open for new friendships. Everyone lives kind of his own, selfish, little life.” (R3, female, 36, employee in a radio station, Swiss)

Another factor influencing the bonds with neighbours is the language. It came up in the interviews that if neighbours do not have a common language they can use, it is likely that they are not in close contact. A young Swiss interviewee explained:
“I think it’s incredible. She cannot speak a word in German and it’s a 40 year old women. She can’t even say Grüezi [hello] and I think this is heavy.” (R14, female, 28, employee in publishing management/marketing, Swiss)

Street festivities, cooperative events and other activities in the neighbourhood can have a positive influence on the bonds with neighbours. Several respondents mentioned that they meet their neighbours at such events. Many interviewees, who live in a cooperative housing, mentioned cooperative events where they meet and get to know their neighbours.

Trust
Regardless of their bonds, the vast majority of respondents clearly say that they trust their neighbours. For some there is no difference between different neighbours in terms of trust. An interviewee with migration background explained, that even if her neighbours are very diverse her trust in them does not vary:

“The people living here are definitely different but there are no differences in terms of trust from my side.” (R8, female, 41, executive secretary, German)

Others said, that they trust some of their neighbours more than others. They explained that it is not related to the characteristics of the neighbours but rather depending on how good or how long they know each other or if they like each other. The following statement of an interviewee living in the neighbourhood for more than ten years illustrates this:

“I think there are differences [in terms of trust], because there are a number of people living here. Some of them I know better and others I don’t know very well.” (R10, female, 64, shop assistant, Swiss)

Only few respondents said that they do not trust their neighbours or have some reservations. This might be because a person does not live in the current place for a long time and therefore does not yet know the neighbours very well. But there are also interviewees who already live in their current housing for a while but still do not fully trust some of their neighbours or had some concrete negative experiences. An interviewee living in a cooperative housing considers living in this type of housing as a special situation also in relation to trust, as the following statement illustrates:

“Well, it is quite a special situation in cooperative housing, here I would obviously trust everyone. Well not obviously, but I trust everyone here. It is maybe a special case […] cooperative housing is even more familiar.” (R5, male, 35, employee at university and PhD student, German/American)

Mutual Support
Asked about mutual support among neighbours, many interviewees stated that they would not call it support but rather ‘helping out’ or ‘doing little favours’. Concrete little favours such as helping out with an egg, sugar or other things, watering the plants while the neighbour is on holiday, or doing grocery shopping for someone who is sick, served as illustrations for mutual support among neighbours. Several interviewees already received or provided this kind of help. Also many respondents said that so far they did not need support from their neighbours, but that they are sure they could get help if they would ask for. A young interviewee living in the neighbourhood only for three years stated:
"I haven’t asked and there has been no case that I have needed the help so far. But I think if I need it, I can ask. So that’s a good thing." (R4, male, 28, PhD student, Iranian)

One interviewee said that she perceives it as a kind of ‘partnership of convenience’ between neighbours. Due to spatial proximity, help from neighbours is uncomplicated in comparison to help from others. She explained:

“Other support is also available, but it has to be organised or concretely asked for. It is easy to go up one floor and to ring the bell of our neighbours. To go to my friends place or if she has to come here takes much longer and is more complicated to organise.” (R20, female, 44, employee in school administration, Swiss)

Only few respondents said that they faced some difficulties in getting support. An older respondent living in district 4, who is very active and participates in various social activities stated:

“There is basically no mutual support in this house. When I want help, I need to think about whom I can ask. There are two or three persons I could ask. But most of the people say: ‘My children will look for me, my son will come to help me or my daughter will do this for me.’ But some don’t have this and don’t dare to accept help.” (R34, male, 70, freelance consultant, Italian (2nd gen.))

This statement points to two other issues: Firstly, for some people it is not easy to accept help possibly because accepting help also creates dependence. This issue also came up in another interview, where a respondent said that he prefers to help others rather than to receive help. Secondly, people who do not have relatives living in the neighbourhood might face some problems in getting help. It came up in other interviews that if there are relatives living in the neighbourhood, people are more likely to rely on the help of those rather than on neighbours, even though relatives live further away.

Especially people with children reported that they got support or support each other in the neighbourhood as they generally tend to have more neighbourhood-related networks. Support includes things like looking after each other’s children or borrowing things such as children’s clothes, shoes, sledge etc. A mother working part-time explained that she has an arrangement with two other mothers in the neighbourhood where children alternately go for lunch. In this way, all mothers are not forced to pay external day-care which is rather expensive. The mother of two children explained:

“In the past, my children went to a day-care centre for lunch when I was working. […] Then I suggested to my friend to organise it by ourselves and it works quite well. […] That is how we help each other.” (R26, female, 47, bank employee, Spanish (2nd gen.))

To sum up, it can be said few respondents have close bonds with their neighbours but in many cases the statement ‘live and let live’ better describes the interactions between neighbours. Most of respondents meet their neighbours only coincidentally. A friendly interaction and greeting each other is nevertheless considered important and appreciated by many respondents. Interviewees with children and homeowners have comparably rather good bonds in the neighbourhood. We couldn’t find any evidence that diversity of the residential area is important for respondents’ bonds with their neighbours. Rather common interests or situations (having children, being older) resulted in bonding.
6.4 Conclusions

In this chapter we analysed the social network of respondents in order to find out more about social cohesion in the neighbourhood. We could not find evidence, that diversity in the residential area has an influence on social cohesion, neither in a positive nor a negative way. But we found that respondents’ networks consist especially of people with similar interest and lifestyle and in most cases also of people with a similar cultural and socio-economic background. We conclude that living in a diverse neighbourhood does not necessarily mean to have a diverse network.

The residential area does not have an influence on the formation of strong ties. We found that respondents’ ties in the neighbourhood are predominantly weak. Spatial proximity itself is not enough to serve as basis for strong ties. In many cases the bonds between neighbours are friendly but more of functional nature; a partnership of convenience based on common interests or rather needs. Bonds with neighbours are often superficial and support is more appropriately described as helping out, but this is what most of respondents are looking for and appreciate in the neighbourhood. Most respondents are happy with the bonds and social support they find in the neighbourhood.

As mentioned in the introduction, the possibility to build a social network in the neighbourhood is likely not to be equally important for all social groups (Henning and Lieberg, 1996, p. 23). The analysis showed that families have rather strong bonds in the neighbourhood. Due to the space they use for their living it is important that bonds in the neighbourhood are possible. We couldn’t find evidence that the employment situation, the educational level or the financial situation has an influence on the social network in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, we could not find an indication that people specialise in either local or non-local relations, as suggested by Guest and Wierzbicki (1999, p. 109). The interviewees, regardless of their socio-economic status, have various bonds with their neighbours. Therefore, the respondents cannot be categorised as either locals or cosmopolites.

The analysis showed that there are some elements, which have the potential to foster social cohesion. Similar interests and lifestyle including having children or a dog can serve as starting point for friendships but are also important points of connection for bonds in the neighbourhood. Living in the neighbourhood for a long time and also the long-term plan to live in the neighbourhood – especially by homeowners and families – lead to more commitment. People who spend a lot of time in the neighbourhood, such as older people and families are likely to have stronger ties in the area. Events for neighbours such as street festivals are other important elements, which foster the contact among neighbours. Living in a cooperative can foster cohesion within the cooperative but not necessarily in the neighbourhood. Institutional facilities such as community centres also have the potential to facilitate contact in the neighbourhood. We also found some elements, which might have a negative influence on social cohesion. Differing interests or lifestyles are a central point. Furthermore, the language barrier and the ‘reserved mentality’ of Zurich or Swiss people can hinder contacts in the neighbourhood.

7 Social mobility

7.1 Introduction

Literature provides different definitions of social mobility. The labour market career is almost always a central aspect. Furthermore, education can be a factor influencing social mobility. In this project we work with the following definition: ‘Social mobility is the change over time in an individual’s
socio-economic characteristics, such as labour market position and income' (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013, p. 52).
The necessary resource to reach social mobility is social capital which describes possible benefits one might get through the social network (Kleinans, 2005 in Tasan-Kok et al., 2013, p. 52). Literature makes a distinction between bonding capital and bridging capital. 'Bonding capital refers to strong ties within one’s social circle (often to similar others), while bridging capital is about relations outside one’s social circle (weak ties)' (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013, p. 53). Relations to neighbours are often rather weak. But according to Granovetter (1973, p. 1364), especially weak ties are important for social mobility as they serve as bridges between different networks, which allow people to access resources they would otherwise not have.

Different studies have investigated the effects of living in a particular neighbourhood on social mobility of inhabitants and got different results (see Van Kempen and Wissink, 2014, p. 97). Nevertheless, in general the findings point in a similar direction stating that neighbourhood effects exist but that other aspects such as individual and household characteristics are more important (Van Kempen and Wissink, 2014, p. 97).

In this chapter, we aim to explore the following research questions:

- To what extent is the diversity of the neighbourhood important for social mobility?
- Which elements foster social mobility and which elements hinder social mobility?

In this chapter, we will first look at some general characteristics of the interviewees’ professional careers. Then we will outline how the interviewees found their jobs, if they could benefit from neighbours or others and if the diversity of neighbours plays a role in finding a job. We will then enter into the question if the neighbourhood has some positive or negative effects on social mobility. At the end we will draw some conclusions.

7.2 Current and previous jobs

As the sample of people is rather diverse, not surprisingly the professional careers of the interviewed persons (and their partners) differ substantially. Some careers are more linear, others are characterised by interruptions or change of directions. As some of the questioned persons are still at the beginning of their career or still in training and others are already retired it is rather difficult to compare the individual trajectories. In addition, it has to be considered that the labour market itself and the structural conditions changed considerably in the last decades.

Approximately half of respondents work full-time, one quarter part-time and the other quarter is not in paid work (pensioners, housewives, disabled people). The majority of part-time working interviewees in our sample are women with secondary or tertiary education, whereby most of them live in a household with children. In most cases, they are not the main breadwinners in the household but have a husband or partner who works (almost) full-time. This reflects a common family model in Switzerland whereby the man fulfils the function of the main breadwinner and the woman works part-time.

Almost half of the respondents work as professionals as defined by the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). The majority of them have a Swiss background, are second-generation migrants or highly skilled migrants (fourth wave of migration). Respondents from Southern Europe and former Yugoslavia (first, second and third wave of immigration) in our sample have a lower educational level and get lower paid work. They mainly work as associate professionals, clerical support workers or as service and sales workers according to ISCO. This difference can mainly be attributed to the different level of education rather than to the cultural background. Respondents who only recently migrated to Switzerland partially have the same cul-
tural background as earlier migrants but the majority of them are well trained. During the first, second and third wave of immigration there was especially a demand for low-skilled workers.

For immigrants the reason why they migrated to Switzerland turned out to be the determining factor for their labour situation. Interviewees who came to Switzerland because of their partner (either their partner was already in Switzerland or they came together because the partners found a job in Switzerland) faced some difficulties in finding a suitable job. Several interviewees referred to a lack of language skills as possible obstacle. A respondent with a master degree, who came to Switzerland with her partner, explained it as follows:

“I didn’t know that the German language is so important in Switzerland. I thought it is an English-speaking country and it would be easy to find a job” (R24, female, 37, childcare worker, Indian)

As expected, people in the sample who came to Switzerland because of a job offer or for education (especially PhD position) found a suitable employment. The analysis furthermore showed that for people who came to Switzerland as refugees it was rather difficult to find a suitable job. Language might also be an issue in this case. Furthermore, interviewees referred to difficulties related to the recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications.

7.3 Using neighbours and others to find a job

The way respondents in our study found their job can mainly be divided into two categories: They either found it through a job advertisement or through their network. More than half of the questioned persons (or their partners) found a job through an advertisement in newspapers, internet or other sources. Besides this classical way, a big part of the respondents benefited from connections to find a job. The interviewees fell back on different networks, namely the professional network, the personal network and neighbours whereby there was no indication that diversity plays a role in these networks. It turned out that some networks were activated more often than others and depending on the network with varied success.

The professional network proved to be most important for the respondents. In this case it was also most likely that the respondents found a suitable, long-term employment. The personal network was another important source for the interviewees. However, for the interviewees who found a job through their personal network, it was only a temporary solution. But the personal network proved to be important in another aspect. It turned out that the personal network of the interviewees was especially important indirectly in suggesting jobs or providing information about open positions or job advertisements.

Few interviewees referred to people living in the neighbourhood when asked about how they found their current job. A Swiss respondent found a job in the neighbourhood, which suits her educational level, because she was rather active in the neighbourhood and well known by many people. Two respondents with migration background found a job through the community centres in the neighbourhood which they had made use of already before. For one of them it is however only a temporary solution as the job does not correspond to her education.

---

2 Asylum seekers are prohibited to work during the first three (sometimes six) months after applying for asylum. People with a right to stay in Switzerland – this includes refugees and temporarily admitted people – are allowed to take up an employment (SEM, 2015).
Only few interviewees made a connection between their professional life and their neighbours. One interviewee sees no particular potential in his neighbourhood related to job opportunities, but could imagine that it might be different in other areas, as the following statement shows:

“No, I don’t see particular advantages. Not necessarily in this area. More likely in the city where my sister lives. A lot of bankers, insurance consultants, managers, CEOs etc. live there. If you try hard to maintain contacts, it might offer opportunities. But even there it is not so easy.” (R17, male, 47, computer scientist, Serbian)

In the special case of self-employed interviewees and freelancers the neighbourhood was not particularly in the foreground. It seems that also for them the professional network is especially important.

It has been shown that especially the professional and personal networks are important to find a job. The personal network is especially important in providing information. As shown in chapter 6, diversity plays only a minor role in the personal network of respondents. The professional network normally consists of people with a similar level of education or in a similar field. Therefore these networks are likely to give the most direct benefits. Weak ties with neighbours were only helpful in in a minority of cases. The persons who benefited from neighbours were rather active in the neighbourhood and well known by many people.

7.4 Neighbourhood reputation as an asset in upward social mobility?

The analysis revealed that there is no strong connection between neighbourhood and social mobility. The interviewees were asked if they feel that living in the neighbourhood helps or hinders them from taking advantage of important opportunities in life. In answering this question almost no interviewee referred to issues related to job or education. The few positive and negative effects, which appeared in the interviews, will be discussed below.

Positive effects

Only few respondents saw a positive connection between their neighbourhood and their working life. The location of the neighbourhood turned out to be the only factor, which was assessed positively in relation to work. For some the central location is considered to be an asset, as they are not forced to have a car, even with irregular working hours. For one interviewee, living in district 4 is an advantage, as the following statement shows:

“For me it is a chance to be in the heart of the city and to feel the heartbeat of the city. Especially for people working in journalism and media, this is a big advantage” (R23, female, 28, manager communications, Swiss)

Negative effects

The neighbourhood cannot only be an asset for social mobility but also a hindrance. In literature some hypotheses can be found, why the neighbourhood might have a negative influence on employment trajectories. These include among other things external stigmatisation by employer, a spatial mismatch between neighbourhood and work locations, or little access to information about job vacancies (Pinkster, 2014, p. 2042).

The analysis showed that the neighbourhood’s reputation was not relevant for the interviewees, neither in personal nor in professional life. None of the respondents referred to experiences of being stigmatised because of their place of living. This is certainly related to the fact that none of the neighbourhoods in the two districts are confronted with a strong bad reputation. Even the
area around Langstrasse, which is well known as red-light district is also a popular nightlife district and a hip place to live. Only one interviewee living in a side street of Langstrasse thought about some negative influences due to the reputation of Langstrasse. But she made clear that she never had any bad experience but just thought about it:

“When I write a letter, I sometimes find myself thinking about what the recipient might think when he reads the sender address ‘Langstrasse’? If the recipient is prejudiced? The Langstrasse is kind of disreputable – justifiably. If the recipient thinks about what kind of person I am, living at the Langstrasse? Maybe you are assigned a particular characteristic if you have the address ‘Langstrasse’.” (R25, female, 44, freelance journalist, Swiss)

The most important issue, which came up in the interviews, is related to schools in diverse neighbourhoods. Several interviewees said that they know families with children, who moved to other areas because of the high diversity in schools. An inhabitant of district 4 described it as follows:

“For many of my friends the issue of school was an obstacle to stay in this neighbourhood. They were worried, that their child might be the only Swiss child or the only German-speaking child in his/her class, which would mean less encouragement and fewer opportunities.” (R13, female, 48, freelance filmmaker, Austrian)

In some neighbourhoods in district 9 the situation is different. An interviewee said that they don’t have to be afraid of having too many foreigners in a class. Most of respondents with children living in district 9 are satisfied with the schools in their neighbourhood as the statement of a mother of two children illustrates:

“I especially see chances for our children. We have good schools in the neighbourhood and good sports facilities. I see a lot of development opportunities.” (R6, female, 40, lawyer, Swiss)

Few respondents – especially those with children – referred to some concerns about future developments in schools. An interviewee of district 9 was afraid that if diversity increases, problems would arise in terms of education, as the following statement shows:

“I think more diversity could easily lead to more problems, especially regarding schools. Not necessarily because of different backgrounds but only because of the language. There is no problem, if there are only some and they should also be integrated. But if 90% of a first grade cannot speak German, a lot of problems come up. It leads to anger and aggression.” (R20, female, 44, employee in school administration, Swiss)

In summary it can be said that no strong connection could be observed between the neighbourhood and social mobility. We found no particular positive but also no particular negative effect. Other factors and personal characteristics seem to be more important. Also in literature there is a general agreement that personal characteristics are more important than the neighbourhood (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013, p. 54).

7.5 Conclusions

In this chapter we attempted to find out if diversity in the neighbourhood is important for social mobility and which elements foster or hinder social mobility. We found that diversity in the neighbourhood and also the neighbourhood in general do not have a big influence on social mobility of inhabitants in our case study area.
A good personal network and even more important a good professional network turned out to be crucial elements, which foster social mobility. The personal network is especially important to provide information about job opportunities. The professional network – mostly consisting of people working in a similar field with a similar educational background – proved to be most useful in finding a suitable job and can therefore be considered as having the most direct influence on social mobility. People living in the neighbourhood play only a minor role for the social mobility of the respondents in our case study area. Only few benefited from people living in their neighbourhood. A decisive factor was that they were active in the neighbourhood. Even though it was only a temporary solution, it can be considered as a good starting point in the labour market.

As set out, the neighbourhood’s reputation neither had a clear positive nor negative influence on social mobility. The only issue that came up was related to highly diversified schools, which some interviewees consider problematic.

We conclude that even though personal characteristics are much more important for social mobility than the neighbourhood, a social network in the neighbourhood can have positive effects on the social mobility of inhabitants.

8 Perceptions of public policies and initiatives

8.1 Introduction

In a previous stage of the project, we examined urban policies on diversity in Zurich (see Plüss and Schenkel, 2014). It has been shown that there is no explicit policy strategy on diversity in Switzerland but that diversity is mainly associated with immigration. Therefore, the focus lies clearly on cultural and ethnic aspects of diversity. The issue of immigration is a topical subject in Switzerland, clearly present in public discourse and high on the political agenda. The concept of diversity mainly appears in the context of integration policy. In addition, it has been shown that it is also relevant in public community work and urban housing policy.

In another preceding stage of the project, we furthermore investigated bottom-up initiatives in Zurich (see Plüss et al., 2014). According to the overarching objectives of the DIVERCITIES project, the investigated initiatives aim at either strengthening social cohesion, social mobility or economic performance in the case study area.

In this chapter, we will investigate the following research question:

- How are diversity-related policies perceived by the inhabitants of the area?

We will first look at what respondents know about existing policies and initiatives. We will then present what policy priorities were proposed by the interviewees before drawing some conclusions.

8.2 Perception and evaluation of existing policies and initiatives: what do residents know?

The issue of infrastructure, i.e. public transport, road infrastructure, or public parks, turned out to be the most present and most prominent topic in interviewees’ perceptions of policies with regards to their neighbourhood. There were also respondents who didn’t know that much about existing policies and initiatives. Some interviewees with foreign background referred to the lan-
language barrier to get informed. A first generation EU migrant said that he feels generally rather apolitical in Switzerland, as the following statement shows:

“As a foreigner in Switzerland I feel rather apolitical, as my feeling is that anyway I cannot do anything.” (R5, male, 35, employee at university and PhD student, German/American)

Asked about policies, initiatives or programmes of the local government with regards to the neighbourhood almost none of the interviewees referred to integration policy or specific initiatives and programmes. This might be related to the fact that integration policy is not primarily associated with the neighbourhood but rather considered as a superordinate issue concerning other levels than the neighbourhood as the following statement indicates:

“I know that the city and the canton now and then launch an integration campaign. [...] They just start a new one. But here in the neighbourhood? I even don’t know what the district association does.” (R8, female, 41, executive secretary, German)

Several interviewees, especially those with children, referred to the community centres and the activities they offer – particularly for children. Only one respondent made a link between the community centres and integration, as the following statement shows:

“I think it’s good that [the city] supports institutions such as the community centres. The community centres do a lot of things, also in the field of integration, for example you can learn German there.” (R26, female, 47, bank employee, Spanish (2nd gen.))

Except for those interviewees we found through previously investigated initiatives (see chapter 2.1 on selection procedure) almost no respondent referred to the ten bottom-up initiatives investigated in the preceding stage of the project.

An interviewee living in district 4 knew of programmes with which schools in highly diversified neighbourhoods are supported. The previously investigated programme QUIMS (Quality in Multicultural Schools) is such a programme. Few interviewees living close to Langstrasse referred to the efforts of the city to fight against the drug scene and prostitution in the neighbourhood (project Langstrasse PLUS).

An issue that turned up with a direct link to the debate on diversity was the housing policy. Some respondents – especially those with a high educational level – know policies and activities related to social housing rather well. Social housing is also associated with the diversity in the neighbourhood, as it is affordable and therefore allows also low-income households to live in the neighbourhood, as the following statement shows:

“Flats in cooperative housing are affordable which allows a mixing in the neighbourhood” (R25, female, 44, freelance journalist, Swiss)

Affordable housing was and is also a current topic in votes in Zurich. Some interviewees pointed to the last votes in the city and the canton of Zurich on the issue of affordable housing. In 2011 and in 2014, the citizens of the city respectively the canton of Zurich voted in favour of more social housing and affordable living space. With the vote in 2014, the canton of Zurich established the right of municipalities to define a minimum share of social housing when modifying the building regulations and design plans. The objective of the vote in 2011 was to raise the percentage of social housing in the city of Zurich to one third until 2050. Social housing has a long tradition in the city of Zurich and today already makes up 25% of all rental housing in the city. Several respondents know that the city of Zurich is rather active in supporting social housing. On
the one hand, the city supports cooperatives but it is also owner of several dwellings. As an interviewee stated, there are several criteria the city considers when assigning its dwellings:

“Well, I know that the city of Zurich takes into consideration a lot of criteria when assigning its dwellings, one of it is the social mix.” (R8, female, 41, executive secretary, German)

What the city does in the area of social housing is mainly perceived positively. However, many respondents hold the view that it needs to be done more, as the next section shows.

8.3 Policy priorities proposed by interviewees: what do residents want?

Housing policy is not only highly present in the interviewees’ perception, the issue of affordable housing also turned out to be the central priority and housing shortage an urgent problem that needs to be addressed. Several interviewees said that in their opinion there should be done more to facilitate affordable housing in Zurich. Especially in district 4 the housing shortage and the gentrification processes leading to higher rents are perceived as a problem that needs to be addressed. The following statement of an interviewee living in district 4 serves as illustration:

“I think it is important that living is affordable in Zurich. Because since I live here I notice this change, the rents increase horrendously and I think this is very problematic. I think this is a priority problem of Zurich.” (R3, female, 36, employee in a radio station, Swiss)

Several interviewees consider the availability of affordable housing as an important instrument to maintain diversity in the area. Some respondents emphasised that there has to be space for everyone in the neighbourhood, no matter of their financial situation. The following statement shows, that the respondent considers it important to maintain the mix in the neighbourhood, which is only possible if affordable housing is available:

“That the mix remains. Well, that it is possible to live in this city, to live in the city centre. That the current residential areas remain residential areas, with totally normal people, with totally normal salaries, also with people with low salaries. […] This is my main concern in the city, that normal people can live here, that the diversity remains and this is only possible, if living in the city is affordable.” (R25, female, 44, freelance journalist, Swiss)

Even if many respondents demand to put more priority on the issue of affordable housing, many of them are also aware, that the city is already rather active in this respect. The new housing complex of ‘Kalkbreite’ served as positive example for a housing project, which was supported by the city. On the other side, the case of ‘Weststrasse’ was mentioned as negative example. A respondent criticised the city and hold the view that the city has not done enough to prevent speculations.

Few respondents pointed to the issue of structural modifications such as high-density construction or high buildings. They hold the view that changes are necessary but there should still be space for all groups of people, as the following statement shows:

“It is really an important issue that change is necessary and good, but at the same time there should be as little change as possible. The neighbourhood can change structurally and the constructions can be denser to provide space for more people. The thing that shouldn’t change is, that there should be space for everyone who wants to live here no matter how much money they have or where they come from. It must be possible to provide adequate space in this neighbourhood for everyone.” (R19, female, 34, employee in marketing and communication, Swiss)
Other policy priorities, which were proposed by interviewees, are related to specific groups of people respectively their specific needs and characteristics. Many respondents – especially those with children – highlighted the importance of good education. Two respondents living with a disability and relying on a wheelchair demanded a more disabled-friendly environment as they sometimes face difficulties with their wheelchairs. A former single mother called for more support for single parents. She has the impression that it is easier for a foreigner to get support than for a single parent and that the needs and difficulties of a foreigner are more quickly recognised than those of single parents.

8.4 Conclusions

In the respondents’ perception of policies with respect to their neighbourhood issues such as the infrastructure, especially issues related to public transport or the road infrastructure are rather well-known and considered important. We found that housing policy is the central issue in both the perception of policies as well as in the policy priorities proposed. Many respondents appreciate what the city does in terms of housing policy but they think that the city should do even more. The availability of affordable housing is mainly associated with the possibility to maintain diversity in the area, especially socio-economic diversity. Some might evaluate it this way because of their political and cultural values. However, we assume that another factor might have some influence: maintaining socio-economic diversity also protects their own interests, namely the availability of affordable dwellings.

Almost none of the interviewees referred to bottom-up initiatives investigated in previous stages of the project. Only few respondents referred to the issue of integration, as integration policy it is not primarily associated with the neighbourhood.

9 Conclusion

In this final chapter, we will answer the six research questions formulated in the introduction and summarise the key findings of the individual chapters. We will then draw some overall conclusions by answering the question how residents profit or suffer from living in a hyper-diverse area. Finally, we will give some suggestions on what policy makers can learn from inhabitants’ perceptions and practices in hyper-diverse areas.

Why did people move to the diverse area they live in now? To what extent has the diversity of the area been a pull-factor? Or were other aspects a much stronger motive to settle in the present area? (Chapter 3)

Respondents moved to the diverse area they live in out of various reasons, whereby diversity was not a main pull factor. A limited number of respondents were explicitly looking for cultural diversity, primarily due to their own foreign background in order to not stand out and better fit in. This means that even though they were looking for a culturally diverse neighbourhood, they were looking for people ‘like them’. Other respondents were actively looking for similarity in terms of attitude and lifestyle. The location and the affordability and availability of dwellings turned out to be much stronger motives to settle in the neighbourhood than diversity-related issues. The urbanity and the rootedness in the neighbourhood were other important aspects as well as the motive to live in an open-minded neighbourhood in the city.

How do residents think about the area they live in? Do residents see their neighbourhood’s diversity as an asset or a liability? (Chapter 4)

Most residents think very positively about the area they live in and do not want to live elsewhere. Diversity is a reality and clearly present in people’s perception of their neighbours and neigh-
bourhood. Especially socio-demographic aspects are taken notice of, as these characteristics are easily observable. Ethnic and cultural characteristics were also often used to describe neighbours. Furthermore, the diversity in terms of lifestyles, attitudes and activities is important for some respondents as it also allows them to live the life they want. Socio-economic characteristics were mentioned less often, possibly because they are less apparent. Generally, the majority of the interviewees assessed the intense diversification of the neighbourhood very positively as it keeps life interesting. Many appreciate that living peacefully side-by-side is possible. To get in contact with people with other backgrounds, views or ways of life, is considered an asset, which can help to broaden one’s horizon and promote intercultural learning and tolerance. The persistent gentrification was considered a threat to sustain diversity in the neighbourhood. Possible difficulties were mainly associated with differences in terms of social manners and too much diversity in schools.

How do residents make use of the diversified areas they live in? Do they actively engage in diversified relations and activities in their neighbourhood? To what extent is the area they live in more important than other areas in terms of activities? (Chapter 5)

Most of the interviewees spend a lot of time in the neighbourhood, making use of commercial services or public local facilities. Public space is important for leisure as well as for everyday practical purposes and many respondents spend a lot of time in the neighbourhood, which indicates that the area they live in is rather important in comparison to other areas. Many different groups of people use the same public space at the same time. However, using the same public space does not necessarily lead to more contact with other people or other groups of people. Often public space is used side-by-side without further interaction. Community centres or children’s playgrounds have particularly the potential of fostering diversified relations. Local associations can also help to expand its social network in the neighbourhood. However, respondents mostly spend time with family members or friends they know independently of their neighbourhood. Therefore, people make especially use of the functional diversity in the neighbourhood, rather than of the demographic diversity.

To what extent is the diversity of the residential area important for social cohesion? Which elements foster social cohesion, which elements hinder the development of social cohesion in the area? (Chapter 6)

The residential area does not have a strong influence on the formation of strong ties as especially family members and friends are important for interviewees’ network. Respondents’ ties in the neighbourhood are predominantly weak. In many cases the bonds between neighbours are friendly but more of functional nature; a partnership of convenience based on common needs. Even though rather superficial, most respondents appreciate the friendly interaction and social support they find in the neighbourhood. The analysis showed that there are some elements, which have the potential to foster social cohesion. Similar interests and lifestyle including having children or a dog can serve as starting point for friendships but are also important points of connection for bonds in the neighbourhood. Living in the neighbourhood for a long time and also a long-term plan to live in the neighbourhood lead to more commitment, which helps to foster social cohesion. People who spend a lot of time in the neighbourhood, such as older people and families are likely to have stronger ties in the area. Living in a cooperative can foster cohesion within the cooperative but not necessarily in the neighbourhood. Events for neighbours such as street festivals are other important elements, which foster contact among neighbours. Institutional facilities such as community centres also have the potential to facilitate contact in the neighbourhood. Differing interests or lifestyles might have a negative influence on social cohesion. Furthermore, the language barrier and the ‘reserved mentality’ of Zurich or Swiss people can hinder contacts in the neighbourhood.

To what extent is the diversity of the neighbourhood important for social mobility? Which elements foster social mobility and which elements hinder social mobility? (Chapter 7)
Diversity in the neighbourhood and also the neighbourhood in general do not have a big influence on social mobility of inhabitants in our case study area. A good personal networks and even more important a good professional network turned out to be crucial elements, which foster social mobility. People living in the neighbourhood play only a minor role for the social mobility of respondents. Only few respondents who are actively engaged in the neighbourhood, benefited from people living close-by. There are no elements related to diversity in the neighbourhood, which directly foster social mobility. Living in the centre of the city was nevertheless advantageous for some respondents, either due to the close location to their working place or due to the close proximity to the city hotspots. An element, which possibly hinders social mobility, are highly diversified schools which some interviewees consider problematic. The neighbourhood’s reputation neither had a clear positive nor negative influence on social mobility. Overall, diversity in the neighbourhood is of minor relevance for social mobility and personal characteristics are much more important.

How are diversity-related policies perceived by the inhabitants of the area? (Chapter 8)
In the respondents’ perception of policies with respect to their neighbourhood, diversity-related policies were not paramount. Other issues such as the infrastructure, especially issues related to public transport or the road infrastructure, are rather well-known and considered important. Housing policy is the central issue in both the perception of policies as well as in the policy priorities proposed. Many respondents appreciate what the city does in terms of housing policy but they think that the city should do even more. The availability of affordable housing is mainly associated with the possibility to maintain diversity in the area, especially socio-economic diversity.

How do residents profit from a hyper-diverse area and how do they suffer from living in such an area? What do residents do with hyper-diversity and to what extent are they being affected by it?
Even though most respondents have only weak ties in the neighbourhood, they can profit of getting in contact with people with other backgrounds, views and ways of life. These everyday encounters with diverse people, e.g. in the hallway, at children’s playgrounds or in shops, can promote intercultural learning and tolerance. The findings support the contact theory, which assumes that ethnic diversity has a positive effect on intergroup relationships due to the continuous intercultural contact that initiates a learning process correcting negative views on other ethnic groups and reducing prejudices (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998).

Inhabitants of the case study area in Zurich make especially use of the functional diversity in the neighbourhood, rather than the demographic diversity. There are only few strong ties between different groups of people despite a common use of the same public space. The living together of many different groups in the same neighbourhood is characterised by a friendly, mostly conflict-free side-by-side, which is considered very valuable. However, most of them live parallel lives without much contact to other groups.

We could not find evidence that inhabitants of hyper-diverse areas suffer from living in such an area. Many of them actively chose to live in this diverse area and are satisfied with their housing situation. There is no evidence that living in this neighbourhood hinders the inhabitants of taking advantages in their life. However it has to be considered that we did not reach the group of people with very low income or in precarious situations. Furthermore, the case study area in Zurich cannot be considered a deprived area in comparison with other DIVERCITIES case study areas. In addition, the case study area in Zurich – even though sometimes presented negatively in public discourse – it is not (anymore) confronted with a strong bad reputation.

What can policy makers learn from the inhabitants’ perceptions and practices?
It is important that a sufficient amount of affordable housing is provided in the city in order to maintain the social mix in the neighbourhood. The city of Zurich already takes a leading role in
supporting social and cooperative housing. Non-profit apartments already account for 25% of all rental housing and the city aims at increasing the percentage to one third until 2050. It is important that policy makers continue the approach already taken and strengthen social and cooperative housing in the city of Zurich.

As the perceptions and practices of the inhabitants showed, a hyper-diverse neighbourhood itself does not necessarily lead to more intergroup contacts. It is therefore crucial to provide spaces of encounter where people can come together. Policy makers should furthermore strengthen the community centres and the activities they offer, as they seem to have an important function in supporting especially migrants, families and older people and bringing different people together. When the city is involved in the planning of new (public) housing projects, they should support the idea of common rooms where residents can meet and do activities together.

Policy makers should provide green spaces for everyone in walking distance and ensure that they are accessible for all groups of people. Even though encounters do not necessarily lead to close contact, such spaces where diversity becomes visible are important for friendly, everyday interactions. These places facilitate living side-by-side in a relaxed atmosphere.

Schools in hyper-diverse areas bring together various groups and particularly have a potential to foster intergroup contact and intercultural learning. However, as inhabitants’ perceptions and practices showed, they also include a potential for conflict. Inhabitants are concerned about the effects of schools in which only a minority of pupils have a Swiss background and speak German. It is important to pay attention to the situation in such schools and keep an eye on how children deal with and are affected by diversity. Already existing programmes supporting highly diversified schools, such as the school improvement project ‘Quality in Multicultural Schools’ (QUIMS) carried out by the canton of Zurich, should be continued and strengthened.
References


## Appendix

### List of the interviewed persons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Position in household</th>
<th>Income group(^3)</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Couple household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&gt;75</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Iranian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Father in two-parent household with 2 children</td>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>German/American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 2 children</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Couple household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single in shared flat with 1 roommate</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 1 child</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single in shared flat with 1 roommate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Grandmother in three-generation household with 2 parents and 2 children</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Somali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Couple household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Austrian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single in shared flat with 1 roommate</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Single in shared flat with 1 roommate</td>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 2 children</td>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Father in two-parent household with 2 children</td>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>Serbian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 2 children</td>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>Belarusian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single in shared flat with 1 roommate</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 2 children</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Couple household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>&gt;75</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Father in single-parent household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\) For definition of category income group see chapter 1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Household Type</th>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 1 child</td>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 2 children</td>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>Spanish (2nd gen.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>&gt;75</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Father in two-parent household with 3 children</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Couple household</td>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in single-parent household with 3 grown-up children</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>&gt;75</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Italian (2nd gen.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in single-parent household with 1 grown-up child</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Couple household</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Italian (2nd gen.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Couple household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Father in two-parent household with 2 children</td>
<td>Middle-high</td>
<td>Czech (2nd gen.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Couple household</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Italian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 1 child</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 3 children</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>61-75</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Single household</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Single in shared flat with 2 roommates</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 1 child</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Eritrean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in two-parent household with 3 children</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Croatian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single in shared flat with 1 roommate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Swiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Mother in single-parent household with 2 children</td>
<td>Middle-low</td>
<td>Italian (2nd gen.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>