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Article

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Forced migration, arrival in Germany, and first steps toward integration

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A new representative survey of a total of 4,500 recently arrived refugees to Germany conducted by the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), the Research Centre of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF-FZ), and the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) at the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW Berlin) has generated an entirely new database for analyzing forced migration and the integration of refugees into German society. The findings we present here are based on the first part of the survey, in which over 2,300 people were interviewed. In addition to the causes of forced migration, the survey captures data on escape routes and educational and vocational biographies. Respondents also answered questions about their values, attitudes, and personality traits, as well as their integration into the German job market and education system. The results show that the threats of war, violence, and persecution were their primary reasons for migration, and that the costs and risks of migration are high. The refugees show extreme heterogeneity in educational backgrounds. The share of respondents who arrived in Germany with vocational or university degrees is low. However, these refugees have high aspirations when it comes to education. And in terms of values, they have more in common with the German population than with the populations of their respective countries of origin. The integration of refugees into the job market and education system has just begun, but Germany's integration policy measures are starting to have a perceptible impact.

Germany experienced an influx of 890,000 refugees in 2015 and an additional 210,000 by the end of September 2016.[1] The country has not experienced this level of immigration since the Federal Republic was founded in 1949. The upsurge in migration for humanitarian reasons since the beginning of the present decade poses major challenges to policymakers, administrative agencies, and civil society organizations. All these actors need reliable data to master the challenges at hand, and up to now, a representative database on the refugees who have come to Germany in recent years has been lacking.

To meet this pressing need, the IAB, BAMF-FZ, and SOEP have forged a partnership to create a comprehensive, representative database on refugees to Germany.[2] The first part of the longitudinal study surveyed over 2,300 refugees to Germany and is the basis for the findings in this report. In the second part, the random sample will be expanded to include at least 4,500 respondents. The approximately 450 survey questions capture data on refugees' personality traits, attitudes, health, and indicators of subjective well-being in addition to their educational and occupational biographies, the causes of their forced migration, and the escape routes they used. The survey also asked about their accommodations, the asylum process, integration into the job market, and other areas of society, and their participation in specific policy measures (Boxes 1 and 2).

In this short report, we present preliminary results from the first part of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey. Simultaneously, a more detailed presentation of the results has been published in a longer report (in German).[3]

1 See: Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI), "890.000 Asylsuchende im Jahr 2015," press release dated Sept. 30, 2016.

2 The first part of the random sample upon which this report is based was financed with funds from the research budget of the Federal Employment Agency (BA) allocated to the IAB. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research is financing the second part. The Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs commissioned the IAB to conduct analyses on the basis of these data, which will offer increased opportunities for analysis. Furthermore, all three research institutes have allocated personnel resources to the project.

3 See Herbert Brücker, Nina Rother and Jürgen Schupp, "IAB-BAMF-SOEP-Befragung von Geflüchteten: Überblick und erste Ergebnisse," *IAB Research Reports* no. 14 (2016).

Migration to Germany: reasons and costs

Threats of war and persecution are the primary causes of forced migration

In migration theory, forced migration is understood as a complex decision in which war and persecution as well as economic, political, and institutional factors in the countries of origin and destination all play a role.[4] This is why the adult refugees interviewed in this study were not only asked why they left their countries of origin and transit countries, but also why they chose Germany as their destination. The survey allowed multiple answers in order to decipher the complex motivators that culminate in the decision to migrate.[5]

The threat of violent conflicts and war was by far the most frequently stated cause of forced migration (70 percent). Other important political reasons were persecution (44 percent), discrimination (38 percent), and forced conscription (36 percent). Poor personal living conditions (39 percent) and the economic situation in the country of

4 Timothy J. Hatton, "Seeking asylum in Europe," *Economic Policy* 19 (38) (2004): 5–62; Timothy J. Hatton, "Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Policy in OECD Countries," *American Economic Review* 106 (5) (2016): 441–45.

5 The interviewers clearly explained that the answers would play no role in the respondent's asylum process and would remain completely anonymous.

Box 1

The IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey

The IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey is a representative longitudinal study of more than 4,500 people in Germany aged 18 and older. In the first phase, 2,349 people living in 1,766 households were surveyed from June to October 2016. The results in the present report are based on that survey. The second part of the study is currently in progress. An additional 2,300 people are expected to respond to the survey by the end of 2016. The study provides the basis for general statements about the statistical population of refugees who are registered in the Central Register of Foreign Nationals; who entered Germany between January 1, 2013, and January 31, 2016; and who applied for asylum (regardless of their current legal status).

The term "refugee" is not used in the legal sense here, but must be understood as a collective term for the group of adults described above and in Box 2.

Key features of the survey:

- It provides comprehensive information on the respondents' reasons for forced migration, escape routes, individual cognitive abilities, personality traits, values, health, educational and employment-related biographies, language proficiency, earnings and assets, and family contexts and social networks. It also includes data on registration, asylum procedure status, accommodations, and use of integration and job market policy measures and career counseling programs. To the best of the authors' knowledge, the survey represents the most extensive collection of data for the analysis of forced migration and the integration of refugees worldwide.
- It was conducted in person by trained interviewers from KANTAR Public (formerly TNS Infratest Sozialforschung) with the assistance of computers. The questionnaire was available in seven languages: Arabic, Kurmanji, Persian, Urdu, Pashto, German, and English. It was important to ensure that people unable to read well participated in the survey, so the company developed innovative audio-visual survey instruments, making the questionnaire available both in writing and verbally. Interpreters were available to provide support as required.
- The catalog of questions was harmonized with that of the IAB-SOEP migration sample and the basic catalog of questions used in the SOEP study "Leben in Deutschland" (Life in Germany). This allowed the results of the survey to be compared with data on immigrants and non-immigrants living in Germany. The survey was integrated into the SOEP as a special sub-sample so that can be used by the research community for analysis.
- With the written consent of respondents, the results are linked to the data from the IAB Integrated Employment Biographies (IEB), adding the precise job market data of the BA, which include data on earnings and episodes of employment, unemployment, and receipt of unemployment benefits, to the Refugee Survey data. This provides a detailed picture of the employment biographies of refugees in Germany.
- Respondents are closely tracked to ensure that as many as possible can be located to participate in further waves of the survey.

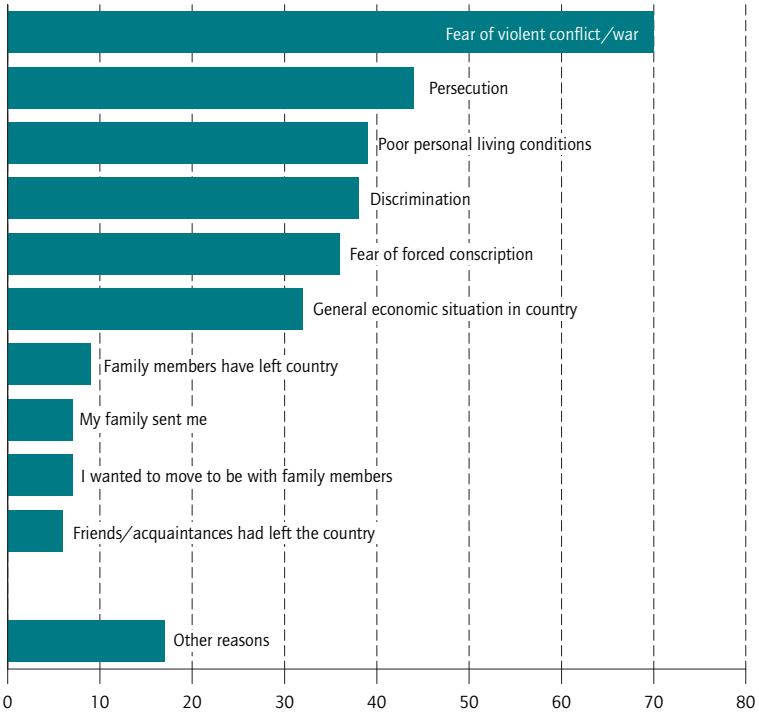
As a whole, the study provides a data set that is unique worldwide for research on refugee migration and integration. The data from the first wave will be available for research in fall 2017 at the IAB and SOEP Research Data Centers. For reasons of data confidentiality, the data sets linked to the IEB can only be used by guest researchers at the IAB or via remote access.

origin (32 percent) were also frequently mentioned reasons (Figure 1a). Refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran cited war and persecution as reasons for migration, while refugees from Eritrea cited forced conscription. By contrast, many refugees from the Western Balkans reported precarious living conditions, discrimination, and poor economic situations in their countries of origin as their reasons for migration. Before coming to Germany, over two-fifths of refugees spent three months or longer in a transit country, although around 60 percent of them were planning to continue on to a different destination country. Many refugees reported that they did not leave the transit country voluntarily but due to precarious living situations (53 percent),persecution (25 percent), expulsion (19 percent), and discrimination (18 percent). The most frequently cited transit countries were Turkey, Iran, Lebanon, and Sudan, countries that bordered the respondents' respective countries of origin.[6]

Figure 1a

Reasons for leaving country of origin

Multiple answers possible, weighted percentage value



Basis: Respondents who gave at least one reason.

Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2016; weighted values.

Respect for human rights is the main reason for migrating to Germany

The respondents' need for protection played the central role in their choice of Germany as their destination country. The respect for human rights in Germany was cited most frequently on average (73 percent), particularly among respondents from Iraq (85 percent) and Syria (81 percent) and refugees from other conflict regions. The German education system (43 percent) and the feeling of being welcome in Germany (42 percent) were cited less frequently. Almost one-quarter of respondents stated Germany's economic situation or the national social welfare system as reasons for their choice (Figure 1b).

Personal networks played a minor role in the decisions to leave the country of origin. However, these networks were slightly more important as reasons for choosing Germany as a destination. While only nine percent of respondents stated that family members had already left the country as their reason for migrating, 19 percent indicated that they decided to come to Germany because family members were already living there.

Forced migration means high costs and risks

Forced migration is different from other forms of migration in that it entails higher costs and risks. Little has been reported on the level and structure of these costs or on the individual risks of forced migration.

According to the respondents who came to Germany as refugees between January 2013 and January 2016, the mean cost of travel from their home country to Germany was around €7,100 and the median cost[7] was €5,000 (Table 1). The mean cost of travel from a transit country was lower: approximately €5,200 (the median cost was €3,550). The extremely large sums of money spent by some respondents to reach Germany explain the large difference between mean and median costs.

With regard to the average costs of forced migration, refugees spent the most on travel from their country of origin (€3,949; €2,912 from a transit country), followed by smugglers' fees (€3,103; €2,440 from a transit country), and accommodations (€459; €626 from a transit country, Table 1). People were most likely to pay out of their own savings (50 percent) or by selling assets (39 percent) or doing odd jobs (34 percent). Some borrowed the money from family members (15 percent) or friends (15 percent), or took out loans (seven percent).

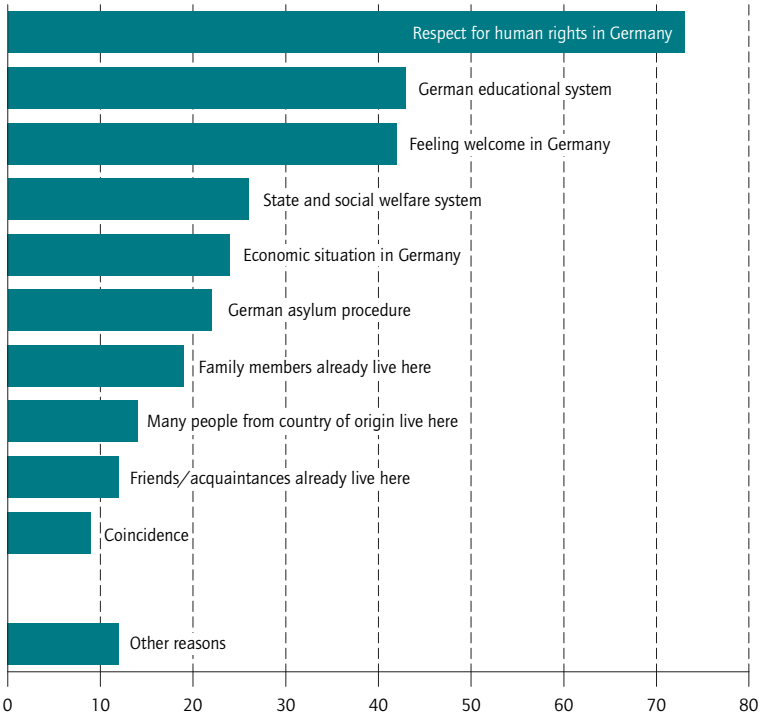
6 See Herbert Brücker et al., (2016a), ibid.

7 The median value is derived by dividing the random sample into upper and lower halves. Extreme values at the upper and lower ends of the distribution cannot influence the results here, in contrast to the calculation of average costs.

Figure 1b

Reasons for choosing Germany

Multiple answers possible, weighted percentage value



Basis: Respondents who gave at least one reason.

Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2016; weighted values.

Table 1

Costs of forced migration to Germany

In euros[1]

Cost category	Travel to Germany			
	Directly from country of origin		Directly from transit country	
	Mean	Median[3]	Mean	Median[3]
Costs of transportation	3,949	2,500	2,912	1,800
Costs of room and board	459	0	626	0
Costs of border crossing assistance/smuggling	3,103	1,500	2,440	1,000
Total costs[2]	7,137	5,000	5,231	3,550

1 Covers departures from January 1, 2013, to December 31, 2015.
2 The total costs were calculated as the sum of all costs for transportation, lodging, and border crossing assistance/smuggling. If respondents answered "don't know" to questions about the particular costs, their responses were not calculated into the total.
3 Values of 0 appear for the median value when more than half of respondents did not state any costs in that cost category.

Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2016, weighted values.

Box 2

Sampling procedure, sample size, and weighting

The sample was taken from the Central Register of Foreign Nationals, which contains information on the legal status of all those registered, thus allowing refugees to be identified. The study includes three groups classified by legal status: 1) asylum seekers whose asylum procedures are still ongoing; 2) refugees who have already been granted protection, in particular, asylum seekers whose asylum claim has been approved, refugees recognized under the 1951 Geneva Convention, and refugees who have been granted subsidiary protection[1]; and 3) individuals whose asylum claims have been rejected but who are permitted to remain in the country temporarily with the status of Duldung ("toleration", a temporary stay of deportation).

Refugees who were not yet registered as asylum seekers were not included in the sample design because statistical information on this population is lacking, making it impossible to draw general conclusions about this group as a whole.

Overall, the Central Register of Foreign Nationals recorded 529,078 adult refugees[2] who entered Germany between January 1, 2013, and January 31, 2016, and submitted an application for asylum. Two-thirds of them (337,445) entered the country in 2015. Those who entered the country in 2016 were added retrospectively by BAMF. To mitigate the bias resulting from individuals who were not registered in 2015, the sample was drawn in three phases.

Of the newcomers who entered Germany in the aforementioned period, 55 percent (289,705) still had ongoing asylum procedures, 36 percent had been granted protection (191,481), and nine percent (47,892) had "tolerated" status (Duldung) or another status.

Because the sample is designed to be repeated every year, it includes an above-average number of people with better chances of remaining in Germany. And a higher proportion of women were included to enable general conclusions to be drawn about this group. The other groups are also represented in proportions smaller than that of the statistical population. The appropriate weighting procedures were used to assure that the sample is representative of the population in question.

1 This also includes people who were accepted as part of a resettlement program, as well as "contingent refugees".

2 Plus 205,932 minors.

The average costs of forced migration varied widely by country of origin. Respondents from Afghanistan and Pakistan reported the highest costs (€12,040), followed by Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Palestine (€11,363), and Syria (€5,556). The costs for people from the countries of northern Africa (€1,398), the Western Balkan states (€1,638), the rest of Africa (€2,578) and the post-Soviet states (€2,644) are at the lower end of the distribution.

Forced migration entails not only monetary costs but also significant risks and hazards to physical and emotional well-being. For example, one-quarter of respondents said they had survived shipwrecks. Many also reported other health risks and threats to their physical well-being. Two-fifths of the respondents had been victims of physical assault, one-fifth had been robbed, and 15 percent of female refugees reported having been sexually assaulted. More than half had fallen victim to fraud and more than one-quarter had been blackmailed.

Duration and costs of travel have fallen over time

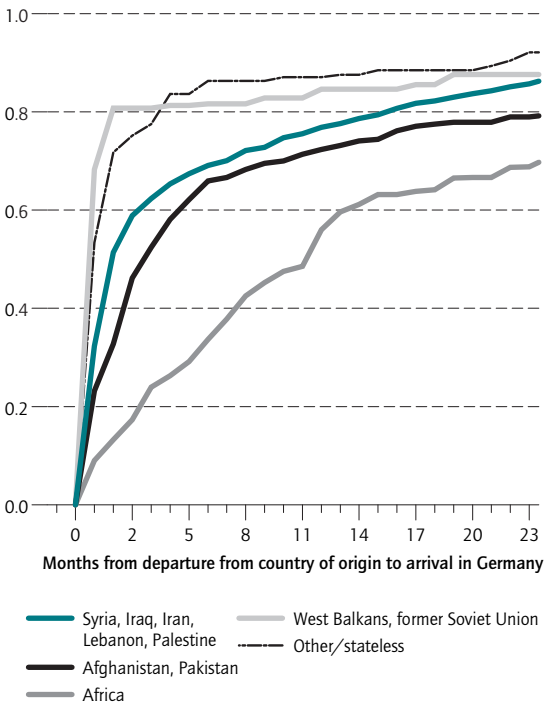
For respondents who traveled from their countries of origin directly to Germany, the trip took an average of 35 days. Travel from transit countries where the respondents had stayed for more than three months took an average of 49 days.[8] The total duration of the journey from the country of origin to Germany (including stays in transit countries) varied by region of origin (Figure 2). For example, within one month of their departure, 81 percent of refugees from the Western Balkan and post-Soviet states and half of refugees from Syria and other Middle Eastern countries had arrived in Germany. However, this was true for only one-tenth of refugees from Africa. The geographical locations of the countries of origin do not account for all of these differences. Respondents' options for passage through transit countries and personal financial situations could also be significant factors.

Over time, the financial costs and duration of travel to Germany have fallen. While refugees who left their country of origin or transit country during the first six months of 2013 spent an average of €7,229 to reach Germany, those who left during the first six months of 2015 spent only around €6,900. By the second half of 2015, the average cost was only €5,232. At the same time, the time spent in transit decreased from an average of 79 days to 38 days for those traveling directly to Germany and 22 days for those traveling through a transit country (Figure 3).[9] When interpreting the values for the second half of 2015, it should be kept in mind that people with long journeys to Germany are under-represented at the end of the sampling period because they had not yet arrived in Germany at the time of the survey.

Figure 2

Length of time from departure from country of origin to arrival in Germany

Cumulative share of the people who entered Germany



Notes: We used an inverted Kaplan-Meier estimator to calcuate the probability of arriving in Germany at a specific point in time.

Example: The probability of arriving in Germany one month after leaving their respective country of origin is 52 percent for people from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, and Palestine, 33 percent for people from Afghanistan and Pakistan , 13 percent for people from Africa, and 81 percent for people from West Balkan and former Soviet states.

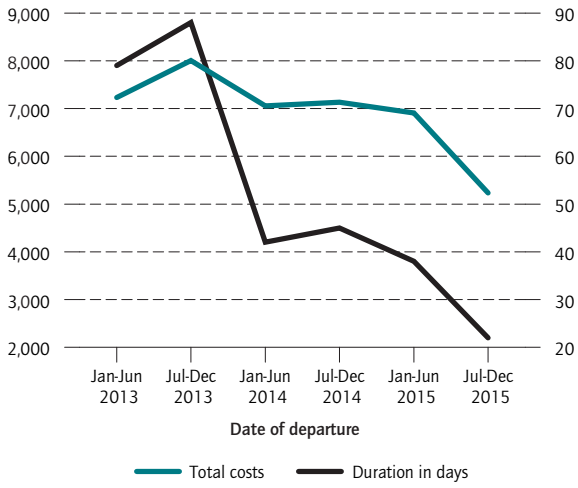
Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2016; weighted values.

8 "Duration" is defined as the period from departing the last place of residence in the country of origin or transit country until arriving in Germany. Duration and costs are both based on the date of departure. Only departures between January 2013 and January 2016 were taken into account.

9 The findings are also robust when changes in the composition of countries of origin are considered. The results of a multivariate analysis controlling for the effects of the country of origin are available upon request.

Figure 3

Travel time to destination country and costs of travel for refugees
First half of 2013 to second half of 2015



Notes: Answers given in dollars were converted into euros according to annual exchange rates.

Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2016; weighted values.

Table 2

School attendance, graduation, and years of attendance by school type

School type	Percentage of respondents aged 18 and older		Years of attendance	
	School attendance	Graduation	All school attendees	With graduation
No school	9	–	–	–
No response	7	–	10	–
Still in school[1]	1	–	6	–
Primary school	10	–	6	–
Middle school	31	22	9	10
Secondary school	37	32	12	12
Other school	5	3	10	11
Total	100	58	10	11

1 "Still in school" refers to respondents who are attending school in Germany but did not attend school in their country of origin or did not provide a response to the respective question. – "School attendance" was modified to "School attendance with graduation" when the level of school completed was higher than the response to the question about highest level of school attendance.

Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2016, weighted.

Educational backgrounds and professional skills

Diverse levels of formal education

Levels of formal education vary widely in our sample of refugees. Around 37 percent of adult respondents attended secondary school in their country of origin and 32 percent graduated (Table 2). The vast majority of secondary school graduates had general diplomas that are approximately equivalent to a university entrance qualification. On average, those who attended and/or graduated from secondary school completed 12 years of schooling.

A total of 31 percent of respondents attended and 22 percent completed middle school. Those who attended middle school completed nine years of school on average, and middle school graduates completed ten. A further five percent attended other types of schools, and three percent received certificates of completion. On average, those who graduated spent 11 years in school and those who did not, ten years.

On the other end of the spectrum, ten percent of respondents had only primary school education (attending for six years on average) and nine percent did not have any formal education. In total, 26 percent of the school attendees in the random sample had dropped out of school. Only one percent of respondents had graduated from a school in Germany and one percent were currently enrolled in school in Germany (Table 2). This low percentage is likely due first to the fact that most of the respondents are adults and second to the short time they have lived in Germany.

A total of 55 percent of respondents have spent a minimum of ten years in formal schooling, achieving what is considered the minimum level of education in Europe. Whereas 58 percent of refugees have spent ten or more years in formal schooling, vocational training or colleges and universities this is true for 88 percent of the German population at present. We must remember that war, persecution, and forced migration have disrupted many refugees' educations. Due to the differences in education systems, comparing school types across countries is only possible to a limited extent. The 2014 SOEP findings indicate that 36 percent of the German resident population aged 18 and older had completed upper or technical secondary schools (Gymnasium, Fachoberschule), while 56 percent had completed intermediate or lower secondary school (Realschule, Hauptschule). Accordingly, the educational structure of the refugee population differs less from that of the German resident population at the upper end of the educational spectrum, but shows a much smaller percentage of the population in the middle of the spectrum and a significantly greater percentage at the lower end.

Among refugees from countries long plagued by war and civil war such as Afghanistan, areas bordering Pakistan, Somalia, and Sudan, the percentage of respondents who dropped out of school or never started school is especially high. Eritrea is a special case, because educational certificates are not issued there until people have completed military service, which often lasts for ten years. That means the number of school attendees in the country is relatively high, but the percentage with diplomas or certificates is very low.[10] Ethnic minorities, such as Roma from the Western Balkan states or Yazidi from Iraq and Syria, have relatively low educational levels. Discrimination in access to educational institutions is likely to have played a key role in this. Syrian nationals have a relatively high level of education because access to educational institutions was guaranteed there up to start of the civil war there in 2011. Refugees from Iran and the post-Soviet states appear to have similarly high or even higher educational levels.

Low percentage of refugees with higher education or vocational training

A total of 19 percent of respondents have attended a university or other institution of higher education, while 13 percent have a university degree. A further 12 percent have participated in an on-the-job training program or other vocational training program, and six percent have vocational qualifications (Table 3). On average, university graduates have spent five years at universities, and respondents with vocational training qualifications completed three-year programs. In comparison, the 2014 SOEP findings show that 21 percent of the German population have a university degree and 59 percent have vocational training qualifications.

This large disparity in vocational training is due only in part to the level of economic development and war-related circumstances in the countries of origin. Most of these countries do not have an educational system that is comparable to the German vocational training system. Many people work in trades and technical or commercial professions that do not require a formal education. Therefore, many refugees may have vocational skills that they acquired through on-the-job training or other educational programs that would be useful in Germany but for which they have no educational diplomas or certificates.[11]

Table 3

Vocational training and university education: Attendance and graduation

Percentage of persons aged 18 and over, and average number of years in vocational training and university education

	Percentage of respondents aged 18 and older		Average number of years in education	
	Attendance	With graduation[1]	All attendees	Persons with graduation
No response	1	–	–	2
None	69	–	–	–
Company-based training/ vocational school	9	6	3	3
Company-based training/ vocational school (current)[2]	3	–	not available	–
Universities/technical colleges	19	13	4	5
Total	100	19	4	4

1 Only graduation from vocational training programs and universities abroad.
2 Attendance/graduation in Germany.

Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2016, weighted.

The results also showed differences in the educational levels of men and women: 37 percent of women and 32 percent of men had not completed formal schooling, while 71 percent of women and 68 percent of men had not completed a university degree or vocational training. When comparing childless women to childless men, however, the percentage of women who had not completed formal schooling was lower than that of men (29 percent against 31 percent). The gender gap in vocational education disappeared entirely when considering only childless women and men.

Refugees have high educational ambitions

The survey results provide evidence of respondents' educational aspirations: A total of 46 percent of the adult refugees intended to complete secondary school in Germany and 66 percent planned to obtain vocational qualifications or university degrees. And at 23 percent, slightly more than one-third of the latter group wanted to obtain a university degree.

These results indicate that the educational structure of the refugee population is likely to change dramatically in the years to come. However, it would be premature to draw conclusions about the extent to which these refugees will actually attend and graduate from educational institutions in Germany based on their current educational plans. Furthermore, these individuals do not have fixed timetables: many want to work first and invest in education and training later.

10 See Susanne Worbs, Eva Bund and Axel Böhm, "Asyl – und dann? Die Lebenssituation von Asylberechtigten und anerkannten Flüchtlingen in Deutschland. BAMF-Flüchtlingsstudie 2014," *Research Report* 28 (2016).

11 See Marie-Claire von Radetzky and Kristina Stoewe, "Bildungsstand syrischer Flüchtlinge – 5 Gerüchte auf dem Prüfstand", *Cologne Institute for Economic Research Study* 20, 1–3 (2016); and bq portal, *Berufsbildungssyste, Syrien* (2016), https://www.bq-portal.de/de/printpdf/5077 (accessed on October 20, 2016).

Measured against their aspirations, these refugees still show a relatively low level of participation in the German educational system. During the survey period, five percent of the adult refugees were attending German schools and universities or participating in a training program. But here it should be taken into account that around 55 percent of respondents were still in the asylum process and nine percent had been granted "tolerated" status (Duldung), meaning that their asylum application has been rejected but that they have been granted a temporary stay. In many cases, these refugees' proficiency in German is still too low to attend an educational institution. Taking all of these factors into account, it seems likely that participation in the education system will increase among this group of refugees.

German language proficiency initially low but improving

Around 90 percent of respondents reported that they did not know any German before migrating to Germany, but almost 30 percent rated their English speaking and reading skills at the time of the survey as good or very good. During the survey period, respondents reported that their German had improved significantly since they arrived. A total of 18 percent of respondents who had spent less than two years in Germany rated their German proficiency as good or very good; 35 percent said it was satisfactory, and 47 percent indicated that they had little or no knowledge of German. Of those who had been in Germany for more than two years, 32 percent reported having good or excellent German skills and 37 percent reported having satisfactory German skills.

Growing numbers of refugees have taken part in language learning programs since 2015. The BAMF integration courses are an important publicly funded language learning program (Box 3). There are also a series of other language programs, including the ESF-BAMF courses in German for professional purposes, introductory German and other language learning programs sponsored by the Federal Employment Agency (BA), as well as programs organized by individual federal states and municipalities, charitable organizations, and volunteers.

Almost no data are available on the scope of language programs available and participation in these programs. At the time of the survey, one-third of respondents had attended integration courses. An additional five percent had participated in the ESF-BAMF German courses and eight percent in the BA's[12] introductory courses or similar language learning programs. Many more attended language courses offered by federal states, municipalities, charities, and other organizations. In total, two-thirds of respondents had attended one type of language course or another. Of those who were attending or had attended a language course, 22 percent have participated in more than one program.[13]

Refugees not only participate in formal language learning programs but also utilize other opportunities for learning German. A large majority (71 percent) of respondents reported using media such as the Internet, television, newspapers, and radio to learn the language. Almost one-third were learning German from relatives, friends, or acquaintance, and around 30 percent were using language-learning CDs, Internet courses, and other multimedia learning aids.

A multivariate analysis of the determinants of refugees' German skills showed a strong, statistically significant relationship between language course attendance and improvement in language proficiency. It also showed significant positive correlations between gains in language proficiency and duration of stay, recognition of claims for

Box 3

Legal framework for attendance of integration courses

Integration courses are Germany's key publicly funded language support program. They include comprehensive language teaching consisting of an average of 600 lesson units and an orientation course that now has 100 units. Learners complete the course with knowledge of German at the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, and are given regular language tests throughout the course to monitor their progress. Until November 2015, "tolerated" refugees and people with ongoing asylum procedures were not allowed to participate in an integration course. Since November 2015, however, "tolerated" refugees and asylum applicants expected to receive legal permanent residency in Germany – which currently applies to refugees from Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, and Syria – can apply for permission to take a BAMF integration course. And as in the past, refugees who have recognized protection status also have the right to apply. There is no legal right to language courses. Since the Integration Act came into effect in August 2016, participation in an integration course is binding and non-attendance can be penalized.

12 Some of the respondents who said they had participated in a BA introductory German course may actually have participated in a different BA language learning program.

13 See Herbert Brücker et al. (2016a), Ibid.

refugee protection, educational levels, and living in private accommodations rather than refugee shelters. The correlations are negative, however, for women as well as for refugees from safe countries of origin.[14]

First steps: integration into the job market and education system

Many refugees come to Germany with work experience

Refugees' integration into the job market is likely to depend not only on their education, German proficiency, and other skills, but also on the work experience they acquired in their respective countries of origin. Of the 18- to 65-year-old respondents, 73 percent reported having worked before coming to Germany. However, there was a significant gap between the men and women surveyed: 81 percent of male respondents but only 50 percent of female refugees had work experience.

The refugees' job structures in their respective countries of origin provide initial insights into their occupational skills. On average, 27 percent were self-employed, 30 percent were non-salaried employees, 25 percent were salaried employees in non-management positions, and 13 percent were salaried employees in management positions.

Most refugees want to work

Survey results showed that respondents are highly motivated to work: 78 percent of unemployed respondents reported that they were "definitely" and another 15 percent "probably" planning to work in the future. The results also reveal gender differences: 97 percent of men and 85 percent of women reported that they "definitely" or "probably" wanted to work. This shows that women have a strong desire to work, even though their employment rate is still low.

Job market integration just beginning

During the survey period, 14 percent of respondents had jobs. The majority of these respondents can be classified into the following groups: full-time employees (32 percent), part-time employees (21 percent), and participants in internships or vocational training programs (24 percent). Employment was nine percent among refugees who came to Germany in 2015 and 2016, 22 percent among those who arrived in 2014, and 31 percent among those who arrived in 2013 or earlier.[15]

Patterns of job market integration among recently arrived refugees correspond closely to the process and timing of job market entry for past waves of refugees.[16] To understand this development, it is important to keep in mind that 55 percent of the respondents were still awaiting a decision on their asylum claim at the time of the survey and only had limited access to the job market.[17] In many cases, they were also still lacking the necessary German skills.

A large share (42 percent) of respondents with work experience found their first jobs in Germany through personal contacts: family members, friends, or acquaintances. However, this percentage is significantly higher among other migrant groups, 55 percent of whom found their first jobs in Germany through social contacts.[18] A higher percentage (60 percent) of refugees without vocational or university degrees found their first jobs through personal contacts, while refugees with vocational or university degrees had more success finding a job through employment agencies or job centers (33 percent), newspapers, and the Internet (ten percent).

Career counseling programs still used relatively little

Twenty-two percent of the respondents had taken advantage of the BA career counseling programs and 19 percent had used the services of a job center, while some had used several of the available programs.[19] An additional 20 percent knew of the programs offered by the BA and 19 percent were aware of job center services but had not used them (yet). The longer respondents had stayed in Germany, the more likely they were to be aware of these counseling programs. Around one-fifth of recently

14 See Herbert Brücker et al. (2016a), Ibid.

15 Due to the low number of cases, these values can only be interpreted as preliminary. For those who migrated to Germany before 2013, these were relatives and other people in the household surveyed.

16 Herbert Brücker et al., "Geflüchtete Menschen in Deutschland – eine qualitative Befragung," *IAB Forschungsbericht* no. 9 (2016b); Zerrin Salikutluk, Johannes Giesecke and Martin Kroh, "Geflüchtete nehmen in Deutschland später eine Erwerbstätigkeit auf als andere MigrantInnen," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 35 (2016): 749–56.

17 Asylum applicants cannot pursue gainful employment until three months after registering. Asylum-seekers from safe countries of origin who submitted their asylum application after August 31, 2015, are not allowed to work at all. Hurdles refugees must overcome in order to work include the BA verification of the comparability of working conditions, approval from the immigration authorities, and the priority checks that the BA still conducts in some regions. However, the main hurdle are the legal uncertainties about their future residency status during the asylum procedure.

18 See Herbert Brücker et al., "Arbeitsmarktintegration von Migranten in Deutschland: Anerkannte Abschlüsse und Deutschkenntnisse lohnen sich," *Die IAB-SOEP-Migrationsstichprobe: Leben, lernen, arbeiten – wie es Migranten in Deutschland geht: IAB-Kurzbericht* no. 21.3 (2014): 21–8; Philipp Eisnecker and Diana Schacht, "Die Hälfte der Geflüchteten in Deutschland findet ihre erste Stelle über soziale Kontakte," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 35 (2016): 757–64.

19 The Federal Employment Offices (BAs) are responsible for asylum-seekers looking for work during their asylum procedures and for people with a temporary suspension of the deportation (Duldung) , if their asylum claims have been rejected. Job centers are responsible for people whose asylum applications have been approved and who receive benefits to cover their basic costs in cases of need.

Table 4

Connection between employment and integration measures or advisory services

Estimated impact on employment propabilities

Language courses[1]						
BAMF integration course	0.100** (0.024)					
ESF-BAMF language courses[2]		0.304** (0.061)				
BA introductory language program[3]			0.084** (0.032)			
Career counseling and other advisory services of the BA[4]						
BA Perspectives for Refugees[5]				0.155** (0.050)		
General job counseling					0.084** (0.020)	
Career counseling						0.075** (0.024)
Observations	1,776	2,107	2,079	2,128	2,131	2,135
R^2	0.261	0.251	0.232	0.236	0.233	0.232

*Notes: Significances at 1 or 5 percent level are denoted by ** and * respectively. The standard deviation is given in parentheses.-- The dependent variable in each case is a dummy variable that has the value of 1 if a person was employed at the time of the interview (full-time, part-time, in marginal employment, in company-based training, or in an internship) and 0 if not. -- The model is estimated using the method of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression.-- As additional control variables, we used sex, age, age squared, age on arrival, educational degrees before immigration, region of origin, duration of stay, duration of stay squared, children, employment prior to immigration, housing, current language knowledge, language knowledge before immigration, health status, and fixed effects for the month of the inerview, municipal size classes, general job search assistance, German courses, other integration measures, residency status, and federal state.*

1 The reference group consists of persons who did not take part in the respective language course. Individuals who are expected to have dropped out of a language course are not considered in the estimations.
2 The course is designed to teach occupation-specific language skills.
3 Respondents were asked about their participation in introductory language courses offered by the BA. Since many respondents stated participation in these language courses at a point in time when they were not yet or no longer being provided, one must assume that this variable also includes other language programs offered by the BA.
4 The reference group consists of persons who had not yet received advice or counseling or who were not aware of advisory centers.
5 This is a labor market measure designed by the Federal Employment Agency to assess refugees' vocational skills.

Example: For a person who received general job counseling, the probability of being employed is 8.4 percent higher than for a person who did not receive general job counseling or who is not yet familiar with the job counseling centers.

Source: Own estimates based on the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2016.

arrived refugees reported that they needed and received help finding a job; two-fifths said they needed help but had not received any. These findings indicate that the BA counseling programs are not being utilized fully despite growing awareness of their existence.

Language and counseling program effectiveness

Many programs support the integration of refugees into the German job market. In order to acquire an initial impression of how effective these programs are, we examined the relationship between employment and various programs. The results should be understood as a statistical correlation between participation in a program and participation in the job market, and not as a causal relationship.

We initially examined three language programs. The first were the integration courses offered by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). Second, we examined the ESF-BAMF courses in German for professional purposes, which are also offered by BAMF. These courses are designed to teach advanced language skills with practical application to specific occupations, meaning that those who complete the program leave with more advanced language skills than participants in integration courses and with a knowledge of the specific vocabulary used in their occupation. Third, we examined the introductory-level language course the BA offered in 2015 as well as other BA language programs that were designed to teach both basic and occupation-related language skills.[20]

In the estimates (Table 4), respondents who had not (yet) participated in the relevant language courses are the comparison group. The estimates show that those who had completed a language course have a significantly higher probability of employment than people who had not participated in one. The effects are the greatest for the ESF-BAMF language courses. This could be because the ESF-BAMF language courses teach a higher level of occupation-related language proficiency.

The second part of the regressions (Table 4) examine the extent to which participation in the BA's "Perspektive für Flüchtlinge" (perspectives for refugees) program, which is designed to build on refugees' existing occupational competencies and skills, and in the BA's job market and vocational counseling programs is correlated with the refugees' employment. As the results of the estimate show, all of the programs have a statistically significant correlation with the refugees' likelihood of being employed. Since those with greater proximity to the job market and skills that are relevant for job market integration are also more likely to participate in these types of programs, the effects cannot be interpreted as causal proof of their effectiveness. Future research is needed to provide more answers here.

20 The survey asked about participation in the introductory BA course that took place from October to December 2015. However, many of the respondents said they had attended the course outside of that period. This may be due to respondents confusing the introductory BA course with the other language-learning programs the BA offers (e.g., occupation-related language courses offered under the Social Insurance Code III sect. 45). Due to this possible measurement error, in a wider sense this variable not only encompasses the introductory BA courses but other BA language-learning programs as well.

Table 5

Attitudes about forms of government and democracy (agreement in percentages)[7]

Database	IAB-BAMF-SOEP	World Values Survey (WVS)		Difference	
	Refugees[1]	Population with German citizenship[2,3]	Countries in crisis[2,4]	Column A and B[5]	Column A and C[5]
	Column A	Column B	Column C		
Attitudes about forms of government					
There should be a democratic system.	96	95	91	*(1)*	5
You need a strong leader who does not have to be concerned with a Parliament or elections.	21	22	46	*(−1)*	−25
Experts, not the government, should decide what is best for the country.	55	59	70	*(−4)*	−15
Attitudes about democracy					
The people choose their government in free elections.	96	92	89	4	7
Women have the same rights as men.	92	92	67	*(0)*	25
Civil rights protect the people from government oppression.	93	83	80	10	13
The government taxes the rich and supports the poor.	81	71	63	10	18
Religious leaders ultimately determine the interpretation of laws.	13	8	55	5	−42

1 The response scale for the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey in the questions on forms of government, which ranges from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree), was condensed into disagreement (responses 1 to 4) and agreement (responses 5 to 7). The response options in WVS do not contain a neutral middle category, in contrast to the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey. The responses in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey on the middle category (value of 4) are considered here "rejection." An alternative approach that treats the middle category as "no response" generates substantially similar findings. --In attitudes toward democracy, the response scale, which runs from 0 (should definitely not happen in a democracy) to 11 (should definitely happen in a democracy), was condensed into disagreement (responses 0 to 5) and agreement (responses 6 to 10). The response options in WVS do not contain a neutral middle category, in contrast to the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey. The responses in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey on the middle category (value of 5) are considered here "rejection." An alternative approach that treats the middle category as "no response" generates substantially similar findings.
2 The WVS response scale for the questions on forms of government, which range from 1 (totally disagree) to 4 (totally agree) were condensed into disagreement (responses 1 to 2) and agreement (responses 3 to 4).-- The response scale, which ranges from 1 (should definitely not happen in a democracy) to 10 (should definitely happen in a democracy) was condensed into disagreement (responses 1 to 5) and agreement (responses 6 to 10).
3 For Germany, only persons with German citizenship were included.
4 Not included in the WVS are Syria, Afghanistan, and Eritrea. Countries defined as countries in crisis were: Algeria, Palestine, Iraq, Libya, Egypt, and Yemen.
5 Differences in percentage points. Estimates that suggest a statistically non-significant difference (Adjusted Wald Test, 99 percent level of significance) are in italics.
6 In Germany, the percentage of missing answers on questions about the form of government (don't know, no answer) is between one and four percent (WVS), in countries in crisis (WVS) between six and eight percent, and among refugees (IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey) between 13 and 26 percent. It is impossible to determine from the data at hand to what extent these differences are due to differences in the survey instruments and situation, to language problems or social desirability bias. – In Germany, the percentage of missing answers on questions about attitudes toward democracy (don't know, no answer) is two percent or below (WVS), in countries in crisis (WVS) between six and ten percent, and among refugees (IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey) between 11 and 20 percent. It is impossible to determine from the data at hand to what extent these differences are due to differences in the survey instruments and situation, to language problems or social desirability bias.

Sources: IAB-BAMF Refugee Survey 2016; World Values Survey, Wave 6, 2010–2014.

Much in common: Comparing refugees with the German population

Democratic values

Refugees' social and cultural as well as economic participation in Germany will depend to a great extent on their personal values and how these values continue to develop and change. Many respondents come from countries under dictatorships, in which democratic traditions and the civil society structures are poorly developed or have been destroyed in recent years. To what extent refugees' experience living under dictatorial regimes is expressed in either lower or higher levels of support for democracy has been measured here based on the respondents' levels of agreement with various statements dealing with forms of government and democratic principles.

To this end, we examined respondents' attitudes about forms of government in the survey, as well as their understanding of democracy and the roles of men and women in society. Most of the questions are based on the World Values Survey (WVS), which enables a comparison between the German population and – with some limitations – the populations of the countries of origin.

Ninety-six percent of respondents expressed support for the statement, "There should be a democratic system" (Table 5, Column A). Respondents' answers almost completely matched those of the Germans who responded to the WVS (Column B). However, around one-fifth of the refugees surveyed agreed partially or completely with the statement, "You need a strong leader who does not have to be concerned with a Parliament or elections." And 55 percent agreed partially or completely with the state-

ment, "Experts, not the Government, should decide what is best for the country." These two statements are problematic from a democratic political viewpoint, but the refugees did not report a higher level of agreement with them than German respondents, 22 percent of whom supported the idea of a strong leader and 59 percent of whom were in favor of rule by experts.

However, significantly more of the WVS respondents in crisis regions agreed with these anti-democratic statements. In Egypt, Algeria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Palestine, almost one in two respondents supported the idea of a strong leader, and 70 percent thought that experts are more competent policymakers than the government (Table 5, Column C).

The survey respondents also gave similar answers to the German respondents on questions of "what should happen" in a democracy: 96 percent of refugees and 92 percent of Germans believed "The people [should] choose their government in free elections." Both refugees and Germans supported equal rights for women: 92 percent of both groups agreed with the statement, "Women [should] have the same rights as men."

In addition to freedom and equality, a particularly high percentage of refugees agreed with two statements dealing with the protection of civil rights and respect for the weak. Ninety-three percent of the refugees (compared to 83 percent of Germans) agreed that "Civil rights protect the people from government oppression", and 81 percent of refugees (compared to 71 percent of Germans) supported the idea that "The government taxes the rich and supports the poor". The refugees' agreement with these two statements was thus around ten percentage points higher than that of the German respondents to the WVS.

The question of whether "Religious leaders [should] ultimately determine the interpretation of laws" probed respondents' support for the separation of church and state. Only a minority of refugees (13 percent) agreed with this statement. Although this percentage is higher than that of German respondents to the WVS by a statistically significant amount (eight percent), it is 40 percentage points lower than the agreement rate that this statement receives in Egypt, Algeria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, and Palestine (approximately 55 percent).

Thus, although many refugees come from regions in which over half the population supports the role of religious leaders in lawmaking and the idea of a strong government leader, their responses to questions about democratic principles in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey are much more similar to answers given by German respondents than they are to the responses of people in their countries of origin. With regard to these views, the refugees clearly represent a select group that differs vastly from the population of their countries of origin.

Gender role conceptions

In order to examine the similarities and differences in gender roles conceptions between refugees and the resident population of Germany, we compared levels of agreement with three statements. They dealt with the role of women in the working world and in the family context, and the value of education for girls as opposed to boys. Since the answer categories in the WVS were different from those in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey, we combined categories here as a means of harmonizing the surveys.[21]

The portion of German respondents who agreed with the statement, "Having a job is the best way for a woman to be independent," is, at 71 percent, statistically significant and lower than that of refugees (86 percent, Table 6). There were statistically significant differences between refugees and the German population overall as well as within the gender groups. A comparison of the effect sizes (Box 4) reveals a medium overall effect size (0.34) and a larger effect size among men (0.46) than among women (0.21). The difference in the effect sizes for men and women is also statistically significant.

As for the statement, "If a woman earns more money than her partner, this inevitably leads to problems," the German respondents in 2013 were more strongly for gender equality than the refugees: 29 percent of refugees and 18 percent of German respondents agreed with this statement. Among women, the difference was 30 percent to 20 percent and among men, 28 percent to 18 percent. Here, the differences among all groups were statistically significant. However, the effect sizes are relatively small and the differences are not statistically significant. For the overall random sample, the value is 0.25. For women it is also 0.25, and for men it is 0.32.

Eighteen percent of refugees and 14 percent of Germans agreed with the statement, "For parents, vocational training or higher education for their sons should be more important than vocational training or higher education for their daughters." While female refugees agreed more strongly with this statement than German women (14 percent compared to 11 percent), there was hardly any difference between the respective groups of

21 The WVS contains three categories of answers to the question on the aspect of independent gainful employment and earnings ("agree," "neither," and "do not agree"). Here, we combined answers 5–7 in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey and assigned them to the "agree" answer in the WVS. The WVS contained four answer categories to the question about the education of sons and daughters ("completely agree," "agree," "do not agree," and "completely disagree"). Here, we combined WVS answers 1 and 2 and categories 6 and 7 in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey into the "agree" category.

Table 6

Comparison of gender role conceptions between refugees and Germans
Agreement in percent

	Refugees[1]	Germans[2,3]	Standardized difference[4,5]
Having a job is the best way for a woman to be independent.			
Total	86	72	0.34**
Women	88	81	0.21*
Men	85	62	0.46**
N	2,123	1,914	
If a woman earns more money than her partner, this inevitably leads to problems.			
Total	29	18	0.25**
Women	30	20	0.25**
Men	29	18	0.32**
N	2,074	1,906	
For parents, vocational training or higher education for their sons should be more important than vocational training or higher education for their daughters.			
Total	18	14	0.10
Women	14	11	0.11
Men	19	20	0.02
N	2,121	1,922	

*Notes: **,*: significant at the one and five percent level. The results were also calculated based on an alternative coding which in the SOEP considers only the categories 6 and 7 to represent "agreement." Based on this more conservative definition, none of the questions produced statistically significant differences between refugees and Germans.*

1 The response scale in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey, which ranges from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree) was condensed into disagreement (responses 1 to 4) and agreement (responses 5 to 7).
2 The WVS response scale, which ranges from 1 (totally disagree) to 4 (totally agree) was condensed into disagreement (responses 1 to 2) and agreement (responses 3 to 4).
3 Only persons with German citizenship were considered in the estimations.
4 Adjusted Wald test.
5 Measure of the effect size based on standardized mean values.

Sources: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey (2016) and World Values Survey (2010–2014).

men (19 percent compared to 18 percent). For this statement, the differences were not statistically significant in any group, and we can ignore any differences in the already low effect sizes (Table 6).

Therefore, depending on the statement in question and the gender of the respondent, differences in the understanding of gender roles between the refugees in our sample and the German population exist in both directions and to varying degrees.[22]

22 For an in-depth analysis of the refugees' ideas on gender roles, see the qualitative preliminary study to this study (Herbert Brücker et al., (2016b, 2016c). See also Herbert Brücker et al., "Geflüchtete Menschen in Deutschland: Warum sie kommen, was sie mitbringen und welche Erfahrungen sie machen," *IAB Kurzbericht* no. 15 (2016).

Box 4

Calculation of effect sizes for differences between different groups

The significance of differences between two groups does not say anything about the size of the effects. The larger the sample, the lower the standard deviation, and the greater the probability that small differences are also statistically significant. In order to make the sizes of the differences in different samples comparable, Cohen (1988) proposed a procedure in which the difference of the average values is divided by the weighted standard deviation in the respective samples (Cohen's d).[1] Using this method, we can calculate the effect sizes of the differences in average values independently of size. Values in the range of 0.1 to 0.3 are considered small differences, 0.3 to 0.8 are medium differences, and 0.8 or greater are large differences.

1 See Jacob Cohen, *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd edition). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1988.

When interpreting these statistics, it should be kept in mind that levels of agreement with fairly abstract norms may differ substantially from lived, everyday values.

Social participation and life satisfaction

Social contacts

Most of the refugees in the survey had only been in Germany for a short time. Social contacts and social networks play a key role in their participation in social life and integration into the job market and education system. Not only contacts to the German population but also to other newcomers can provide them with a source of information and facilitate their integration into the job market. On average, respondents to our survey had three new German contacts and five new contacts from their countries of origin (excluding relatives).

Not only the number of new contacts but also the frequency of contact is relevant for measuring social participation. In total, 60 percent of refugees have contact with Germans at least once a week, and 67 percent have weekly contact with people from their countries of origin. Both the number of new contacts and the frequency of contact with Germans increase with the level of education. Refugees living in a private apartment or home have more frequent contact with Germans than those living in refugee shelters, and refugees living in smaller municipalities have somewhat more frequent contact with Ger-

mans than those living in large cities. For the frequency of contact with people from the same country of origin, these trends are reversed.

Experiences with discrimination

Prejudice and resentments can create burdens that make it difficult for refugees to integrate into German society and that impede their participation in all areas of social life. Only ten percent of refugees report having experienced discrimination frequently, and another 36 percent report having seldom experienced discrimination. The respondents in our sample have encountered discrimination at a somewhat above-average rate relative to the migrant population in Germany as a whole (32 percent in 2015).

The self-reported experience of discrimination fluctuates only slightly among refugees from different educational groups. A higher share of those living in refugee shelters have encountered discrimination frequently than those living in private apartments or homes (12 percent and seven percent, respectively). Refugees who are married or in a relationship and those whose asylum application has been approved feel discriminated against less often; those with a better grasp of German feel discriminated against more often. With regard to the size of the municipality, there is no uniform pattern.[23]

Life satisfaction

A key measure of quality of life is subjective life satisfaction. This can be understood as a comprehensive indicator of well-being, providing an initial idea of the extent to which the refugees' quality of life matches that of the German resident population. The comparison group here is that of non-immigrant SOEP respondents.

Their general evaluation of life satisfaction shows that refugees are less satisfied than non-immigrants overall, but the difference is relatively small – a finding that can be partially explained by the younger age structure of the refugee population. Greater differences appear when we examine satisfaction with individual areas of life. As expected, there is a large difference between refugees and people without an immigrant background when it comes to satisfaction with their living situation and a moderately large difference in satisfaction with income (Table 7).

Health

Overall, refugees are more satisfied with their health than non-immigrants; they rate their health status higher and

Table 7

Life satisfaction of refugees and individuals without a migration background

Indicator	No migration background	Refugees	Standardized difference
Age in years[1]	52.0 (18.9)	31.2 (10.8)	−1.14*
Sex[1] (% female)	51.3	27.4	–
Life satisfaction[1, a]	7.25 (1.75)	6.86 (2.55)	−0.21*
LS Lodging[1, a]	7.92 (1.82)	6.28 (3.08)	−0.83*
LS Income[1, a]	6.38 (2.47)	5.64 (3.06)	−0.29*
LS Health[1, a]	6.56 (2.24)	7.72 (2.65)	0.51*
State of health[1, c]	3.31 (0.98)	3.92 (1.15)	0.61*
Health, concerns[1, e]	1.90 (0.68)	1.61 (0.76)	−0.42*
Loneliness[2, c]	2.03 (0.74)	2.71 (1.15)	0.86*
Depression[3, d]	1.56 (0.56)	1.85 (0.73)	0.50*
N	20,548	2,349	

*Notes: **,*: significant at the 1 to 5 percent level.--Means, standard deviations in parentheses. – LS – current overall life satisfaction. Higher values in columns 5 and 6 represent larger effect sizes. According to Cohen (1992), a standardized difference of between 0.2 and 0.5 represents a small effect size, between 0.5 and 0.8 a medium effect size, and greater than 0.8 a large effect size.*

1 Surveyed in 2015.
2 Surveyed in 2013.
3 Surveyed in 2016.
a Scale range from 0 to 10.
b Scale range from 1 to 7.
c Scale range from 1 to 5.
d Scale range from 1 to 4.
e Scale range from 1 to 3.

Sources: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2016, weighted; SOEP.v31, years 2000–2014.

are not as worried about their health (Table 7). While this result may be surprising, one possible explanation is the relatively young average age of the refugees. A multivariate analysis that controls for age found no significant differences between refugees and non-immigrants.[24] Another plausible explanation is that only relatively healthy people embarked on the long, often strenuous journey to Germany and actually arrived here.

Other survey results qualify the finding of a comparatively good self-reported health: refugees suffer much more from loneliness and depression than non-immigrants.

Conclusion

The survey of recently arrived refugees to Germany confirms some existing findings but also provides a much fuller picture. Most of the refugees indicated that they

23 For an in-depth analysis, see Herbert Brücker et al., (2016a), Ibid.

24 The results are available upon request.

left their countries of origin, and in some cases also transit countries, due to the threats of war, violence, and persecution. Precarious personal living conditions were another commonly cited factor in the decision to migrate. Respondents reported having chosen Germany as their destination country primarily because of the high level of protection granted to refugees. The costs and risks of the journey are high, but have fallen over time.

The refugees in our sample differ widely in educational levels: On the one hand, a comparatively large percentage have attended secondary school or higher, and on the other hand, another large group have only attended primary school or no school at all. Sixty-one percent have attended school for at least ten years, which is the minimum standard in Europe. Only around 30 percent have attended a university or vocational school, and less than 20 percent graduated with a degree or certificate of completion. However, around two-thirds of the refugees plan to pursue university or vocational education in Germany, so we can assume that their level of education will rise – particularly since this report does not take children and their schooling into account. Upon arriving in Germany, most refugees do not know any German, but a significant increase in language proficiency is noticeable over time.

The integration of refugees into the job market is just beginning, but the longer these individuals stay in Germany, the more likely they are to find jobs. The initial results correspond to the patterns of integration observed in past waves of refugees and the process and timing of their labor market entry.

Only a relatively small percentage of respondents are aware of or have been able to take advantage of existing career counseling and integration programs available to refugees, including some just launched in 2015. Around one-third of the refugees represented in the sample have participated in integration courses; two-thirds have attended other language courses. A minority of refugees have taken advantage of the many advisory programs and job placement services available, for instance career counseling to foster refugees' job market integration. The initial results indicate that systematic integration measures are capable of significantly increasing refugees' job market participation.

Participation and inclusion do not only depend on integration into the job market and education system. A high level of shared values between refugee and the German population will also play an important role. A comparison of values shows that the refugees hold very similar basic convictions about democracy and the rule of law to the resident German population, and differ significantly in these values from the populations of their respective countries of origin. When it comes to beliefs about gender roles, Germans and refugees show both similarities and differences.

As expected, the refugees are less satisfied with their living and income situations than the non-immigrant German population. However, the differences in life satisfaction are few. Surprisingly, refugees report higher satisfaction with health than the comparison group – a finding that may be related to the low average age of the refugees in the sample.

The initial results of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey indicate a great deal of heterogeneity among refugees with regard to their biographies, educational backgrounds, values, and personality traits. Considering their low average age and high aspirations for education and employment, they hold enormous potential. Their integration into the job market, the education system, and other areas of society is just beginning, we can expect to see significant progress in the future. The IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey will continue to track these developments over the years to come.

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