

# INTEGRATION IN GERMANY

## Migration and Migrants

Over the past 50 years Germany has increasingly become a major destination of migration. The country now has the largest number of non-national residents of all EU countries, when counted in absolute terms<sup>1</sup> - ca 8,7 Million in 2016 equaling more than 10% of the total population<sup>2</sup>.

This is counting in terms of how many residents in the country are **not** German-citizens. In addition to that there is a large proportion of the population that now hold German citizenship, but were born and held citizenship in another country before. And also a large part of the population, that was born in Germany to parents who had immigrated to the country. It is estimated that more than a fifth of the German population today (ca 18,6 Million) could be said to have "Migrationshintergrund" ("immigrant background"), that is, having "partial roots outside of Germany".<sup>3</sup> This is a categorisation that is used quite often in German integration policies and social programs, that often aim to support and strengthen specifically people from this group, since many research reports show people with "migration background" to be disadvantaged in terms of educational and professional development.<sup>4</sup> A person is determined as having "immigrant background" if he/she is or was citizen of another country OR if he/she has at least one parent who is or was citizen of another country. A bit more than half of the German population with immigrant background have German citizenship<sup>5</sup>.

There were a few different larger movements of migration to Germany in more recent history. During the "Wirtschaftswunder" ("the economic miracle") in the 1950's and 1960's, West German companies faced a shortage of labourers and as a result started to recruit workers from other countries through the signing of bilateral recruitment agreements. As a result large groups of people moved to Germany in these years and until the beginning of the 1970's, mainly from Italy, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and Yugoslavia. The idea of the agreement was that the workers were to return to their country of origin after a

few years. Many did indeed return, but a large part also decided to stay and raise their families in Germany<sup>6</sup>.

In the 1980's and 1990's after the reunion of Germany and the fall of the "Iron curtain" there was a fairly large migration movement of "Aussiedler" - 'ethnic Germans' from different parts in Eastern Europe that at some point had belonged to or had a connection to Germany before WWII, returning to Germany. This migration was first encouraged and the migrants were given special support, but later in the 90's the flow of migration was again restricted. From the mid 1980's on there was also an increase in war refugees to Germany from especially Iran, Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Romania and Turkey. Many were granted asylum in Germany until 1992 when the fairly liberal right of asylum was amended, making it more difficult for people coming to Germany being granted asylum<sup>7</sup>.

As in many other EU-countries, from 2013 to 2016 Germany showed a rapid increase of people seeking asylum in the country due to armed conflicts, as well as socio-economic and environmental problems. In 2013 there was an overall 13% increase of immigration to Germany (out of which 58% were made up of EU-citizens) and an 70% increase in humanitarian immigration (i.e. people applying for asylum in the country<sup>8</sup>). In 2014 there was an 19% increase in overall immigration to Germany (55% from other EU-countries), and an 60% increase in asylum applicants (ca 202 000 in total<sup>9</sup>). In 2015 these numbers rose drastically to 46% increase in total arrivals, with a total of about 2,14 Million people immigrating to Germany. Out of these 39,6% came from other EU-countries, and 890 thousand came to seek asylum in Germany, which implied a 135% increase from the previous year - a unprecedented number in the history of German immigration<sup>10</sup>. In 2016 due to increased control over the borders within EU, stricter assessment of applications from citizens of countries deemed to be "safe" and deals made with countries at the outer border of EU (especially with Turkey increasing control over movement over the Aegen Sea and ensuring the possibility to send migrants back to Turkey, who arrived over this route), the number of asylum seekers arriving in Germany again dropped significantly to 280 000<sup>11</sup>. In 2016 there were 745 545 applications for asylum made in Germany -

but a large part of these were from people who arrived in 2015. The by far largest part of asylum seekers came from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq - together making up for more than 65% of the total of applications made, but there were also large groups of asylum seekers from Iran, Eritrea, Albania, Pakistan, Nigeria and Russia<sup>12</sup>.

Out of the German population that does not hold German citizenship, as of 2016 the largest groups come from Turkey (14,9%), Poland (7,8%), Syria (6,4%), Italy (6,1%), Romania (5,3%), Greece (3,5%), and Croatia (3,3%) - among the remaining more than 50% some further large groups are from Bulgaria, Russia, Afghanistan, Iraqe and Serbia - each with more than 200 000 nationals living Germany.<sup>13</sup>

The population with immigrant background in Germany are on average younger than the part of the German population without immigrant background - 35,4 years average as opposed to 46,9 years<sup>14</sup>.

### **Integration process and institutions for migrants**

The main institution responsible for supervising, developing and coordinating different means and measures of integration in Germany is “Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge” (BAMF), that is the “Federal Office for Migration and Refugees”. It is a decentralised institution with many regional offices and departments and belongs under the German Ministry of Interior. The main tasks of BAMF are: 1) To administrate and take decisions on all applications for asylum, 2) to collect and make available data and statistics on migration, 3) to advice policy makers and other stakeholders on issues of migration and integration and support national and international research in this area, 4) to assist foreigners that are looking to work and live in Germany with information needed for the transition, and also 5) largely to ensure continuous quality standards of the integration courses, migration counselling, and other projects for integration offered by different organisations and agencies they support. On the website of BAMF there is a multitude of sources of information in different

languages, about the different rules, procedures and offers in relation to migration and integration. Here it is also possible to search for organisations and agencies that offer integration courses and projects for migrants in different regions and cities.

The right to take advantage of the different courses and counselling offered depends on the category the migrant is determined by the authorities to belong to. There is the official state funded integration course which includes training German language and learning about different aspects of German culture, society, law and everyday life. Earlier this course was only open for migrants who had had their application for asylum approved. Since a couple of years due to the great increase of asylum applications and the delay in processing all these, courses have been opened also to people whose asylum application is still being processed, but who have good chances of having it approved. Additional to that, in order to adapt to the new situation in Germany, with a large group of migrants, who do not have good chances to get permanent asylum, but who, due to delayed application processes, and / or it for different reasons being impossible or complicated for them to return to their country of origin, there is also a state funded "orientation" course ("Erstorientierungskurs"). This course is open for anyone, who has applied for asylum, whether in process with not good chances to get permanent residence permit, or where the application was rejected, but deportation delayed, i.e. holding a "tolerated right to stay" - "Duldung / Bescheinigung für die Aussetzung einer Abschiebung".<sup>15</sup>

Also the orientation course contains both German language classes and learning about German culture and society, as well as excursions to different social institutions and organisations, for example libraries, markets, social authorities etc. Both Orientation and Integration courses are free of charge, but whereas the attendency to "integration course" is obligatory for migrants with approved asylum applications, the "Orientation courses" are voluntary. This said, the possibility to be allowed to stay for longer in the country, (in the case of migrants whose asylum applications have been rejected in the first place) is significantly dependant on being able to prove a good level of German language.

Both courses are offered not directly through BAMF, but through other agencies that have been charge with the task - for example Freien

Wohlfahrtspflege Arbeiterwohlfahrt, Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, Deutscher Caritas Verband or Der Bund der Vertriebenen. Through the search funktion on the BAMF website these different agencies and what they offer in different regions and cities in Germany can be found.

In addition to the integration and orientation courses there are also advanced courses funded and supervised by BAMF (-as part of Federal Ministry of the Interior - BMI), and also, at a higher level, by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS - "Bundesministerium für Arbeit und soziales"). These are specifically aimed at preparing migrants and refugees who are in search of work, with the specific skills and experiences needed in their specific area of expertise and generally preparing them for the work market - especially focused language classes, professional qualifications and praktikum.<sup>16</sup>

Apart from specific courses there is the possibility for all migrants - both who is new to Germany and all people with migrational background, no matter how long they have lived in Germany - to get individual counselling. Same as with the advanced courses, the counselling is also within the jurisdiction of both BMI and BMAS. The counselling is divided into two separate areas of expertise, that however often in the last years have been increasingly interlinked: 1) MBE - Migrationsberatung für erwachsene Zuwanderer - Migration Counselling for adult immigrants, 2) JMD - Jugendmigrationsdienste - Youth migration services - which is open for all migrants between 12 and 27 year of age. Possible topics for individual counselling is broad and can include questions concerning all areas of life, like for example how to find a place to live or a work, which medical doctor to go for what, what qualifications are needed to study a specific subject, or how to get the qualifications already attained in a foreign country officially validated in Germany. The counselling normally consists of several personal meetings with a counsellor, who helps the person develop a plan for what is needed, and can offer guidance and information about what different kinds of support is available where. The counselling is seen as "Integrationsbegleitung" - "Integration accompaniment".

In addition to the different counselling and course offers both BMAS and

other ministries in Germany give funding for all different sorts of social and cultural projects, that teach specific skills or give the participants experiences within certain fields - for example computer game making, film editing, creative writing, or acting. Especially in the past few years, more investment has been made in this, in order to give more opportunities for refugees and migrants opportunities to find new directions or gain contacts and skills that can help them advance.

### **Integration into the labour market**

In terms of labour market integration of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants of different categories, Germany's main response to the rapid increase of migration into the country since 2014 was, apart from investing into expansion of integration courses and other educational measurements, also to make the access to the labour market more easy (the possibility to start looking for work already after 3 months), developing new support systems for employers offering jobs and internships to migrants, exploring more efficient systems for assessing foreign educational and professional qualifications.

During the asylum process the main responsibility for integration measurements in regard to the labour market lies with the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit - BA). After a person receives refugee status this responsibility moves over to so-called "Jobcenters". These are "run either by municipalities themselves, or jointly with the local Employment Agencies", and are also generally the agency in charge of providing labour market integration services, also for the long-term unemployed and recipients of social welfare benefits<sup>17</sup>. At the beginning of 2017 9% of all registered jobseekers were refugees and asylum seekers<sup>18</sup>.

According to the report of the European Commission from 2015 the numbers of "long-term unemployed" (12 months or more) and "very long-term unemployed" (24 months or more) is generally fairly low in Germany in comparison to European standards. This is of course dependant however on how the statistics are interpreted and the national standards of how registration of unemployed is made. At the end of 2014 "long-term unemployed" was down to

2,2 % and “very long-term unemployed” down to 1,5% of the German population<sup>19</sup>.

The division in Germany between the Federal Employment Agency and Jobcentres was adapted after reforms of the state unemployment system in 2002 called the Hartz law (after the person who initiated the change). The reforms were an answer to increased long-term unemployment rates, and on many levels implied a hardening of the regulations and rules surrounding unemployment benefits. Before then, since the end of the 1960's where a law on the promotion of labour (Arbeitsförderungsgesetz - AFG) was made, focus had been on longer term promoting of the unemployed through trainings and advice, also with supporting them in not having to take work that didn't seem suitable for them or were underpaid for their qualifications. The reforms made a division between the BA that stays a form of “unemployment insurance” for who has paid contributions for this into the system for minimum 12 months in the two years leading up to the unemployment, and gives 60% of the former salary for a limited amount of time. If a person still hasn't found a new work within this time frame (varying depending on age), they are not eligible for unemployment benefits anymore, but are moved to the responsibility of the Jobcentres - which are a combination of local employment agency and social security offices. The benefits paid from here are not anymore dependant on the salary of the person, but are a set monthly amount with the possible addition of contributions for moderate rent and heating. In order to get contributions for the Jobcenter, the person also needs to show that they themselves don't have the means to pay for themselves - i.e. they need to give evidence of any possible savings or other sources of wealth or income. A person getting contributions in this way also has the obligation to report back to the office and show the efforts they make to find a new paying job, and in case of prolonged unemployment, may also be forced to take part in job placement or activation programs, where they are assigned a job through the agency, and will lose their benefits if they don't take it. Also through the Jobcenter there are however the possibility to get counselling and individual support and training<sup>20</sup>.

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1. In contrast to relative terms when in relation to total population where Luxembourg has by far the highest percentage of non-national residents - 47%

2. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/>

Migration\_and\_migrant\_population\_statistics -20.01.2018

3. [https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2017/08/PD17\\_261\\_12511.html](https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2017/08/PD17_261_12511.html) - 20.01.2018

4. <http://www.bpb.de/apuz/30801/migrantenkinder-im-bildungssystem-doppelt-benachteiligt?p=all> - 22.01.2018

Article: "Migranten haben es schwerer" - <http://www.taz.de/!5385634/> - 22.01.2018

Research reports about unequal chances in the school system: <https://www.chancenspiegel.de/chancenspiegel/> - 22.01.2018

<https://www.bibb.de/dokumente/pdf/>

Soziale\_Ungleichheit\_in\_der\_Einwanderungsgesellschaft\_FES.pdf

<https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Thematisch/Bevoelkerung/>

MigrationIntegration/Migrationshintergrund2010220157004.pdf?\_\_blob=publicationFile

[https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2017/11/PD17\\_413\\_12521.html](https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2017/11/PD17_413_12521.html) - 23.01.2018

5. <http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Glossareintraege/DE/M/>

migrationshintergrund.html?view=renderHelp[CatalogHelp]&nn=1363754 | 17.01.2018

6. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/germany-immigration-transition> 30.01.2018

7. <http://countrystudies.us/germany/89.htm> - 22.01.2018

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration\\_to\\_Germany](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immigration_to_Germany) - 22.01.2018

8. <http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2013.html?nn=2006704> - 23.01.2018

9. <http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2014.html?nn=2006704> - 23.01.2018

10. <http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2015.html?nn=2006704> -23.01.2018

<https://www.destatis.de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/>



2016/07/PD16\_246\_12421.html. 23.01.2018

11. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Artikel/>

2017/01/2017-01-11-migration-jahresbilanz.html - 23.01.2018

12. <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/germany/statistics%20> - 20.01.2018

13. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/>

File:Main\_countries\_of\_citizenship\_and\_birth\_of\_the\_foreign\_foreign-born\_population,\_1\_January\_2016\_(%C2%B9)(in\_absolute\_numbers\_and\_as\_a\_percentage\_of\_the\_total\_foreign\_foreign-born\_population).png  
(20.01.2018)

[https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Thematisch/Bevoelkerung/MigrationIntegration/AuslaendBevoelkerung2010200167004.pdf?](https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Thematisch/Bevoelkerung/MigrationIntegration/AuslaendBevoelkerung2010200167004.pdf?__blob=publicationFile)

[\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](https://www.destatis.de/DE/Publikationen/Thematisch/Bevoelkerung/MigrationIntegration/AuslaendBevoelkerung2010200167004.pdf?__blob=publicationFile)

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14. [https://www.destatis.de/EN/FactsFigures/SocietyState/Population/MigrationIntegration/Tables\\_PersonsMigrationBackground/MigrantStatusAge.html](https://www.destatis.de/EN/FactsFigures/SocietyState/Population/MigrationIntegration/Tables_PersonsMigrationBackground/MigrantStatusAge.html) - 23.01.2018

15. <http://www.dw.com/en/types-of-protection-in-germany-for-asylum-seekers/a-39085481>

16. "Deutsch für den Beruf" - <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Willkommen/DeutschLernen/DeutschBeruf/Deutschberuf-esf/deutschberuf-esf-node.html> - 17.01.2018

17. "Finding their way: Labour market integration of refugees in Germany" © OECD 2017

18. "Country fact sheet: Long-term Unemployment in Germany", European Commission, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=14461&langId=en>, accessed on 21.01 2018

19. "Country fact sheet: Long-term Unemployment in Germany", European Commission, <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=14461&langId=en>, accessed on 21.01 2018

20. <https://www.etui.org/content/download/21667/180997/file/Germany+Employment+policies%2C+unemployment+administration+Mechthild+Veil.pdf>, 23.1.2018