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Germany as an Immigration Country: From Denial to Integration

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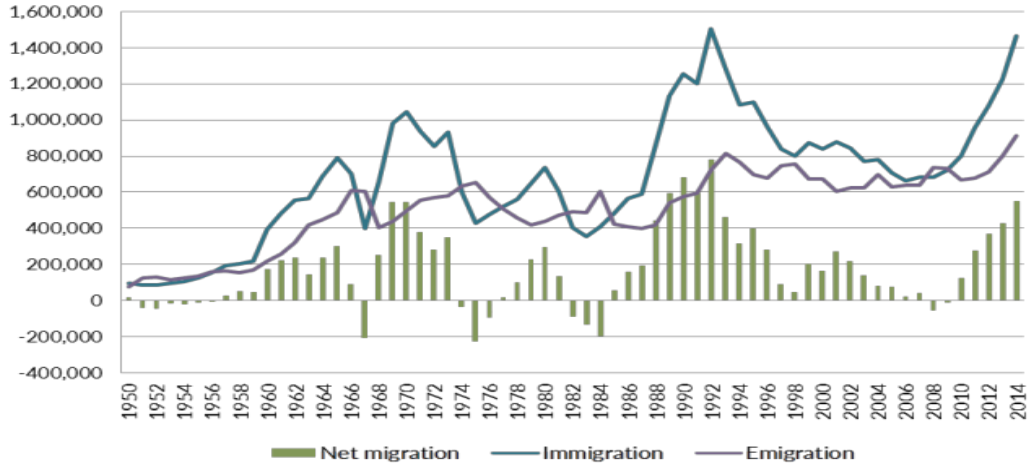
1. Context

One of the most significant trends in post-war Europe has been the way migration has changed nation-states across the continent (Green, 2013). Germany's transformation has perhaps been the most striking (ibid.). Today, more than 15% of Germany's population are foreign-born (Rietig and Müller, 2016), and one-fifth of Germany's 82 million inhabitants have a migration background, including one-third of children under the age of six (Foroutan, 2013). From a country that did not historically see itself as a 'country of immigration', Germany is more actively embracing its status as one of the most attractive immigration destinations in Europe.

Germany has gone through many waves of inward and outward migration since 1945, including post-war refugees; a surge in outward and internal migration with the division of East and West Germany (Kurthen, 1995); the arrival into West Germany of over 4 million ethnic Germans (*Aussiedler oder Spätaussiedler*), primarily from Poland, Romania and the Soviet Union; refugees from Iran during the 1980s and from the Balkans/former Yugoslavia in the 1990s; Iraqi refugees; and refugees from the current Syrian conflict. The country's longstanding demand for foreign workers has also made it an attractive destination, and between 1955 and the end of the 'guest worker' (*Gastarbeiter*) scheme in 1973 millions of unskilled and low-skilled workers entered the country (Green, 2013). While most (around 11 million) returned home, around 3 million remained in Germany, and their efforts to reunify families resulted in a sustained stream of immigration throughout the 1970s (Rietig and Müller, 2016).

Figure 1: Migration to and from Germany, 1950–2014

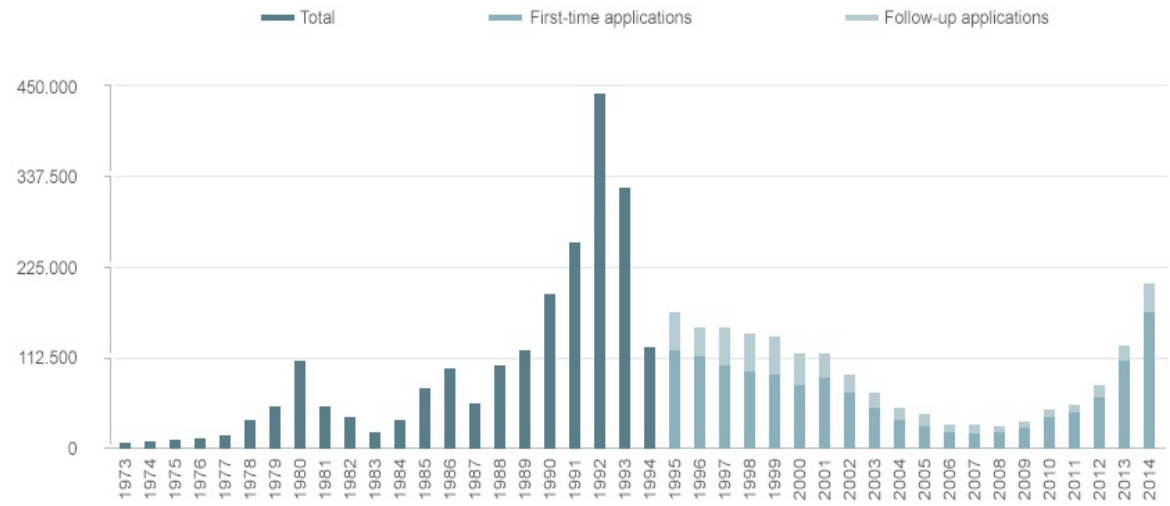


Source: Migration Policy Institute, 2016

Between the end of the Second World War and the early 1970s, the number of asylum applications was relatively low (between 4,300 and 5,600). After 1973, there was a significant change in both the volume and origin of asylum-seekers – with many more coming from outside Europe (Kreienbrink, 2013). By 1979, forced displacement had emerged as a significant source of immigration, with close to 2.6 million asylum applications lodged in Germany over the following two decades (Green, 2013). The number of asylum-seekers reached its first peak between 1979 and 1981, with a total

of 200,000 applying for asylum in the Federal Republic of Germany (Schneider and Engler, 2015). Between 1989 and 1994, Germany witnessed another peak in forcibly displaced people seeking asylum (see Figure 2), particularly from the Balkans. From Yugoslavia alone, about 350,000 refugees fled to Germany; while some claimed asylum, the majority were granted temporary leave to remain (so-called 'tolerated stay') (ibid.). As can be seen in Figure 2, the number of asylum-seekers increased once more by the middle of the 1980s, as Tamils from Sri Lanka and Kurds from Turkey, Iraq and Iran sought refuge in Germany. Between 1980 and 1999, West Germany was by far the largest destination for asylum-seekers in Western Europe.

Figure 2: Asylum applications in the Federal Republic of Germany (1973–2014)



Source: BAMF (2015); Federal Agency for Civic Education (2014)

The increase in arrivals of asylum-seekers throughout the 1980s, coupled with another peak in arrivals of ethnic Germans (*Aussiedler*) and the perceived increasing expenditure on these groups – largely due to the lack of a coherent integration policy which did not allow asylum-seekers to work and enforced their stay in communal housing – led to an increasingly tense and politicised debate around asylum-seekers and immigration more generally (Kreienbrink, 2013), including the extent to which asylum law was being abused by 'economic migrants' (Schneider and Engler, 2015). As the asylum debate became increasingly heated during the 1980s, federal and provincial governments sought to curb asylum claims, making it more difficult to appeal against negative decisions, imposing a visa requirement for countries of origin, preventing asylum-seekers from working during the first 12 months of the asylum procedure, cutting social benefits and imposing residency restrictions (*Residenzpflicht*) (Schneider and Engler, 2015). Despite these restrictions, as can be seen in Figure 2 the number of asylum applications continued to rise, with an exponential increase between 1988 and 1992. Rather than curbing forced migration, restrictions instead encouraged rejected asylum-seekers to remain in the country without pursuing an appeal and pushed a significant number to decide against applying for asylum at all.

Germany's obligations under international human rights law, especially in cases of lost identity documents, made deportation virtually impossible, and eventually 60–70% of those rejected as de jure refugees were allowed to stay and work indefinitely as 'tolerated migrants'. Others stayed on as undocumented illegals (Kurthen, 1995). In 1992, a cross-party compromise called the '*Asylkompromiss*' restricted the constitutional right to asylum, including the introduction of 'safe third country' and 'safe country of origin' principles (Green, 2013). The result was a sharp decrease in asylum claims, which reached their lowest level between 2006 and 2009 (ibid.).

Throughout these ups and downs, policy-makers continued to assert that Germany was 'not an immigration country', despite the existence of immigration since the 1950s, and the large number of foreign workers in the country. This changed in the early 2000s when the new social democrat/green coalition introduced a number of key legislative changes and reforms. These effectively accepted that immigration (both by migrants and by asylum-seekers) was an inevitable fact that could not be undone. The coalition also started looking into how integration processes could be enhanced and made more sustainable (Kreienbrink, 2013). With the large inflows in recent years integration efforts have been accelerated and more holistic and expansive integration policies have been developed. At the same time, however, public unease and anti-immigrant sentiment has grown, leading to a tightening of asylum policies since 2015–16 (Rietig and Müller, 2016).

This study explores the economic, demographic, social and political impacts of forced displacement to Germany. We focus in particular on three main waves: Afghans (from the end of the 1980s); Iranians (from the end of the 1970s); and the most recent wave of arrivals (from 2015–16), mainly Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis. The study will also consider integration policies towards these groups, and how successful (or not) they have been at integrating both economically and socio-politically, and how public opinion towards forced displacement has evolved. While the study focuses on forced displacement (not just refugees in the narrow sense of the definition), it also draws on studies and data on migration more broadly (including economic migrants), to illustrate commonalities or distinctions between these groups. No data is available specifically on the economic impacts of forced displacement. Detailed data on refugees is only available from the 1990s on, as refugees have mainly been treated as part of the larger group of migrants.

2. Legal and policy frameworks

2.1 National legislation and legal framework

Germany is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which is enshrined in the constitution of the Federal Republic and integrated into German law. The right to asylum is codified in Article 16a of the German Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) and Sections 3 and 4 of the Asylum Act (*Asyl Gesetz*).[49] Germany offers subsidiary protection based on the European Convention on Human Rights on Subsidiary Protection, which has been transposed into national legislation through Section 4 of the Asylum Act.

[49] Until 2011 there was a legal difference between the entitlement to asylum according to the German Basic Law and acceptance as a refugee according to the Convention.

Through this, and as per Section 4(3) of the Asylum Act, a foreign national 'shall be eligible for subsidiary protection if he has shown substantial grounds for believing that he would face a real risk of suffering serious harm in his country of origin' (Asylum Act, 2008). Serious harm includes 'serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict' (ibid.). According to Section 60 of the Residence Act, 'a foreigner may not be deported to a state in which his or her life or liberty is under threat on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group or political convictions' (paragraph 1), or 'to a state where they face serious harm as referred to in Section 4 (1) of the Asylum Act' (paragraph 2), and as per paragraph 7 'to another state in which this foreigner faces a substantial concrete danger to his or her life and limb or liberty' (Residence Act, 2008) – following the international customary norm of non-refoulement. The Asylum Act and the Residence Act also provide rules for the admission of refugees and the handling of refugee claims. The Asylum Act codifies the process for and consequences of granting and denying asylum, whereas the Residence Act covers the entry, stay, exit and employment of foreigners in general.

Until the early 2000s, Germany did not have specific policies geared towards the integration of immigrants, let alone an immigration law (Green, 2015). Labour migrants from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) had no legal avenue for coming to and working in Germany. This changed in 2000, when German citizenship law was liberalised to make it easier for immigrants and their children to become German citizens, and for natives and immigrants to hold dual citizenship. The following year, a highly influential government-appointed commission, the Süssmuth Commission, set out comprehensive reform plans for immigration policy and integration. This was followed by the 2005 immigration law, which included the Residence Act governing immigration of third-country nationals and the EU Freedom of Movement Act governing immigration of EU citizens. The Residence Act significantly reduced the administrative complexities of residence procedures and highlighted the importance of integration, making it for the first time a responsibility of the federal government, rather than of immigrants themselves (Rietig and Müller, 2016). New integration courses funded by the federal government were introduced, focusing on language training and legal and cultural orientation (ibid.).

Coincident with these changes to Germany's overall immigration law, there were also important amendments to its asylum law, which meant that many of the restrictions under the 1992 asylum compromise were gradually abolished, and an increasingly generous interpretation of humanitarian protection was established (ibid.). In particular the 2004 EU Qualifications Directive and 2011 EU Asylum Procedures Directive requested that those granted refugee status under the Geneva Convention be guaranteed the same rights as those granted asylum under the German Basic law. The principle of 'subsidiary protection' was also introduced (ibid.).

Most refugees are accepted through an in-country asylum claim, although there are additional routes to refugee protection such as the humanitarian admissions programme and resettlement and relocation programmes at the national and European level (Korntheuer, 2017). Germany participates in the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)'s resettlement programme and the EU-wide resettlement programme, though the numbers resettled through these schemes are

low (300 a year in 2013–14, increasing to 500 in 2015 and 1,600 in 2016–17 through the EU resettlement scheme). Under Germany's lesser-known humanitarian assistance programme for Syria, a total of 20,000 Syrian refugees from Syria and neighbouring countries are allowed entry, while an additional 21,500 were admitted by the end of 2015 under a private sponsorship scheme that began in 2013. Germany also grants temporary protection to local Afghan staff whose work with German troops or officials in Afghanistan may have exposed them to danger.

The number of asylum-seekers increased dramatically from 2015, prompting an outpouring of support by civil society activists and volunteers. What was widely referred to as '*Willkommenskultur*' or 'welcome culture' seemed to demonstrate widespread acceptance of these new arrivals. However, over time discontent has grown, alongside a rise in anti-immigrant political parties, and Germany has adopted a series of new, tighter immigration and asylum laws and policies. Legislative changes in 2015 and 2016 (part of the so-called Asylum Package II) envision an accelerated asylum procedure for a large number of asylum-seekers, with a target of one week to complete applications. The Asylum Procedure Acceleration Act of 2015 designated Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro as 'safe' countries of origin, meaning that applicants from these countries are not allowed to work and will have their applications rejected more quickly than previously. Other claimants with a good prospect of being allowed to stay are to be integrated into the labour market more quickly, and benefit from early integration measures such as occupational language training.[50] Tougher measures were also introduced for those who refuse to participate in integration schemes, including cuts to benefits, and the ability to stay in Germany permanently has been linked to successful participation in these schemes (Rietig and Müller, 2016). In addition to access to training and language courses, as well as benefits, a refugee's status determines their rights to family reunion. Recognised refugees are given an immediate right to family reunion, whereas family reunion is currently on hold for those who obtained subsidiary protection after March 2016.

2.2 Freedom of movement and accommodation

The responsibility for and allocation of asylum-seekers is shared between the federal government, the provinces (Länder) and municipalities. A quota, the 'Königstein Key',[51] is used to allocate asylum-seekers based on the population and tax revenues of each German state, giving no say to asylum-seekers about their preferred location. The asylum procedure is handled by the BAMF, while the provinces and municipalities are responsible for providing accommodation and social benefits. During the first three months of the asylum process, asylum-seekers are housed in specialised reception centres (Residenzpflicht), are not allowed to move freely or work, and are required to remain in the district where they registered (Eurofound, 2016). People who have been granted refugee status or subsidiary protection receive a residence permit. Municipalities and provinces decide on a case-by-case basis whether to house asylum-seekers in accommodation centres (Gemeinschaftsunterkünfte) or state-provided apartments, decentralised housing (see

[50] For more details see https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Artikel/2015/10_en/2015-10-15-asyl-fluechtlingspolitik.html.

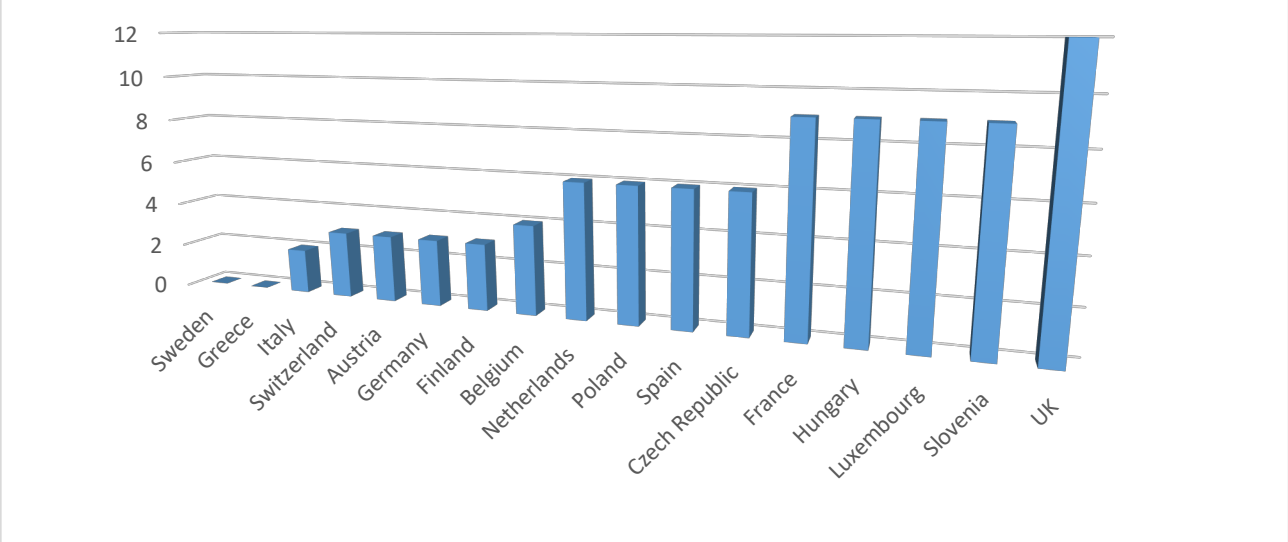
[51] According to the BAMF the Königstein Key is calculated on an annual basis by the bureau of the Federation-*Länder* Commission (http://www.bamf.de/EN/Service/Left/Glossary/_function/glossar.html?lv3=1504234&lv2=1450778).

Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration, 2017), or allow them to seek accommodation in the private housing market, where they may find themselves competing with other migrants and German nationals. Local implementation of federal guidelines is not uniform and differs between provinces (Scholz, 2016).

2.3 Right to work: from the European to the national

With the exception of Ireland and Lithuania, every member of the European Economic Area (EEA) grants asylum-seekers the right to work at some point during their application process and before a decision is made on their application. However, under the 1951 Refugee Convention there is no obligation on states to grant asylum-seekers the right to work, and states do not commonly grant asylum-seekers the immediate right to access the labour market for fear that this would encourage more asylum-seekers, as well as economic migrants, and for political and public opinion reasons. Aside from Greece and Sweden, which grant an almost immediate right to work, waiting periods vary from two months (in the case of Italy) to 12 months (in the case of the UK) (Migration Watch UK, 2013; OECD, 2016a).

Figure 3: Waiting period until a work permit is granted across EEA countries (in months)



Source: OECD, 2016a. Certain employment conditions apply in some countries, e.g. labour market tests.

Once an asylum-seeker receives a positive decision on their application in the EEA, they are granted the right to work (OECD, 2016a). The key problem in Europe is the period between an asylum application and becoming a recognised refugee. During this time, asylum-seekers are dependent on social assistance from the state and are in many cases unable to access language classes or other educational or training courses. Although research shows that granting the right to work facilitates integration, many countries believe that, before an asylum-seeker is recognised, there is little incentive to invest resources in their integration. Yet without initiating the integration process prior to approving an application, recognised refugees will not be immediately able to work due to language and other educational barriers (Chope, 2012)

2.3.1 Access to the local labour market

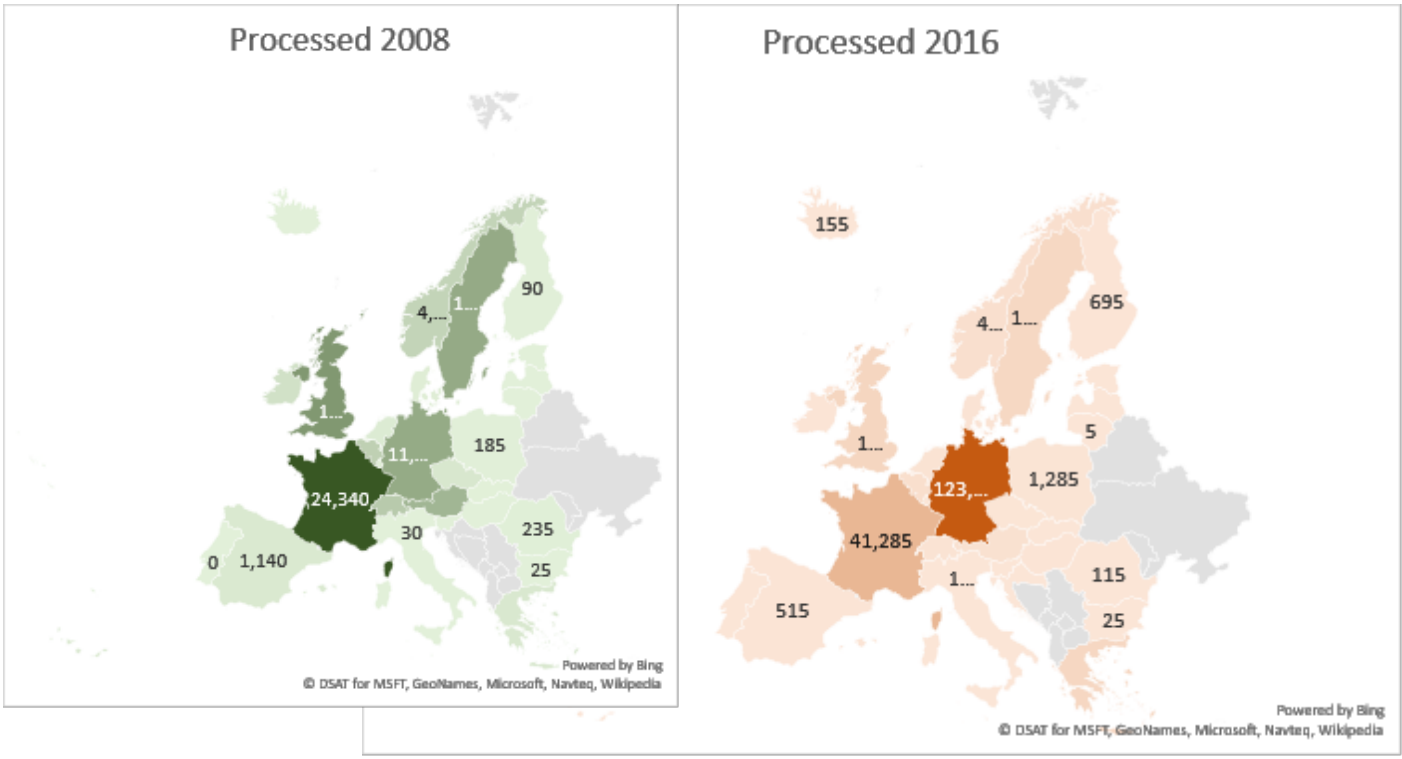
Prior to 2014, refugees in Germany were expected to pass a proof of precedence test (*Vorrangigkeitsprüfung*) before receiving the right to work. This meant that German nationals and those holding permanent residency had priority access to any open job positions, and employers were required to demonstrate that they had been unsuccessful in attracting a German national to the vacancy. Similar rules applied to apprenticeships, with the additional stipulation that the candidate had to demonstrate a good likelihood of keeping their refugee status and becoming self-sufficient. Refugees had access to the same level of social support (in the form of financial assistance, rent coverage, health insurance etc.) as a long-term unemployed German (Barslund et al., 2016).

Starting in 2014, the hurdles to employment for refugees and those with subsidiary protection have been progressively reduced. Initially, the right to work could be given to asylum-seekers (but not to tolerated persons, i.e. rejected individuals who are not deported) after three months of their formal application, but required a proof of precedence and that the individual was not a national of a so-called secure third country. The proof of precedence was subsequently reduced to a period of 15 months, before being abandoned altogether in most provinces. While refugees staying at reception centres are not given the right to work, the waiting time to access the labour market for asylum-seekers with a good prospect of being granted asylum is now officially three months (Eurofound, 2016). Recognised asylum-seekers and those with tolerated status are allowed to engage in self-employment, though the latter are required to ask for permission from the immigration authorities. Employers can offer an unpaid three-month internship for career guidance purposes, including a six-week assessment (*ibid.*).

3. Impacts of forced displacement on Germany and prospects for integration

Germany has experienced a significant increase in asylum applications since 2013, and since 2014 has received the largest number of asylum applications in Europe. Previously, France and the UK processed the largest number of asylum-seekers.

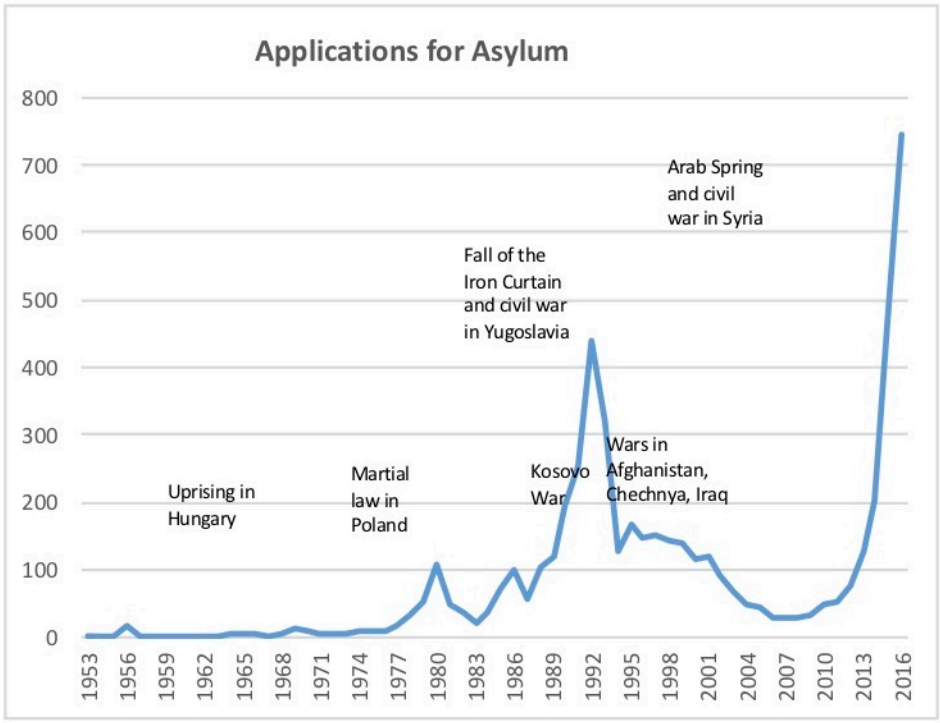
Figure 4: Final decisions on applications by refugees



Source: Developed by the authors based on Eurostat, data set as of July 2017, extracted in August 2017)

Year	Applications for asylum		
	Total	**First application**	**Subsequent applications after withdrawal or denial of first application**
2007	30,303	19,164	11,139
2008	28,018	22,085	5,933
2009	33,033	27,649	5,384
2010	48,589	41,332	7,257
2011	53,347	45,741	7,606
2012	77,651	64,539	13,112
2013	127,023	10,958	17,443
2014	202,834	173,072	29,762
2015	476,649	441,899	34,750
2016	745,545	722,370	23,175

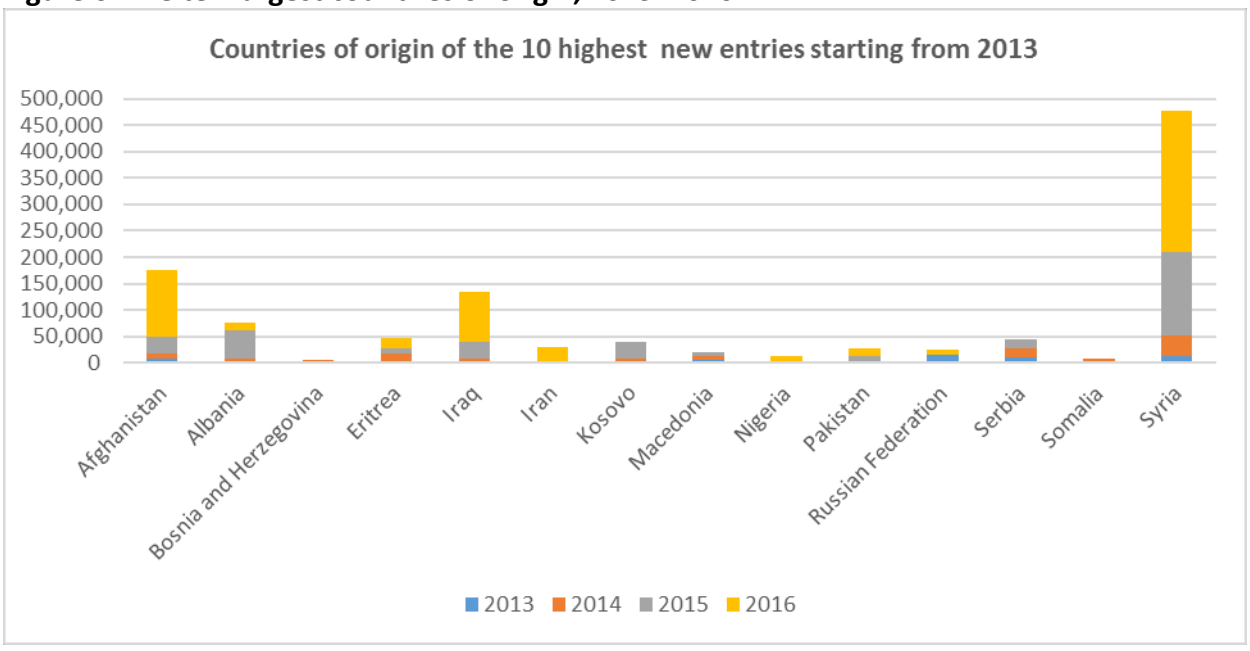
Figure 5: **Applications for asylum, 1953–2016**



Source: Developed by the authors, based on data from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, key figures, 2016.

The ten largest groups comprise more than two-thirds of all refugees in 2013 and 2014, and more than 80% for the years 2015 and 2016, with Syrians making up by far the largest group of forcibly displaced people. Afghans and Syrians represent the largest groups of forcibly displaced people in Germany for at least the last five years.

Figure 6: The ten largest countries of origin, 2013–2016



Source: Developed by the authors based on data from the Federal Office for Migration

and Refugees, key figures, 2016.

3.1 Demographic impacts

3.1.1 Demographic profile of the forcibly displaced population

There are three main sources on recent asylum applicants to Germany. The first key source is published by the BAMF, based on a 2014 representative survey of people entitled to asylum and recognised refugees (Worbs et al., 2016).[52] The second is based on analysis of a database of all first-time asylum applicants in 2015 who agreed to respond to additional questions,[53] also published by the BAMF (Rich, 2016). This is therefore not a representative sample. The third is a representative survey of 4,800 refugees who applied for asylum in Germany between 2013 and 2016 (IAB/BAMF/SOEP, 2016).[54] These three sources thus differ in the time period they cover (with some overlaps) and the types of forced displacement they are concerned with. All three, however, show that the forcibly displaced population has a different demographic composition than the German population.

Gender profile

Compared to the German population, there is a greater share of men than women, around two-thirds male to one-third female (Worbs et al., 2016). The Rich (2016) study based on 2015 data suggests that up to 75% of asylum-seekers are male (Rich, 2016). This male–female breakdown is found among Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi asylum-seekers. However, this is a recent phenomenon; over the past 50 years, immigration has seen only a small gender imbalance.

Age profile

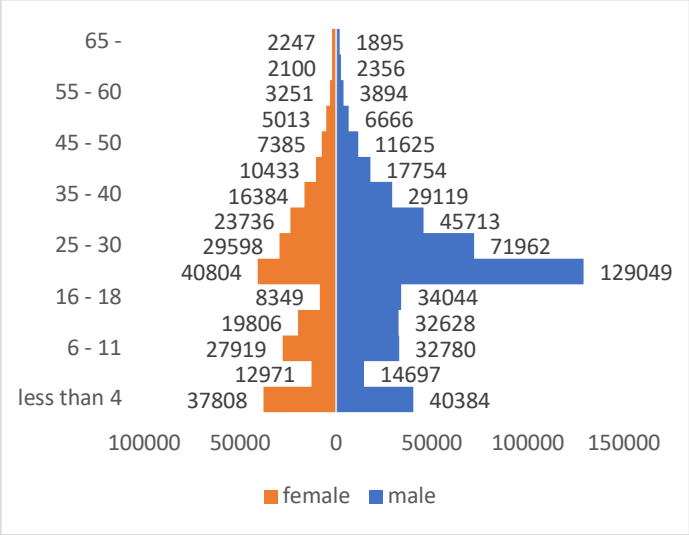
Like most industrialised countries, German society is aging, increasing dependency ratios between the non-working and the actively working population. The inflow of young migrants and refugees may alleviate the imminent pension crisis. The forcibly displaced population has a much younger demographic profile than those with German ancestry (see Figure 7). Young people aged between 18 and 34 constitute the largest share by far in all nationality groups and in the total refugee population. Crucially, the over-50s do not account for a tenth share in any group. The share of the youngest group is largest for Afghan refugees, with more than 70% in that category, giving an overall average age of 32.5 years (Worbs et al., 2016). This means that the forcibly displaced population is generally of working age, but it also implies that they could be more likely to need state services (there is more discussion on this below).

[52] This survey was based on responses from 2,800 people entitled to asylum and recognised refugees from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iraq, Iran, Sri Lanka and Syria, aged between 18 and 69, and whose asylum application was approved between 2008 and 2012.

[53] This is the so-called '*Soziale Komponente*' questionnaire, which includes questions on education, language skills and employment.

[54] This includes people entitled to asylum, failed asylum-seekers and recognised refugees. The first part of the results of this survey have recently been published under Forschungsbericht 29. The analysis of the second part of the survey was published after this report was produced.

Figure 7: Age breakdown of refugees



Source: Developed by the authors based on data from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2017.

The average number of children per woman is significantly higher than in the German population. With the exception of Iranians and Sri Lankans, with an average of 1.7 and 2.1 children respectively, the range is from 2.7 for Afghan refugees and 3.1 for Iraqis, according to the 2014 study by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

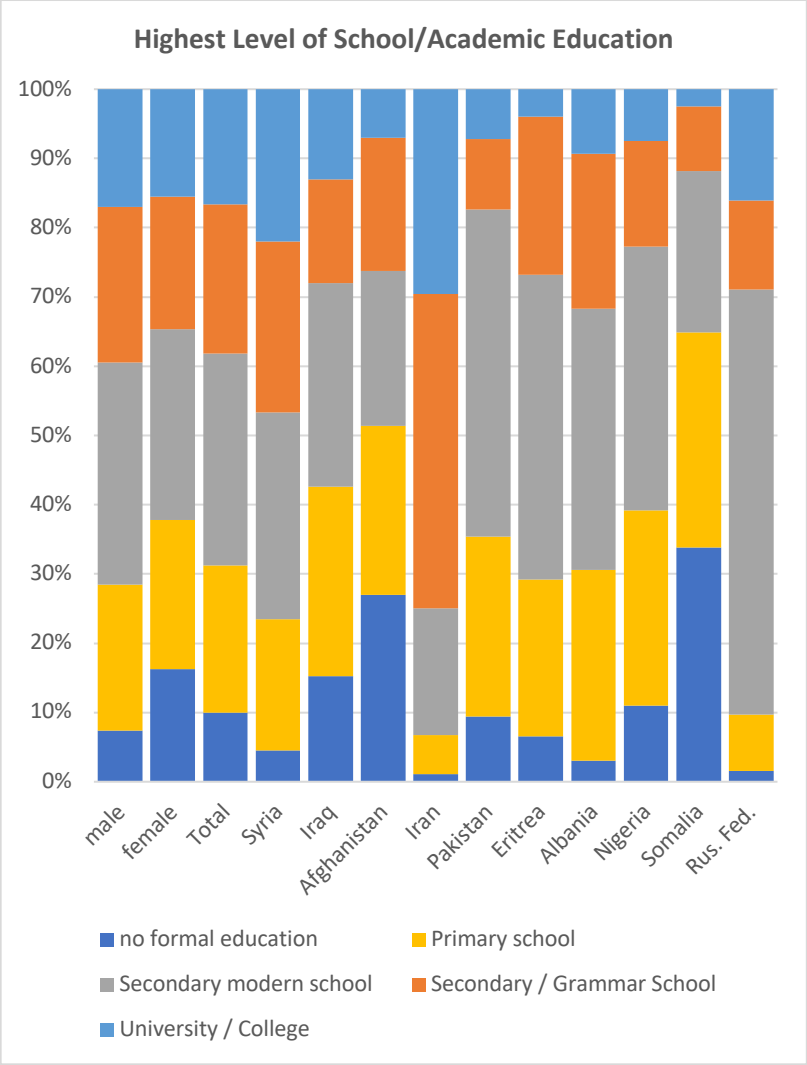
3.1.2 Education levels

Levels of education among the forcibly displaced are, as to be expected, lower than in the German population. The Worbs et al. (2014) study shows that around 16% had no education (25% for Iraqis, 18% for Afghans, 16% for Syrians). Roughly 70% of all respondents in the survey attended school for between five and 14 years (Worbs and Bund, 2016, based on Worbs et al., 2014). Approximately 13% can be categorised as 'unskilled' with regard to schooling and formal vocational training taken together, while just over 10% can be regarded as 'higher-skilled' (13% for Afghans, 8% for Syrians) (ibid.).

The 2016 study based on the database of asylum-seekers finds that 7% had no educational attainments (27% for Afghans, 18% for Iraqis, around 5% for Syrians), 22% some primary schooling, around 50% some form of secondary education and 18% higher education (27% for Syrians) (Rich, 2016). The most recent study (IAB/BAMF/SOEP, 2016) shows that 55% of asylum-seekers have completed ten years of schooling, and 58% have spent ten years or more in school, higher education or professional education, compared to 88% in the German population. At the upper end of the spectrum, around 37% of those aged 18 and above have attended secondary/high school, and 32% have completed their high school education; those at this end of the spectrum have comparable or even slightly higher levels of education than the German population – for comparison, around 29% of the German population have completed high school or similar. In the middle, 31% have attended middle school (comparable to German Hauptschule or Realschule, i.e. secondary school) (22% completed), and at the lower end 10% of asylum-seekers only attended primary school and 9% attended no school at all. In other words, at the higher end of the spectrum the qualifications of asylum-seekers are not very different from the overall German

population but are significantly different in the middle and at the lower end. There are also significant differences between asylum-seekers from countries that have experienced prolonged wars (such as Afghanistan, Somalia and Sudan), where the education sector has been decimated, leaving large numbers of people without formal education, and countries like Syria, where education levels are comparatively high (ibid.).

Figure 8: Education level of refugees based on full database of asylum applicants in 2015



Source: Developed by the authors based on data from the BAMF Soko Database, 2016.

Recent data on asylum-seekers shows a varied and diverse picture of educational attainment, and one that is highly dependent on the country of origin. Comparing the more recent survey described in Rich (2016) to the earlier study of Worbs et al. (2014), we can see somewhat higher education levels in the Rich (2016) study, in particular

regarding Syrians (8% against 27% with higher education), though it is unclear if this is a trend that will continue in the long run.[55] Many have high ambitions for future education: 40% of asylum-seekers surveyed aim to attain a high school certificate in Germany, and two-thirds a university or professional leaving certificate (IAB/BAMF/SOEP, 2016). This could have important consequences for the German education system, as well as highlighting the importance of integration measures such as language training and professional integration. However, it remains to be seen whether refugees will be prepared to invest substantially in education or professional training, potentially at the expense of starting a job and earning an income more quickly (ibid.).

3.1.3 Women and girls

More than 500,000 women and girls came to Germany between 2012 and 2016, mainly from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq (Worbs and Bauralina, 2016). Most are young and live with their families (ibid.). They tend to have lower educational qualifications than men, and often lack any form of schooling or vocational training (Worbs and Bund, 2016). In the 25–65 age group, unskilled women account for 17%, compared to 10.8% for men. The share is particularly high among Iraqi women, at 27.2%. Women are also most represented in the group with no vocational qualifications (the highest is again Iraqi women, at 82%). On average, women also tend to have significantly less experience of paid work in their countries of origin (Worbs and Baraulina, 2017). As women account for only one-third of refugees, this is unlikely to have a major impact on the labour market, but it does have implications for their integration because women are less likely to work and more likely to be 'stuck' at home. See below for a more detailed discussion.

3.1.4 Place of residence

Data from 2014 shows that most refugees live in large cities (Worbs et al., 2016). This means that impacts on public services will be felt particularly strongly in cities and large agglomerations, though schools and service providers in these areas should also have more experience with migrants and refugee children. This was also one of the reasons behind the additional obligations on asylum-seekers introduced in 2016: only those able and willing to find a job are allowed to settle wherever they want in Germany (after the three-month waiting period); others have to accept their place of residence as determined by the official distribution system (the '*Königsteiner Schlüssel*') (Rietig and Mueller, 2016).

3.2 Education

Like German children, the children of refugees and asylum-seekers (including those who have a 'tolerated' status (temporary leave to remain)) are required by law to attend full-time education for nine or ten years – with few exceptions[56] – and are given the opportunity to obtain an official school certificate (Müller et al., 2014). Given the

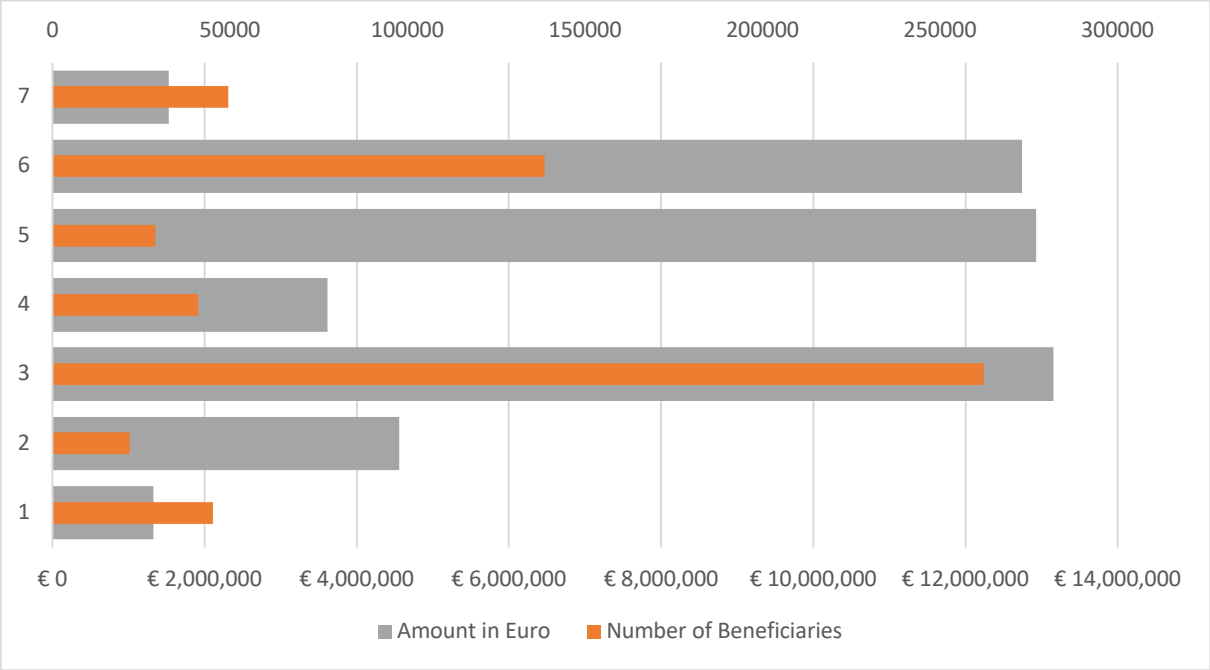
[55] We also need to keep in mind that they are sampling somewhat different populations.

[56] Education is the responsibility of the provinces, so there are regional variations. For example, in Berlin schooling is not compulsory for asylum-seekers who have not yet been granted asylum.

educational differentials discussed above, refugee children frequently require additional years of preparatory classes before switching from primary to secondary school or follow regular classes while receiving additional language tuition (Schroeder and Seukwa, 2007). Insufficient resources mean that schools are often unprepared to accommodate young immigrants (Eurofound, 2016).

The state actively supports extra-curricular activities, such as school trips. Figure 9 provides an overview of the support provided by the state to parents of school-age children. Additional funding is available for children with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, but this is dependent on their leave to remain status (Weiser, 2016).

Figure 9: School support for asylum-seekers in 2016 and first quartile of 2017



Note: The categories are: 1) School excursions, 2) School trips (lasting serval days), 3) School supplies, 4) Transportation, 5) Learning support, 6) Board, 7) Participation in social and cultural life as part of the community.

Source: Developed by the authors based on data from the Federal Statistical Office 2017 – Benefits for asylum-seekers.

On condition of having obtained a minimum language proficiency at level C1 and providing proof of the necessary formal qualification, refugees are allowed to attend university in Germany. In addition, the '3 plus 2' rule is intended to guarantee greater legal security for those employing an asylum-seeker as an apprentice, as requested by employers. Since February 2016, asylum-seekers (including those granted leave to remain) can start an apprenticeship under certain circumstances, and are protected

from deportation during their training, and for two additional years if they succeed in finding work after completing their training (OECD, 2017). Asylum-seekers are also entitled to the same level of pay as German apprentices pay according to the Federal Employment Office (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, see 2017).

In response to recent refugee inflows, the German government has provided additional funding of €130m (Bundestag, 2016). The Education Ministry (BMBF) has developed an app to teach German, trained teaching assistants, developed special reading kits for refugees, and put in place funding for educational coordinators at municipal level (ibid.). Many schools have introduced 'welcome classes' and integration courses (Judith Kohlenberger, Wittgenstein Centre, draft).

There is as yet no systematic empirical evidence on the impact of refugee children on the German education system, but in terms of numbers it is unlikely to be substantial (Robert Bosch foundation, 2015). However, it is also important to consider the needs and additional requirements of refugee children, which are likely to be higher than for German children (ibid.). Thus, while the actual number of Syrian children attending primary school in 2014–15 (5,440) led to only a very small increase in enrolment rates, and as such did not have any measurable impact on the characteristics of the primary school population (Blossfeld et al., 2016), Wößmann (2016) argues that pupils do not have a standard of education equivalent to their German counterparts. There is some evidence that individual institutions are overburdened, with teachers unable to cope or who do not know how to deal with the specific challenges involved (Blossfeld et al., 2016; Karakayali et al., 2017). Many teachers feel that they do not have the right training or knowledge (ibid.), making integration more difficult. It is not yet clear to what extent the new initiatives rolled out by the German government will overcome some of the challenges identified by teachers. More broadly, 26.5% of asylum applications in 2015 were made by minors under the age of 16, mostly from Eritrea, Syria and Serbia, for a total of 117,000 applications. These numbers are growing (Blossfeld et al., 2016). These children fall under compulsory education but are particularly difficult to integrate. They have highly heterogenous educational backgrounds, most do not speak German and many also need psychological support (*ibid.*). Refugee children and youth in their late teens are no longer obliged to go to school and have no right to education. Lack of education makes it difficult for them to access work easily. To our knowledge this issue has not been explored.

3.3 Healthcare

Asylum-seekers are initially screened for infectious diseases (Bozorgmehr et al., 2016), but not systematically for chronic diseases or mental health disorders (including trauma). Asylum-seekers whose application has been formally granted and who have a long-term residence permit are eligible for full public healthcare, as are asylum-seekers who have been subject to the Asylum Seekers' Benefit Act for longer than 48 months, regardless of status (Bozorgmehr and Razum, 2015). According to the Asylum Seekers' Benefit Act, all other groups receive only emergency medical care, necessary vaccinations, dental care for painful conditions and support during pregnancy and childbirth. Aftercare is subject to individual application and assessment. Psychotherapy is rarely granted, and only if the need for it is judged to be acute (Klein, 2016).

Perinatal and neonatal mortality rates are consistently higher in foreign-born groups, especially Turkish immigrants, than in the population as a whole (Carballo and Nerukar, 2001). The rate of perinatal mortality for babies born to German mothers is approximately 5.2%, and among non-nationals approximately 7%, and the incidence of congenital abnormalities and maternal mortality is also higher among immigrants (ibid.). A study on migrants from the former Soviet Union showed that male immigrants had a significantly higher risk of dying from external causes and suicide than Germans, and this increases with the frequency of residential changes (Ott et al., 2008). There is little data on the health status of refugees, but isolated studies suggest that refugees are more likely to have mental health issues and PTSD and are at greater risk of suicide (Razum et al., 2008). Children in particular need specialised support (ibid.). The IAB/BAMF/SOEP (2016) also shows that individuals with a background of forced displacement are more satisfied with their general health status but are more likely to suffer from depression.

There is little evidence as to the impact of asylum-seekers and refugees on the health system. Several studies show that migrants and refugees make *less* use of preventive healthcare services (Kohls, 2011; Razum et al., 2008); for refugees, this effect is especially strong for vaccinations (Razum et al., 2008). This is of course linked to the fact that they are on the whole not eligible for these services (see above). Initial restrictions on access to health services can lead to higher follow-up costs if mental health and other health issues go untreated (Bozorgmehr and Razum, 2015; Norredam et al., 2005). The current system shifts care from the less expensive primary sector to costly treatments for acute conditions in the secondary and tertiary sectors, increasing the direct costs of treatment and administrative costs (Bozorgmehr and Razum, 2015). Other barriers to healthcare include language and the availability of interpreters. One study (Bischoff and Denhaerynck, 2010) shows that language barriers can affect usage of health services and hence the costs to the health system in the short and longer term.

There is also a general question as to whether refugees *need* health services more, though this has not been explored. For labour migrants, analysis has shown that there is a so-called 'healthy migrant effect'. This means that migrants tend to be healthier than the native population in the beginning due to self-selection, and so will not use health services as much. There is no analysis on whether this effect also holds for refugees, though studies by Razum and colleagues suggest this may not be the case (Razum et al., 2008; Bozorgmehr and Razum, 2015; Razum and Wenner, 2016). Refugees are also more likely to have mental health issues, disabilities and injuries from war or sustained on the journey (see Lindert et al., 2009 for a cross-European systematic review which shows this). The health of refugees in Germany is better than the population back home, and there is likely to have been positive selection of refugees: journeys to Europe are physically challenging, and younger and healthier refugees are more likely to have attempted the journey. Evidence in this area is still lacking, but it is clear that whether there is a 'healthy refugee effect' depends on the comparison group.

3.4 Economic impacts and integration prospects

3.4.1. Key features of Germany's integration policy

German policy-makers have focused on developing a more holistic set of integration policies since 2015, which has also resulted in a number of legal changes, notably through the Integration Act of 2016.[57] Integration focuses on three key areas: language, employment and societal interaction/integration (Blickpunkt Integration, 2017). Integration measures are linked, so for example while the earliest possible integration into the labour market is clearly a primary goal, this can only be achieved with focused language training that aims, not only at learning the language itself, but also connecting language training with employment and labour market integration, such as how to write job applications (ibid.). Another important element has been the targeting of integration measures more specifically to the needs and characteristics of new arrivals. Thus, specific integration courses help familiarise new arrivals with societal norms and values. A key feature here has been an on average nine-month-long integration course. Although established in 2005, long before the recent refugee influx, access to the course has been widened to cover, not only asylum-seekers, but also those with 'tolerated' status prior to obtaining official asylum status. The course includes a 60-hour 'cultural orientation' with an introduction to German culture and society, as well as 600 contact hours (*Unterrichtseinheiten*) of German-language teaching (Trines, 2017). The new integration measures allow for more rapid integration for some asylum-seekers, but also place more responsibility on newcomers to accept course offers and actively participate in integration schemes, with those refusing to participate facing benefit cuts.

Hundreds of new integration projects have also been created (and are supported by federal budgets) that aim to support interaction between new arrivals and the German population – these range from sports to cooking and various projects run by local associations. Many rely heavily on the involvement of local volunteers and civil society (Blickpunkt Integration, 2017). Between 2015 and 2016, some 15,000 projects aiming to increase refugees' language acquisition were launched, ranging from volunteer teaching to mentoring and more casual meetings and interactions with refugees (Spiegel, 2017). There has been significant public sector investment in these new integration measures, with social welfare payments for asylum-seekers alone accounting for €5.3bn in 2015 – 169% more than in 2014 (Trines, 2017). In 2016, the government spent €21.7bn on refugee-related expenditure, including €5.3bn on integration measures and €4.4bn in social welfare payments (ibid.).

3.4.2 Labour market integration

Studies suggest that, in the past, there were significant differences in integration outcomes between refugees and other migrants. Refugees generally had lower levels of educational attainment and professional qualifications than other migrants and found it more difficult to get their existing certificates recognised (Liebau and Salikutluk, 2016). Refugees also had less knowledge of German than other migrants at the time of their arrival, though they managed to rapidly increase their language

[57] More details on the Integration Act can be found here: https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/EN/Artikel/2016/07_en/2016-05-25-integrationsgesetz-beschlossen_en.html

proficiency (Liebau and Schacht, 2016). Labour market integration also took longer compared to other migrants – in particular for refugee women – although differences seemed to fade over a number of years (Salikutluk et al., 2016). Dustmann et al (2016), drawing on the 2008 wave of the EU Labour Force Survey, finds that, at the European level, migrants who arrived for humanitarian reasons were less likely to be employed than economic migrants from the same areas of origin. However, given that in the past there were no explicit policies in place to facilitate refugee integration into the labour market, and there were a number of additional institutional hurdles placed on refugees with regard to labour market and other integration, it is difficult to know whether these results would still hold true under different circumstances. In particular, changes to Germany's integration policy since 2015–16 aimed at opening up labour market access to asylum-seekers much earlier and investing more in skills/educational training may prove significant.

Enduring and successful integration of asylum-seekers and refugees requires access to the labour market and effective participation in the labour force (OECD, 2016b). Aiyar et al. (2016) identify integration of refugees as a key element in alleviating the potential negative fiscal impact of the recent refugee influx, and as a counter-measure to the aging society in Germany. Integration of refugees into the labour market is however a slow process. Employment reaches its full potential only after 10–15 years, and still remains below the level of native-born Germans (OECD, 2017). According to Dustmann et al. (2016), the gap between refugees and native Germans reaches insignificant levels only after 15–19 years. Nevertheless, almost all male and 85% of female asylum-seekers demonstrated interest in seeking employment. Thus, propensity to seek employment is high, while labour participation remains low, especially among women (Neske and Rich, 2016, Brücker et al, 2016). In addition, asylum-seekers and refugees are frequently employed in the informal sector (Aumüller and Bretl, 2008) and in jobs below their level of qualification (UNHCR, 2013).

Around 14% of refugees in Germany are employed (IAB/BAMF/SOEP 2016), though evidence suggests that labour market integration progressively increases over time: while only 9% of those who arrived in 2015 were working, 22% of those who arrived in 2014 and 31% of those arrived in 2013 or earlier were employed (ibid.). Refugees who have been granted asylum tend to work in positions for which they are overqualified, i.e. that are not equivalent to their degree, as roughly two-thirds of the offered positions require only low qualifications (OECD, 2017). According to the Worbs et al. (2014) study, refugees with an academic degree frequently work as medical or non-medical healthcare professionals (i.e. as physicians, masseurs, medical assistants or carers). They also frequently work as drivers.

Language skills

At least half of employers consider a good mastery of German essential, even for low-skilled jobs. For the position of a skilled worker, 90% require a good level of German and 40% prefer an excellent level of language proficiency. Based on a recent study (Brücker et al., 2016), at entry approximately 90% of refugees had no prior knowledge of German and only 30% declared themselves proficient in English. However, within two years around a fifth considered their knowledge of German to be good or excellent, and a third as average, while roughly half considered their proficiency as

poor or non-existent. Of those who remained in Germany for more than two years, approximately 70% consider their language proficiency as average or better. Acquiring good language proficiency is not just a first-generation problem but applies equally to the children of migrants. Parents often believe that teaching their children their mother tongue is part of conserving their national identity, and so can neglect the German-language skills of their children (see Al-Ali et al., 2001 for the case of Eritreans and Bosnians). However, the children of migrants and refugees have a better chance of acquiring German language skills through schooling than their parents, and often act as translators for their parents.

Education, experience and current work

An estimated 35% of arrivals in Germany in 2015 did not have work experience (Trines, 2017). By comparison, 73% of those surveyed in the recent IAB/BAMF/SOEP study (2016) (81% of men, 50% of women) in the 18–65 age group had some work experience prior to arriving in Germany, on average 6.4 years. A third had been blue-collar workers, 25% were employed but not in management positions and 27% were self-employed. However, 69% lacked formal vocational training or the professional qualifications the German labour market requires (ibid.).

The low rate of acceptance of training qualifications acquired in their country of origin imposes an additional obstacle for refugees trying to access the labour market, especially since refugees need to provide official documentation and proof of their qualifications and certificates (OECD, 2017). A formal evaluation and recognition procedure known as the '*Anerkennungsgesetz*' allows those who do not have supporting documents for their qualifications – including refugees – to take part in a 'skills analysis' that might help identify the level of skills attained or, if the foreign credentials are found not to be comparable to German standards, can recommend programmes to convey the missing skills (Trines, 2017).

Other factors, such as waiting times for asylum decisions and uncertainty about long-term ability to stay, can also greatly influence whether an individual chooses to invest in acquiring new skills – such as language, apprenticeship or education – that are useful in their new country (Dustmann et al., 2016). Germany's system of 2–3-year trade apprenticeships, after which students obtain their skills certificate, is both expensive for refugees (because they earn less than they would in an unskilled job) and the certificate might not be worth much in their country of origin. Hence, a refugee might be reluctant to engage in prolonged training unless assured of permanent residency in Germany (ibid.; see also Dustmann and Schöberg, 2012).

The recent IAB/BAMF/SOEP (2016) study finds that, according to preliminary estimates,[58] there is a statistically significant positive correlation between finishing one of the BAMF integration courses, the ESF/BAMF language courses or the BA language course and the start of employment. The effects of the ESF/BAMF language courses were particularly strong. This shows the potential that investment in integration measures may be able to show in the future.

[58] These are correlations, rather than causal inferences.

Several new government initiatives have focused explicitly on the skills needed for employment in Germany – such as the job-related language training courses funded by the federal government in 2016, or a project to subsidise 100,000 so-called 'one euro jobs' for refugees, which provide employers with cheap, subsidised labour while at the same time helping refugees gain work experience, improve their language skills and develop local contacts (Trines, 2017). However, this programme had reached only 4,392 refugees as of November 2016 and has been criticised for potentially 'parking' refugees in low-skilled, low-income jobs, without leading to real integration (ibid.).

Apart from initiatives formally supported by the German state, the private sector has also launched a number of initiatives aimed at supporting refugees' integration into the workforce. One such initiative, a 'network of businesses integrating refugees', included 300 companies employing 2,500 refugees in October 2016 (ibid.). Here again, the key concern is that these often included temporary hiring contracts, internships and training programmes, rarely leading to full-time employment – at least as yet (ibid.). Individual companies have also launched their own programmes. DHL, for example, has committed €1m in funding in the first year of an initiative to support refugee integration programmes through local partners, in particular language acquisition and vocational support. The company also plans to offer up to 1,000 internships, and supports employee volunteers involved with local projects, drawing on its global Corporate Volunteering programme (DHL Press Release, 2015).

Success rates of these private sector initiatives are not yet clear. Key issues cited by German businesses include the difficult bureaucracy they need to navigate in order to hire refugees, lengthy asylum processes and long waiting lists for language courses (Spiegel, 2017). There are also concerns that investments in young migrants might be wasted should they ultimately be deported – as has been the case for those from Afghanistan and Eritrea (ibid.). Another key concern for German business remains how to fill Germany's skills gap, with 78% of German companies complaining that they are having trouble finding qualified personnel (Ernst & Young, cited in Spiegel, 2017). There were hopes that Syrian refugees might be able to fill this gap given their better qualifications, though comprehensive data is not yet available on their skills and doubts have recently emerged as to how quickly even qualified Syrians might integrate into the labour market, given the bureaucratic hurdles and the difficulties around recognition of skills and certificates outlined above (see also Spiegel, 2017).

As analysis by Deutsche Bank's research unit highlights that, if well managed, the recent influx of refugees presents a significant opportunity to address Germany's demographic challenges and the skills gap in the German labour market (Folkerts-Landau, 2015). Success hinges on the successful integration of the new arrivals, in particular integration into the school system for younger refugees, and for older ones integration into the labour market. Substantial government spending on facilitating integration measures is warranted (ibid.).

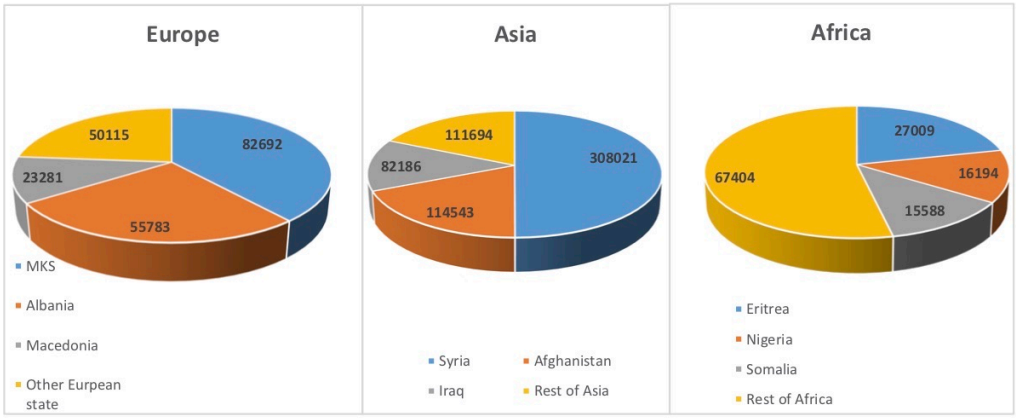
3.5 Fiscal effects

This section looks at the fiscal effects on Germany of immigration as a whole, drawing on available economic literature on the net impact of both migrants and refugees. The literature is ambivalent. Most German researchers are positive, and project beneficial

returns for the German economy from the increase in refugees, while the estimates and projections of Austrian researchers are more negative. Berger et al. (2017) projects that increases in employment are outstripped by the increase in labour supply. This will lead to higher unemployment rates and lower wages for those entering the labour market with lower qualifications. In turn, this will lead to a GDP increase, but a decrease in per capita income. An OECD study in 2015 calculated that the increase in refugee numbers will require an additional 0.5% of GDP per year in public spending but will have little impact on the labour market. Similarly, Riphahn (1998) illustrated that foreigners are more likely to claim welfare benefits, while Ulrich (1994) estimated that welfare benefits received are lower than taxes paid. In the latter study, immigrants generated a positive net contribution of DM25–35bn. Although an average foreign household paid fewer taxes in total than a German household, their total contributions to social security (mainly to the pension system) were higher (see the population structure outlined above). Immigrants were also responsible for the creation of 85,000 new jobs between 1988 and 1994, raising GDP growth rate by 1.3% (Ulrich, 1994). However, immigrants rely more on unemployment payments, child benefits and social security than Germans. They also benefit from the consumption of public goods and will rely more heavily on retirement payments in the future.

Findings regarding the net impact on the German health system are likewise mixed. Sinn et al. (2001) found that the net impact was negative, while a similar study by Bonin (2002) found positive impacts. The difference in results between the two studies is partially explained by their different treatment of costs; Bonin (2002) uses marginal costs, whereas Sinn et al. (2001) use average costs as a means of accounting, implying that all beneficiaries share costs identically, whereas using marginal costs looks at the cost that an additional migrant would entail. Stähler (2017) projects that, as long as the qualification gap can be closed, the increase in refugee numbers will not translate into GDP and consumption losses but will lead to a higher level of employment. Failure to integrate refugees will reduce per capita output and consumption by 0.43% and 0.48%, respectively, whereas adequate integration measures will result in an increase in per capita output and consumption of 0.34% and 0.38%, respectively. Raffelhüschen et al. (2016) predict an increase in the sustainability gap, from 30.1% to 53.6%. One study by Fratzscher and Juncker (2015) anticipates a positive aggregated fiscal impact, whereas another by the European Commission (2016) projects a negative fiscal impact of 3% of GDP.

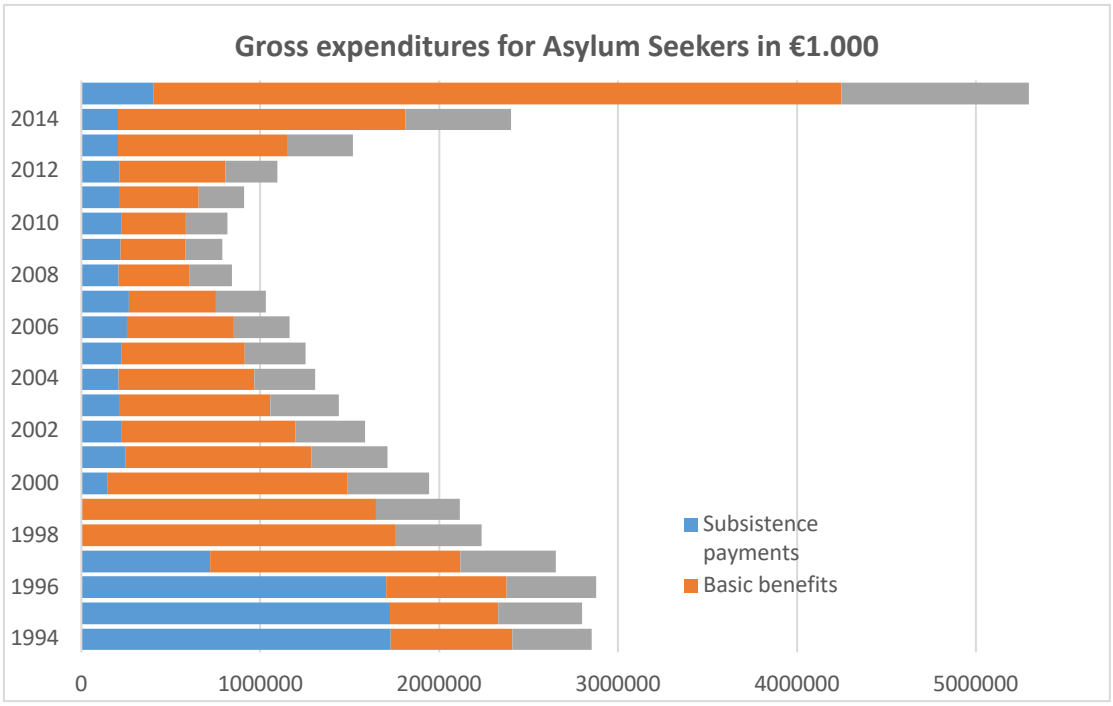
Figure 10: Beneficiaries of standard benefits for asylum-seekers according to nationality for 2015



Note: MKS stands for Montenegro, Kosovo, Serbia (incl. predecessor states).

Source: Authors' elaboration based on the data of the Federal Statistical Office, 2017. Note: Due to the high level of new asylum seekers during the last quarter of 2015, not all asylum seekers could be technically registered in Bremen. The real numbers might be higher.

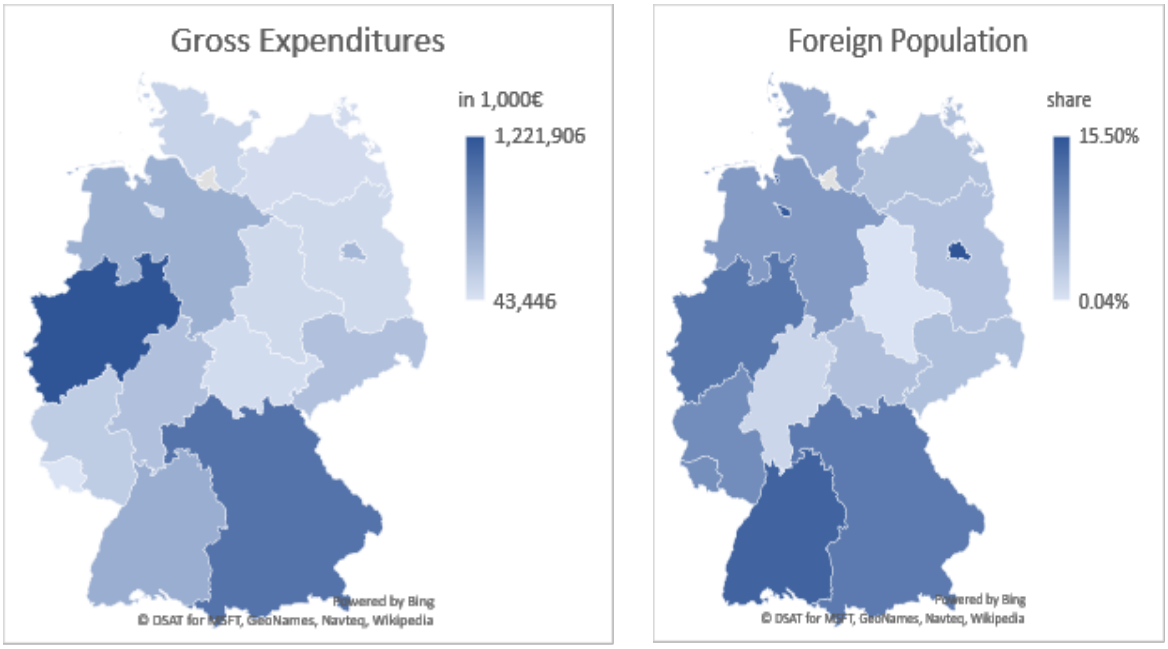
Figure 11: Gross expenditures for asylum-seekers



Source Based on data by the Federal Statistical Office, 2017. Note: The results do not contain the accommodation cost data of a reporting unit in Schleswig-Holstein. They were not available at the time of publication.

The rate of welfare claims is higher for asylum-seekers than for other immigrants. This can partially be explained by the fact that asylum-seekers were until recently not allowed to work. While subsistence payments accounted for the majority of these payments until the late 1990s, basic benefits now represent the largest part. Approximately 82% of asylum-seekers receive basic benefits for less than a year on average, while for those above the age of 65 the share decreases to 30%. In absolute terms, the most populous states pay the majority of gross expenditures. However, if expenditures are taken per resident, the city states and the state of Saxony shoulder the largest burden. Benefits are roughly equivalent to German welfare payments, including housing, medical care and minimum living expenses of €390 (or equivalent consumer goods).

Figure 12: Gross expenditures for asylum-seekers in 2015



Source: The authors, based on data from the Federal Statistical Office (2017) and foreign population in the same year (based on data from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (2017))

Box: Migration histories and experience

Given the lack of long-term historic data that distinguishes between refugees and migrants, this section provides some broad indications of the wider social and economic conditions of people in Germany with a migration background. This is based on migrant data drawn from the latest micro-census of the Federal Statistical Office in 2016, to provide some overall indications that are also relevant to refugee integration in the long term, in particular around the lack of social mobility in Germany. This section uses the German concepts of migration background (*Migrationshintergrund*) and migration experience (*Migrationserfahrung*). People with a migration *background* include both those who were born abroad and those who were born in Germany but have foreign ancestry (at least one parent who immigrated or who was born in Germany as a foreign citizen). A distinction is also made between those with migration

experience and those without – likely second- or third-generation migrants who did not migrate themselves.

According to the Federal Statistical Office's 2016 micro-census, approximately three-quarters of German citizens (77.5%) have no migration background. The remaining 22.5% with a migration background translate into 18.57m citizens (a decrease of roughly half a million over the previous year). The three largest groups with a migration background are from Turkey (15.06%), Poland (10.06%) and Russia (6.58%). Almost 80% of all households have no members with a migration background. Three-quarters of households with a migration background comprise only members with a migration background.

For both groups, participation in the labour market is similar. The most significant difference is that those without a migration background are more likely to work as civil servants (approximately 5.4 times more likely), whereas those with a migration background are twice as likely to be blue-collar workers. Those with a migration experience are more likely to be employed than those without. For example, more than 82% of German nationals with a migration background but without a migration experience are not part of the working population, and over 20% serve an apprenticeship. Those with a migration experience are more likely to rely on welfare benefits and pensions. Most of the difference can be explained by the age difference between groups, where those without a migration experience are second- and third-generation migrants.

Those with a migration experience face a significantly higher risk of poverty. This broadly holds both for German nationals and foreigners. Those with migration experience are also more likely to find themselves in a higher income group than those without migration experience.

The educational background of parents largely defines the level of education children obtains (see also DIPF, 2016). Data from the Federal Statistical Office shows, for example, that independent of ethnic background 43.8% of the children of those who graduated from the lowest type of secondary modern school (*Hauptschule*, from year 5 to 9) end up with a degree from the same school, while 62.5% of parents who obtained an A-Level degree send their children to grammar school (*Gymnasium*, the highest type of secondary school). A similar correlation exists between the vocational and professional qualifications of parents and the choice of school for their children.

Looking at the data on education and degrees attained, there are some differences between those with and without a migration background, but these are not persistent and thus an explicit disadvantage for those with a migration background cannot be established. For example, those without a migration background are 5% more likely to go to a secondary school (*Gymnasium*), but also 7% more likely to attend a secondary modern school (*Hauptschule*). Both groups are similar when it comes to university degrees. Those with a migration background are more likely to attain a bachelor's or master's degree.

3.6 Political and social impacts of selected refugee populations

3.6.1 Afghan refugees

Afghan refugees have been arriving in Germany since the late 1970s. They have seen significant changes in social perceptions and subsequent shifts in policies affecting their legal status – the most recent of which is Germany's latest and heavily criticised deportation policy of Afghans (see for example Marsh 2017; Grunau 2018). Afghans make up the second-largest nationality of asylum-seekers across the EU – nearly 200,000 applied for asylum in 2015, and of those, according to the BAMF, the German government expects 48% to eventually qualify (Kasinof, 2016; European Asylum Support Office, 2015). In 2016, over 127,000 Afghans applied for asylum in Germany (ibid.). Germany is considered to have one of the largest Afghan immigrant populations in Europe (Haasen et al., 2008).

The literature on Afghan refugees and their political and social impact is limited to a handful of studies. A number describe how the image of Afghan refugees has changed over time, especially with growing fears of terrorism, which have heavily impacted their political and social integration in host countries, including Germany (Safri, 2011). Others focus on questions of identity, nationalism and Islam, looking at immigration from predominantly Muslim countries, and the impact of Turkish immigrants on German society and politics in particular. Götz (2011) argues that the demographic impact of immigration since the 1970s by populations from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds has had a considerable impact on German society's self-perception and the definition of the boundaries between insiders and outsiders. With the more recent drastic increase in the number of Syrian and other asylum-seekers from the Middle East, immigration and Islam have dominated policy debates (see Bansak, Hainmueller and Hangartner, 2016).

According to Fischer (2017), unlike the UK, where Afghan immigration is a much more recent phenomenon, Afghan immigration to Germany has been longstanding throughout the twentieth century. By the end of the 1970s, Germany had become a key destination for Afghans fleeing persecution, war and conflict. As a result, the population of Afghan refugees in Germany, particularly those arriving before the early to mid-1990s, belong to the well-educated elite, compared to Afghans arriving in the UK. As a general tendency, the socioeconomic background and education levels of Afghans in the UK are lower than in Germany, as the large majority of Afghans in the UK were previously refugees in either Iran or Pakistan (ibid.).

While there is not much focus in the literature on Afghans' political or social impact in Germany, there is more research on the way Afghans themselves have been affected by changes in asylum and refugee policies. This impact is reflected in the temporal and generational differences separating the different waves of Afghan refugees arriving in Germany. Afghans who arrived before the restrictions in asylum law were introduced seem to be better integrated than those arriving after the 1993 'asylum compromise' (Safri, 2011).

The literature tends to divide Afghan refugees in Germany into two different waves. The first wave arrived in the 1970s and 1980s and was composed of well-educated Afghans; these are mostly professionally active, remain within their community and form close-knit networks. Some formed associations and communities, with members

meeting regularly. These communities tend to be based on deep-rooted family, ethnic and political affiliation and background and are closed to outsiders. Family background is key to shaping self- and mutual perceptions within the Afghan community and networks of family, relatives and friends. It also affects the level of social integration within Germany. As put by one Afghan refugee, who has been in Germany since the 1970s, 'we always move to places where we have relatives, where our children live, where we have friends and where our clan is' (Fischer, 2017). Intermarriage with Afghans outside this network is uncommon, let alone with citizens of the host country.

The second wave of Afghan refugees arrived in Germany after 1993, with a large majority coming to Germany or other EU Member States after transiting through or spending time as refugees in either Pakistan or Iran. As one Afghan refugee put it: '[w]when I came to Germany in 1992, I was part of the second wave, those who came after the demise of the pro-Soviet government … everyone reacted strangely, because they thought "he is probably some sort of communist, socialist or leftist"' (Fischer, 2017). Despite both waves coming from the same country, they perceived each other differently, with political, familial and clan affiliation at the centre of this relationship. Second-generation Afghans of both waves, who were born or have lived for the majority of their lives in Germany, lean more towards abandoning these considerations and reaching out within the wider network of Afghans. They also tend to be more socially integrated than their parents.

Unlike the first wave of Afghan refugees, the second wave was particularly impacted by restrictive asylum policies in place by the time of their arrival. This affected their ability to participate on social, political and economic levels to the same extent as the first wave did, especially as the image of Afghan refugees changed post-9/11. The second wave of Afghan refugees extends to those still arriving in Germany and claiming asylum today. As Germany struggles to process and integrate hundreds of thousands of refugees, newly arrived Afghans are faced with social stigma and are often deported. Of the thousands of Afghan refugees who have made it to Germany in recent years, very few have been able to find work (ToloNews, 2016).

3.6.2 Iranian refugees

Iranians arrived in Germany in the early 1980s in the wake of the Islamic Revolution – though a community of considerable size had existed in Germany before that, and particularly since the 1950s and 1960s. Between 1966 and 1967, 5,545 Iranians studied in West Germany – a figure exceeded only by Americans (6,941) (Bafekr and Leman, 1999). In 1982, 32,246 Iranians were living in Germany, and by 1995 this had risen to 106,997 (Statistisches Bundesamt, 1995). Currently, there are an estimated 120,000 people of Iranian heritage in Germany. This constitutes the third-largest Iranian diaspora community in the world, after the United States and Canada (Ajam Media Collective, 2016).

Like Afghan refugees, Iranians came to Germany in different waves. Iranians who arrived between the 1950s and 1960s were mainly intellectuals who came to Germany to study or complete their university training as doctors, engineers, scientists or literary scholars, and then ended up staying (Bafekr and Leman, 1999). As in the case of Afghans, existing literature on Iranian refugees is very limited. Studies on Iranians tend to focus on intellectuals, and generally suggests that Iranians tend to be well-

educated and successful socially and economically, especially those who have been in Germany for a significant period of time. Most of the literature on the Iranian community in Germany focuses on highly skilled Iranian refugees and their means of integrating within German society, particularly through their integration in the German labour force and engaging in professions such as medicine and law or literature, music, the arts/entertainment and politics. Iranians have the lowest percentage of intermarriages within their community and the highest with Germans, as well as other nationalities, compared to other refugee communities in Germany. There are many notable Iranian-German figures in public and professional life, including Yasmin Fahimi, the general secretary of the Social Democratic Party; Iranian-born and naturalised German Omid Nouripour, an active politician of the Alliance '90/The Greens, Bundestag member for the state of Hesse, vice-chair of the German-US parliamentary friendship group and a board member of the Atlantik-Brücke and German Atlantic Association; Sahra Wagenknecht, an Iranian-German left-wing politician and member of the Bundestag; and Ramin Djawadi, an Iranian-German composer who gained worldwide recognition for his score for the *Game of Thrones* television series.

Iranians tend to be more closely connected as a community than Afghans, and the literature suggests that this connection surpasses political or religious differences between different waves. Iranians who came to Germany prior to the Revolution in 1979 chose not to take any public stance on the subject, and their interest in Iran both then and now focuses on their families, whom they still regularly visit. It is this absence of interest, debate and publicly expressed opinions on religion, politics and society that differentiates them and their children from the political refugees who came to Germany after the Revolution (Bafekr and Leman, 1999). Regardless of their background, the reasons for their immigration, whether or not they have been naturalised or the years they have spent in Germany, many Iranians share a common attachment to their culture, which among pre-1979 Iranians is idealised and often related to Iranian heritage and society prior to the Revolution. The literature suggests that, while Iranians and largely doing well socially and economically, many feel uprooted and lack a sense of belonging (Ajam Media Collective, 2016). As one Iranian put it, 'I am no longer an Iranian and I will never become a European. I feel uprooted' (ibid.).

The Iranian community has a large number of associations and community-based networks in Germany and Europe, such as the Iranian Academics and Specialists Association in Germany (IRASA), the Association of Iranian Faculty Members and Academics in Germany (*Verband Iranischer Hochschullehrer und Akademiker* – VIHA), the Academy of Iranian Physicians and Dentists in Germany, www.InterNations.org and the German-Iranian Alumni Network (GIAN). There is also a strong online presence aiming to connect these local networks both regionally and globally, such as www.farsinet.com/ipco. The predominant feature of these networks is that they are largely educational and professional, reflecting the socioeconomic and educational background of the Iranian community. Köck et al. (2004) also refer to a significant number of traditional Iranian religious institutions in Hamburg (and London) representing a section within the Iranian migrant community, particularly those who arrived after the Iranian revolution.

Sadeghi (2014) suggests that, compared to Iranians in the United States, where the state does not provide any formal or uniform support to immigrants, Iranians in Germany rarely rely on family networks or other forms of informal support given that Germany provides all refugees with equal support. This makes them more reliant on the state, but also allows them to be more socially and economically engaged and active. While Iranians in both the United States and Germany reported experiencing discrimination, in Germany this seemed to be part of a general anti-foreigner sentiment rather than one particularly targeting Iranians (ibid.). Such sentiments can also be related to wider questions around the place of Islam within German society. Islam has been at the heart of debates around migration and integration and has particularly impacted the integration of newly arrived asylum-seekers and refugees from predominantly Muslim countries. Yet, according to Foroutan (2013), the integration of Muslims in Germany has on average been better than often assumed: more than 50% of Muslims are members of a German association, and just 4% are members of associations affiliated with their country/culture of origin. At the same time, Sadeghi (2014) suggests that, despite their success, Iranians from both first and second generations interviewed described feeling perpetually 'foreign', with the best they can expect being seen as a 'good foreigner'.

3.6.3 Recent waves of refugees (predominantly Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan refugees)

Syrians accounted for the largest number of asylum applications in 13 out of the 28 EU Member States, including over 266,000 applicants in Germany (the highest number of applicants from a single country to one EU country in 2016). At the end of 2015, 366,566 Syrians and 136,000 Iraqis were registered in Germany. Between 1991 and 2014, 140,000 asylum applications were made by Iraqis, and in 2015 the number increased sharply to about 30,000 a year, 50% of which were applications from the Yazidi community (Hunger and Candan, 2016).

It is still too early to say what the social and political impacts will be of these more recent waves of forced displacement. However, some initial studies focusing on the social and political engagement and integration of some of these groups show how they build on the activities and engagement of previous arrivals from the same areas of origin. For Iraqi refugees, the most recent arrivals are often integrated in established structures and voluntary associations that previous immigrants had set up in Germany in the second half of the twentieth century. Recent arrivals have also set up voluntary associations of their own. A key characteristic of Iraqis in Germany has been their high level of engagement with their community in both Germany and Iraq (ibid.). There are a large number of studies on the enormous influence that the Iraqi diaspora has had on reconstruction in their home country, including the diaspora in Germany (ibid.). Apart from this engagement there is no overall association that represents all Iraqis, but community groups tend to be established according to ethnic, religious and political affiliations, and work is often focused on building support for that particular community in Germany and back in Iraq (ibid.).

Like Iraqis, Syrian immigration to Germany predates the current crisis. At various times over the past 50 years there have been overlapping movements of voluntary migrants and forcibly displaced people arriving in Germany. The literature distinguishes in particular between two waves of Syrian immigration: those arriving since the 1980s,

who were frequently very well qualified, including many students, and the large number of forcibly displaced who arrived roughly since 2011, with a much more mixed background (Hunger et al., 2017). Many of those who arrived in the 1980s founded community associations to strengthen links among the Syrian diaspora in Germany, as well as to support integration and connections in Germany (ibid.). After 2011, politicisation among Syrians in Germany has increased, and much effort has been put into highlighting the plight of those struggling for freedom and democracy back in Syria (ibid.). Of particular importance is the Association of German and Syrian aid organisations (*Dachverband*), which explicitly aims to support connections and interactions among Syrians in Germany, regardless of their religious or political affiliations. The Association also forms part of wider inter-cultural initiatives, notably among the Turkish community in Germany (ibid.). A recent study by the University of Maastricht (Ragab et al., 2017; cited in Hunger et al., 2017) highlights that most diaspora organisations focus their activities either on humanitarian projects or on integration in Germany, with 60% of the organisations surveyed mentioning these areas as their primary focus. The literature highlights how self-organisation and voluntary associations play a very important part in different immigrant groups' integration in Germany. However, in the case of Syrians there do not yet seem to be many connections between initiatives taken by the Syrian diaspora and the wider integration efforts of the German state (*ibid.*).

Given the very recent arrival of most of the forcibly displaced, it is still too early to assess integration *outcomes* for these groups. There are, however, a number of representative studies currently under way that have started to shed light on some of the factors that may determine the success or failure of integration of these groups, and which highlight very initial findings gleaned from the experience of the past two years.

The IAB/BAMF/SOEP (2016) survey shows that 95% of recent arrivals would like to stay in Germany indefinitely. Those who felt more welcome were more likely to want to remain in the country. Encouragingly, the survey finds a high level of conformity (96%) with German attitudes towards democratic values, including democracy as the best form of government and the protection of citizens' rights. Similarly, 92% of asylum-seekers state that equality between men and women is a key part of democracy. This data, though reliant on refugees' self-characterisation, seems to indicate that cultural and value differences may be less stark than often portrayed in the media and in public discourse around the current refugee influx. Such attitudes are corroborated by studies in Austria of the same refugee cohort (Buber-Ennser et al., 2016).

Another key aspect of integration is the extent to which new arrivals have been able to interact with the local population. Even though those surveyed in the recent IAB/BAMF/SOEP (2016) survey have only arrived recently in Germany, they seem to, on average, have relatively frequent interactions with the local population. The amount and frequency of interactions seem to be positively correlated with levels of educational attainment and are important not only in terms of social integration, but also crucially for integration into the labour market.

4. Public attitudes and politics

Since the early 1990s, and in response to the increasingly polarised political debate around migration, Germany has witnessed what Green (2013) refers to as a 'tectonic shift' in definitional terms, as well as in the political discourse. Foroutan (2013) notes that, from 2006, German politicians began to perceive hostility towards Muslims as a growing threat to social cohesion. As already mentioned, on the policy level Germany has long struggled with questions around its own national identity and reconciling this identity with its changing demographics. This played out most often in the public domain with the oft-repeated slogan 'Germany is not an immigration country'. In response to the changing social and political mood towards immigrants, changes in terminology could be observed. First, from 1998 the term used to refer to immigration changed from '*Einwanderung*' to '*Zuwanderung*' (Green, 2013). Although seemingly technical, this change has resulted in a change in the perception of immigration, as '*Einwanderung*' refers to formally recruited migrants (i.e. *Gastarbeiter* or migrant workers), whereas '*Zuwanderung*' refers to any form of immigration (ibid.). The effect has been to move public and political perceptions away from the history of the Turkish 'guest workers' scheme to a perception of Germany as a country open to different kinds of immigration.

In 2000, the Statistisches Bundesamt began to develop a new category of 'persons with a migration background' (*Personen mit Migrationshintergrund*), which referred to anyone who either has personal experience of migration, or who has one parent or grandparent who is a migrant. Previously, official statistics had only differentiated between 'Germans' and 'foreigners'. Thus, this change facilitated much more nuanced data collection, but also a change in perception by de-linking the concepts of 'migration' and 'nationality'. Statistical data released subsequently showed that there were more German citizens with a migration background than there were non-nationals in total (Green, 2003).

Despite this revealing data, which aimed to reflect the change in Germany's demographic and social makeup to show that Germany had indeed become a country of immigration, public discourse often represents German society as homogenous, in which those with a migration background cannot fully belong (Foroutan, 2013). Migrants in general, and in recent years migrants with a Muslim background, have often been perceived negatively by the wider public (ibid.). Green (2013) confirms that, over the years, despite the 'welcome culture' (*Willkommenskultur*) portrayed in the media in response to the recent refugee influx, Germans have not found it easy to accept growing ethnic, religious and cultural diversity. One-third of Germans reportedly believe that 'people who have always lived here should have more rights than those who have moved here later', while 47% agree with the statement that '[t]here are too many foreigners living in Germany' (Foroutan, 2013).

The tensions around integration, national identity and culture in many ways remain unresolved, on both the policy level and within general public debate. Historically, integration was seen as an active choice by the non-national to embrace German culture – a perspective which underpinned dual citizenship and Germany's 'guiding culture' (*Leitkultur*) debate (Green, 2013). An essential element of this debate has been the question of how much diversity German society can accommodate, and in

particular whether Islam and Christianity can coexist in the country (*ibid.*; Foroutan, 2013). Both Green (2013) and Foroutan (2013) refer to examples that confirm this contention: in 2010, Angel Merkel herself declared that multiculturalism has 'failed utterly', while declaring in 2015 that 'Islam belongs to Germany' (*Islam gehört zu Deutschland*); in 2010, Bundesbank executive board member and former Berlin state finance minister Thilo Sarrazin published a critique of immigration in his book *Germany Does Away with Itself* (*Deutschland schafft sich ab*), where he referred to genetic and racially-based differences that inhibit Muslims from integrating into German society and culture. The book sold over one million copies and created the most polarised and intense debate in recent years around the issue of migration in Germany; while then Federal President Christian Wulff confirmed, in a speech in 2010 marking the twentieth anniversary of German unification, that Islam was part of Germany in response to Sarrazin, the newly appointed Federal Interior Minister, Hans-Peter Friedrich, asserted precisely the opposite at the annual meeting of the German Islamic Conference in 2012.

It is clear that German politicians as well as the general public are still wrestling with issues around migration, with Islam being at the heart of this question today. While for some an open refugee and asylum policy offered an instrumental renunciation of the country's past, for others it signalled the renunciation of the German people's cultural and ethnic identity (Poutrus, 2014). The diverse responses and effects of the most recent refugee crisis epitomise this dichotomy: on the one hand, there was an outpouring of public support and solidarity at the beginning of the refugee crisis, with large donations and support for refugees, as well as significant civic and volunteer engagement, ranging from free German lessons to offers to shelter refugees, as well as many other volunteer projects (Trines, 2017). On the other hand, attitudes towards refugees and the governments' policies have turned increasingly negative. Key events that precipitated this change in public opinion include the sexual assaults during New Year's Eve 2015 (wrongly blamed on asylum-seekers), as well as an increase in terror attacks during 2016, some of which were carried out by asylum-seekers (ibid.). Polls conducted in January 2017 showed that some 42% of those surveyed considered refugees a threat to German culture, up from 33% in October 2016; 70% believed that growing refugee numbers were related to increased crime, up from 62%. Disapproval of Merkel's handling of the refugee crisis increased from 49% to 56% (ibid.). In particular, perceptions that the crisis was out of hand and not under control, with the government and local authorities barely able to handle the pressure on housing and services created by new arrivals, seem to have exacerbated these negative perceptions. However, recent studies in Germany also show that two-thirds of those polled agreed that accepting refugees was a national obligation (Purpose, 2017). Recent research employing methods of 'attitudinal segmentation'[59] also finds more nuanced perceptions, where the German public can be roughly divided into 'liberal cosmopolitans', 'radical opponents', 'economic pragmatists', 'humanitarian sceptics' and 'moderate opponents' (Purpose, 2017). This segmentation reveals some

[59] 'Attitudinal segmentation' divides the public into different segments based not only on their attitudes towards migration, but also their attitudes towards a number of related issues, including multiculturalism, diversity, social change and optimism about the future. It is therefore able to map out segments of the population based on interlinked attitudes, rather than purely demographics (Purpose, 2017).

characteristically 'German' features, such as the 'humanitarian sceptics' group consisting mainly of older Germans who, although worried about refugees' ability to integrate, see accepting refugees as a national obligation (ibid.).

Arguably the most important impact so far has been political: the rise of anti-immigrant movements and parties across Europe more widely, and in Germany a reconfiguration of the political landscape with the rise of the anti-immigrant right-wing party Alternative for Germany (AFD). The recent rise of anti-immigrant parties is often intertwined, as is the case with the AFD, with anti-European activism (ibid.). Germany's refugee policy was at the heart of the debates and outcomes of the recent German elections, with the AFD winning, for the first time since the Second World War, popular representation for a right-wing party in the Bundestag, with 13% of the vote.

5. Conclusion

Over the past decades Germany has gone through major changes in its attitude towards both forcibly displaced people and migrants. For a long period, the assumption was that arrivals were only a temporary phenomenon, and that people would in time return home. Hence, little was done to facilitate their integration into the labour market, or into German society more widely – in fact, obstacles to integration were often deliberately deployed so that integration did not act as a 'pull factor' encouraging people to stay. This attitude changed from the early 2000s, when policy-makers finally accepted that immigration was part of German society and a phenomenon that was here to stay; as a result, a number of key policy and legal changes were gradually introduced aimed at actively facilitating multi-dimensional integration through early access to the labour market, language skills, vocational training and cultural orientation. A key realisation has also been that successful integration hinges not only on labour market and skills integration, but integration into society as a whole.

What the long-term effects will be for both the forcibly displaced and German society as a whole remains to be seen. Whereas data from the past shows that refugees were poorly integrated into the labour market, acquired poor language skills and often pushed up social expenditures, future prognoses are still unclear. Many studies to date highlight the substantial opportunity that new arrivals present for Germany in terms of addressing the country's demographic challenges as an aging society and closing the skills gap in the German labour market. However, success hinges on the integration of the new arrivals – in particular, integration into the school system for younger refugees, and into the labour market for older ones. Significant government spending will also be needed in the short to medium term to sustain integration measures and social security for new arrivals. Most studies are clear that missing the opportunity to invest in and integrate newcomers would result in increasing distributional conflict and long-term raised governmental expenditure.

Initial results from surveys conducted among the recently arrived cohort show a mixed picture as to how likely it is that these hopes will be fulfilled. While it has become clear that many are not as well educated as was initially thought – or have education and professional skills that may not be comparable or – in their current form – useful in

the highly formalised German labour market, this has also triggered a number of reforms in the German labour market that will make it easier for those skills to be converted/updated to the requirements of the German labour market. Similarly, while initial figures of labour market integration of those recently arrived seem low, data from surveys covering the last few years paints a more positive picture and shows progressive integration into the labour market among recent arrivals.

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