



**Saskia Schmidt**

## **Report on people with a migration background in Germany as consumers or designers of fashion**

- People with a migration background, especially juveniles, are often associated with low education, low-paid jobs and at least crime.
- But in fact they have a great chance to benefit from their multicultural background, their language skills and their skills in intercultural communication. Many immigrants use these advantages to make creative work.
- It is not easy for young immigrants, even with a high graduation, to find a traineeship.  
→ 39% of the 20 to 24 years old persons, who have no general qualification for university entrance and no traineeship, have a migration background.

Especially for women with a migration background it is hard to find work in Germany.

- In Bamberg there is a project called “Mode macht Mut”, which helps women with a migration background to work as sewers and designers. Most of them have already learned the most important skills in sewing. To participate in this project let them improve their skills and give them a chance to earn money. Some of them are single mothers and a certain job is very important for their families.

The project also backs up sustainability, because all used materials are either second hand clothes or sponsored fabrics, which are going to be new designed.

If this project will be successful, there is a chance to develop the project to a business company.

- In Vienna there is a similar possibility for migrant women to work with fashion. The fashion label “Made IN – Made By” has chosen female immigrants as their target group to employ them and protect them from poverty. In 2010 the label won the Austrian Social Impact Award.

The multicultural background of the whole team is shown in the clothes design and the diversity of the team members is seen as enrichment for creativity.

The label focuses on economically and ecologically sustainability. There is a strong preference for local resources and a local production of the clothes.

- Because the most juveniles with migration background have a low level of education, you could say their identification with their friends and with their ethnical background were more distinctive than between German juveniles. The Shell-Study of 1997 shows that juveniles with a low graduation identify themselves more often with special groups.



One important way to show the membership to a special group is to have the same style and wear similar clothes. Their ideals are often musicians or actors found on TV. Hip Hop musicians e.g. are mostly Native Americans with dark skin, so to some juveniles' minds it is cool to have a migration background.

On the one hand many immigrant juveniles try to accommodate to the German members of their peer-group by wearing the same clothes, but on the other hand many German juveniles are wearing Hip Hop clothes to show their membership to this kind of subculture dominated by immigrants.

In some shops you can find display-dummies with a North African appearance. A producer of these kinds of display dummies explains, that shops showing these dummies want to express internationality. These Dummies, either with a North African, an Asian or a Latin American appearance, are mostly produced for young-fashion shops.

A professor for Art and Culture from the University of Dortmund points out, that the prestige of immigrants enhanced because of the high educated immigrants, who came to Germany with a green card. The different nationalities of display-dummies also express the development of society. She also says that fashion is not longer affected only by the upper class, trends and styles of youth subcultures or immigrants also influence it.

- The biggest part of immigrants in Germany is Turkish. Because of the Islamic religion especially the women have some rules about their clothes. That's the reason why there are more and more Islamic-clothes shops in Germany. These shops sell e.g. head cloths, long skirts, tunics and Abayas, a kind of long coat.

Some Muslim women want to show their religious affiliation by wearing Islamic clothes. It doesn't mean automatically religious repression.

Sources:

Beicht Ursula / Granato Mona: Übergänge in eine berufliche Ausbildung - Geringere Chancen für junge Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund.

<http://www.bibb.de/de/52287.htm> (aufgerufen am: 12.04.2012)

Dahinden, Eveline / Appel Ariane: Kleider als Statussymbol bei Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund.

[http://www.martinapeitz.ch/pdf/Forschungsdesign/Forschungsdesign\\_Gruppe\\_16\\_Ariane\\_Appel,\\_Eveline\\_Dahinden.pdf](http://www.martinapeitz.ch/pdf/Forschungsdesign/Forschungsdesign_Gruppe_16_Ariane_Appel,_Eveline_Dahinden.pdf) (aufgerufen am: 12.04.2012)

Homepage „Made IN – Made BY“ <http://mimb.at/about-us/principles/> (aufgerufen am: 11.04.2012)

Mack Cornelia: KanakCultures- Kultur und Kreativität junger Migrantinnen. (Zusammenfassung)

<http://idw-online.de/pages/de/news350248> (aufgerufen am: 12.04.2012)



Mayer Petra: Mode macht Mut.

<http://www.infranken.de/nachrichten/lokales/bamberg/design-Bamberg-Migration-Arbeit-Spass-Mode-macht-Mut;art212,77118> (aufgerufen am: 11.04.2012)

Nordbruch Götz: Jugendkultur, Islam und Demokratie. Islamische Mode in Deutschland.

<http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/jugendkultur-islam-und-demokratie/65182/islamische-mode> (aufgerufen am: 11.04.2012)

Taxacher Gregor: Mode-Puppen als Ethno-Stars: Multikulti im Schaufenster.

[http://www1.wdr.de/themen/archiv/sp\\_integration/integration232.html](http://www1.wdr.de/themen/archiv/sp_integration/integration232.html) (aufgerufen am: 11.04.2012)

April 2012