

## Structural Context of Refugee Integration in Canada and Germany

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*Annette Korntheuer · Paul Pritchard  
Débora B. Maehler (eds.)*

**Structural Context of  
Refugee Integration in  
Canada and Germany**



## Structural Context of Refugee Integration in Canada and Germany

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**Structural Context of Refugee Integration in Canada and Germany**

Annette Korntheuer · Paul Pritchard · Débora B. Maehler (eds.)

# Structural Context of Refugee Integration in Canada and Germany

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# Foreword

*Howard Ramos, Martha Crago, & Karin Zimmer*

The International Organization of Migration and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees estimate that the world now has over 65 million refugees and displaced people. More than half are under the age of 18. At the same time the world has seen many countries close their borders to outsiders, turning away migrants, and has seen the rise of a wave of suspicion towards them. Amid this crisis two countries, Germany and Canada, are, by exception, opening their doors and leading the global response to the crisis.

During a period of about one year, Germany received approximately 890,000 refugees and over 475,000 formal asylum applications were filed in the country. To put this into context, this meant the country received the equivalent of just over one percent of its population. Canadians were largely unengaged in the recent global refugee crisis until the country was captured by striking images of the lifeless body of Alan Kurdi, a Syrian refugee child, on the shores of a Turkish beach. The tragedy vividly awoke the country to the crisis and in a period of just over a year, the country welcomed over 40,000 refugees, mostly from Syria, with more than half coming in just a four month period. In both countries, the majority of refugees are children and youth and young adults.

As researchers in Germany and Canada observed these trends, they, like other citizens, felt a compelling need to act to ensure that these children and youth have the best opportunities and brightest futures ahead of them. If re-settlement efforts in both countries are to be successful, there is a need for research and evidence-based policy that stems from it.

In this spirit, the Leibniz Education Research Network (LERN – Leibniz-Forschungsverbund Bildungspotenziale), with support from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung - BMBF), and Canadian support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) President Opportunities Fund, Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, and the Canadian Embassy to Germany, invited colleagues and policy makers from across Germany and Canada to meet in Berlin, June 27-28, 2016, to see what common strategies could be developed and what lessons had been learned by researchers in both countries. Canadian researchers mobilized the Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRRC), and with support from the SSHRC, BMBF, the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada and the German Embassy to Canada, held a reciprocal meeting in Ottawa September 9-10, 2016.

Stemming from the meetings are ongoing and future projects looking at comparable literatures and surveys and measures, as well as the development of interdisciplinary teams to address refugee children and youth issues, such as language and learning, social and cultural integration, as well as mental and physical well-being. At the two meetings, clusters of researchers showed a common interest in better understanding the structural contexts of how Germany and Canada receive, manage, and settle refugees, and in particular, those that are children and youth.

To this end, this volume examines policy frameworks that guide refugee protection and settlement to see how they shape the resettlement and integration of newcomers. Because so many migrants to both countries are children and youth, the educational systems that they will face are analyzed. Comparisons of access to education, housing, health, settlement services, and religious and ethnic communities are also examined. As well, similarities and differences in refugee narratives in the two countries and the reactions and responses of civil society and the broader public are described. This is all done to facilitate a knowledge base for future research and comparison between Germany and Canada.

If we, as researchers and policy makers, can identify the protective factors that ensure the successful resettlement of children and youth in both countries over time, we will be better prepared to reach out to other cohorts of forcibly displaced peoples. We will also be able to ensure that the immense potential of young people is tapped for the benefit of their own communities as well as their countries of Germany and Canada. It is for these reasons that researchers from LERN and the CYRRC have committed to working together and why this volume begins the process of comparative analysis.

## *Short Biographies*

### *Howard Ramos*

is Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean of Research in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Dalhousie University. Howard Ramos is a political sociologist and has published on a wide range of social justice issues, including: non-economic immigration and retention of immigrants, equity issues, human rights, and political mobilization. He is also President of the Canadian Sociological Association.

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### *Martha Crago*

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# The Canadian and German Context for Refugee Integration

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*Keywords* refugee, Germany, Canada, structural integration

The integration of refugees into societies of the global north such as Canada and Germany has received limited public and scientific attention in the past. Since 2014, however, ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and in African nations such as Eritrea and Somalia, have triggered a massive increase of asylum seekers into Europe and led to considerable humanitarian commitments to resettlement in Canada; subsequently, attention on the topic has increased. Knowledge and in particular scientific evidence on integration trajectories and the risk and protective factors that inhibit or promote integration are sparse. Moreover, the void of international comparative studies in the extant literature poses a significant gap in research (Barslund et al., 2016; Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016; Berry et al., 2006; Korntheuer, 2016; Korntheuer et al., 2017). With this publication we hope to support projects initiated within the Canadian German Research Coalition and to spark ideas for more comparative research in this field.

In 2016 Canadian researchers from the Canadian Refugee, Child, Youth and Family Research Coalition (CRCYFRC) and German researchers from the Leibniz Education Research Network (LERN) as well as Canadian and German researchers from other networks and institutions, came together in Berlin and Ottawa to discuss potential collaborative research regarding challenges in education and the integration of refugees<sup>1</sup>. The scientific discussion revealed that both countries would be facing enormous challenges not only in terms of temporarily hosting the incoming refugee populations, but even more importantly in providing access for these populations to central institutions and resources in their respective societies. Many relevant aspects of both countries were discussed during the workshop. For example, differences and similarities in institutional structures, policies and processes in education, health, labour market, refugee protection systems, housing and resettlement supports were articulated. Through this fruitful exchange it became evident

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1 The workshops were hosted by the Canadian Embassy and by the Dalhousie University (<https://www.facebook.com/CanadainGermany/photos/pcb.1325188927510676/1325188504177385/?type=3>)

that a deeper understanding of the structural contexts that frame the integration of refugees in both countries would be necessary for developing joint projects. It is, thus, the main aim of this book to provide a base of knowledge for supporting upcoming and potential research projects. Therefore, the target groups to which this contribution is directed are researchers and students, especially those in the migration and integration field. Nevertheless, this volume also provides an introduction and broad overview to refugee integration in Canada and Germany for individuals with general interest in the topic.

## 1 Definition of a Refugee

Traditionally refugees are defined on the legal basis of the Geneva Convention. Article 1 of the *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* defines a refugee as someone seeking international protection from political or other forms of persecution “who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion” (Weis, 1967, p. 39). Forced migration researchers have criticized the shortcomings of this definition. The *Oxford Handbook Of Forced Migration Studies* advocates for the following broader definition of forced migrants:

[...] those who have been identified by the international community as asylum seekers, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), development induced displaced persons, or trafficked persons, as well as all those whose claim to such labels may have been denied, but who have been forced to move against their will as a result of persecution, conflict, or insecurity (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Loescher, Long, & Sigona, 2014a, p. 5)

## 2 Facts and Numbers in Canada and Germany

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (2016) estimates that by 2016 over 65 million people will have been forcibly displaced worldwide due to persecution, wars and conflict, generalized violence or human rights violations. By the end of 2015, there were 21.3 million refugees and 3.2 million asylum seekers, over half of which were under the age of 18 (UNHCR, 2016).

The response to mass forced displacement in nations such as Germany and Canada vary considerably due to geographical proximity to sites of conflict and instability and migration trajectories, as well as by national policy contexts and historical and ongoing humanitarian commitments. Hence, legal definitions and categories of refugees differ in both national contexts. Figure 1 gives an overview of the categories of refugees in Canada and Germany.



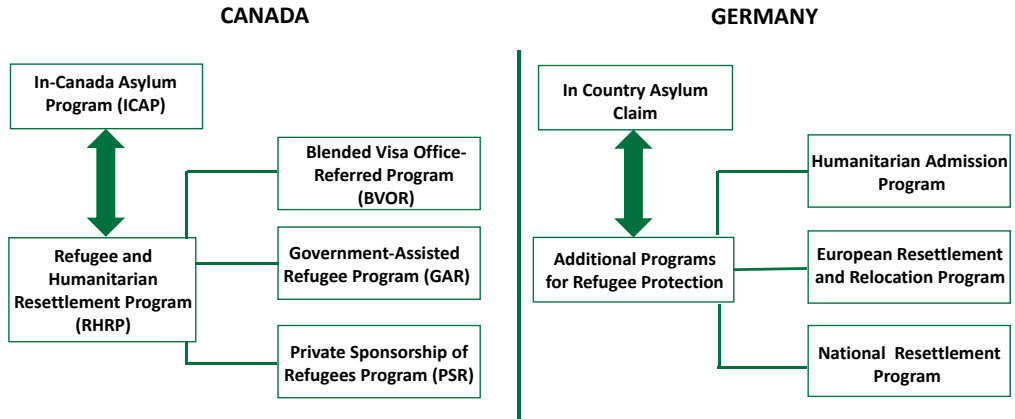


Figure 1 Categorization by refugee programs

Between 2006 and 2015, 260,000 refugees resettled in Canada, constituting on average around 10 percent of its total annual immigrants (IRCC, 2017a). Canada's response to the recent and ongoing political conflict and instability in Syria was a commitment to resettle 25,000 Syrians by January 1, 2015. Not only did the Canadian Government reach that goal but as of January 1, 2017, 39,671 Syrians had been successfully resettled in Canada, in addition to its ongoing resettlement efforts (CIC, 2016b). It has also made multi-year commitments to resettling high numbers of refugees from Iraq (23,000), as well as many Bhutanese (6,500), Eritrean (4,000), Congolese (2,500), and Colombians (900), and others from the Middle East via Ankara (5,000), between 2015 and 2018 (RSTP, 2016).

Germany granted residence titles to 266,000 refugee claimants from 2006 to 2015 and accepted more than 40,000 refugees between 2012 and 2015 through resettlement and humanitarian admission programs (BAMF, 2016; 2017; Grote, Bitterwolf, & Baraulina, 2016). In 2015, more than 890,000 asylum seekers were registered in Germany (BMI, 2016). The largest group of refugee claimants by far came from Syria both in 2015 (35.9%) and 2016 (36.9%). Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea, the Balkan region and Pakistan are other prominent origins of the refugee claimant population. A total of 22,255 claims were filed by unaccompanied minors in 2015 (BAMF, 2016; 2017).

Table 1 Numbers and categories of refugees in Germany and Canada

	numbers in total	% under 18 years	% of female population
<b>GERMANY</b>			
Refugee claimants (2015)	476,649	31%	31%
Accepted claimants (2015)	140,915	-	-
Humanitarian Admission Program (2012-2015)	40,452	-	-
National and European Resettlement Program (2012-2015)	1,402	-	-
<b>CANADA</b>			
Government-assisted refugees (GARs) (2015- September 2016)	27,430	53%	49%
Privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) (2015- September 2016)	24,590	32%	47%
Blended visa office-referred refugees (BVORs) (2015- September 2016)	4,480	54%	49%
<b>Total of Sponsored Refugees (2015- September 2016)</b>	<b>56,500</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>48%</b>
Refugee claimants (2015)	16,109	-	45%
Protected Person in Canada (accepted claimants, 2015)	12,068	-	-

Source: BAMF, 2016, 2017; Grote, Bitterwolf, & Baraulina, 2016; IRCC, 2017b.

The Canadian immigration system provides two pathways for protection and resettlement to refugees: 1) The Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program, for people seeking protection from outside of Canada (resettled refugees); 2) The In-Canada Asylum Program, for individuals making asylum claims from within Canada.

*Resettled refugees* include government-assisted refugees (GARs), people outside of Canada determined to be Convention refugees and referred by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR). Privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) include both Convention refugees as well as those in *refugee-like situations* who do not qualify as Convention refugees. Blended visa office-referred refugees (BVORs), a stream beginning in 2013, are Convention refugees referred by the UNHCR and matched with private sponsors. Refugees landed in Canada (RLCs, formerly LCRs), are accepted claimants that made an inland asylum claim, which are then determined by the Immigration and Refugee Board (CIC, 2016) (Garcea, 2017).

In Germany asylum seekers usually request refugee status upon arrival in the country. Additional ways to refugee protection such as the humanitarian admission program and resettlement and relocation programs at the national and European level are less known and offer protection for a smaller number of refugees. The largest proportion of the refugee population is accepted through an in-country asylum claim (Korntheuer, 2017).

### 3 Refugees Integration: What Does it Mean?

There is a long tradition and a broad range of theoretical and conceptual approaches to the integration of migrant populations, making it impossible to provide one comprehensible unified definition of the term integration (Alba & Nee, 1997; Berry, 1997; Esser, 2001; Maehler & Brinkmann, 2015; Portes & Zhou, 1993). Generally, the definitions focus on the individual (e.g. learning the language of the host country, feelings of belonging to the host country) or on the given structural environment (e.g. access to education or rights in the host country). Specific theoretical approaches for integration of refugee populations, however, are still lacking. Ager and Strang (2008) provide a conceptual framework of refugee integration and define ten core domains, with a strong focus on the structural environment. A central indicator of integration is participation in the labour and housing markets and in the education and health-care systems. Furthermore integration trajectories are shaped through social connections such as social bridges to the host community, social bonds to ethnic and religious communities and social links. In other words, integration is framed by “connections between individuals and structures of the state, such as government services” (Ager & Strang, 2008, p. 181). Two facilitators interact significantly in the integration process, language and cultural knowledge and safety and stability, while access to rights and citizenship forms its foundation.

In order to deliver integration opportunities to refugee populations and for Canada and Germany to realize the full potential of their commitment to resettling the large number of refugees within their borders, it is essential for researchers to assess the structural challenges they face. Moreover, a central aim of this publication is to support cross-national collaborative research between Canada and Germany. To this end, this volume provides a concise and broad overview of the structural context of refugee integration in each respective nation, based on the 10 core domains outlined above.

### 4 Addressing Core Domains for Refugee Integration

This book begins with *narratives* written by authors of refugee background, as well as civic society members involved in the integration process, to show the important role of social connections, such as community and family bonds and new friends, in integrating into the host society. These narratives also highlight the legal and structural barriers that many refugees face in the resettlement process, which can significantly impact wellbeing, formation of social links, opportunities for social mobility, and the overall integration experience.

After the illustration of refugees and society perspectives in Canada and Germany the next section aims to better understand the context in which integration takes place and outlines the institutional and environmental conditions for refugees in both countries. It begins by offering a descriptive account of the respective *refugee protection systems*, and thus access to rights and citizenship, as well as the *educational systems*, in each respective country. In doing so, significant differences in the protection and education systems between the two national contexts emerge.

The second part of the manuscript addresses core domains of refugee integration, including: *Access to housing, health services, education as well as the labour market*. Furthermore, *access to resettlement services and ethnic and religious communities* are addressed in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how language learning, cultural knowledge and social connections can be supported in Canada and Germany.

In addition, *unaccompanied minors in the German context as well as refugee claimants in the Canadian context*, each of which are subgroups with a distinct structural context for integration, are addressed in separate contributions.

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## *Short Biography*

### *Annette Korntheuer*

recently graduated as a PhD. at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, Germany. Her doctoral thesis focussed on the educational participation of refugee youth in Munich and Toronto. Currently, she is employed by the City of Munich as educational coordinator for newcomers. Annette collaborates as a lecturer at Faculties of Social Work and is member of the executive board of the German network for refugees studies.

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is a PhD student in sociology at the University of Toronto. His main research interests lie at the intersection of precarious legal status (non-citizenship) and precarious employment. In particular his research examines processes of social inclusion/exclusion as they relate to global migration, the labour market and youth-to-adult transitions. He is also involved in collaborative research on the long-term social and economic impacts of precarious legal status, and the social integration of refugee children and youth.

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# Canadian Refugee Narrative

*Tarek Kadan*

My name is Tarek. I am 21 years old. I was born and raised in Damascus, Syria. I fled to Lebanon two and a half years after the war broke out in my country. I came to Canada by myself, as a privately sponsored refugee in 2015. I want to share a little bit about my experience resettling in Canada.

When I arrived in Canada, I did not speak a word of English or know one letter from the alphabet. Before leaving Syria, I had completed two years of computer engineering at university in Damascus. But in Canada, I had to go back to high school – to learn English and earn a Canadian high school diploma. Even though my English at the time was very basic, this did not stop me from getting involved. I completed over 1000 hours of volunteer work in my first year in Canada, and I have managed to create a broad social network made up of teachers, guidance counsellors, youth and settlement workers, and community leaders. This network of people, many that I now consider my friends, has helped me in so many ways throughout the resettlement process. For this I am very grateful and I try to pass the good deeds people have shown me on to those who come after me.

For my first year in Canada, I lived in a one-bedroom apartment, a transition house, with two other refugees. My accommodation was arranged by my sponsors and I received \$1500 per month to cover my living expenses and house rent, which was enough to get by. As a refugee, I was not covered by the provincial health care plan for my first three months in Canada. This was very unfortunate to me because I had undergone surgery only 10 days before arriving. I needed follow-up medical care, but I was not eligible to receive it and because I did not get treatment I no longer have full function of my finger.

After the first year, I had to move out of the transition house and find my own accommodation and my own source of income. I was still a full-time high school student and still learning English and so working full-time would have been impossible. The only option was to go on social assistance. But it only provides \$681 per month, which is not even close to enough money to get by in Toronto, as it is a very expensive city to live in, one of the most expensive in the country. Finding affordable housing on such a limited budget has probably been the biggest challenge I have faced. I was told it would take up to 15 years to get into social housing (government subsidized) as a single male. Even with the help of my social network, it took months to find accommodation. If you are lucky you can find a cheap room in Toronto for between \$550 and \$750 a month. But you also

must add to that the cost of Hydro and phone bill (\$100), and a metro pass to use public transportation, which costs almost \$150. On top of this there is the cost of basic needs – food, laundry and other expenses. To live ‘cheaply’ in Toronto by yourself, you would need around \$1450. But social assistance gives us less than \$700 a month to live on!

Therefore, I thought of working part-time while studying, but social assistance only lets me keep \$200 of that income – the rest of what I earn they deduct from my monthly allowance. While I can see that they would want to get back some of the money they give out, this arrangement puts us into a challenging situation. I know many people who have had to find cash jobs, so that they can keep their earnings. This kind of work is never good and it can be dangerous and workers have no protections. The way the system is set up though, makes it necessary for some just to be able to survive.

On top of this, I must also make monthly payments to the Government of Canada to recuperate the costs of my flight and pre-migration health tests. It is very difficult to survive on so little money – especially when so recently fleeing violence and conflict and dealing with the many challenges of resettlement – having to learn a new language and culture, going back to school, gaining Canadian experience. Maintaining mental health is a serious issue many of us refugees face, and the extra stress caused by financial instability makes things much worse.

Therefore, I decided to study for one term while working part-time. Then, for the second term, I don’t go to school but instead work as much as possible to be able to save some money to cover my living expenses for the next studying term. That is the only option that I am left with, but it has its negative effects too. It will take me about 3 and a half years to graduate from high school, instead of one year and a half. Aside from that, it is very difficult to find jobs in our fast-growing city, but the connections that I have made have helped me a lot with that. Currently I have three part-time jobs.

Despite the hardships, my time so far in Canada has been very positive. I am a permanent resident of Canada, which makes me feel stable and motivates me to do the best I can, since I know that all what I may build in Canada is not just temporary. This lowers my fear of the risk of losing everything again. People have made me feel welcomed, and my sense of belonging is growing. But I also recognize that I have been lucky. I have made many friends and established social connections, I have learned English quickly, and have been fortunate that my volunteerism has led me to gaining Canadian experience which is necessary to find jobs. But I know this is not the experience for all refugees. And many of the challenges I face are magnified for those who do not yet grasp the language and who may not as easily find a social network and friends to help them with the transition.

My long-term plan after graduation from high school is to study social work and political science, hopefully at the University of Toronto. Then, I will study law. I want to use each and every opportunity to succeed in my new home and to rebuild a better life here. I am very much motivated and I enjoy working with people. I have a huge passion for working for social change and social justice and creating approaches that bring betterment and positivity to communities overall. While I am filled with hope, I am also mindful of the past. I will work to help those struggling and to repay those who have helped me.



## *Short Biography*

### *Tarek Kadan*

is a Syrian individual newcomer youth who arrived to Canada in 2015. He is a Volunteer Community Advisor, a Peer Researcher and a youth worker for Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services, and a Peer Leader for North York Community House in Toronto. Since coming to Canada he has volunteered with over 15 different organizations, supporting and fundraising for people in need both in and outside of Canada.

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# German Refugee Narrative

*Anon*

## 1 How I came to Germany

From Damascus I left the country for Lebanon in 2013 and stayed there for about eight months. I was waiting for something to happen: a working opportunity, a solution in my home country, a way back. But unfortunately, nothing changed.

Then I got the opportunity to work for an import / export company in Turkey. They needed someone who could speak English and work for them as a commercial and logistics responsible. The company was new and I thought I would get better opportunities, in time, a better position, a better salary and a better future. The company was successful, but nothing got better for myself. While I was working there I made contact with a company in Italy. This was the first time that I thought about leaving Turkey for another country, and for Europe, specifically. I asked the Italians for an invitation to visit their company. And they agreed! After I got the invitation I headed up to the embassy of Italy in Turkey and applied for a Visa and after about two weeks I got my passport back and a Schengen Visa for all the EU-Zones!

## 2 Why Germany?

When I came to Europe I never thought about Germany as a final destination for my trip.

First I thought about the United Kingdom because of the language. But when I was looking at the map and looking at the possibilities to reach the UK I realized I would have to go by sea, to pass to France and then from France I would have to take a very dangerous way to the United Kingdom. So I abandoned the idea.

I thought about other countries. But I faced the Dublin agreement and they will send me back to Italy. There is no future over there. Germany was the only choice because it was the only country that was welcoming and hosting the refugees.

### 3 Permanent Residence – German Bureaucracy

Right now, I only got the right of protection for one year. I rejected the decision of the BAMF [Germany Federal Office for Migration and Refugees] through a lawyer and I'm waiting for an answer, because I need the right of asylum for three years. It took me a very long time to take a decision to make the appointment with the BAMF to finish the whole procedure here in Germany.

If you are going to ask me about the German people that I have experienced in my daily life and in the lifestyle of Germany and the German society I will tell you that it is a great experience to be in this society.

The opposite are the German authorities. Actually if you are a foreigner or if you are a person who is facing the same conditions that I am facing - and all the refugees and the asylum seekers are facing - it is not a good experience at all. You have to wait for a long time, it is not easy at all to deal with the German authorities and the German departments and offices.

It's the waiting and also the insecurity. You cannot travel, you cannot do anything. Even when I got the opportunity to work as an intern, at first, I was not allowed to work. Then, they changed the law and gave [temporary] work permissions, because the [asylum] procedure is taking a long time and the people are sitting without anything and this is not a solution. I applied again and they accepted. A short while ago my status was changed and I have been allowed to work officially starting August, 1st, as an intern, in a German research institution.

### 4 Daily Life – Making New Friends in Germany

When I arrived, a lot of people used to ask me to translate, because I can speak the Arabic language, the language of the region that I came from and I can speak English. The first time I was in a social welfare office, a social worker came and asked me if I wanted to be a volunteer. This was the beginning of my volunteering work. Through this I started to meet a lot of Germans and got into contact with them, mostly volunteers who offered help to people who needed it. I was a translator for 24 hours a day and it was really exhausting! Now, I am still a volunteer translator, but not on the same scale.

### 5 Family and Friends

My mother is in Turkey right now with my aunt. She cannot get back to Syria because she has a health issue. My father and the rest of my family are living in Aleppo.

They are not able to leave the country and they will not leave their properties without any protection because anything that you're going to leave in Syria right now simply will

be gone for good. I contact them regularly every day, sometimes much more than once a day, this depends on the news.

I have two Syrian friends who were with me in the University near Damascus. They are now finishing their Masters degrees, one of them in Germany and the other one in Vienna, Austria. An old friend is now living in Switzerland, and I visited him during my journey to Germany. He applied for asylum in Switzerland because he has been a cycling champion in Syria and he is currently training with the Swiss team.

As for my German friends, they are volunteers that I work with. One of them is a close friend, really. She really helped me a lot with the authorities in Germany. She's the most helpful person that I have ever met. She has a really full work schedule but still she gives a lot of her free time to help other people.

## 6 Myself in About Five Years

First of all I have to learn the German language and then I'm sure that I will continue my education. I will finish my Master in international relations. This will allow me to work in international organizations like the United Nations or at an international court in the Netherlands. Or I may work for consulates and embassies.

## 7 My Closing Statement

Although it can be understood that it is not that easy for the German authorities and people to handle the refugee problem, as unfortunately many European countries and members of the EU do not cooperate in this matter, I do hope that they will not close down their borders and offer their humanitarian help as long as it is necessary to protect the people of my country and those of other war-faring countries.

If I had more than one wish, which would obviously be peace, I would wish that the German authorities will be able to install faster procedures and clear plans. All of us fear the permanently changing laws and many of us feel helpless and intimidated, as we find it difficult to keep up with the new laws and regulations. All of us have fears, many of us have family members who are still in great danger and many of us have lost their beloved and we depend on you to stretch out your hands.

I am grateful that Germany offers us protection but still it remains a great challenge for all of us, and we are more than willing to integrate and show that we respect the efforts Europe takes, that we are willing to live according to your laws but that we need a realistic chance to make ourselves independent of financial support and make a living, pay taxes and thus will be able to be valuable members of the German society.

### *Short Biography of Refugee*

*Anon*

I was born Aleppo in Syria. After high school I moved to the Damascus countryside to start university. I studied “International relations / diplomacy”. Unfortunately, last year I had to leave the country because of the problems that my country is passing through right now – that was the year of my graduation from Damascus I left the country for Lebanon in 2013 and stayed there for about eight months. Then I got the opportunity to work for an import / export company in Turkey. After I got the invitation from an Italian company to work with them I headed up to the embassy of Italy in Turkey and applied for a Visa and after about two weeks I got my passport back and a Schengen Visa for all the EU-Zones!

### *Short Biography Interviewer*

*Sabine Eyert-Kobler*

(born 1968) is a marketing communications specialist and social media manager. Currently she works with the German Institute for International Pedagogical Research (DIPF) in Frankfurt, Germany, as public-relations and event manager for the Leibniz Education Research Network (LERN). Her special interest is on knowledge mobilization in research organizations.

# Civic Society Narrative from Canada

## Community Member Narrative

*Valerie Mansour*

February 25, 2016, was a typically cold, wet and dreary winter night in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Planes due at the airport were turned around because of fog. On board one plane was a Syrian family of four – a young dad and mom, with two little girls, who had lived in exile in Turkey for two years. Members of their sponsor group, Open Harbour Refugee Association (OHRA), were at the airport, including four moms with their excited children with balloons in hand.

The plane arrived hours late and it was midnight when they entered their apartment where I was waiting. They were tired, and no doubt anxious, but I remember dazzling smiles. They were particularly thrilled because they thought they were going to a hotel. Instead, they had a furnished home with a stocked kitchen and a children’s bedroom full of toys, books and stuffed animals. Yasmin, the mother, hugged me warmly with tears in her eyes. Our group of 25 – one of over 100 groups in Nova Scotia – had worked for months raising money, finding accommodation and furniture, and preparing paperwork to sponsor this family.

It is a big task to help a family start a new life. But it was, and continues to be, fun, satisfying and important work. OHRA started as two groups that joined forces. It’s an effective mix of more “senior” members of the community with contacts and experience, and younger folks with social media skills, and tons of ideas and energy. OHRA members have included students, lawyers, retirees, a truck driver, a massage therapist, a social worker, a municipal politician, researchers and writers.

We fundraised through social media. Because of news coverage of Syria, the money simply flowed in. Amounts varied; some gave as much as \$1,000. We continue to fundraise to allow our family to live comfortably, to have a contingency fund and to sponsor more families. We have online auctions, raffles, yard sales, dinner parties and bake sales. Nothing like selling oatcakes to educate the community and recruit new members!

OHRA operates as a non-profit society with a board and committees: fundraising, communications, education and job training, housing, documentation, household donations, medical, budgeting and banking, and social. We even had a baby committee to support the arrival of Joanna Surya, born October 10, 2016. We took turns being on call for babysitting and assisting the family at the hospital. We delivered food and provided drives.

The family is lucky to be here, but we too are lucky to have them in our lives. We are all madly in love with the little girls, Yara and Shana, and baby Joanna. The family appreciates the different skills and opportunities we offer. This summer we hosted them at an ocean-side home where they swam, paddled a canoe and sat round a campfire. I suspect our friendship will continue long after our obligatory first year. Support work takes time, energy and commitment, but the smiles that started on that stormy February nights remind me that it's worth it.

### *Short Biography*

#### *Valerie Mansour*

worked as a freelance print and broadcast journalist for many years. Currently, she provides research for documentary films and television series, edits books and reports, writes about food for a regional magazine and reviews cookbooks. She writes profiles of new arrivals for Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia. She is Board member of Open Harbour Refugee Association (Halifax, Nova Scotia), Chair of the fundraising committee, and Member of the communications and housing committees.



# Civic Society Narrative from Germany

*Anon*

## 1 A German Teacher Volunteer

For me integration is that refugees participate in life in Germany. This does not mean that they have to adapt to German habits and through that more or less become German. Participation means that they bring their own culture, habits and values into our society. This could be a different way of integrating than Germans might expect.

Integration, the way I see it, happens for example in the migrant council (Migrationsbeirat). They advocate for the rights of ethnic minorities. I definitely do not think that refugees should assimilate entirely. They should keep their own way of living and leave their own footprints in our society.

I teach German. Learning German is the key for integration. Without any knowledge of the language they cannot become part of our society.

I gave sports clothes to one refugee and organized for him to join a sports club. He is now training there with other people.

A female refugee joins me for gymnastic sessions. Afterwards, the gymnastic group sometimes meets in a pub. The woman joins us in the pub and now knows several other German women. The German women did not have any prior contact with refugees, so in the beginning they were very curious and asked a lot of questions. The first contact is very important and then everything goes from there. To be interested in one another is deeply human.

I really enjoy that the refugees are becoming active community members, looking for activities themselves that they would like to join in. Now that they have spent enough time in Germany, they are starting to organize their lives independently. They start feeling somewhat “at home” and build their own everyday life in Germany.

### *Short Biography*

The interviewed person is engaged in the work with refugees in a municipality with 10,000 inhabitants since the middle of the year 2016. She mainly teaches German lessons, but also does public relations work and organization of family projects. In the 90s, she was engaged as a volunteer in the field of asylum with a local group of Amnesty International for about one year.



# Canada's Refugee Protection System

*Joseph Garcea*

*Keywords* refugees, resettlement, canadian refugee policies

Canada's refugee protection system is managed within the context of multi-level governance that exists within the Canadian federation. The objective of this document is to provide a brief overview of the three major components of that system, namely: (a) the constitutional authority for managing the refugee protection system; (b) the selection and admission of refugees; and (c) the provision of resettlement supports for refugees (Elgersma, 2015).

## 1 Constitutional Authority for Managing the Refugee Protection System

The bulk of constitutional authority for managing Canada's refugee protection system rests with the federal government. That authority stems from two major sections of the Canadian constitution. The first is Section 95, which states that authority for immigration is shared between the federal and provincial governments, albeit subject to federal paramountcy. The second is Section 91(25), which grants it control over aliens and naturalization. Those two sections of the constitution provide the federal government with the bulk of authority to manage and make decisions related to the following matters: the classification of refugees; the number of refugees; the initial destinations of refugees; the selection of refugees; the admission of refugees; the deportation of refugees and refugee claimants; and the granting and revoking of Canadian citizenship of refugees.

Although the federal government has the bulk of authority for managing and making decisions related to those particular matters for refugees destined to all provinces and territories, there are a few matters for which Quebec's provincial government has some important roles and responsibilities pursuant to the bilateral *Canada-Quebec Accord on Immigration and Temporary Aliens*, signed in 1991. This includes roles and responsibilities related to the following matters: (1) the selection of certain categories of refugees destined to Quebec from abroad; the proportion of refugees that shall be destined to Quebec, and that it must accept, each year; (2) the criteria for private sponsors in that province; and (3) the procurement of settlement services for refugees settling in that province (Béchar, 2015).

## 2 Types of Refugee Programs

Canada has two major types of refugee programs (CIC, 2016a). The first major program, and the one through which most refugees arrive into the country, is the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program (RHRP), which is designed for persons applying from outside Canada for permanent resident status as refugees. Persons within the RHRP admitted under these programs may be resettled from either within or outside a refugee camp to Canada within one of two refugee classes. The first is the Convention Refugees Abroad Class, and the second is the Country of Asylum Class (CIC, 2016a; 2016b).

The second major program is the In-Canada Asylum Program (ICAP), which is designed for persons seeking asylum after they have entered Canada (Becklumb, 2008; CIC, 2016a). However, any claimants who have entered Canada via the United States the bilateral Third Safe Country Agreement between these two countries requires them to submit their claim to the government of the United States, unless they have a valid reason for a special exemption. The same terms and conditions apply to claimants who travelled through Canada or are on their way to the United States (CIC, 2016c). Decisions on other refugee claims are made by two divisions of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB), namely the Refugee Protection Division with the potential for appealing such decisions to the Refugee Appeal Division, and ultimately to the Federal Court if there is a legitimate concern that there has been either an error in the application of the law or breach of a principle administrative law during the initial application process (CIC, 2016d).

The average amount of time for processing claims within the scope of ICAP has varied over the years. In recent years efforts have been made to reduce the length of processing times to less than one year from the initial assessment to the final assessment.

This is substantially less than the processing of resettlement refugees based in other countries for which the processing times can vary from one year to more than six years depending on the countries in which they live (CBC, 2015). Normally approximately half of all refugees are accepted annually through the RHRP and the other half are accepted through the ICAP (CIC, 2016d). The average number of admissions in the 15 years between 1999 and 2014 was 27,300, but in some years when there have been special large flows of refugees from some countries, the numbers have been as high as 40,000 (Conference Board of Canada, 2016). Regardless under which of the aforementioned program they are accepted as refugees, all of them are granted permanent resident status. Moreover, like other immigrants granted permanent resident status, refugees are eligible for citizenship after three years of maintaining their full time residency status. If their residence is not full time for the first three years, they must be physically present in Canada as a permanent resident for 1,460 days in the six years immediately before they submit the application, with a minimum of 183 days in each of the four calendar years before the date their application is submitted (CIC, 2016k).

### 3 Types of Refugee Resettlement Sponsorship and Assistance Programs

Canada has three major categories of resettlement sponsorship and assistance programs for refugees who do not have adequate financial resources to support themselves and their families (CIC, 2016e). This includes: the Government-Assisted Refugee Program (GAR); the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSR); and the Shared Government-Private Sponsorship Programs (SGPSP), which include both the Blended Visa Office-Referred Program (BVOR) and the Joint Assistance Sponsorship Program (CIC, 2016f; 2016g; 2016h; 2016i).

The two major government sponsors are the federal government, which is responsible for Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs) destined to all provinces and territories other than Quebec, and the Quebec government, which is responsible for GARs destined to that province (Quebec, 2016). The private sponsors are various categories of non-governmental organizations that perform sponsorship function for refugee applicants. Organizations that perform such sponsorship over time are officially designated as Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH) and their constituent groups include incorporated faith-based, ethnic-based, or public organizations that have signed an agreement either with the federal government, or with the Quebec government in the case of that particular province. Other sponsors, known as Groups of Five and Community Sponsors, are groups, organizations or corporations in the community who are not involved on an ongoing basis but have been formed to sponsor refugees at least once (CIC, 2016g). The private sponsors have major roles and responsibilities in receiving, orienting and supporting refugees at all stages of the resettlement process.

The basic and common features of all three categories of sponsorship and support programs (i.e., GAR, PSR, and SGPSP) are that they are designed to provide refugees with assistance they need for resettlement for up to one year from the date of arrival in Canada, or until they are able to support themselves, whichever happens first. In some instances (e.g., in the case of refugees with special needs) such supports may be extended for a longer period of time. Generally this includes not only basic settlement services, but also income support from their governmental or private sponsors. The basic services they receive include, for example: reception upon arrival at the airport or port of entry; temporary accommodation; help in finding permanent accommodation; acquiring basic household items; general orientation to life in Canada; finding employment; and finding other things they need for settlement and integration purposes (Atallah, 2017).

As well, depending on their needs, refugees who are resettled under either the GAR or the SGPSP qualify not only for RAP, but also for two special supplementary support programs, namely the Immigrant Loans Program (ILP) and the Interim Federal Health Care Program (IFHCP) (CIC, 2016j; Hynie, Qasim, & Das, 2017).

When refugees no longer qualify for resettlement supports noted above from the federal government, the Quebec government or the private sponsors, they become eligible for various public social programs (e.g., income support), generally offered by provincial and territorial governments, that are available to all permanent residents and citizens.

Although this overview has emphasized the roles and responsibilities of the federal and Quebec governments and private sponsors, it should be noted that community based non-profit immigrant serving organizations perform key roles in providing settlement and integration services for refugees, most of which are paid by the federal government. However, provincial and territorial governments also contribute both directly and indirectly to the settlement and integration of newcomers. Similarly, increasingly many larger municipalities perform key roles in providing programming and logistical support for such organizations in providing services to refugees and also in creating warm and welcoming communities. The joint and shared commitment of all governmental and non-governmental agencies to perform key roles and responsibilities contributes immensely to the efficacy of the Canadian refugee protection system.

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## Short Biography

### Joseph Garcea

is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. His research and publications have focused on policy areas such as immigration, integration, citizenship, and multiculturalism. He has written reports for the City of Saskatoon on building capacity in the immigration and integration sectors. He is currently Chair of the Executive Committee for Immigration Research West (IRW).

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# Germany's Refugee Protection System

*Annette Korntheuer*

*Keywords* refugee protection, asylum system, resettlement

## 1 Short History on the Germany's Refugee Protection System

In Germany, the right to asylum has been historically enshrined in the Basic Law since 1949. This unique policy was created in response to the Second World War, when 800,000 people were only saved from Nazi terror because they were granted asylum in other countries (Fiyalkovsky, 1993, p. 852). The Geneva Convention on refugees came into effect in Germany in 1953. Until the late 1970s refugees mainly arrived from communist countries (Poutrus, 2014, p. 116). Numbers of asylum claims remained low until 1980 and the paths to political asylum were relatively open.

The war in the Balkan region led to high numbers of asylum seekers with a maximum of 438,191 asylum applications in 1993 (BAMF, 2016a). This situation had a significant influence on asylum policy development. The so-called “asylum compromise” was amended in 1993 resulting in a severely restrictive orientation of German Asylum law. Since then the living situation of asylum seekers has been strongly influenced by residence restrictions, employment prohibitions and limited access to social benefits through the Asylum Seekers’ Benefits Act.

As part of the Europeanization of asylum policy, the European framework has become increasingly important. Since 1985 the Schengen and later Dublin Agreements regulate the freedom of movement and responsibility for asylum applications. This means that asylum claims must be lodged in the country of first arrival within the EU (Parusel, 2010, P. 81). European border controls, the Dublin procedure and the determination of safe countries of origin were implemented earlier than comparable measures in Canada (Korntheuer, 2016a).

Under the current situation, high numbers of claimants are leading to an inconsistent and partly contradictory asylum policy development. On the one hand, work bans have been reduced for most asylum seekers (Rinne & Zimmermann, 2015). On the other hand, deportations have been enforced and access to the right to claim asylum has been severely limited by the closure of the European border through the EU- Turkey deal. This agreement between the European Union and Turkey results in the deportation of asylum seekers from Greece to Turkey and the enforcement of border measures. In return the EU agreed to resettle Syrian refugees from camps within Turkey (SVR, 2016).

Contradictory measures are also found within the new German Integration Act that came into effect in August 2016. Here, extended integration support is granted for some

groups (e.g. claimants from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Eritrea and Somalia), while residence obligations have been implemented again for asylum claimants and all accepted refugees (BMI, 2016a).

## 2 Overview of Refugee Protection Systems in Germany

There are three types of programs to gain refugee protection in Germany: i) In-country asylum claim and family reunification programs; ii) Humanitarian admission programs; iii) National and European resettlement and relocation programs.

- i) The main way to refugee protection in Germany is through an *in-country asylum claim*. More than 476,000 claims were filed and 890,000 asylum seekers were registered in 2015 (BAMF, 2016a; BMI, 2016a). Certain groups of accepted claimants have the right to family reunification programs. Since this is by far the most important way to refugee protection in Germany a more detailed description of asylum process procedures can be found in the following section.
- ii) In the past, several *humanitarian admission programs* were carried out, including the acceptance of 2,501 Iraqi refugees from Syria and Jordan in 2009 and 2010. More recently, between 2013 and 2015, around 40,000 Syrian refugees were accepted through similar programs on a national and provincial level (Grote, Bitterwolf, & Baraulina, 2016, p.6). Humanitarian admission programs are similar to resettlement but may grant only temporary protection status. They aim to provide a fast way to protection in an expedited process for refugee populations in extremely insecure or vulnerable situations via fixed quotas. Criteria for admission may vary between programs. For the recent admission of Syrians, vulnerable groups and those with family ties in Germany were prioritized (ERN).
- iii) In contrast to the Canadian context, Germany only recently established a small *national resettlement program* (Korntheuer, 2016b). Since the end of 2011 an annual quota of 300 to 500 resettled refugees has been accepted (Grote, Bitterwolf, & Baraulina, 2016, p. 13). In the wake of the European crisis some efforts were made to establish a *European resettlement and relocation program*. Projected numbers for European resettlement are low compared to asylum claimants with approximately 22,500 spaces in Europe. Relocation of Syrian and Eritrean refugees from Italy and Greece to other European states is planned for 160,000 persons. As of November 2016, only 11,852 refugees have been relocated (European Commission, 2016). Both resettlement and relocation programs prioritize Syrian refugees. While resettlement is defined by the UNHCR as the “transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another state that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement” (UNHCR, 2016), in Germany resettlement refugees currently receive only a temporary residence permit, but have the possibility of applying for permanent residency after three or five years (ERN).

### 3 Asylum System and Asylum Process Structures in Germany

In Germany, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) is responsible for the examination and decision of asylum applications. Asylum seekers must report that they are seeking asylum at the border or after crossing into Germany. They are then sent to an *initial reception facility*, which is, in most cases, a mass accommodation. A branch office of the Federal Office oversees registration of new claimants and provides a first official document: the proof of arrival. This document entitles refugee claimants to state benefits, such as accommodation, (limited) health insurance and food.

The *transition of asylum seekers* into a more permanent accommodation in different Länder (federal states) takes place in Germany according to a fixed quota system, the so called “Königstein key” (for further information see Schmid & Kueck, 2017).

The asylum application is filed at the branch office of the Federal Office. Adolescents age 16 or older must submit their own claim, as their application will not be processed as part of the family unit (§12, para. 1 AsylVfG). During the ongoing asylum process, there is a housing obligation, often in mass accommodations for asylum seekers. Claimants who have reached 14 years of age are photographed and their fingerprints are matched to those in the EURODAC database. If there is confirmation that the refugee has already been registered in another European country, he or she can be returned to this country under the Dublin III regime. Those age 16 or older must explain their reasons for seeking asylum in a personal hearing (BAMF, 2016b).

In addition to the formal decision (for example, based on Dublin III), the *following outcomes from the decision making process* exist:

- Recognition as a person entitled to asylum in accordance with § 16a GG (Basic Law)
- Recognition as a refugee according to the Geneva Convention
- Granting a right to Subsidiary Protection Status
- Imposition of a ban on deportation
- Rejection as unfounded / manifestly unfounded (BAMF, 2016b).

Asylum seekers who are granted recognition under the Basic Law or the Geneva Convention may apply for a permanent residence permit after three or five years of residence depending on their language proficiency; they are also entitled to family reunification programs. Claimants that are granted subsidiary protection and deportation prohibitions can only apply for a permanent residence permit after five years. Merely the permanent residence status constitutes a secure legal status. Other permits might be affected by revocation proceedings. Overall acceptance rate for asylum claimants from January to November 2016 was 63.3%. There are huge differences in acceptance rates between countries of origin. Syrians, the largest group among the refugee claimants, had an acceptance rate of 100 percent, while only 55.5% of the claimants from Afghanistan, the second largest group of claimants, were accepted (SVR, 2016).

If the application for asylum is refused, but there are still deportation restrictions (e.g. no travel document is available), the refugee is generally granted the so-called toleration status (*Duldung*). This status is merely a suspension of deportation and translates into a highly uncertain legal status (Gag & Voges, 2014).

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## *Short Biography*

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# The Educational System in Canada

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*Keywords* education, Canada, refugees

## 1 Introduction

In Canada, departments or ministries of education within the 10 provinces and three territories are responsible for the organization and delivery of education at various levels – elementary and secondary education and postsecondary education. In some provinces, such as British Columbia and Ontario, separate ministries are responsible for K-12 education (elementary and secondary) and postsecondary education and training (for further details, see the Council of Ministers of Education Canada, *Education Indicators in Canada: An International Perspective*, 2016). General information regarding the structure of various levels of education in Canada is outlined below.

## 2 Preschool Education

Nursery schools and preschools usually run as part-day programs for children ages 2 to 5, and are subsidized in part for families based on socio-economic status. These programs are regulated under provincial/territorial child-care legislation. They are often privately operated or run by community organizations.

## 3 Elementary and Secondary Schools

There are 10,100 elementary schools, 3,400 secondary schools, and 2,000 mixed elementary and secondary public schools in Canada, with over 5 million students enrolled in 2011/2012 (Statistics Canada, 2013b). School boards (or districts) manage schools within certain geographical areas. Trustees, elected by the public, make or approve board decisions, and facilitate public consultations on how the board is run.

Without an integrated national system of education, there are varied approaches to curriculum, assessment, and accountability across provinces and territories and the boards within them. These differences reflect the diversity of geography, culture, language, and

history of each region, and the continuing changes in demographics of the populations served. In some provinces, publically funded religious education is offered in some schools, referred to as separate schools, specifically for catholic education. Also, opportunities for students to be educated in the province/territory's minority language (i.e., either one of Canada's two official languages, English and French) exist across Canada. For example, schools in majority English speaking provinces have the opportunity to learn French as part of their schooling, with publically funded French schools in existence in these provinces. In Quebec, a majority French speaking province, English is offered within French schools, and publically funded English schools exist (CMEC, 2016).

## **4 Elementary School – Kindergarten to Grade 8**

All provinces and territories in Canada offer some form of kindergarten as an entry point to schooling completely funded by the government. Generally, kindergarten programs begin at age 4 or 5, with varying focus and ages in different provinces based on factors such as socio-economic status and disability identification (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2005). Some programs are half day, with some, like those in Ontario, recently moving to a full day program (approximately 6 hours of schooling per day). Students attend elementary school until Grade 8 (age 13). Some schools include kindergarten to Grade 5 or Grade 6, after which students attend a middle school (Grade 6-8), and some schools offer kindergarten to Grade 8, where all students in all grades are educated at the same location and within individual or split grade groupings.

## **5 Secondary School – Grade 9 to Grade 12 (Grade 11 in Quebec)**

Secondary schools generally cover grades 9 to 12, and include mostly compulsory courses in the first few years. In 2014, the graduation rate from secondary school was 85 percent (Statistics Canada, 2016). Options for courses diversify in the later years so that students may take courses specific to job or postsecondary requirements. Across provinces and territories, academic and vocational programs are offered, mostly within the same secondary schools. For example, in Ontario, students can select Academic or Applied courses (or encouraged to enroll in Locally Developed Courses depending on special education needs) reflective of different programs of study. Students are often placed into these programs based on perceived ability levels, and reflect what some scholars and advocates argue is a streaming process that disproportionately limits postsecondary options for students who identify as part of historically marginalized groups (Parekh, 2014).



## 6 Postsecondary Education

Both government-funded and private institutions provide postsecondary education. These institutions are recognized public and private universities and public colleges that offer degrees, diplomas, and certificates depending on the institution and length of the program. In 2011/2012, 1,996,200 students were enrolled in Canadian universities and colleges, with areas of highest enrollment in humanities, business, management and public administration, and social and behavioural sciences and law (Statistics Canada, 2013a). While postsecondary education is mostly publically funded (accounting for an average of 54.2 percent), tuitions fees account for 20 percent of the total, alongside donations, private grants, and investments accounting for 25 percent (CMEC, 2016). Across Canada, undergraduate students paid an average of \$6,191 in tuition fees in 2015/2016 (Statistics Canada, 2015)

## 7 Refugees in Canadian Education Systems

There is little data available on the number of refugees attending school. Most recently, Canada has welcomed and resettled over 39,671 Syrian refugees, and 49.4 percent of them are under the age of 18 (CIC, 2017). Local school boards, responsible for management and enrollment in schools, have developed various responses to supporting refugee settlement and school enrollment. Many school boards in Ontario, for example, have reception centres that support students, with their families, with respect to enrollment decisions, and particularly for secondary course selection. These reception centres administer English or French Language assessments, as well as assessment in mathematics, in order to support enrollment decisions and levels of support. In the largest school board in Canada, Ontario's Toronto District School Board (TDSB), reception centres exist for secondary age students only. For students at elementary ages, students are enrolled directly in their local school.

In Canada, any child under the age of 18 without full legal status (do not have recognized status with Citizenship and Immigration Canada) or in the process of claiming refugee status can access pre-school, elementary, or secondary education based on the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Such federal policy, however, does not preclude issues in practice within specific provinces. In Quebec, for example, a recent amendment to the provincial Education Act has created obscurity with respect to whether or not all refugees and undocumented migrants are permitted to attend elementary and secondary schools without paying international fees (Gervais, 2016). In Ontario, legislation ensures access to education for children who are, or whose parents are without full status or claiming refugee status (Ministry of Education, 1993, Statute 49.1). The TDSB and the Toronto Catholic District School Board, specifically, have a "don't ask don't tell" policy with respect to immigration status of students, ensuring that non-status or refugee claimants are not required to pay international student fees for attending schools within those boards. In a postsecondary context, children of refugee claimants and refugee claimants themselves are considered to be international students and required to pay international tuition fees (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2004). Since 2003, the Canada Student Loans Program

has allowed convention refugees to apply for postsecondary loans and grants (Parliament of Canada, 2006). Despite such access to such funding, international fees have continued to be a serious barrier to accessing postsecondary education for convention refugees, those in the process of claiming refugee status and their children.

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# The Educational System in Germany

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*Keywords* education system, Germany, refugees

The educational system in Germany is well-developed. It ranges from preschool education to lifelong learning opportunities. Concerning the different educational stages, some basic information can be given (for more details please refer to the Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany, 2015):

- Across Germany, *preschool education* is voluntary. Yet still, most children attend a preschool institution before school enrolment – for children the age of five the attendance rate is 98%, even for children the age of two it is already 61% (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2016). Preschools are in most cases organized as mixed-age groups.
- As the Federal States are responsible for the *school system* there is some important variability in the school structure within Germany. In most German Federal States primary education starts at age 6 and covers four years (in two Federal States it runs for six years). At age 10, students enter the tracked secondary level; in this way, Grades 5 and 6 are seen as an orientation stage. Most Federal States differentiate between the “Gymnasium” (academic track leading to a higher education entrance certificate) and a combined school form which leads to different school leaving certificates and often to entering the vocational education system. In 2014, 36% of all Grade 8 students attended a “Gymnasium” (Sekretariat der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 2015). Full-time compulsory education is 9 or 10 years. Within the academic track the university entrance certificate can be achieved within 12 or 13 years. The vocational educational system within Germany is split up into a dual system of vocational training (combination of school-based and firm-based training), a school-based vocational education option, and the so-called transition system (supporting the transition into the dual system). In 2014, 12% of all students reached a subject-linked higher education entrance qualification and 42% a general higher education entrance qualification (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2016).
- *Tertiary education* is in most cases provided by universities and universities of applied sciences. In 2014, 58% of the age cohort started tertiary education and 32% received a university or university of applied sciences degree (Buschle & Hähnel, 2016).

- The system of *lifelong learning* is manifold within Germany. In 2014, 49% of the total working population took part in further education measures (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2016). Additionally, informal learning opportunities are used but these are difficult to count.

Whereas the schools, universities, and universities of applied sciences are in most cases publicly funded and free of charge, preschool and lifelong learning options are mostly privately organized and fee-charging services (despite financial support provided to low-income groups especially for attending preschools or businesses covering the costs of further education).

Data concerning the educational status of refugees in Germany are scarce. We have almost no data concerning the participation of young refugees in preschool education institutions (Blossfeld et al., 2016). Although refugees have a right to send their children to preschool (after three months present in Germany), and their costs can be covered, this option is used very rarely by the refugee population. Haarmann (2015) refers to an unspecified study which shows for Berlin that only 6% of all children attend a preschool institution. Concerning school education, Worbs, Bund, and Böhm (2016) showed in an adult sample of more than 2,800 refugees in Germany that 23% of all refugees in their sample reported no school or only elementary school education, 71% had secondary school level, and only 4% reported 15 years of schooling or more, which might correspond to university entrance. Rich (2016) indicated an even higher number of refugees with low education levels, yet also found a higher number of refugees with university degrees. On the vocational level, 62% of the refugees within the study by Worbs et al. (2016) had no vocational qualification. Given these numbers it is evident that a large investment in education is urgently needed.

Concerning refugees, all parts of the educational system have reacted immediately to the large numbers arriving especially since 2014. We have seen a huge investment in the information and training of educational staff, building up information platforms for refugees, and the provision of additional capacities for the large numbers of refugees, as well as pilot projects within the different areas of education and in the first stages of empirical research. Anger, Orth, and Plünnecke (2016) estimated just how large the investment is that is required: For 2017, they calculate the amount of money needed for the educational system to be €3.45 billion – most of the money will be needed for the school system (€1.279 billion) and the so-called transition system (€1.184 billion). Other estimations aim a bit lower (for a compilation of different estimations within the school sector see also Klemm, 2016). Despite the demand for funding, it has to be kept in mind that adequately trained staff are not readily available in required numbers in many areas and training cannot be accomplished so quickly. In addition to reactions of the formal and non-formal educational system, we also see a huge engagement of volunteers.

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# Refugee Access to Education in Canada

*Madine VanderPlaat*

*Keywords* access to education, structural inequalities, refugee children

## 1 Introduction

The Canadian educational system is highly decentralized with little if any involvement from the federal government, making it the only country in the developed world without a federal department of education (OECD, 2011). Within the ten provinces and three territories the responsibility for educational policy development and practice is shared between the central government and locally-elected school boards. Each province/territory has its own history, governance structure and educational strategy. As such, and despite the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act's (2001) confirmation of a refugee child's right to go to school, no single national policy exists that regularizes access to education.

## 2 Limited Research

Despite Canada having welcomed numerous waves of refugees since the second World War (with varying degrees of enthusiasm) the literature on the educational experiences of refugee children in Canada is surprisingly sparse (Fereded, 2010; Shakya et al., 2010; Wilkinson, 2012). What does exist tend to be case studies that focus on educational outcomes for particular populations (Dippo et al., 2012; Kanu, 2009; OCASI, 2016; Shakya et al., 2010) or the psycho-social-emotional needs that refugee children and their parents bring to the classroom (Rousseau & Drapeau, 2013; Stermac, et al., 2008; Stermac, et al., 2013; Sullivan & Simonson, 2015). Little attention is given to the broader socio-ecological factors that contribute to these outcomes beyond the influence of individual and familial characteristics (Wilkinson, 2002). Systemic or structural influences on educational outcomes for refugee children and youth have only recently come under consideration.

The reason for the dearth of research may be due to the marginalization of women and children in traditional Canadian migration research and policy development. In general, and up until recently, the integration experiences of newcomer children have been peripheral to Canadian mainstream research interests and have largely gone unexplored (Yoshida et al., 2011). The lack of interest may also be due to the lack of a perceived "problem". Canada has received international acclaim for its educational performance particularly as it

pertains to the education of immigrant children (OECD, 2011). Likewise, in their work Stermac, Brazeau, and Martin (2008) found that students from war-torn countries have a high level of satisfaction with the Canadian educational experience and statistics have shown that on an aggregate level refugee children do relatively better than their Canadian born counterparts when it comes to accessing post-secondary education (Feng & Bonikowska, 2016). However, it should be noted that this positive picture is not true for all refugee populations (see for example, OCASI, 2016) and leaves unexplored the structural antecedents to academic success or, conversely, lack of accomplishment for refugee children.

### 3 The Canadian Narrative

With the recent influx of Syrian refugees to Canada, ensuring the successful integration of refugee children appears to have taken on a new urgency at both the government level and within the academic community (see for example the recently created Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRRC). One cannot help but notice that this heightened interest corresponds closely with the post-9/11 shift in narrative surrounding the acceptance of refugees in general and from the 'Middle East' in particular. As a point of illustration, in 2002 Wilkinson highlighted the importance of the school as the site where much of refugee students' integration takes place. How well they do in school was seen as an indication of how well they were integrating into society and how well integrated they would be in the future as adults. For Wilkinson, and arguably most Canadian policy makers at the time, the need for successful integration was closely linked to desirable economic and occupational outcomes. Five years later Kanu (2009) reinforces the importance of schools for successful economic integration but adds to this the critical role of the school for forming successful attachment to the nation-state. Seven years later Ungar and Ramos (2016) unequivocally state what to date had been "the elephant in the room" (p.1):

... there is also the particular concern about radicalization of adolescent refugees—something that becomes a particular source of worry if we fail to meet their educational, mental, physical and social needs immediately after resettlement.

Within a year of the first Syrian families arriving in Canada the federal government was forced to admit that they were woefully unprepared for the number of refugee children (Glowaki, 2016). Of the 35,147 entrants close to 50% were under the age of 18. The inability of schools to cope with the sheer numbers was echoed by teachers and school administrators across the country (CBC News, 2016; Braun, 2016; Laroche, 2016; Rolfson, 2016). In addition, teachers felt they were inadequately equipped to deal with the complex psychosocial needs of the Syrian refugees. The resolution to these concerns tended to focus on the need for additional resources such as educational psychologists, additional language specialists and educational assistants as well as funding for improved programming (Braun, 2016). While not minimizing the importance of adequate resources, a number of researchers (Beyon et al., 2005; Braun, 2016; Kanu, 2009) challenge the argument that additional resources will decrease the tensions created by the Canadian response and the concerns for

refugee children. In particular, they point to systemic structures and practices, as well as the lack of professional development for teachers and administrators as major barriers to the educational success of refugee children. The discussion that follows highlights some of the structural barriers to refugee children's equitable access to education.

## 4 Structural Inequity

There is considerable consistency among the authors regarding the challenges faced by refugee children when they enter the Canadian school system. First, there is a general agreement that the assessment tools used to determine grade placement for refugee children are often inadequate and inappropriate (Braun, 2016; Ferreded, 2010; Kanu, 2009; Shaykya et al., 2010). In Canada students in elementary schools are generally grouped according to age and once they reach Grade 10 they are streamed into general, vocational, advanced, or university entrance tracks. Refugee children often have no way of documenting their educational histories which may be characterized by frequent and long periods of interruption. The use of standardized assessment tools which reflect or privilege the dominant culture assesses a child's ability to "fit" into existing structures, not their actual abilities. The result is that refugee children are often placed in grades lower than usual for their age which in Canada is a clear signal of academic deficiency with all the stigma attached thereto. Likewise, refugee students tend to be streamed towards technical rather than academic programs (Naji, 2012; Wilkinson, 2002). Norms surrounding more informal assessments can also present barriers to student advancement. A non-normative response to course material may lead a teacher to under estimate a student's ability to demonstrate understanding (Braun, 2016). Refugee children are also more likely to be misdiagnosed with learning disabilities (Naji, 2012).

Assessment practices combined with provincial age policies restricting access to free public school education compound the barriers to academic success (Beyon et al., 2005; Wilkinson, 2002). In Canada, individuals over the age of 21 (in some cases 18) must pay for their secondary education. Refugee students who have been held back or placed in a lower grade risk not being able to meet this deadline and may be forced to leave school before graduating. In some provinces a child who is claiming refugee status or who has no status may be barred from school or charged international student fees.

The delivery of English as an Additional Language (EAL) program also continues to be heavily criticized (Beyon et al., 2005; Braun, 2016; Kanu, 2009). Segregating EAL learners from other students is argued to not only increase isolation and exclusion but is also thought to stigmatize EAL learners by narrowly defining them in terms of their English deficiency. As Beyon et al. pointed out as early as 2005 (p.4):

... effective education requires approaches that are inclusive of diversity. Such approaches construct minority learners as participants in a socio-cultural context to which they bring rich linguistic, cultural and social resources. Conversely, defining minority learners narrowly as individuals who lack English language proficiency, without recognizing their heritage knowledge and resources, works against establishing greater equity in schools.

Almost all of the researchers included in this overview agree that teacher training and professional development is seriously inadequate when it comes to dealing with refugee children. Diplo et al. (2012) points to the difficulty teachers have in providing adequate responses to the stories of trauma and terror that refugee children may reveal when asked to talk about life in their home country. They warn that even those teachers who themselves arrived as newcomer children cannot assume that they know what refugee children are experiencing. This inability to understand the refugee experience and the cultural context from which these children emerge often results in refugee children being more likely to be punished for what are perceived as behavioral problems (Naji, 2012). Adequate interaction with parents is also undermined by this lack of cultural competence.

Braun (2016), Shakya et al. (2010), and Wilkinson (2002) also point to the barriers created by the 'deficit' attitudes held by many teachers. Refugee children by virtue of their lack of English and unfamiliarity with "mainstream" norms are expected not to do well. Likewise there is the not-so-latent assumption that successful integration requires refugee children to adapt to the status quo as opposed to adapting pedagogical approaches and curriculum design to meet the needs of refugee children (Beyon, et al., 2005). Beyon et al. (2005), Kanu (2009) and Shakya et al. (2010) all note that teachers' curricula, pedagogical approaches, assessment and interaction patterns are not being adapted to meet the needs of refugee children and that historical norms which privilege dominant groups and maintain the status quo prevail throughout the Canadian educational system.

## 5 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is striking that the issues and concerns raised by Wilkinson fifteen years ago continue to persist and are echoed repeatedly in the more current literature. One would argue as does Beyon et al. (2016) that these entrenched barriers are due to the Canadian educational system's failure to divest itself of its antiquated 19<sup>th</sup> century roots which keep in place archaic disciplinary, age and time divisions. Canada with its commitment to multiculturalism could do well to follow Finland's example and explore new pedagogical practices and curriculum designs that have at their core a deep commitment to eradicating inequalities among all students (Sahlberg, 2015; Simola, 2015).

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## Short Biography

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# Access to Education in Germany

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*Keywords* education, Germany, refugees

## 1 Slow Provision of Access to the Educational System in Germany

Refugees had only very limited access to the educational system in Germany in the 90s of the last century. A great deal has changed since then. Initially, children and young people up to the age of 16 years were given access to nine or ten years of schooling at *general education* schools; a decade later this was fixed by law in all sixteen states of Germany (Schroeder, 2007). It took much longer to provide access to *vocational education* and, in some cases, this change is only now being implemented. It took a particularly long time for refugees in Germany to be included in *adult education* (Schroeder & Seukwa, 2007; Gag et al., 2016). At present, issues in access to *university studies* for asylum seekers are the subject of widespread discussion (Kultusministerkonferenz, 2015), and the existing barriers to *special needs education* are just slowly coming into focus (Wansing & Westphal, 2014).

## 2 Access to Early Childhood Education

The children of refugees have, like all other children in Germany from the completion of the first year of life, a legal entitlement to a place in a daycare center or kindergarten. However, access to early childhood education for young refugees is in fact difficult because of the limited number of spaces available. In total, refugee children are underrepresented in German kindergarten. Surveys show that children from refugee families, in particular those that live in mass accommodation, rarely attend daycare centers; from the perspective of parents, intercultural hurdles can also inhibit enrollment. Furthermore, at the institutional level, there is a lack of openness of the specific intercultural needs of refugee families, which should be criticized (see Robert Bosch zur Neuausrichtung der Flüchtlingspolitik, 2015, p.8f.). In almost all federal states, language level tests and corresponding language support measures are carried out during the last kindergarten year or during the transition to school. However, the language level tests are not uniform across the country and are therefore not comparable (Lisker, 2010).

### 3 Access to Primary and Secondary Education

In nearly all 16 states of Germany, children and young people whose asylum requests are in-process or who have the so-called “tolerated” status (temporary leave to remain) (Korntheuer, 2017, pp. 37-42) are included in the requirement for nine or ten years of *full-time compulsory schooling*, with the opportunity of obtaining an official school certificate (Müller et al., 2014). However, in the initial reception centres they merely have a right to education. Following the Federal legislation in autumn 2015, which increased the required period of stay of refugees at the initial reception centre from three to six months, there may be corresponding delays to the start of schooling.

In some primary schools refugee children are taught, starting from the first day, in regular classes accompanied by additional language courses. More typically, one- or two-year *preparatory classes* support the transition to primary or secondary school. They provide intensive language instruction, as well as teaching in other school subjects (Drewitz & Massumi, 2015). A school leaving certificate requires knowledge of a “foreign language” in addition to German, so many of these preparatory classes also provide initial foreign language teaching, most of which is English. It is difficult for some young people to learn two new languages at the same time. So some of the states have a language certification programme for recognition of the language of the country of origin as a first or second “foreign language”.

There is no standard arrangement set at the national level for schooling of children and young people without leave to stay (also known as “undocumented adolescents” or “illegal immigrants”); schooling is compulsory for these boys and girls only in Bavaria, Bremen and North-Rhine Westphalia (Vogel & Assner, 2010, p.5). Following lengthy discussions, politicians have now reached undisputed agreement that, at least from the humanitarian viewpoint, it is essential to provide access to school education for these undocumented children and young people up to the age of 18. Subsidiary legislation has recently been enacted that provides access to schooling in almost all states (ibid.).

### 4 Access to Workplace Education

Young refugees between the age of 16 and 18 have access to one- or two-year *workplace related preparatory classes* at vocational education schools, within which they can qualify for their first school leaving certificate (ESA). Apart from general educational subjects, they also learn vocational preparation subjects. Some of the programmes also provide additional supporting measures, especially in language education. Special “literacy classes” are available in some states or educational institutions for young people who did not obtain literacy in their language of origin. Additional social support and counselling provided by the migration social service institutions are widely available (Gag & Schroeder, 2015).

Compulsory schooling for young refugees ends in some states when they reach the age of 16 (Barth & Guerrero Meneses, 2012). The longstanding demand by refugee organizations to provide admission to formal education up to the age of 25 has so far been



implemented in only a few states (Robert Bosch Expertenkommission zur Neuausrichtung der Flüchtlingspolitik, 2015, p.11). However, there are some new regulations, which give a more favourable position specifying that all young refugees are entitled to attend school until they have obtained a state recognized educational qualification, and that young people whose asylum requests are rejected can still complete any vocational training they have started (Charta der Vielfalt e.V., 2015).

In a few states the Youth Services are providing *alternative schools* for young refugees with the necessary educational programmes—for example, Munich (Bavaria) with “SchlaU” (acronym for “school-like education programme) is a state recognised “school for refugees,” which receives funding from the state of Bavaria. Transition is possible at any time between the various levels, classes and forms of schooling, with a language teaching concept that is related to life situation, with socially appropriate vocational preparation and with an open system of teaching (Stenger, 2009).

## 5 Access to Vocational Education

Access to vocational education was traditionally closed to refugees, as acceptance by a vocational education and training school was subject to possession of a work permit, which asylum seekers were not provided with for decades. Only in recent years have such legal obstacles been eliminated or at least reduced. Yet, the assessment of leave to stay is still tied to individual circumstances and specific workplaces/training places. Regulations also vary by date of entry into the country, and in some cases by country of origin (BA, 2015; GGUA, 2015).

The Federation, the states and the local authorities agreed in 2014 and 2015 that asylum seekers and persons with so-called “tolerated” status should be entitled to a work permit if they wish to take up vocational training in a state recognised trade. Anyone who starts qualified vocational training before the age of 21 can have their so-called tolerated status extended one year at a time, provided their vocational education is completed within a reasonable period. If after completion of the vocational training a person with “tolerated” status cannot secure a job sufficient to earn a living, he or she may be granted a time-limited residence permit (Charta der Vielfalt e.V., 2015).

## 6 Access to Special Needs Education

Children, young people and adults in the asylum process who have severe mental or physical disability, or who have visual or hearing impairment/loss, face specific problems in accessing the school and vocational training system, and in particular the employment market. The funding and support stipulated in social legislation for migrants with disabilities are dependent on their status with regard to leave to stay (Weiser, 2016).

The official status of *persons with disability* is conferred by a disability pass, which is issued by the responsible social security office after examination of the case, and is subject

to *usual residence* in Germany. There is no collective exclusion of migrants with disabilities from the provisions set out in social security legislation, but there are certain exclusions resulting from residence status, date of entry into the country, duration of residence, and the individual types of provision (Weiser, 2016).

Childcare centres, schools and universities are in many cases inaccessible to persons with disabilities, and mostly fail to observe the principles of universal design. Audible accessibility is neglected in many classrooms and group rooms. Access to computers and the internet is not always provided. Many schools are unable to provide care support alongside schooling, and rehabilitation provisions often fail to respect cultural sensitivities (Degenhardt & Schroeder, 2016).

## 7 Access to Universities

Refugees are in general allowed to study in Germany. However, access to universities is conditioned by the availability of the required formal qualifications that have to be proved through documentation as well as language proficiency at level C1. Nevertheless, in several cases access to university is still much obstructed for asylum seekers and persons with a so-called tolerated status, due to the intertwining of very restrictive and somehow inconsistent laws between states and federal regulations. This is for example the case when an asylum seeker is admitted by a university in a given city but could, by de facto, be denied access because of the regulation obliging him or her not to leave their place of residence (see Robert Bosch Expertenkommission zur Neuausrichtung der Flüchtlingspolitik, 2015, p.13).

Given that many refugees have started studying or even completed a university study in their home country but, for various flight-related reasons, are not in possession of their documents, the German Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) decided on December 3 2015 that university admission and admission to higher education should be granted to applicants who are unable to provide proof of the university entrance qualification acquired in their home country. The decision provides an opportunity for refugees to demonstrate their suitability for professional studies in a three-step process, including the verification of asylum-related conditions, the plausibility check of educational biography in their home country and the implementation of a quality-based examination and assessment procedure (see KMK decision of December 3 2015). Admission is granted under the following conditions:

Persons with leave to stay, but not yet recognized as refugees or asylum seekers [...] must give evidence of five years' stay in Germany and of having been or being in legal employment before starting university study; alternatively, a three-year period of stay of at least one parent, whereby such parent must be in legal employment. Recognised refugees are as a general rule entitled to provisions as set out in the Social Code." (Robert Bosch Expertenkommission zur Neuausrichtung der Flüchtlingspolitik, 2015, p.14).

## 8 Conclusions

The German educational system increasingly incorporates the principle of inclusion and has eliminated many of the legal obstacles to access to the various stages of school and the various educational institutions. Yet, there are still substantial barriers to implementation of the comprehensive right to education for adolescent and adult refugees. There is still much to be done in order to secure a minimum of access, participation and educational development for those in the asylum process and for those with the so-called “tolerated status” (Schroeder, 2016).

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# Access to Housing in Canada

*Kathy Sherrell*

*Keywords* housing, social inclusion, refugees

## 1 Housing, Social Inclusion and Refugees

The idea of housing as an indicator of integration is relatively easy to understand. The type and quality of housing obtained can be directly related to the amount of financial support provided by employment income or government transfers (e.g. social assistance). Housing outcomes are further influenced by a variety of other factors, including size of family, as well as the appropriateness and availability of existing housing stock. For those with low incomes finding adequate and affordable housing is difficult, if not impossible. The result, is that newly arrived refugees often live in overcrowded conditions and experience high affordability stress. Less frequently considered, however, are the ways in which housing itself influences other aspects of people's lives. At its most basic level, housing influences household budgets – the higher the cost of housing, the less is available to pay for other necessities, such as food, transportation, clothing and utilities. While attention has increasingly been focused on the immediate housing experiences of refugees, including overcrowding and affordability challenges (Rose & Charette 2014; Francis & Hiebert 2014; Preston et al., 2012; Sherrell, 2011; Preston et al., 2009; Hiebert, Mendez & Wyly, 2008), there is a need for more explicit consideration of the ways in which housing influences peoples' long-term social outcomes.

The concept of social inclusion provides a helpful way to frame discussions about the impact of housing on people's everyday lives. At its most basic level “[s]ocial inclusion is about making sure that all children and adults are able to participate as valued, respected and contributing members of society” (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003, viii). Chisholm (2002) asserts, housing is intimately related to social inclusion.

Housing is a gateway through which we connect to our immediate environment and society at large. It reflects social status, belonging to community, a centre to gather with friends and family, and socially it has a direct bearing on the extent to which we experience social inclusion or exclusion (online source).

For some, housing provides a safe space from which to retreat from the world, while for others housing creates additional burdens. For newly arrived refugees housing represents the foundation upon which settlement unfolds. Failure to ensure newcomers, and low-income Canadians more broadly, have access to adequate and affordable housing has long-term implications on their physical, mental and social development (Watt, 2003).

For newcomers, the assistance provided in the period after arrival has the potential to impact both the adults' and their children's futures. At the least, the consequences of social exclusion include "a lack of recognition and acceptance; powerlessness and 'voicelessness'; economic vulnerability; and, diminished life experiences and limited life prospects" (Omidvar & Richmond 2003, viii). At worst, there lies the potential for the development of a multigenerational cycle of poverty.

To date, Canadian research within the housing and newcomer literature has predominantly focused upon housing as an outcome (e.g. of limited income security or the housing market) with little sustained attention to the ways in which housing influences other aspects of newcomers' lives.

This article extends previous research on the housing outcomes of refugees to consider the ways in which housing influences long-term social inclusion. Drawing upon the concept of social inclusion I argue it is not sufficient to focus upon housing outcomes; rather, consideration must be afforded to the ways in which housing shapes long-term social inclusion for refugee newcomers.

## 2 Finding Housing

The housing experiences of refugees upon arrival in Canada varies significantly according to category of entry. Unlike privately sponsored refugees (PSRs) who move directly into permanent accommodations upon arrival, government assisted refugees (GARs) are provided temporary accommodations in reception centres or hotels until permanent accommodations are secured. GARs receive assistance in identifying and securing permanent accommodations from staff at resettlement agencies and are provided either a basic furniture and household goods package or allowance in order to furnish their home. Refugee claimants are not provided any assistance in locating or securing housing upon arrival, nor are they eligible for temporary accommodations.

Although newcomers do not face any restrictions on where they can live and find housing (e.g. they may choose to move to another city or province), they do so at their own expense and may not receive assistance in finding accommodations in their new location.

## 3 Housing and Poverty

Employment or lack thereof, is a key influence on housing outcomes – the higher the income, the greater choice households have in the size and quality of housing that is obtained. Those with higher incomes may allocate more to housing, while the choice of those with lower incomes is constrained. "Where housing is allocated purely on a market basis, people with low incomes are restricted to the bottom end of the housing market" (Fuller-Thomson, Hulchanski & Hwang 2000, p. 7 as cited in Cooper, 2001, p. 7). Upon arrival, refugees struggle to find housing that fits within their limited budgets and meets the size needs of their families. While resettled refugees receive assistance in securing



permanent accommodations through private sponsors or government contracted agencies, the financial resources provided through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) are insufficient to obtain good quality, affordable housing that is of appropriate size for the family. Rather families are forced to allocate a significant proportion of their financial support to housing that is often inadequate or unsuitable to meet their needs. Lack of financial means necessitates taking whatever is available; in general, newly arrived refugees do not have the luxury to consider what is safe, healthy, or appropriate (Sherrell, 2011; Carter et al., 2008). While many would like to obtain larger, more appropriate accommodations to better meet the needs of their families, there is often a trade-off between the price and size or condition of housing. For many, the high price of housing is often the deciding factor, particularly in light of low household incomes and dependence upon government transfers as the main source of household income.

Research undertaken in Canada on the housing outcomes of refugees highlights the challenges faced by newly arrived refugees. In the first few years after arrival, housing obtained is frequently older stock and of poor quality, including units infested with cockroaches and/or mould, both of which negatively impact physical and mental health (Sherrell, 2011; Sherrell & ISSofBC, 2009; Carter et al., 2008; Hiebert et al., 2005).

Unlike single newcomers – who might have been able to double or even triple up to make housing more affordable – households with children were more constrained in their housing options. In part, decisions around housing are influenced by the greater willingness of landlords at the lower price range of the rental housing spectrum to overlook National Occupancy Standards (NOS), allowing larger families to rent smaller units. In Winnipeg and Vancouver, for example, the dearth of larger units (e.g. 3-4 bedrooms or more) within the rental market intersects with very low vacancy rates and low turnover to make it almost impossible for large families to find adequate and affordable housing (Sherrell, 2011; Carter et al., 2008). “The vacancies that do exist are in older rental stock in poor condition or newer stock that is well beyond the price range affordable to most refugee households” (Carter et al., 2008, viii).

While living in overcrowded, lower-quality housing may help families in balancing tight budgets, the condition of housing may have unforeseen psychological and physical consequences for the entire household. Initial results from the Health and Housing in Transition (HHiT) Study (REACH 3, 2010), for example, revealed that those who were vulnerably housed (e.g. overcrowded, unaffordable, or inadequate housing) were at high risk of serious mental and physical health problems. For some families the need to double up (e.g. with other extended family members) might create mental health concerns. Further, Watt (2003) cautions that [d]espite popular thought that some cultures are more ‘resilient’ to the consequences of living in crowded conditions, research indicates that all people, regardless of culture, are vulnerable to these effects (p. 9).

For some parents, pressures about adequately providing for their children may be amplified by social understandings of what is ‘normal’ or appropriate. With little money remaining after paying for shelter, respondents in some studies lamented being unable to give their children fun things (e.g. games) or provide them with ‘normal lives.’

Access to healthy and nutritious food is one area in which low income households suffer. As families are forced to “cut dietary corners in order to save enough money for

shelter” (Watt, 2003, p. 13) they are at an increased risk of malnutrition. Reliance on the food bank is high among newly arrived refugees (ISSofBC, 2016; Marchbank et al., 2014; Sherrell & ISSofBC, 2009), a finding which echoes research in both Canada and the United States that link high shelter costs and dependence upon emergency food supports (Carter et al., 2008; Cooper, 2001). In addition to forgoing foods such as meat, fruit, vegetables, and other staples when their prices increased, parents may sacrifice their own health in favour of feeding their children. Being hungry sets people on edge, making it even more difficult to pay attention and take care of necessary things.

As rents continue to rise, households must devote a greater proportion of their income to housing, leaving fewer resources to meet other basic needs. The reliance of many newly arrived refugees on public transportation – particularly in the first year – makes it difficult to purchase larger and heavier items, and as such take advantage of savings offered by buying food and household items in bulk. Consequently, families “are forced to allocate money that would otherwise be spending on food, clothing and other essentials toward rent payment that exceed their means” (Cooper, 2001, p. 17). In some cases, the need to choose between rent and other expenses extends to “amenities [normally] considered a part of housing. For some refugee families, telephone service, heat and hydro are luxury items, not basic amenities” (Watt, 2003, p. 17; Sherrell, 2011).

For many, the lack of privacy arising from the need to have family members share bedrooms and/or sleep in the living room and dining room adversely affects the mental and physical health of all family members. Although some spoke of the need for a quiet place to rest owing to physical or mental health issues, many did not have such a space within their apartments.

In addition to the effects of overcrowding, the meagre budgets remaining after housing had been procured left little money to cover additional expenses associated with their children’s education, including technology, tutoring and classroom-related fees. As schools move toward greater integration of technology in the classroom (e.g. online research, homework guidelines, multi-media assignments) the ability of low-income students to succeed may be impaired. In the absence of computers and internet at home, some youth are forced to go to libraries, settlement agencies, or other public facilities to do their homework. Yet, the ability to use computers in public spaces is constrained by daily limits (e.g. 30 minutes) (Wong et al., 2009). These limits are most strictly enforced during times of high demand. Further, the need to pay for printing in libraries, sometimes as high as 10 – 15 cents per page, created additional financial challenges for low-income families.

## 4 Conclusion

For many refugee households, low incomes and high rents have necessitated living in housing that does not meet commonly used standards of adequacy, affordability and suitability. Housing is one of the largest household expenses and as such it significantly shapes the amount of resources families have to take care of other needs. While housing is often thought of as an outcome it influences many other aspects of people’s lives, including their

physical and mental health. In the struggle to make ends meet, newly arrived refugees have little time and few resources to fully participate in Canadian society.

The need to allocate a high proportion of household income to housing necessitates that families make difficult financial choices. For many the dilemma of 'pay the rent or feed the kids' (Hurtig, 2000) is amplified by pressures to support those left behind (e.g. in refugee camps or war-torn countries) and, for Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs), to repay Government Transportation Loans incurred through their resettlement to Canada. With little money left, newly arrived refugees are forced to rely on food banks and/or low-cost, low-quality foods in order to meet their basic needs.

Beyond the physical health impact of poor quality housing, mental health is influenced by their housing situation. The inability to provide for their family's well-being or to 'get ahead' creates considerable stress for families. For those living in overcrowded conditions, the inability to retreat to a private space was cause for concern for both adults and children alike. The impacts of poverty on physical and mental health, as well as families' inability to provide the supports necessary for academic success for their children and young adults raise questions about newcomers' long-term potential for successful integration.

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# Access to Housing in Germany

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*Keywords* housing, asylum seekers, civic engagement

## 1 Migration and Accommodation Policy on the Federal Level

The migration policy that shapes the legal treatment of asylum seekers in Germany is mainly regulated by the following federal laws, which provide the basis for a harmonized framework for the asylum procedure, including asylum seekers' accommodation: i) The Asylum Seekers' Benefit Act (Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz), ii) the Asylum Law (Asylgesetz), and iii) the Residence Act (Aufenthaltsgesetz). Both the Asylum Law and the Residence Act constitute a substantial part of the refugee law. Finally, the Integration Act (Integrationsgesetz) is a skeleton law that summarizes a number of recent changes in the aforementioned federal laws (Schammann & Kühn, 2016, p. 6).

The reception and accommodation of asylum seekers during the asylum procedure is organized in a multi-stage process, with shared responsibilities between the Federal Government, the states and the municipalities (Schammann & Kühn, 2016). The asylum procedure is carried out by the German government through the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). Meanwhile, the states and municipalities are responsible for the implementation of the federal guidelines, which places them in charge of providing adequate accommodation and benefits covering the basic costs of living during the asylum procedures. The actual implementation of the relevant laws varies widely, however, among states and municipalities (Scholz, 2016).

Asylum seekers entering Germany must register in initial reception centers of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. During this time, asylum seekers usually stay nearby in shared accommodation facilities (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015; Scholz, 2016). Under the residence requirement (Residenzpflicht) defined in the Asylum Law, asylum seekers are not allowed to leave their district during the asylum proceedings. This regulation usually expires after three months. It is not to be confused with the condition of fixed abode (Wohnsitzauflage) as formulated in the Integration Act. This regulation concerns persons who have gone successfully through the asylum proceedings. It sets certain limits to the right of free choice of residence for persons who cannot support themselves financially, including persons with limited probability to remain in the country. The condition of fixed abode expires after three years. The quantitative distribution of asylum seekers

among the states after their first registration follows the EASY<sup>1</sup> quota system, an IT system for the initial distribution of asylum seekers. The quota, called the “Königstein Key”, is calculated annually by the Federation-States Commission based on tax revenues and the number of inhabitants in the federal states (Hummitzsch, 2014). After being allocated to the responsible federal state, asylum seekers can make their complete asylum application in a centralized initial reception center (Die Bundesregierung, 2016). Depending on the country of origin and the current accommodation capacities, asylum seekers must remain for up to six weeks but no longer than 6 months within mass accommodation facilities (§ 47 I AsylG). The accommodation in those shared facilities is formulated as a recommendation by the Federal Government (§ 53 I AsylG; Schammann & Kühn, 2016; Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015).

## 2 The Federal Accommodation System

During the asylum proceedings, asylum seekers and refugees are objects of administration. They have no voice in selecting their place of residence in Germany. Instead, their accommodation and distribution are determined by the federal administration structure and their requirements (Wendel, 2014). Each state has its own Reception Act, which regulates the accommodation system and the financing of this system for the municipalities. (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015).

Under the respective federal Reception Acts, asylum seekers are allocated to the federal states in a one, two, or three-stage procedure. In general, the distribution processes of each state include the initial reception and an allocation to the regional governments, which are responsible for reception and accommodation (Wendel, 2014). In Baden Württemberg, for example, asylum seekers and refugees are transferred to subsequent accommodations after 24 months, or after the successful completion of the asylum procedure.

The federal government does not set minimum standards for forms of housing. Instead, these vary state by state from no regulations, to recommendations, to requirements and finally to direct control of the compliance with the minimum standards. It should be noted that no regulations do not mean that the housing conditions are necessarily poor. Rather, no regulations can lead to a widespread heterogeneity of conditions concerning furnishing and the qualification of housing staff. If regulations exist, they can affect housing size, the possibilities of having a self-contained dwelling, the maximum number of persons per rooms, the common rooms, the minimum living space per person, and so on. For example, the minimum living space per person varies between 6 m<sup>2</sup> and 7 m<sup>2</sup> state by state (Wendel, 2014, pp. 37-56). Consequently, the living conditions of refugees are heavily dependent on the goodwill and discretion of the state institution responsible (Cremer, 2014).

Although the federal government regulates the housing situation for asylum seekers, it is striking that it does not set any minimum standards for psychosocial support for asylum seekers and refugees. Social support is crucial for the inhabitants of shared housing, since

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1 “Erstverteilung von Asylsuchenden”

it can provide orientation in an extraordinary and often stressful living situation. The social support workers can act as mediators for interactions between, for instance, authorities, doctors, schools. They can also mediate between the inhabitants and the housing staff, and support the staff with their tasks (Wendel, 2014). This procedure of accommodation gives the municipality a great deal of responsibility for the housing and care of asylum seekers and refugees, without setting out any standards that specifically shape the condition of their housing and care.

### 3 Forms, Practices and Possibilities of Municipalities to Accommodate Refugees and Asylum seekers

In general, the regional authorities in the states and municipalities decide whether asylum seekers will be transferred to shared accommodations, decentralized forms of housing, or if asylum seekers can seek accommodation on the private housing market, whereas vulnerable persons<sup>2</sup> are accommodated in special housing units (Scholz, 2016). While municipalities operate in the direct order of the federal state authorities, decision-making processes of local authorities in the field of migration and refugees are also dependent on the involvement of civil society, volunteers, and specific structural conditions, such as the position of the topic within the local self-government (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015). Local civic engagement has a significant impact on the public's attitudes towards refugees in host communities. Furthermore, volunteers often assume numerous incidental tasks that improve the situation of asylum seekers significantly (Daphi, 2016). However, not all municipalities are equally equipped. When considering the implementation of centralized or decentralized forms of housing, debates over costs are often crucial for the decision (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015). Furthermore, the communal property and housing policy determines the availability of apartments and plots. In larger municipalities, refugees and asylum seekers compete for affordable housing with families, students, migrants and other vulnerable groups (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015). Thus, there can be a wide scope of action on the local level within the political and administrative system.

Shared and mass accommodations are most often the standard option for refugees and asylum seekers. They were implemented to act as a deterrent measure against the influx of asylum seekers in the 1990s. Its proponents argue that they can facilitate orientation for newcomers through the possibility of direct interaction with other newcomers. Furthermore, institutions can provide support with fewer logistical constraints. It is also assumed that independent living might overstrain refugees and asylum seekers (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015). However, shared and mass accommodations may have consequences and risks of a psychosocial, material and societal nature. People are living together in crowded conditions, sharing kitchens and sanitary facilities, and a lack of privacy and forced cohabitation of persons often suffering from trauma can lead to massive psycho-

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2 These include traumatized persons, orphaned children, single parent, children traveling without their parents, victims of human trafficking or suffering from sexual violence.

social stress (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015). In addition, the German Institute for Human Rights has highlighted women's exposure to the risk of sexual harassment and assault in such settings. For children and adolescents there is a lack of opportunities for play and physical activity, as well as an adequate learning environment within the facilities (Cremer, 2014). Due to poor-quality buildings and spatial isolation, there is often little social interaction between the local population and people seeking asylum, which can lead to feelings of alienation and estrangement (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015).

The term decentralized accommodation is mostly understood in the sense of an accommodation in shared or single apartments, located in both existing buildings and newly-constructed houses, offering private space with good infrastructure. (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015). Furthermore, it is assumed that persons living in centralized accommodations over a longer period could lose their sense of personal responsibility and local orientation. However, definitions and standards concerning decentralized housing diverge or are non-existent. The implementation of decentralized forms of housing is often unfeasible or difficult to enforce (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015). Surprisingly, some municipalities in Germany have concluded that operating centralized accommodations on the municipal level for refugees and asylum seekers is more expensive in contrast to accommodation in single apartments or shared-flats; in the case of the latter, the costs and responsibilities are shared between public authorities, welfare organizations, volunteers and others (Aumüller, Daphi, & Biesenkamp, 2015).

The increase in the number of people seeking asylum in Europe and Germany in autumn 2015 and the following months leveraged basic municipal arrangements regarding the practice of placing asylum seekers due to severe housing shortage. The need for pragmatic emergency solutions led to the combination of different forms of housing (Schammann & Kühn, 2016).

## 4 Conclusion and Implications

The current governmental housing system and situation of accommodation for asylum seekers in Germany has been shaped by several past developments. Due to structural changes in the housing sector and the comparatively low or stable numbers of asylum seekers prior to 2010, affordable housing has been decreasing over many years. Moreover, a continuous tightening of the asylum law, especially since the "asylum compromise" in 1993, in addition to poor-quality housing, overcrowding, and a lack of alternative livelihood opportunities should be a deterrent for refugees to come to Germany. However, the current situation shows that these conditions do not discourage refugees to hope for and aspire to a better life in Germany and Europe. If the approach neither reduces refugee numbers nor encourages equal participation in society, then it is not beneficial, irrespective of the political and societal intentions.

Long-term accommodation in isolated shared housing should consequently be avoided (Wendel, 2014). Minimum standards and social care should be enacted by law and harmonised across the states (Wendel, 2014), while municipalities should set the topic of migration



and refugees at the top of their political agendas. An accompanied transition period into the new daily life and housing must be established (Wendel, 2014). However, in light of the current situation, an increasing number of municipalities are working on innovative concepts and strategies to implement new forms of accommodation and integration, often in close collaboration with civil society and researchers.

The Real-World Laboratory project “Asylum seekers in the Rhine-Neckar region” is focusing on identifying the factors necessary to provide societal participation of asylum seekers and refugees. Two sub-projects within the Real-World Lab “Asylum”<sup>3</sup> address the aforementioned issues of accommodation and local civil society. One project deals with decentralized living and housing of refugees and investigates the impacts of decentralized forms of accommodation on different actors in society, especially at the neighbourhood level. This project will provide information regarding the local area used by refugees and forms of spatial appropriation in the city. It focuses on the collaborations between volunteers, locals and refugees. A second project focuses on civil society concerns the motivations behind civic engagement and the types of engagement undertaken by citizens and the associated organizations working in the field of integration. Of interest is how informal and formal actors in the civic community work together and how they cooperate with state, and in particular municipal actors, as well as representatives from the private sector. The Real World Lab thereby supports scientific analyses to enable the region’s knowledge-base to be widened, to develop good-practice recommendations, and to integrate the conclusions of this local discussion into the national debate.

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3 The Real World Laboratories are a funding program of the Ministry for Science and the Arts of Baden-Wuerttemberg. The Real World Lab “Asylum” is being carried out in collaboration between the Heidelberg University of Education (PH) and the Mannheim Centre for European Economic Research (ZEW).

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The research focus of Verena Schmid (M.A.) lies on the issues of civil society, civic engagement, knowledge sociology and the methods of qualitative social research. In the project “Real World Lab Asylum”, she focuses on the civic engagement undertaken by citizens and the associated organizations working in the refugee aid. Her doctoral thesis sheds light on how memories of the past construct the presence and the future of refugee aid.

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# Access to Health Care in Canada

*Michaela Hynie, Kashmala Qasim, & Minakshi Das*

*Keywords* health care, refugee status, health insurance

## 1 Introduction

The World Health Organization recognizes the fundamental right to health as including the right to affordable and timely health care (WHO, 2015). Although health care is a human right for all, there are particular moral obligations for vulnerable populations. This includes refugees, who are, by definition, fleeing conflict, discrimination, and violence, and who can experience extreme physical and psychological hazards along the migratory route, and in subsequent sites of asylum (Gerard & Pickering, 2014; Illingworth & Parmet, 2015). Thus, the provision of health care is an essential component of the international humanitarian response to refugees. Those individuals who are seeking temporary refuge in a second country often have primary health care needs addressed by special programs that are a collaborative effort between the hosting nation and international humanitarian agencies such as UNHCR and the Red Cross/Red Crescent. This is particularly true for those residing in refugee camps. However, resettled refugees who find permanent migration in a third country rely on the health care systems of the countries to which they are migrating, and since they are migrating to become permanent residents, should have access to health care in these countries that is comparable to that of other vulnerable residents.

The nature of a country's health care system has consequences for how health care is offered to citizens, and how it is offered to those requiring social assistance such as refugees. Health care coverage in high-income countries typically follows one of three broad models, although there is a wide range of hybrid models and variations in the specifics of how these systems operate. The three classic models are: a national health service system (e.g., Sweden, the United Kingdom), a social insurance system (e.g., Germany, Canada), and a private insurance system (e.g., the United States), which differ in terms of the roles taken on by the state, health care providers, and those who pay into the system (Beckfield, Olafsdottir & Sosnaud, 2013). Differences also exist between, and within, countries in terms of how migration status is addressed in the health care system, which services are covered, and for whom, with some countries having special coverage for children and pregnant women. Increasingly, though, health care coverage for resettled refugees and asylum seekers is strongly linked to a country's general migration policies (Messina, 2011).

## 2 Refugee Migration in Canada

Canada normally accepts approximately 20,000 to 25,000 refugees per year, although from November, 2015 until November, 2016, 35,147 Syrian refugees arrived in Canada, in addition to the usual numbers (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2016c; Elgersma, 2015). Approximately half of Canada's refugees make asylum claims on arrival (refugee claimants). The other half are resettled refugees, individuals whose claims are accepted prior to arrival in Canada. Resettled refugees are permanent residents on arrival. The two dominant programs of resettlement are: Government Assisted Refugees (GARs), who receive settlement and financial support through the government and Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs), who receive settlement and financial support from groups of private individuals and private organizations like faith groups. A less frequently used blended program (Blended Visa Office-Referred) is provided for about 10% of resettled refugees. The distinction between the types of refugee status has become important for issues of health care in recent years.

### 2.1 Canada's Health Care Coverage for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Canada implements a universal single-payer health care system that is primarily delivered through provincial and territorial health insurance programs. The three provinces with the largest number of immigrants, namely British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec, also have residency requirements for obtaining provincial coverage. Newcomers in these provinces, and previous residents who have lived outside of the province, must reside in the province for at least three consecutive months before they are eligible for insurance, leaving resettled refugees as well as other new landed immigrants without access to provincial insurance in their first months of arrival (e.g., Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Ontario, 2016)

The Canadian government offers limited temporary health care coverage to refugees and protected persons through the Interim Federal Health Insurance Plan (IFHP) (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2016b). There are different types of coverage and an individual's migration status determines which type of coverage they are eligible for. *Basic coverage* is similar to provincial health insurance coverage in most provinces, and it includes access to in-patient and out-patient hospital services, primary care services from health care providers including pre- and post-natal care, and diagnostic and ambulance services. *Supplemental coverage* is similar to the additional coverage that is provided by provinces and territories to those receiving social assistance. This includes services from allied health professionals for both physical and mental health care needs, including urgent dental care, long-term care, and assistive devices. *Prescription drug coverage* is available for prescription medications that are covered by provincial public drug plans. IFHP also includes *Immigrant Medical Exam* coverage for diagnostic tests that are required under the *Immigration Refugee Protection Act*, and *Public Health and Public Safety* coverage, which includes diagnosis and treatment of physical and mental health conditions that could be a risk to the general public, such as infectious diseases or serious mental illnesses that are deemed to make people a danger to others (CIC, 2016a). IFHP provides coverage until refu-

gees have provincial coverage. Once refugees receive provincial insurance coverage, IFHP continues to cover supplemental services until the end of the individual's financial support from the government (for GARs) or from private sponsors (PSRs).

Prior to 2012, all refugee groups, including refugee claimants and denied refugee claimants, had access to all types of coverage under IFHP. However, the IFHP system exists in parallel to the provincial/territorial systems and has traditionally been met with some resistance among health care providers, due to the complexity of making claims through a less familiar system and long waits for reimbursement of fees. As a result, it was not uncommon to encounter health care providers who refused to accept IFHP and required individuals who had coverage to nonetheless pay for their services in advance (Hynie, Korn, & Tao, 2016; ter Kuile et al., 2007).

In 2012, the Canadian government made several changes to categories of coverage, including removing supplemental benefits from PSRs, and providing only Public Health and Public Safety coverage to refugee claimants coming from 42 countries that were deemed safe (the Designated Countries of Origin, or DCOs) (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2013). The changes were overturned by the Federal Court in 2014. The then Conservative Federal government appealed this ruling but was forced by the courts to resume offering insurance coverage to the temporarily excluded categories while the case was under appeal. In the interim, several provinces stepped in to provide temporary health insurance, using a complex new set of protocols, to cover the gaps created by the new federal regulations.

The numerous changes in coverage led to confusion among health care providers regarding who was covered for what kind of care and for how long (Hynie, Rummens & Cleveland, 2016). The result was delay and often denial of care to refugees and refugee claimants alike (Webster, 2015). The impact of the complex sequence of changes was aggravated by a lack of clear communication by the government, and a seeming lack of clarity within the insurance companies implementing the health care coverage about what was covered for whom. In addition, by virtue of the discourse around "bogus refugee claimants" that accompanied these changes, health care providers and the general public believed that no refugees were now covered for health care, and attitudes towards refugees became more negative, reducing the motivation of health care providers to make efforts to meet refugee needs (Harris & Zuberi, 2015; Hynie et al., 2016).

In November, 2015, the newly elected Liberal federal government dropped the appeal and offered full IFHP to resettled refugees, but *from Syria only*, further adding to the confusion. Finally, by April, 2016, IFHP coverage was reverted to pre-2012 coverage for all categories. However, given the existing confusion in the health care sector, and the withdrawal of services by many health care providers, it is unclear whether service accessibility has reverted to pre-2012 levels, and whether the staged reversal of the changes, which introduced even more complexity into the system, actually made things worse.

### 3 Summary

The health care coverage that Canada currently provides for refugees is comprehensive but requires different claim procedures for health care providers. For those for whom refugees and refugee claimants make up a small minority of their case load, the complexity of dealing with a different administrative system is a barrier to providing care. Temporary changes made to health care coverage for refugees and refugee claimants greatly complicated the system, and resulted in an escalation of health care denial and delay. As is the case for most countries, coverage reflects the nature of the health care system, but is also closely linked to political initiatives intended to shape migration policy, such as the government's explicit intention to dissuade refugee claimants from certain "designated countries of origin" (Government of Canada, 2013), in part due to the to-date untested assumption that asylum seekers come to countries like Canada in order to access health care (Illingworth & Parmet, 2015). Health care coverage will continue to shift in concert with shifts in immigration policies, and attitudes to refugees and asylum seekers, but with far reaching consequences for all.

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# Access to Health Services for Refugees in Germany

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*Keywords* refugees, healthcare provision, mental health

## 1 Legal Foundations

In 2015 approximately 890,000 refugees arrived in Germany (BMI, 2016). However, not only since the so-called refugee crisis have asylum seekers been subject to restrictions. In 1993, the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act (AsylbLG) was adopted. Among other things, it restricts access to health services. Currently, only after 15 months of living in Germany access to statutory health insurance benefits for asylum claimants is granted.

By now, severe diseases and psychiatric diagnoses are considered as obstacles to deportation rather than as reasons for protection. Moreover, any medical certificate concerning mental illness is now only valid if issued by a psychiatrist. This must be handed in at the beginning of the asylum procedure, although this is very difficult due to practical issues (Janßen, 2016). After the registration in Germany, refugees are obliged to an initial medical examination. Unfortunately, its content is highly heterogenic among federal states and no standardized procedure exists. As soon as refugees move to the next stage of accommodation, information about their health status is lost because there are no standardized procedures for passing on vital information. The initial examination mainly consists of a screening for infectious diseases. The investigation and completion of the vaccination status is often missing, though it is statutory in order to prevent epidemics (Bozorgmehr, Noest, & Razum, 2016). Although a medical check is mandatory, it is not enough to systematically detect mental health disorders, chronic diseases and other special needs. This gap in early detection is problematic in light of the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council of June 2013, which creates standards for the reception of applicants for international protection. The directive requires provision of emergency medical care, the early identification of particularly vulnerable asylum seekers, their needs and immediate treatment. Essentially, any asylum-seeker with special needs (e.g. minors, victims of violence, sick persons etc.) is considered vulnerable. The guideline should have been implemented by July 2015 (L2013/33/EU). However, Germany has not yet implemented a sustainable and nationwide concept.

## 2 Prevalence Rates

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that there are no systematic data on health status (Razum, Bunte, Gilsdorf, Ziese, & Bozorgmehr, 2016). Diseases found in an exemplary study were mostly well known to general practitioners. Depending on the country of origin more infectious and tropical diseases were reported (Alberer, Wendeborn, Löscher, & Seilmaier, 2016). Concerning mental health, a large meta-analysis revealed prevalence rates of 30.6% for PTSD and 30.8% for depressive symptoms (Steel et al., 2009). Richter and colleagues (2015) reported that 63.6% of refugees in Germany have one or more psychiatric diagnoses. Notwithstanding the great need, only a few refugees receive psychological treatment. The same is true for children, of which 95% are suffering from mental health problems and who are not treated appropriately (Ruf, Schauer, & Elbert, 2010). Health services are more accessible for unaccompanied minors because they are treated equally to German adolescents due to the guardianship of the youth welfare system, whereas children with parents who seek asylum are subject to restrictions according to the Asylum Seekers' Benefit Act (Razum, & Bozorgmehr, 2016).

## 3 Residence Status and Access to Health Services

Access to health care in Germany for refugees generally depends on their resident status. Therefore, it is important to differentiate between the following groups: i) asylum seekers who have applied for refugee status but are still waiting for a decision; ii) accepted claimants with a refugee status and iii) rejected claimants who either hold a tolerance status (Duldung), are in the process of expulsion, hold a temporary residence permit on humanitarian grounds, or are undocumented migrants without any legal residency permit.

Only accepted claimants and asylum seekers who have been in Germany for more than 15 months without a decision made on their asylum claim receive access to standard health care (Bozorgmehr, & Razum, 2015). All other groups are subject to the restrictions according to the Asylum Seekers' Benefit Act, as previously mentioned. The Asylum Seekers' Benefit Act only allows emergency medical care, support during pregnancy/childbirth, vaccination, treatment for acute and painful conditions and other "necessary preventive measures" (§4). Further treatment is possible after an individual application and only if it is "essential" to preserve health (§6). Medical aids are not covered automatically. Dental care is only provided in painful conditions or to terminate orthodontic therapies. Treatment of chronic diseases is approved only if the omission has dangerous consequences. Psychotherapy is possible if an individual request has been evaluated as acute, which very rarely occurs (Klein, 2016).

## 4 Financing Health Services

Requesting financial compensation for each treatment is time consuming. Moreover, the approval is highly dependent on the interpretation of the Asylum Seekers' Benefit Act by federal states and municipalities due to the lack of nationwide standards (Bozorgmehr, Noest, & Razum, 2016). Before visiting a doctor, asylum seekers have to request a health care voucher. The approval of this voucher, a medical referral or the cost absorption for medical treatment requested by practitioners is determined by employees of the social welfare office, who do not have medical expertise. This can have life-threatening or lethal consequences (Misbach, 2015). The cost absorption of mental health treatment is particularly problematic. Most requests are denied and on average only 3% of the costs are reimbursed.

The 32 psychosocial centers in Germany are underfunded by the government, although they provide most of the mental health care during asylum procedures. At the moment the centers have only the capacity to treat around half of the persons seeking help. Moreover, they can only refer 6% of their clients to psychotherapists. Even if a psychotherapist is available, 15% of the requests are denied (1 to 3% rejection for statutory health insured people). If psychotherapy is approved, financing of interpreters is still uncertain (Bundestag, 2016). Lack of financing for interpreters for psychotherapy treatments as well as for visits to a doctor is one of the greatest barriers in the health care system for migrants, in general and independent of their residence status. Against the background of adopting restrictions for access to health care in order to reduce costs it has to be considered that restrictions result in increasing expenses. The costs for patients with restricted access to health services are up to 40% higher than for patients with unrestricted access. Probable causes are delayed care, higher costs in administration and shifts from the primary to the secondary and tertiary care sector (Böttche, Stammel, & Knaevelsrud, 2016).

## 5 Additional Barriers

On one hand, complex federal structures in Germany complicate the implementation of health policies on a national level. On the other, missing interface management as well as a lack of standards for documenting and transferring medical information are crucial barriers for a well-functioning health care system for refugees (Razum, Bunte, Gilsdorf, Ziese, & Bozorgmehr, 2016). Regarding medical institutions the lack of intercultural openness, practical knowledge and expertise concerning legal and medical aspects relating to refugees are problematic. Moreover, refugees themselves might be inhibited because of cultural aspects or missing information about the health care system. Mistrust of public institutions and legal structures may also be considered. Undocumented migrants usually avoid visits to doctors completely. In theory, undocumented migrants are eligible for services (AsylbLG), while in practice, they avoid utilizing services for the risk of deportation (Misbach, 2015).

## 6 Existing Approaches

In Germany, a substantial level of voluntary engagement provides health care to refugees, free of charge and anonymously. In turn, this has created a functional parallel structure, yet political solutions are still expected (Misbach, 2015). Voluntary work may not be enough to fill the gap caused by inadequate legal restrictions. Since 2015 it is possible to immediately provide an electronic health care card to refugees independently of their residence status. Unfortunately the decision to implement this regulation is left to the federal states. Moreover, the range of services for refugees without granted asylum remains the same (Böttche, Stammel, & Knaevelsrud, 2016). Nonetheless, electronic health cards provide quick and easy access to health care and above all allow medical staff to decide on necessary treatments. The model of the city state of Bremen exemplifies best practice, as it grants immediate access not only to an electronic health card but also to most standard care services. The same applies for the city state of Hamburg. These examples also show that such an approach reduces costs (Sothmann, auf der Günne, Addo, Lohse, & Schmiedel, 2016).

## 7 Conclusion

This overview reveals there is potential to improve access to health care services for refugees in Germany. The following factors should be considered: political frameworks, institutional structures of health care providers and access to relevant information for refugees. Agreements such as the European directive should be implemented in order to identify and treat refugees with special needs appropriately. Moreover, access to medical standard care is necessary for all refugees to prevent avoidable emergencies, while also reducing costs. Decisions on treatment have to be taken by treating medical staff. Most importantly, clear regulations and policies should be implemented nationwide. Additional resources, especially for interpreters and specialized centers, are essential. Medical institutions should develop cultural sensitive services. Moreover, front line staff must gain expertise in legal regulations and be trained in dealing with refugee patients. From the perspective of refugees it is important to disseminate information about the German healthcare system, their rights and duties. The overarching objective must be a well-functioning and professional cooperation between the different levels. Therefore, more data that captures utilization of health services, practical access, and the costs and underlying causes of inappropriate healthcare provision for refugees including all three levels are indispensable to start an evidence-based debate about possible and necessary changes. Refugees will keep on coming into the global north. Therefore Germany should realize a well-functioning model that guarantees appropriate healthcare provision consistent with human rights for all groups of refugees.

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## *Short Biography*

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# The Labour Market Experiences of Refugees in Canada

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*Keywords* refugees, Canada, labour market transitions

Researchers, policy makers and the general public know very little about the lives of refugees after they have resettled. Too often, focus is on language acquisition and mental health issues that may arise upon their arrival and we forget the other aspects of their lives in Canada. When labour market integration among this group is discussed, stereotypes and biased opinions tend to overshadow facts. This results in skewed incorrect information and an unfair emphasis on the negative aspects of labour market integration. The reality is that refugees contribute significantly to the economies they enter even though these contributions may be difficult to observe. As the OECD's Philippe Legraine (2016) writes, "(r)efugees can contribute economically to the societies that welcome them in many ways: as workers, innovators, entrepreneurs, taxpayers, consumers and investors" (p. 1). This chapter examines some of the major labour market indicators for refugees in Canada.

Newcomers have played a major role in the development, growth and sustainability of the Canadian workforce and economy prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their contribution is so important today that estimates suggest that between 60-100% of the growth in the Canadian economy is the result of the labour, income, taxes, and investments that immigrants and refugees make (Ontario Ministry of Finance, 2014). According to the Conference Board of Canada (2015), the country would have to increase immigration to over 350,000 per year to prevent an economic recession, and the labour provided by refugees will make significant contributions to maintaining economic prosperity in the country. Between 1990 and 2014, over 731,000 refugees entered the country (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2015), making up between 11% and 17% of all the newcomer arrivals annually. Given that upwards of 60% are under the age of 25 prior to their arrival, most will have long-term connections to the labour market so understanding their labour market trajectories is important.

Canada has a vested interest in the labour market success of refugees and there are several indicators that refugees provide significant economic returns, particularly in the long-run. For instance, long-term evidence suggests that in Canada, the US and Australia, the lifetime employment rate of refugees is higher than the native-born (Legraine,

2016). In these three countries, refugees will earn more in their lifetimes and pay more in taxes, on average, than workers born in Canada. They will use far fewer social, economic and health resources in the long-run. Even if we factor in the high initial costs of resettling these refugees, the economic output is far greater than the initial investment (Picot, 2013). According to the Brookings Institute (Callie and Sekkarie, 2015), refugees are not a substitute for labour either. Instead, refugees do jobs that those born in Canada refuse to perform. In sum, refugees are not a drain on income support systems and do not compete with Canadians for work.

How many refugees are working after their first year in Canada? This is a question that preoccupies policy makers, governments and settlement agencies because all refugees, regardless of whether they are government- or privately sponsored, move from federal income support to provincial income support 13 months after their arrival to the country. Those who have already gained employment do not require the continuation of this type of income support, or would at least require less of it. Once a refugee arrives to Canada under the various government programs (Wilkinson and Garcea, 2017), they are free to work once they have been offered employment. All refugees are entitled to work in Canada upon arrival. The only exception are refugee claimants. Refugee claimants are persons who declare refugee status upon their arrival. Their ability to legally work depends on a number of issues. The simplest understanding is that refugee claimants from UN-recognized countries of origin may obtain a work permit (provided they meet criteria) during the wait to have their case assessed. Asylum seekers from non-Convention countries must wait until their claim is accepted by the Canadian government before they are entitled to work (see Clark-Kazak, 2017, for more information).

Various news outlets are reporting that over half of the privately-sponsored newly arrived refugees from Syria are already working less than one year after arrival while only 12% of the government-assisted Syrians are currently working (IRCC, 2016; Keung, 2016; Kassam, 2016). There is a consistent pattern where privately sponsored refugees tend to find work faster than those who are government sponsored. The prevailing theory is that privately sponsored refugees benefit from the close connection they have with their sponsors. The sponsoring group may be family and friends or may be a mixed group of Canadian and former-refugee sponsors. These sponsors often personally assist refugees to find work. Although government-assisted refugees are eligible for various job entry and training services, the volume of this group of newcomers precludes settlement service agencies from providing personalized support so it takes them a bit longer to find steady work. The good news is that four years after their arrival, 56% of refugees are working, a number that is only 6% lower than the employment rate for Canadians (Morissette, Hou & Schellenberg, 2015; Canada, 2016).

While the employment rate might be encouraging, it masks some of the labour market adjustment problems some refugees face when transitioning to work in Canada. Unemployment varies geographically, but the Canadian average<sup>1</sup> in 2015 is 6.9% (Canada, 2016); among newly arrived refugees, that number also varies with a low of 5.5% in Alberta to a

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1 Geography influences unemployment rates. Saskatchewan has the lowest unemployment rate of all provinces at 5.0% in 2015. Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest unemployment rate at 12.8%.

high of 29% in Saskatchewan (Wilkinson et.al., 2016)<sup>2</sup>. Understandably, refugees change jobs frequently, particularly in their first years in Canada. Four years after arrival, 28% of refugees had held three or more jobs (Xue, 2008)<sup>3</sup>. Many refugees work part-time in their first few years in Canada, for various reasons. For many, a part-time job is necessary as they work to complete their language training. For others, they may be unable to find full-time work and work two or more part-time jobs to make ends meet. By four years after arrival, however, 71% of refugees are working full-time, a number comparable to those born in Canada but lower than other immigrants (Xue, 2008). On average, it takes 14.9 months for refugees to locate work after their arrival to Canada (Xue, 2008).

It is hardly surprising that after years of uncertainty and upheaval that many refugees are anxious to find work quickly after their arrival to Canada. A longitudinal study in 2004 finds that 46% of refugees who have been in Canada for six months or less had already looked for work during that time (Xue, 2008), which is rather remarkable given that only four in ten refugees can speak English or French upon arrival (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2015, calculations by author). Four years after arrival, over 50% were still looking for work, though it should be noted that many of the former refugees looking for work were currently employed, they were just looking for better work. Among the recently arrived Syrian refugees, two-thirds cited finding a job as their number one problem since moving to Canada less than one year ago (IRCC, 2016).

Not surprisingly, refugees often face barriers to finding work. Less than 40% of refugees have a good understanding of English or French prior to arrival and many have to wait for months to access quality language training<sup>4</sup>. British Columbia, for instance, currently has over 5,000 people on its waiting list for English language classes (Kassam, 2016). Four years after arrival, 25% of refugees still indicate that their poor ability in English or French prevents them from finding a job or locating work within their field (Xue, 2008). It is the barrier most often cited by refugees as the main problem preventing them from finding suitable employment.

There is evidence to suggest that refugees who have family and friends already living in Canada are able to find work faster. Refugees from the former Yugoslavia were more likely to have friends, family or connections living in Canada prior to their arrival than other refugee groups. Having family and friends to help make connections in the labour market eases the transition to a new job for many. The presence of family and friendship networks, however, tends only to assist in early labour market transitions. Over the long-term, all refugees have better labour market participation rates than those born in Canada. The Vietnamese refugees who arrived 15 years earlier than the Yugoslavians had very little in terms

2 This figure supported by Xue's (2008) research in 2004.

3 This is the best study of refugee employment currently available. Although data collection ended in 2004, it remains the only study that is based on a simple random sample of all newcomers to Canada and followed them six months, two years and four years after arrival. Sadly, the study was discontinued due to lack of funds. The observations on labour market issues should be made with extreme caution given the 'age' of the analysis.

4 Among the recently arrived refugees from Syria, 83% of government-assisted refugees had no knowledge of either English or French compared to 19% of those who were privately sponsored (Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2016).

of existing familial and social networks. Despite these differences, their lifetime average unemployment rate was 2.5% lower than among workers born in Canada (Beiser, 1999). In short, while the presence of family and friendship networks may aid in short-term labour market entry, they do not determine long-term labour market success.

Other barriers, while not unique to refugees, are highly exacerbated by the refugee experience. Foreign credential recognition, for instance, is a serious barrier to labour market entry, particularly among those working in the self-regulated professions such as medicine, nursing, accounting and other professional jobs. In Canada, these professions set their own rules regarding who is eligible to practice a particular occupation, meaning that all newcomers wishing to pursue licensing and work in these areas are at the mercy of the professional organizations to review and either accept or reject their qualifications. There is currently no penalty for any professional organization for failing to consider and review the credentials of foreign-trained professionals (Kelly, Marcelino & Mulas, 2014). To further complicate issues, each province has its own professional organization, so the steps in licensing can vary significantly depending on geographical location. Refugees are the most likely to experience difficulty having their foreign credentials recognized in the Canadian labour market. A recent study of newly arrived refugees five years after their arrival reveals that 64% of refugees are currently working in jobs for which they are overqualified, the highest of all newcomer groups (Wilkinson, et al., 2016). Many of these refugees simply give up on recertifying in their field, especially given the expense, time and uncertainty.

Demographics also play an important role in understanding the labour market contributions and outcomes of refugees in Canada. While 51% of the most recent refugees are of working age (between 25 to 64 years), another 47% are under age 24<sup>5</sup> (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2015, calculations by author), meaning there is a significant number who will benefit from direct experience with the Canadian education system. This experience will make the transition of this younger generation significantly easier than for their parents because they will have training, degrees and diplomas acquired in Canada, meaning they won't face the same barriers to recognition of foreign credentials that their parents will experience. In fact, 29% of government-assisted and 32% of privately sponsored refugee youth will complete a university degree, a number that outpaces the youth born in Canada (24%) (Hou and Boniskowska, 2016). These children will be highly successful in the labour market as well. Their employment incomes will be roughly double that of their parents, with privately sponsored refugees who enter the country prior to their 24<sup>th</sup> birthday earning approximately \$44,000 per year, close to the Canadian average (Hou and Boniskowska, 2016), while their parents will earn about half of that figure.

It is not surprising that refugees experience various barriers in finding work and finding good work in their initial years in Canada. A combination of poor official language skills, lack of family and social networks, combined with problems having their skills and degrees recognized by professional associations, make the initial labour market transition

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5 The most recent arrival of Syrian refugees to Canada is significantly younger, with 59% under the age of 15 years among the government-assisted and 33% among the privately assisted refugees (Citizenship and Immigration Canada; 2015; Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2016), a number that is similar to the worldwide average calculated by the IOM (2016).

difficult for many refugees. Despite the short-term difficulties, most refugees find work and become economically self-sufficient to the point where over a lifetime, they pay more in taxes than they use in social welfare and health. Those arriving as children or youth, have even better labour market outcomes. From a purely economic perspective, refugees are a good investment for Canada.

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## Short Biography

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# Refugee Integration and Canadian Multiculturalism

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*Keywords* Canadian multiculturalism, refugee integration, religious diversity

## 1 Introduction

Refugee integration has become a clear and present challenge to the European Union in the past few years, as millions of displaced people fleeing wars and crisis were trying to reach safety in Europe by bus and boat. This is particularly true of Germany that in 2015 took in almost one million refugees. The challenge is made more daunting by the fact that almost all the new refugees are Muslim and non-Europeans. Although current domestic and international events may feed negative sentiments towards refugees in Europe, this is one reason why the Canadian model is needed even more.

Organized religious and ethnic communities play an important part in refugee integration in Canada, and they shoulder the responsibility for institutional adaption (in education, health, and social services). The arrival of refugees to Canadian points of entry and their integration have posed no serious problems (Adams, 2007; Breton, 1986; Canada Council for the Arts, 2006) comparable to those faced by some countries of Europe. I provide here a general description of the role organized religious and ethnic communities play in the refugee integration process.

## 2 How Canadian Integration Works?

Canada's brand of multiculturalism could be the preferred model for countries that receive large numbers of refugees and immigrants. The relevance of, and need for, Canadian-styled laws (the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, the *Canada Labour Code* "Labour Standards"<sup>1</sup>, etc.) is greater in an environment of increasing diversity such as in Germany.

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1 For example, Labour Standards under the *Canada Labour Code* would allow religious accommodation in the workplace (religious holidays, reasonable accommodation of certain religious observances at the workplace, etc.).

In a population of 35 million, Canada has a multitude of ethnic groups (almost 250), two official languages, 100 heritage languages (including German and Italian), and many Indigenous peoples. Over the past 100 years, Canada has been transformed from a predominantly white christian nation to a diverse ethno-religious mosaic. Already 20 per cent of the population belongs to visible minority groups, and almost 15 per cent are adherents of religious groups other than Christian (Anthony n.d.; CBC News, 2006; Clark 2006; Canadian Social Trends, 2006; Kymlicka, 2003; Pendakur & Cardozo, 2007; Bramadat & Seljak, 2005). The demographic diversity is more significant in large urban centers, where visible minorities make up 45 per cent in Vancouver and 47 pr cent in Toronto (Dench n.d.; Dib, 2006; Statistics Canada, 2011).

Critics of multiculturalism argue that refugees and immigrants gravitate to their ethno-cultural communities, and that these communities are highly segregated from “mainstream” society (Dib, 2008a). Critics also think that active promotion of multiculturalism by government leads to the edification of artificial communities, and thus to lesser national cohesion, and that segregation arises out of choice by refugees and immigrants and, therefore, represents a failure of integration. The critics also claim that multiculturalism, rather than promoting social cohesion, actually promotes separateness through social segregation<sup>2</sup>, and that segregation, once in place, may become permanent, as values of separateness are passed from parent to child. However, facts on the ground and longitudinal research show that such concerns by critics are unfounded (Dib, 2009; CIC, 2005).

In fact, organized ethno-religious communities are one of the reasons why refugee reception and integration are more successful in Canada compared to other countries. The Canadian model allows communities to organize since it does not endeavour to forcefully assimilate refugees and immigrants, but rather it recognizes the importance of diversity in social cohesion by constantly building common spaces and venues of voluntary integration. This approach is not about emphasizing separateness and divisiveness, but it is about respect for difference and inclusion of all Canadians – from colour and dress to customs and religion (Dib, 2006).

Public opinion polls, socio-economic studies, and evidence of greater integration demonstrate that Canada is adapting well to rising religious and ethnic diversity domestically and around the world. The high level of ethnic and religious concentrations in Canada does not equate with social exclusion. Some neighbourhoods of large cities do contain a high density of refugees and immigrants, however, this coincides with much more socially mixed residential landscapes. The kind of extreme isolation and social malaise characteristic of the French and American ghettos does not exist in Canada and the “isolationist narrative” that refugees gravitate to highly segregated enclaves is not supported by facts. On the contrary, there is evidence that the level of segregation for most minority groups did decline from 1991 to 2010 (Hiebert, Schuurman & Smith, 2007; Qadeer, 2006; Massey, Eggers, & Denton, 1994; Fong, 1996; Murdie, 1997; Walks & Bourne, 2006; Murdie, 1994; Smith, 2004). There are critical voices of Canadian multiculturalism, some of them are motivated by political agendas or a general anti-immigrant attitude, but others are correct in pointing

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2 Multiculturalism provides the right to cultural distinctiveness, but this is interpreted by critics as an invitation to remain separate from the “mainstream”.



out to potential problems of immigrant enclaves that are coupled with poverty, and how immigrants in the past two decades are not as successful economically as previous ones, etc. (Hasmath, 2011; Reitz, Phan, & Banerjee, 2009; Biles and Winnemore, 2006; Statistics Canada, 2013).

In each major Canadian city, there are definite areas of concentration of minority and immigrant groups. To suggest that immigrants and visible minority groups deliberately separate themselves from “mainstream” Canadian society is incorrect. Ethnic enclaves in Canada (e.g., *Little Italys* and *Chinatowns*) are a result of the history of refugee and immigrant settlement in general. Ethnic concentrations are the norm in Canada for centuries since new immigrants from Europe settled in areas where their own kin and countrymen settled before them (Buzzelli, 2001; Hiebert et al., 2007; Jimenez, 2007).

### 3 How does Refugee Integration Work?

Religious and ethnic concentrations in Canada have led to the birth of religious and ethnic organizations and associations that cater to the needs of their respective communities. And this phenomenon is at the crux of how new refugees succeed in finding quick support upon arrival.

Refugees come under many classes: “Government-Assisted Refugees”, “Privately Sponsored Refugees”, “Landed-in-Canada Refugees” and “refugee claimants” (Garcea, 2017). Their integration works its way down to the 10 provinces and two territories where social services are provided.

Refugees settle in the large cities, not only because they stay with their sponsors upon arriving in Canada, but also because they gravitate to organizations with which they share religious or ethnic affiliation. It is in the ten largest Canadian metropolitan areas (Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Ottawa-Gatineau, Calgary, Edmonton, Quebec City, Winnipeg, Hamilton, and London) that we see refugee integration at work. These cities host a multitude of religious and racial groups and their urban structure is essential to helping refugees in building social networks, enabling participation in the cultural and political life of the city, and maintaining their cultural and communal ties. In the past decade, close to 300,000 refugees have arrived in Canada of whom 75% settled in the three largest cities: Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2016).

A large number of government service outlets are available, ranging from online services and one-on-one support, to community, provincial and federal programs. They have multilingual workers who also come from a large variety of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Easy access to services such as public education, language training, housing, job training, and health, plays an important role in enhancing refugee integration. Most integration services are actually delivered by non-governmental organizations, some of which specialize in certain ethnic or religious groups. For example, when the federal government announced the reception of 15,000 Syrian refugees last fall, it was only a matter of a few days before a whole system of organizations and networks mobilized to receive them, including Muslim and Eastern Christian centers, Lebanese and Syrian associations, and a

myriad of academic and social institutions. The number of arriving Syrian refugees grew to 39,000 within months. Individual families provided accommodation to Syrian families, others collected clothes, and some private, even highly priced, educational establishments offered admission and classes to Syrian refugee children.

In addition to official programs and services, there are 400 refugee service providing organizations which have signed a contribution agreement with the federal government (resettlement programs provide grants and contributions to private contributions), and hundreds of other organizations who rely on provincial, municipal or on their own community's support. While the vast majority of organizations are mainstream with no link to specific religious or ethnic groups, some have such links, such as the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society, the Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, the Manitoba Inter-faith Immigration Council Welcome Place, the Jewish Child and Family Service, the Arab Community Centre of Toronto, the Ethiopian Association Toronto, the Toronto Chinese Community Services Association, the Vietnamese Association Toronto, the St. John YM-YWCA, YMCA Centre for Immigrant Programs. Most information about refugee assistance organizations can be found at this government portal: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/resettle-providers.asp>

## 4 How does Germany Compare?

Given Germany's history of immigration and citizenship, one cannot speak of multiculturalism in Germany in the same manner one would in the Canadian context. Yet, Germany compares well to Canada in many respects: (1) Germany has had a national integration plan since 2007, which includes an outlook on immigration (although it has no annual intake targets as does Canada); (2) Contrary to popular myth, although not historically a country of immigration, Germany is a welcoming country for Geneva Convention refugees, and has a lengthy experience in receiving and streamlining refugees into the various *Länder (federal states)*, at least since 1970; (3) Germany was open to millions of guest workers between 1960 and 1990; (4) Therefore, even without a prior design or a conscious effort, Germany already has a sizeable immigrant population, which is not far behind, proportionally, Canada and Australia (Statistics Canada, 2013, p. 7). It is in the small towns and villages of Germany where the integration challenge exists: how to distribute practices, programs and policies to the small towns and rural areas where negative attitudes towards foreigners prevail.

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# Access to Religious and Ethno-Cultural Communities in Germany

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*Keywords* muslim organizations, diaspora welfare, refugee integration

## 1 The Context of Ethnic and Religious Migrant Organizations in Germany

According to the *Migrant Integration Policy Index* (MIPEX, 2015), Germany is a country of immigration that affords to its migrants a high degree of freedom to organize themselves, regardless of nationality or resident status. This freedom of association has paved the way for a broad and diverse landscape of migrant organizations that have evolved over the past decades. At the same time, the approach in politics regarding migrant organizations has followed a *laissez-faire* model: On the one hand, migrants benefited from the freedom to organize themselves, but on the other hand, their organizations were hardly actively supported or systematically included in decision making – this all occurred against the background of a widespread rejection of a multicultural society (Peucker, 2016).

The situation has been changing since the beginning of the millennium, resulting in increased importance of migrant organizations. Several developments have contributed to the new situation. Government has been on the lookout for new corporate types of management; it has furthermore attempted to increase social cohesion by increasing volunteering and social involvement rather than state benefits. It is in this context that migrants and their organizations have drawn attention. At the same time, the establishment of an immigration and integration policy on the federal level, which culminated in the 2005 Immigration Act, and ensuing participation procedures (National Integration Plan, German Islam Conference) have enhanced the position of the migrant organizations. Similar developments have taken place in the German federal states and municipalities. Even though these entities partly do have a longer history of cooperation with migrant organizations, they have also increased or established systematic cooperation in recent years (Halm, 2015). On the institutional level – as a case in point for the endeavors of the federal states – Islamic religious education has been introduced in schools.<sup>1</sup>

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1 It needs to be noted that, in Germany, the federal states rather than the federal state are responsible for education.

The developments listed above have triggered and encouraged research into the infrastructures and services of migrant organizations, with the primary focus on Muslim organizations due to public perceptions that Islam and Muslims pose a particular challenge for integration.

## 2 Migrants' Involvement in Migrant Organizations and Mosques

Empirical social researchers wishing to collect data on migrants' involvement in civil society are faced with a particular difficulty, namely to achieve representative samples while carrying out interviews in the mother tongue(s) of the migrants. Without the means to interview migrants of the target population in their respective mother tongue, the probability that new arrivals (who are not yet integrated) will participate in the surveys is diminished. Thus, results regarding involvement in civil society may be upwardly biased. Admittedly, however, studies that include all necessary mother tongues of migrants are not realistic. Alternatively, studies may focus on particular regions of origin; thus, the number of necessary languages can be kept manageable. Research on migrants' involvement in civil society faces these methodological challenges. Nevertheless, certain general findings can be identified:

- The German Survey on Volunteering (Deutscher Freiwilligensurvey, FWS), commissioned by the Federal Government and conducted every 5 years, shows a somewhat lower rate of civic involvement among migrants than among non-migrants (60% vs. 73%). What is even more noticeable, however, is the extent to which migration background explains qualitative aspects of involvement and the intensity of involvement, respectively. The shorter the migrants' stay in Germany, the lower the level of involvement (Simonson et al., 2016). Findings exclusively pertaining to Turkish migrants confirm these results (Halm & Sauer, 2007).
- Socio-economic particularities that are linked to migration background also influence migrants' civic involvement. Yet, other factors may also explain the above results, amongst which including: lack of intercultural tolerance among German organizations, and the lack of structure regarding volunteering in migrant organizations.
- The lack of openness to multiculturalism and institutional support for migrant organizations have resulted in the establishment of a supplemental organizational structure – this structure primarily takes on tasks that are not offered by the host society or where cultural-sensitivity in the host society is missing. This explains why religion (typically Islam) is the field where migrants are involved most within migrant organizations (Halm, 2011).

Other studies examine the organizational structure of Muslims in Germany and the extent to which Muslims make use of religious services. Important studies in this regard are: (1) the study “Muslims in Germany” of the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) (Haug, Müssig, & Stichs, 2009); (2) the “Religion Monitor” of the Bertelsmann Stiftung (Mirbach, 2013; Halm & Sauer, 2015a), and (3) studies of the cluster of excellence “Religion and Politics” at Muenster University (Pollack, Müller, Rosta, & Dieler,



2016). These studies all contain indicators regarding migrants' participation in activities in Muslim communities. Thus, according to Mirbach (2013), 34% of Muslims attend the Friday prayer several times a month. However, research indicates that, when controlling for strength of religiosity, attendance of Friday prayer is more widespread among Muslims in Turkey (Halm & Sauer, 2015a) than in Germany. This may suggest that the infrastructure in Germany is not yet complete; alternatively, less social control may exist in Diaspora communities. Whatever the reason, it is highly likely that the distance between home and the nearest mosque is greater in Germany than in Turkey, and even more so in the country side – despite the existence of about 2,350 mosques in Germany (Halm, Sauer, Schmidt, & Sticks, 2012).

### 3 Cultural and Religious Migrant Organizations in Germany

Dietrich Thränhardt (MASSKS, 1999) was the first to take stock of migrant organizations in Germany, even though his research was restricted to North Rhine-Westphalia. He listed 2,400 migrant organizations. In 2005, Hunger produced the first count for Germany as a whole, based on the register of foreign associations (*Ausländervereinsregister*). 16,000 associations could be identified, amongst which 11,000 were of a Turkish background.

The goals of such organizations are diverse: They offer cultural- and language-sensitive services that are otherwise lacking; they provide information on the welfare and health system; they may also serve as a link to training institutions and the labour market; and finally and ideally, they speak up for the interests of their members and act as a point of contact for other local players (Gaitanides, 2003). Given the processes of migration and social integration, the landscape of migrant organizations is dynamically evolving (Halm, 2015), which means that new organizations emerge and old ones become redundant. This dynamic change poses problems for overview studies, though, and currently, there is no up-to-date and reliable overview study.

With the German Islam Conference, two rather up-to-date inventories were produced for the Muslim organizations, including the Alevi ones. However, these do not yet take into account recent developments in terms of refugee aid. Based on 2,350 mosque and *cemevis* (Alevi worship places) in Germany, Halm and colleagues (2012) provide an overview of the infrastructure and services offered in Germany. Among the non-religious services, it is in particular integration aid to community members that is prominent (e.g., social, educational, and health counseling). About one in three communities offers German language classes to children and teenagers; in general, it is found that the needs of children and teenagers are particularly taken care of. Boys and men make more frequent use of the social services provided by the communities than girls and women. The Alevi organizations are an exemption in this regard, reaching both gender groups equally well. The extent to which religious and charitable activities can be offered depends on the financial and personnel resources as well as the infrastructure of the respective organizations. Most of the organizations were set up in the 1980s and 1990s, which suggests that the needs of the Muslim migrants for infrastructures in Germany are by and large satisfied nowadays

(p. 64). Halm and Sauer (2015b) present in detail the social services of the Muslim organizations, including the Alevi ones, in Germany. Muslim and Alevi organizations offer leisure time activities, educational activities, care, and counselling on a large scale. At least 10,000 volunteers and 900 employees are involved, and at least 150,000 people regularly attend these activities and use the services. However, great challenges exist: The organizations need more expertise for the wide range of services and activities they offer. They need, as a minimum, more expert volunteers with suitable qualifications; it would be much better, though, to increase the employed workforce so that services can be professionalized and linked to the German funding and support structure (p. 106). The larger Muslim umbrella organizations, to which many communities belong, have meanwhile joined forces to develop concepts and exchange views regarding welfare provision. Furthermore, training courses are increasingly offered by the umbrella organizations to their communities (p. 99). In the context of the junior research group “Networking Religion: Civic Potentials of Religious Communities” at Bochum University, Nagel (2016) looked into activities and networks of different religious migrant organizations, including the social services they offer. On the one hand, he concluded there was great potential for cultural sensitivity, even transcending groups of origin; on the other hand, he found that these organizations were faced with massive structural difficulties when it came to providing social services. These difficulties include the lack of qualified volunteers or employed staff and challenges regarding political networking. Finally, Ceylan and Kiefer (2016) present a comprehensive overview of the history and situation of Muslim welfare activities in Germany, which also provides in detail qualitative tasks to further developing the organizations.

#### 4 Refugees: Potential Access to the Services Offered by Migrant Organizations

As of yet, there are no research findings for migrant organizations in general and mosques in particular regarding refugee aid. However, in light of what is known about the Muslim communities some assumptions can be formulated. Halm and colleagues (2012) show that two-thirds of the Muslim communities in Germany, including the Alevi ones, are dominated by persons of Turkish origin. At the same time, almost half are attended by three or more groups of different origins. This shows that the Turkish dominance does not prevent openness towards other groups. This makes it likely that activities and services will also be offered to people from the most important refugee countries, that is Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The findings from Halm and Sauer (2015) on the difficulties regarding an employed workforce and qualified volunteers suggest that Muslim communities can serve very well as a first point of contact, but without support they will not be able to systematically offer integration aid to refugees in the long term (Nagel, 2016).

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# Access to Resettlement Services in Canada

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*Keywords* refugee resettlement, government-assisted, refugees, refugee services

## 1 Resettlement Assistance Program

During their first year in Canada, Government-Assisted Refugees (GARs) are provided with immediate and essential supports for their most basic needs through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP), funded by the federal government department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

“The Refugee Resettlement Assistance Program provides immediate and essential support services and income support to assist in meeting refugees’ resettlement needs. Essential services are supported through contributions to service provider organizations. RAP services include, but are not limited to, reception services, assistance with accommodations, links to mandatory federal and provincial programs, life skills training, and orientation on financial and non-financial information.” (IRCC, 2016a).

## 2 Eligibility

Resettlement assistance is provided by the Government of Canada to Convention Refugees Abroad and, in some instances, to members of the Country of Asylum Class who have been identified as refugees with special needs and who have been admitted to Canada as government-assisted refugees. Refugees who claimed refugee protection from inside Canada are not eligible for this program.

Privately sponsored refugees are expected to receive this early resettlement and orientation support from their sponsoring group and thus are not eligible for the RAP services. They are eligible for all the services provided to permanent residents, such as language training, employment preparation and community programs.

Refugees who claim their status from within Canada are not eligible for any of the RAP and are also not eligible for most of the settlement services such as language training and employment preparation. Support for them is sometimes provided by independent local organizations and once they have been granted a work permit they may access some other government-funded supports.

### 3 Service Providers

The government contracts not-for-profit organizations, also known as Service Provider Organizations (SPOs), to provide orientation and resettlement support for Government-Assisted Refugees. Many of these organizations are immigrant settlement agencies that also provide services for all categories of permanent residents. While all Resettlement Assistance Program providers fulfill the basic contract with the federal government, there are some variations in the way that they achieve the outcomes.

Immigrant settlement agencies are typically not-for-profit organizations that apply for government funding to provide a range of services for newly arrived permanent residents. Most of these organizations only work with immigrants and do not have other activities or client groups. Some of the organizations are multi-service, for example providing language training and employment preparation and community engagement programs. Others may have only one type of focus such as employment preparation.

The basic RAP includes 17 hours of very specific service delivery over a six-week period. SPOs that also deliver general settlement services often link those services to the RAP, to supplement and enhance early orientation and support. There is also provision made for an additional five hours of service for those with particular special needs. In these cases, as well SPOs may use general settlement funding to support such clients and more adequately meet their needs.

Currently there are approximately 37 Resettlement Assistance Program providers across the country, in the larger urban centres in all provinces. The government makes sure that Government-Assisted Refugees are first sent to cities with RAP providers, though the Government-Assisted Refugees are free to move anywhere in the country after their arrival. Some larger RAP providers have developed a “hub and spoke” model, where they sub-contract smaller local organizations to deliver the RAP in the community, as is done in the city of Vancouver. During the Syrian Initiative of 2015-16 there were some creative and extraordinary approaches used to manage the large numbers of arrivals, but these were still within the parameters of the RAP (Korntheuer, 2016; Hynie, 2014).

All RAP service providers are responsible for:

- Meeting refugees at the airport
- Arranging for temporary accommodation
- Helping to find permanent accommodation
- Helping to set up the household with basic items
- Providing orientation to life in Canada
- Delivering the income support provided by the federal government (IRCC, 2016b).

These services are supported by interpretation services when needed.

## 4 Temporary Housing

Many Resettlement Assistance Program providers have their own temporary accommodations for Government-Assisted Refugees. These Settlement Houses typically accommodate several families at a time, using the location as the base for orientation services and offering clients the opportunity to prepare their own meals. Other organizations use hotels for temporary housing and arrange for clients to receive vouchers for meals. In all cases, the goal is to move clients into permanent accommodation within a few weeks of their arrival (Hyndman, 2011).

## 5 Service Delivery

In many Service Providing Organizations that deliver the Resettlement Assistance Program, staff work together using a case-management approach to serve newly arrived Government-Assisted Refugees. All staff support clients to gradually build confidence and independence (Hynie, 2014).

During the first few weeks, staff meet with new clients daily. RAP staff welcome Government-Assisted Refugees at the airport and help them move into temporary accommodation.

During this time, staff assess needs and assist clients with immediate issues such as:

- finding and moving into initial accommodation and providing support with housing application process, Tenancy Act and apartment living
- banking and budgeting
- household and grocery shopping
- access to health care
- referral to some internal and external services and programs (Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) assessment, Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP))

Resettlement Assistance Program staff continue to meet with clients frequently and regularly after they move into permanent accommodation (Hynie, 2014). Staff provide the following ongoing support:

- orientation and practical support in areas of daily life such as: personal and child safety, apartment and city living, life in Canada, shopping, getting to know the neighbourhood, public transportation, health and hospital orientation and accessing community resources
- orientation on broader topics related to life in Canada such as government programs, community resources, rights and responsibilities, education system and family matters
- problem solving about settlement challenges that arise and advocacy on systemic issues that may become barriers to successful settlement

- links to and assistance with accessing essential services and government programs, such as setting up a Social Insurance Number, Canadian Child Tax Benefit Program, and provincial health insurance programs

In addition, Resettlement Assistance Program staff link Government-Assisted Refugees to other immigrant settlement services, whether within their own organizations or elsewhere. These include:

- Community Connection for recreation and social programs
- Family Support programs
- Employment services
- English language assessment and learning programs
- Immigrant, Refugee & Citizenship Canada (IRCC) Other Immigrant, Refugee programs

RAP staff also link their clients to general community services & programs such as:

- public schools
- programs for youth and children.
- dentist, ophthalmologist, other specialized health services (Hynie, 2014)

## 6 Special Needs

Government-Assisted Refugees with complex health or settlement needs may receive additional support such as:

- case management and targeted supports
- specialized and individualized orientation to clients with high settlement/health needs
- referral/linkage to appropriate supports and resources
- case conferences with government institutions, community organizations and relevant service providers
- access to support services such as counselling (including crisis), accompaniment, interpretation, transportation, home visits and other special resources
- links to organizations providing specialized services and supports to special needs populations

Throughout the period of the Resettlement Assistance Program and for the first year in Canada, resettlement and settlement staff aim to encourage and support newly arrived Government-Assisted Refugees to become comfortable and independent in their new country. When the Government-Assisted Refugees are able to support themselves, or after the first year, whichever comes first, the federal government's financial support ends. The Government-Assisted Refugees are still eligible to use general settlement services, such as language training and employment services. If after one year a GAR is not yet financially self-sufficient, he or she may apply for provincial social assistance, which is approximately the same amount of money he or she was receiving for the first year (Korntheuer, 2016).



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# Access to Resettlement Services in Germany

## Language Options for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Germany

*Maria Prem*

*Keywords* language learning, access to education and labour market, asylum seekers, rejected claimants

### 1 Introduction

In recent years, significant efforts have been made to integrate refugees and asylum seekers into the German labour market and society. Employment readiness and sufficient language skills are two key competencies for labour market integration and participation in society. Learning German is fundamental to achieve social integration. It is, hence, one of the main issues addressed in this contribution.

As a rule, access to the German labour market is provided three months after entry into Germany. Standard German language programs contain admission restrictions for participants, for example only certain groups of refugees have access, while the majority of the refugee population remains excluded.

Access to regular language programs, such as the so-called government-funded integration courses (*Integrationsklassen*) is strictly reserved for refugees holding a residence permit and to groups with high prospects to stay in Germany, such as claimants from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Eritrea and Somalia (BAMF, 2015). In order to meet the needs of those who may otherwise fall through the cracks of state and federally funded programs, some German municipalities have established language classes for refugees, regardless of their legal status and country of origin. In rural areas refugees with uncertain prospects to stay may have access to language classes organized by the municipalities or to language support groups offered by volunteers.

In Germany language classes are offered and arranged on four levels of governance.

1. The federal level
2. The level of federal states
3. The local municipalities and local authorities
4. The level of local volunteers organizations

## 2 Language Classes Funded on Federal Level by the Federal Agency of Migration and Refugees (BAMF)

### 2.1 The Integration Course (Integrationskurse)

Target groups of the state funded integration courses include: i) Individuals with unlimited residence permit; ii) Individuals with temporary residence permit; iii) Since 2015, asylum seekers with high prospects to remain in Germany, if sufficient course spaces are available.

On the federal level the Federal Agency of Migration and Refugees (BAMF) offers integration courses for persons with residential permits as well as for asylum seekers with a high prospect to remain in Germany. This, however, is limited to individuals from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Eritrea, and Somalia. For the most part, asylum seekers face high bureaucratic barriers to gain access to those classes. They require permission by the authorities to join the course. Admission is granted by institutions such as the Federal Agency of Migration and Refugees (BAMF), the local immigration offices, or local public employment centres. Refugees are obliged to attend these integration courses. Not attending the course may lead to a temporary cutback in receiving social benefits (Bundesdrucksache 18/8829, 2016; Schammann & Kühn, 2016).

Each integration course comprises a comprehensive language course and an orientation course. The general integration course makes up 600 units or 900 units in case it includes a literacy class of 300 units.

The *orientation course* includes 100 units and covers topics on:

- The German legal system, history and culture
- Rights and obligations in Germany
- Ways of co-existing in society
- Important values in German society

There are also specific classes for special target groups, such as women-only classes or classes for young adults (from 16 – 27 years) (BAMF, 2016).

Participants take intermediate exams during the language course and finalize with the German language test for immigrants (DTZ), as well as the standard federal test for the orientation course. A successfully completed DTZ on level B1 according to the Common European Reference Framework for Languages is required when applying for permanent residency in Germany. For those individuals receiving social benefits courses are free of charge. Individuals with employment must pay a contribution of 1.95 EURO per 45 minutes to participate, unless they are able to proof their social indigence (BAMF, 2016).

The courses are carried out by local service providers. The Federal Agency of Migration and Refugees provides an overview on local integration-course-providers on its website. Further information on the complete range of courses available is given by local immigration offices, employment agencies, job centres or relevant local service institutions (BAMF, 2016).

## 2.2 German for Professional Purposes (Berufsbezogene Sprachförderung nach ESF BAMF Programm und gem. §45a AufenthG)

Target groups for these government-funded language learning supports are individuals who require an adequate proficiency in German to seek better job opportunities. These include:

- New immigrants, including asylum seekers with high prospect to stay
- Immigrants and persons with a so-called immigration background (for example second generation immigrants). Nationality and date of immigration are not important, but a valid work permit is necessary

Conditions for government-funded language courses include:

- Participants must be registered as unemployed and be receiving social benefits.
- An integration course should be completed since the courses for professional purposes usually start from a higher language level
- The compulsory schooling requirement must be fulfilled

Asylum seekers with uncertain prospects to stay and rejected claimants with the so-called tolerated status (*Duldung*) will be excluded from these courses as of January 2017.

The course combines language training, professional skill-building and the option to learn more about a trade or profession through placement in the labour market. The program is directed to individuals who wish to improve their professional language skills as well as their chances on the job market. Classes are free of charge for those receiving social benefits. Employed individuals also have the legal right to attend the program, however, they must cover a proportion of the course fee. The German-language lessons, with the skill-building module and the work placement included, can comprise up to 730 lesson units (six months or 12 months in the case of a part-time courses) (BAMF, 2016; Robert Bosch Stiftung, 2015).

## 2.3 Services for Refugees by the Federal Employment Agency

The Federal Employment Agency offers another language learning support option. Target groups for these courses include:

- Asylum seekers with high prospects to stay in Germany
- Rejected asylum claimants, who still have access to the labour market.

These programs like *Fit in Arbeit* (Fit for Work), *Perspektiven für Flüchtlinge* (Perspectives for refugees) prepare refugees with valid access to the labour market to be fit for vocational training and employment. This also includes the task to assess skills and competencies in order to develop professional perspective for the clients. Courses include three or four months of labour market oriented language classes, information on the German labour market, job orientation, coaching and a six-week internship. After finishing the internship participants take part in job application training and receive support in finding adequate employment (Braun & Lex, 2016).

Employment agencies do not provide literacy programs or basic German language classes. The employment agencies mainly provide programs for vocational orientation

including instruction on job oriented language skills. Hence, asylum seekers and refugees with little or no knowledge of German are not the appropriate target group for these programs.

### 3 The Level of Federal States: Initial Orientation and German Language Support for Asylum-seekers in the Case of Bavaria

Language course initiatives vary state by state in Germany. For example, in Bavaria and other federal states asylum seekers are entitled to attend courses on literacy and initial orientation as well as to language classes that focus on comprehensive and communicative skills (*Erstorientierung und Deutsch lernen für Asylbewerber*).

The Bavarian State Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Family and Integration has developed a curriculum on “Initial orientation and learning German for asylum-seekers” in order to support asylum seekers during their initial arrival period in Bavaria. Courses include general information and orientation on Germany and basic information on societal values, as well as basic German language skills for daily life situations. The curriculum comprises a total of ten modules with 300 units in total (Bayerische Staatsregierung, 2016).

Unfortunately, the number of courses cannot meet the needs of all the newly arriving asylum seekers in Bavaria. As a result, in the past, most of the new arrivals never received the opportunity to attend these type of classes. Instead, people were trapped in inactivity at their camps and mass accommodations.

### 4 Municipality Level: Using Munich as an Example in Bavaria

It is necessary to differentiate the situation of refugees in Germany in relation to their legal status and their prospect to stay in Germany. Access to language and educational programs and access to the labour market varies by legal status and country of origin. Individuals who have access to the standard services of the federal government include:

- Persons with temporary or permanent residential titles
- Persons who hold temporary permission to stay and whose residence is anticipated to be lawful and permanent (i.e. people from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Eritrea, Somalia)

Individuals who are partially restricted or even totally excluded from language and education programs and the labour market include:

- Rejected asylum seekers who, due to certain circumstances, cannot be deported to their countries of origin; For example, if they lack identity documents
- Individuals from so-called designated secure countries of origin (e.g. West-Balkan-States, Ghana, Senegal) (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2016); (Asylgesetz, Anlage II zu § 29a, 2016)

On the local level, municipalities, such as the City of Munich, are interested in offering integration and settlement support even if access to state funded programs is denied. With these programs municipalities hope to support social peace and cohesion as well as to fulfill needs of the labour market. Policy development on the local level might follow a more humanitarian paradigm to forced migrants than the surrounding federal state (Crage, 2009). Since a large proportion of refugees are excluded from educational opportunities and language classes for legal reasons, the City of Munich offers intensive German classes to all refugees regardless of their country of origin or legal status. The City is addressing a gap by providing educational opportunities to those disadvantaged groups in order to support their integration into the urban Munich society, to maintain their employability, to avoid processes of disqualification and to promote peaceful coexistence among all sectors of the population. Munich's policy framework is based on the intercultural Integration Concept, which, among other things, aims to promote educational equity for all immigrants and asylum seekers (Landeshauptstadt München, 2016).

Courses funded by the City of Munich are comparable to integration courses regarding course content and duration. They range from basic literacy to courses for advanced language levels for those with a higher educational background or other qualifications. There are also specific classes for younger asylum seekers. These courses are free of charge for all participants.

## 5 Courses by Local Volunteer Groups and Local Refugee Organizations

In addition to the courses funded by the municipality, there are also part-time language programs offered by local organizations. As a rule, these classes are held as in-house courses. They are offered once or twice a week only, free of charge, and held at the refugee camps or welcome centres.

Programs run by local volunteer groups and local refugee organizations are often the only source of language support for newcomers and asylum seekers with uncertain residence status in rural areas, since other programs are not available or regular programs are not accessible for these individuals.

## 6 Conclusion

Access to education and the labour market for asylum seekers and so-called tolerated (*Duldung*) persons is highly complex. A high number of new language programs have been implemented for asylum seekers and refugees in Germany since 2015. Nonetheless, programs do not always correspond with the individual needs and educational background of refugees. They also do not take into consideration regional differences, for example availability of other programs or public transport options to access educational institu-

tions in remote rural areas. Consequently, some refugees remain highly discriminated and marginalized in their access to settlement services such as language programs, educational opportunities and support for entrance to the labour market.

A main challenge for the municipality in Munich, therefore, remains to bring all language programs and all partners and institutions involved on various levels of governance together. At the same time, the individual agency of refugees as well as their individual needs should not be neglected. This, however, requires a coordinated plan for interaction between all players to establish sound and permanent settlement services for all newcomers and refugees.

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## *Short Biography*

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# Structural Context for Refugee Claimants in Canada

*Christina Clark-Kazak*

*Keywords* asylum seekers, refugee claimants, refugee determination process

## 1 Introduction

This section will focus on the structural opportunities and constraints for people who are claiming refugee protection in Canada, but whose status has not yet been determined. In this paper, “refugee claimants” or simply “claimants” are used to describe people in these circumstances. Because these individuals do not yet have formal refugee status, and thus are not eligible to apply for permanent residence, they face particular structural constraints which are unique to their immigration status. I focus on these here, but do not include more general barriers that will be experienced by all categories of refugees or immigrants, such as language barriers. Specific attention is paid to education, housing, social assistance and employment. Health issues are already covered in the contribution by Michaela Hynie.

## 2 A Brief Overview of the Refugee Determination Process

Before addressing the structural issues relating to refugee claimants, this section will provide a brief overview of the refugee determination process in Canada, since it has implications for claimants’ eligibility for services and programs, as well as the length of time they are without formal refugee status. Here, it is important to note that refugees who have made claims in Canada have historically outnumbered both PSRs and GARs, while in recent years the numbers have been reduced due to increased interdiction practices, as demonstrated in the table below:

*Table 1* Number of refugees (per year)

Category	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Government-assisted refugees	7,424	7,326	7,572	7,295	7,425				153	177
Privately sponsored refugees	2,976	3,337	3,588	3,512	5,036	7,264	7,363	5,412	5,661	7,573
Blended visa office-referred refugees						4,833	5,584	4,225	6,269	4,560
Refugees landed in Canada	19,934	15,883	11,696	6,995	7,206	3,562	4,183	4,856	3,712	3,227
Refugee dependants	5,441	5,953	5,098	4,057	3,182	9,038	10,743	8,586	8,036	7,749
Total Refugees	35,775	32,499	27,954	21,859	22,849	24,697	27,873	23,079	23,831	23,286

*Source:* IRCC, as cited in Schwartz (2015)

People may make an inland refugee claim in Canada at any point of entry when they arrive in Canada, or, after arrival, at an inland office of Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) or the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA). These are the two federal government departments responsible for immigration and border protection, respectively. The IRCC or CBSA official will determine whether or not the claim is eligible to be referred to the Refugee Protection Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB), an independent tribunal.

The most common reasons why a claim is deemed not eligible for referral to the IRB are:

- The claimant has been recognized as a Convention refugee by another country to which she/he can return
- The claimant has already been granted protected person status in Canada
- The claimant arrived via the Canada-United States border. Under the Safe Third Country Agreement, signed by Canada and the US in 2002 and in effect since 2004, refugee claimants are required to make their refugee claim in the first country they arrive in – the US or Canada – unless they qualify for an exception, mostly related to family unity
- The claimant is deemed inadmissible to Canada because of security issues, criminality or human rights violations
- The claimant made a previous refugee claim that was found to be ineligible for referral to the IRB
- The claimant made a previous refugee claim that was rejected by the IRB or,
- The claimant abandoned or withdrew a previous refugee claim.

Claimants whose claims are referred to the IRB must complete a Basis of Claim (BOC) form. This document asks questions about the claimants' identity, family history and immigration trajectory, as well as the reasons why they are claiming refugee protection in Canada. All members of the family, including children, must complete their own BOC form.

Claimants receive a *Notice to Appear for a Hearing* before the IRB. The government has set the following timelines for hearings, which vary depending on whether or not the claimant is from a designated country of origin (DCO)<sup>1</sup> and where the claim was made:

*Table 2* Timeline for refugee determination hear

Country of origin	Claim at inland office	Claim at port of entry
From DCO	No later than 30 days after claim sent to IRB	No later than 45 days after claim sent to IRB
Not from DCO	No later than 60 days after claim sent to IRB	No later than 60 days after claim sent to IRB

Hearings usually last half a day and are conducted in private by an IRB board member in French or English. Interpretation is provided free of charge. Claimants are not required to be represented by legal counsel, but may choose to do so at their own cost. Some provincial and territorial governments in Canada provide legal aid for refugee claimants, but this is inconsistent across the country and often insufficient (Belluz, 2012).

After the hearing, the claimant will receive a written *Notice of Decision*. If the claim is accepted, the claimant may apply for permanent resident status. If the claim is rejected, eligible claimants may appeal to the Refugee Appeal Division within 15 days of receiving the decision. Those who do not have the right to appeal<sup>2</sup> or whose appeals are unsuccessful can ask the Federal Court to review the decision and ask for a stay of removal.

### 3 Access to Education for Refugee Claimants

In Canada, education is under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, while local school boards have considerable autonomy over setting admission requirements and procedures. As a result, access to education for refugee claimants varies by school district, province and territory. Despite this diversity, all provinces and territories require children over the age of 5 or 6 and under the age of 16 to 18 to attend school. Moreover, it is illegal in

1 Under Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), the Minister of Citizenship may list certain countries as a "designated country of origin" (DCO) because it does not normally produce refugees. Claimants from DCOs have expedited hearing timelines and were not allowed access to the Refugee Appeal Division until recently. On July 23, 2015, the Federal Court of Canada ruled that denying claimants from the DCO access to the Refugee Appeal Division is a violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

2 The following claimants do not have a right of appeal: a) If the refugee claim was started before December 15, 2012b) the claim was withdrawn or abandoned; c) the IRB determined that the claim had "no credible basis" or was "manifestly unfounded"; d) the claimant came to Canada from a safe third country – currently the United States. Previously DCO claimants were not allowed to appeal, but this has been overturned by the 2016 federal court decision.

Canada to deny school admission to any child because of their immigration status or that of their parents.

However, children claiming refugee status in Canada still face particular barriers accessing primary and secondary schooling. First, some school districts attempt to charge international student fees for refugee claimants. Second, officials from the Canadian Border Services Agency have, in some cases, apprehended on school property, children whose refugee claims had been rejected (Migrant Mothers Project, 2014). In response, some school boards have implemented “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policies, which prohibit school officials from requiring immigration documents from students.

Post-secondary education is beyond the financial reach of many refugee claimants, who are charged international student tuition many times the domestic rate. Because they are not permanent residents, they do not qualify for financial assistance and loans offered by provincial and territorial governments.

## 4 Access to Social Assistance for Refugee Claimants

Refugee claimants receive no special income assistance, but may be entitled to provincial and territorial social assistance, like other residents. People whose refugee claims have been rejected may still be eligible for social assistance if they have appealed the decision and/or are awaiting removal from Canada. However, under the Omnibus Budget Bill (Bill C-43), which received Royal Assent on 16 December 2014, amendments to the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act allow provinces to deny social assistance to refugee claimants, by imposing minimum residency requirements (CCR, 2015). Although Bill C-43 is now law, the measures will not take effect unless a province decides to impose a residency requirement for refugee claimants. At the time of writing, no province had done so.

## 5 Work Permits

Claimants from DCO countries are not allowed to apply for permits until their refugee claim is accepted or 180 days have passed since their claim was referred to the IRB. For non-DCO claimants, most can apply to IRCC for a work permit once their claim has been referred to the IRB. They must submit with the work permit application evidence that they have completed their medical examinations. Non-DCO claimants applying for a work permit must demonstrate that they cannot live without public assistance. If they have applied for, or are receiving social assistance, they must also submit this information with their employment authorization application.

In some cases, people whose refugee claims have been rejected may still be able to obtain a work permit if CBSA is unable to remove them from Canada due to lack of travel documents or unwillingness of the country of origin to admit them.

## 6 Housing Issues

Refugees in all categories – whether PSRs, GARs, BVORs or refugee claimants – report the greatest difficulties in finding housing amongst all immigration groups (Wayland, 2007, p. 5). While resettled refugees receive some support from government and/or private sponsorship groups, refugee claimants rely on a small number of claimant-specific housing facilities run primarily by non-profit organizations in large urban centres, where rent is high. These include, for example, Matthew House, Sojourn House and Romero House in Toronto and Kinbrace in Vancouver. However, the demand far surpasses the supply. In a survey of immigrants in Toronto, almost 51% of refugee claimants reported dissatisfaction with their housing, compared with 29% of sponsored refugees (Preston, Murdie & Murnaghan, 2007). A follow-up qualitative study confirmed the difficulties that refugee claimants faced in securing adequate housing, including the necessity of sharing with people other than immediate family and living in very small units (Murdie, 2008).

## 7 Concluding Take-away Points

While interdiction practices and laws such as the Safe Third Country Agreement have reduced the number of people claiming refugee status in Canada, they still comprise an important population, which faces particular challenges while awaiting their claims to be heard. DCO claimants are especially disadvantaged due to restrictions on their right to work, as well as expedited hearings. While resettled refugees are eligible for permanent residence upon arrival in Canada, claimants must wait until their cases are heard, with consequences for their ability to access post-secondary education, satisfactory housing and employment authorization. Recent legislation allows provinces to impose waiting periods for refugee claimants before they can access social assistance, but no province has yet done so.

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# Unaccompanied Minors in the German Context

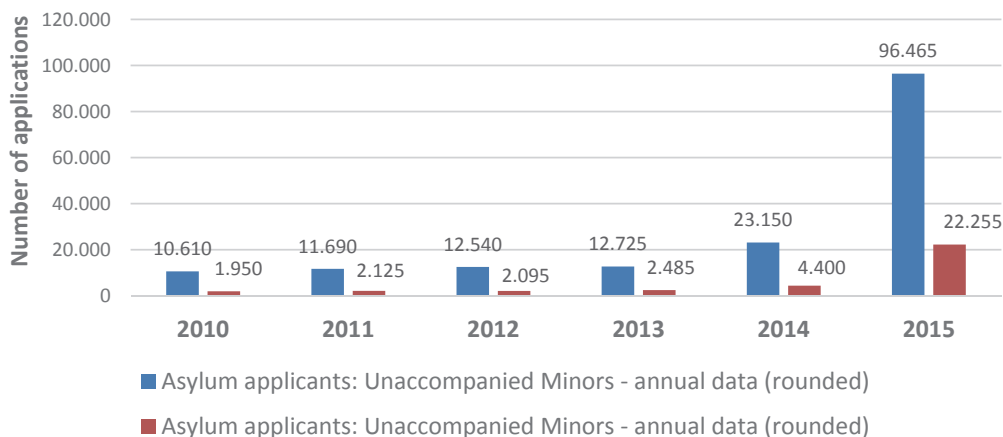
*Nora Hahn-Hobeck*

*Keywords* unaccompanied minors, entry conditions, clearing process

## 1 Some Basic Facts

The number of persons seeking asylum in European Union, and especially in Germany, has increased significantly over the last 5 years (Eurostat, 2016). The number of applications filed by unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UAM) has also risen significantly, from about 2,100 applications in 2011 to more than circa 22,000 in 2015, i.e. over ten-fold (see figure 1). Unaccompanied Minors (UAM) are defined as “children (as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child) from third countries who arrive on the territory of a EU Member State unaccompanied by an adult responsible for them, or who are left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of a Member State” (EMN, 2015). The main countries of origin for UAM in Germany include Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia and Iraq. In general, there are more male than female UAM registered in the German Youth Welfare system (about 8:1). Thus, the vast majority of UAM are boys between sixteen and seventeen years old, and only a small number of children and juveniles are under the age of sixteen. While civil wars, ethnic or political persecution affects people of all age groups, there are additional, child-specific reasons young people flee their native state. These include forced marriage, recruitment of child soldiers, female genital mutilation, forced prostitution and forced child labour (Müller, 2014). The following paragraphs outline the conditions under which UAM are received and the most relevant structures for UAM within the German Youth Welfare System.

## Asylum applications - Unaccompanied Minors



Notes. The data is from the statistical office of the European Union (Eurostat, 2016).

Figure 1 Number of asylum applications: Unaccompanied Minors in the EU and Germany from 2010 to 2015

### 1.1 The Legal Framework

The general legal framework for the protection, reception and support of UAM in Germany consists of the UN convention on the Rights of the Child, the European Convention on Human Rights, the Geneva Convention and several European guidelines specified by domestic German law. Within this framework, the German Social Code (Book VIII) is of particular relevance, upon which the German Youth Welfare System is based (Seckler, 2014). However, the issue of UAM spans between two antithetic fields of law: On the one hand, social law, which seeks to provide support, protection and pro-active measures of social integration for refugees as a vulnerable group, and on the other hand, asylum or residential law, which tends to be restrictive and limits the rights of refugees. Interactions between these two systems pose difficulties (Schwarz & Tamm, 2010). Additionally, the abovementioned German Social Code (Book VIII) regulates the German Youth Welfare system as a federal law, but the procedures for the reception of minors are not well defined so that they may be interpreted differently in different federal states (i.e. the federal states within Germany).

In light of the significant increase of UAM over the last few years and the resulting administrative overload in the federal states, the legal framework has been modified and new legislation has been adopted. For instance, the federal “law on the improvement of the accommodation, material provisions and care of foreign children and adolescents”, was implemented November 1, 2015, following an accelerated legislative procedure. It now

comprehensibly regulates the distribution of UAM to each state on a federal level according to the *Königsteiner Schlüssel*, which is a quota system (BMFSFJ, 2015).

## 1.2 Entry Conditions

To enter legally into German federal territory, non-EU foreigners, including UAM, need a valid passport (Müller, 2014). Many juveniles cannot provide personal documents due to the lack of administrative structures in their countries of origin, loss during their long journeys, theft and other mishaps. Thus, when they are registered by the police in German federal territory, the entry is designated as illegal. If the minors can reasonably claim to be unaccompanied and are under the age of eighteen, they may be granted a protected status. They will then be handed over to the responsible Youth Welfare Office or Aliens Department for further handling, irrespective of their actual legal status.

## 1.3 Taking into Care and Aspects of the Clearing Process

As a first step, the responsible Youth Welfare Office has to take the UAM into care according to § 42 of the Social Code Book VIII and provide accommodation in a “clearing house”, as well as provide for the most essential daily needs. After the often traumatic hardships of their flight, the clearing process should also serve as a recovery phase before further steps are taken (Riedelsheimer, 2010).

In parallel, a legal guardian is appointed by the local family court, without any delay, in order to secure the proper representation for the UAM in important decision-making processes, such as the filing of an application for asylum (DIJUF, 2010; Müller, 2014; Parusel, 2009). Most of the legal guardians from the Youth Welfare Office are confronted with more than fifty cases concurrently. There are also honorary guardians, such as an adult relative of the minor or a non-familial related third person. However, a recent survey by the Federal Association for UAM (BUMF) shows that the appointment of a guardianship can be delayed by up to three months. Consequently, effective access to integration is also delayed as the application for asylum and the validation of residency are prerequisites for beginning the process of social and legal integration (BUMF, 2016; Meißner, 2010).

Since November 1, 2015, the measure of “provisional taking into care” has been introduced, which features a first basic clearing process in so-called “clearing-houses”. Here the most important aspects of the youth life situation are registered, such as his or her age, psychological and physical condition, as well as the location of relatives. These personal data are assessed and filed by the respective youth welfare office, the results being processed to the administration on the level of the Federal states (Esenhorst & Noske, 2015).

Early assessment of a minor’s age by the administration is essential for all further steps, since it has direct consequences for the formal asylum procedure, as well as the more practical aspects of care and accommodation. If no relevant personal documents exist, the person’s age is assessed by purely visual inspection, detailed anamnestic conversations, dental examinations or x-ray examinations of the carpometacarpal bones (Britting-Reimer, 2015; Nowotny, Eisenberg & Mohnike, 2014; Riedelsheimer, 2010).

If no obstructive reasons emerged in the initial clearing phase, for example physical or mental issues, the allocation of a minor to a subsequent facility is processed on the federal level with the intention of always considering the best interests of the minor (Espenhorst & Noske, 2015). His or her educational needs, legal representation, asylum process options or other aspects of crucial interest to the UAM are again checked during the ongoing clearing process, which may last from eight weeks to six months or longer.

After the “taking into care phase”, UAM are placed in an adequate follow-up accommodation such as with a foster family or in different types of residential facilities (§ 33 and 34 of the Social Code Book VIII). There are residential facilities with round-the-clock support and also residential groups in which the adolescents are more independent. This is decided by the Youth Welfare Office by considering the level of development of the adolescents.

## 2 Application for Asylum

As the formal application for asylum is crucial for the further administration and wellbeing of an UAM, its prospects and conditions are carefully considered by the minor and his or her guardian, a lawyer and a representative of the Youth Welfare accommodation where the adolescent is living. The application for asylum is submitted to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). A detailed questionnaire has to be filed personally at a branch office of the BAMF. After the BAMF has determined whether the minor may be considered as a refugee in the sense of the Asylum Procedure Act, the most important part of the asylum procedure follows: the personal direct hearing of the adolescent during an interview with a “specially-commissioned decision-maker” (Müller, 2014). There are some alternatives to a formal asylum application such as a formal residence permit, an exceptional leave to remain or subsidiary protection (Espenhorst & Noske, 2015; Müller, 2014; Seckler, 2014).

## 3 Access to Education and the Labour Market

As a fundamental principle of the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Convention for the Rights of the Child, access to education has to be granted for everybody. In Germany, this is accompanied by compulsory school attendance by federal law. Again, federalism plays an important role: the implementation of the educational mandate is in the responsibility of the respective federal state. Thus, the means and chances of access to education and vocational training for UAM vary between federal states (Golla, 2013). Also, the actual beginning of compulsory school attendance for UAM ranges from a couple of weeks after their registration in Germany to several months. This often leads to a delayed learning of the German language and of general schooling, which are considered to be quintessential for the integration of the minors.

The living conditions of UAM in Germany are often better than the ones of accompanied minors, which are usually accommodated in shared facilities and are not supported to

the same extent by the youth welfare system. This leads to a more unstable learning environment and to less individual support by educators, legal guardians or other care persons (Golla, 2013; UNICEF, 2016; UNICEF, 2014; Boketta & Sachser, 2012).

Decisive factors for the successful education of young refugees are their age upon arrival, the variety of school levels and types in the vicinity of their place of residence, and the often rudimentary German language skills. Therefore, the focus in the beginning is on German language courses. There are several cases in which no literacy and basic education of the minors had taken place as the minors were absent from school for long periods of time or had not entered into the school system in their country of origin.

UAM up to the age of 15 are usually integrated into the general school system, starting in the so-called middle school. After some special training and preparation in transition classes, they join the regular classes (Korntheuer & Anderson, 2014). Sixteen to 18 year olds attend language courses or a vocational preparation program at a vocational school. The latter serves as a preparation for a secondary education degree. Additionally, a vocational integration program has been introduced, in order to secure further educational support (Breithecker, 2012).

Juvenile minors can start the practical part of their vocational program either after their stay in Germany has exceeded three months or even from their first day in Germany on, depending on their residential status (Bauer & Schreyer, 2016). By contrast, employment in the regular labor market is governed by specific provisions of the German Residence Act and the German Asylum Act. Employment is possible only after three months since the beginning of the asylum procedure (§ 61 German Asylum Act). For persons who have already been granted asylum or who are entitled to subsidiary protection, these regulations are not applicable and they may freely apply for all jobs.

## 4 Access to the Healthcare System

The right to health for minors as provided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is to be respected in Germany at its highest standard. Its implementation is warranted by customized early prevention examinations for UAM. Upon their arrival in Germany, a physical, psychological and bio-social examination is performed and a personal history is taken by a local pediatrician. A personalized immunization plan is then provided. The access to health care is closely tied to the residence status and the need for assistance. As soon as formal assistance by youth welfare is granted in accordance with the German Social Code Book XII, the UAM must also be given access to the public health system (Müller, 2014).

Developmental disorders and posttraumatic stress disorders are supposed to be diagnosed as early as possible and treated directly (Nowotny, 2015). Treatment of medical diseases has to be performed without discrimination of any kind such as religion, sexual orientation, age, ethnic group etc., and it should be of the same quality as available to the domestic public (Müller, 2014). However, psychosomatic and psychological treatment of UAM is of major concern to all local and communal authorities as they suffer from

insufficient capacities, lack of translators and training materials resulting in long waiting periods for the minors.

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## Short Biography

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# List of Abbreviations

AsylbLG	Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz (German Asylum Seekers Benefits Law <sup>1</sup> )
AsylG	Asylgesetz (German Law of Asylum <sup>1</sup> )
BA	Bundesagentur für Arbeit (German Federal Employment Agency)
BAfF eV.	Bundesweite Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Psychosozialen Zentren für Flüchtlinge und Folteropfer (German Council of Psychosocial Centres for Refugees and Torture Victims <sup>1</sup> )
BAMF	Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees)
BGBI	Bundesgesetzblatt (German Federal Law Gazette)
BMBF	Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (German Federal Ministry of Education and Research)
BMFSFJ	Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend (German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth)
BMI	Bundesministerium des Inneren (German Federal Ministry of the Interior)
BOC	Basis of Claim
BUMF	Bundesfachverband für unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge (German Organization for Unaccompanied Minors <sup>1</sup> )
BVOR	Blended Sponsorship Refugees
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CBSA	Canadian Border Services Agency
CCR	Canadian Council for Refugees
CERIS	The Ontario Metropolis Centre
CIC	Citizen and Immigration Canada
CIDER	College for Interdisciplinary Educational Research
CLB	Canadian Language Benchmarks
CMEC	Council of Ministers of Education Canada
CMHC	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
CPRN	Canadian Policy Research Network

CRCYFRC	Canadian Refugee, Child, Youth and Family Research Coalition
CYRRC	Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition
DCO	Designated Countries of Origin
DIJUF	Deutsches Institut für Jugendhilfe und Familienrechte e.V. (German Institute for Youth Assistance and Family Rights <sup>*)</sup> )
DIK	Deutsche Islam Konferenz (German Islam Conference)
DIPF	German Institute for International Pedagogical Research
DTZ	Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer (German Language Test for Immigrants)
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EASY	Erstverteilung von Asylsuchenden (German System for Internal Refugee Distribution <sup>*)</sup> )
EMN	European Member States and Norway
ERN	European Resettlement Network
ESA	Erster Allgemeiner Schulabschluss (General School Leaving Certificate <sup>*)</sup> )
EU	European Union
EURODAC	European Dactyloscopy
GAR	Government assisted Refugees
GARP	Government assisted Refugees Program
GESIS	Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences
GGUA	Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft zur Unterstützung Asylsuchender e.V. (German Association for Assistance to Asylum Seekers <sup>*)</sup> )
GVRD	Greater Vancouver Regional District
HHiT	Health and Housing in Transition
HRK	Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (German Rectors' Conference)
HWWI	Hamburgisches Weltwirtschaftsinstitut (World Economics Institute Hamburg)
ICAP	In-Canada Asylum Program
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IFHCP	Interim Federal Health Care Program
IFHP	Interim Federal Health Insurance Plan
ILP	Immigrant Loans Program
IntV	Integrationskursverordnung (German Law for Integration Courses <sup>*)</sup> )
IOM	International Organization for Migration

IRB	Immigration and Refugee Board
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
IRW	Immigration Research West
ISANS	Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia
ISSofBC	Immigrant Services Society of BC
KMK	Kultusministerkonferenz (German Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs)
LERN	Leibniz Education Research Network
LSIC	Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada
MASSKS	Ministerium für Arbeit Soziales und Stadtentwicklung Kultur und Sport des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen (Ministry for Employment of Nordrhein-Westfalen)
MIPEX	Migrant Integration Policy Index
NOS	National Occupancy Standards
OCASI	Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHRA	Open Harbour Refugee Association
PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
PSP	Private Sponsorship Program
PSR	Private sponsored Refugees
PTSD	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
RAP	Resettlement Assistance Program
RHRP	Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program
RLC/CLR	Refugees landed in Canada
RSTP	Refugee Sponsorship Training Program
SAH	Sponsorship Agreement Holders
SGPSP	Shared Government-Private Sponsorship Programs
SPO	Service Provider Organizations
SSHRC	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
SVR	Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration (The Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration)
TDSB	Toronto District School Board
UAM	Unaccompanied Minors
UN	United Nations

UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WHO	World Health Organisation
YWCA/YMCA	Young Men's/Women's Christian Association
ZEW	Zentrum für Europäische Wirtschaftsforschung (Mannheim Centre for European Economic Research)

*Note:* \* Own translation



The massive increase of asylum seekers into Germany and considerable humanitarian commitments to resettlement in Canada leads to the urgent need to gather more knowledge and in particular scientific evidence on integration trajectories of refugee populations. To better understand the context in which integration takes place, this publication outlines the institutional and environmental conditions for refugees in Canada and Germany. It offers a descriptive account of the respective refugee protection systems as well as the educational systems in both national contexts and addresses core domains of refugee integration, e.g. access to housing, health services, education and the labour market.

Der deutliche Anstieg von Asylsuchenden in Deutschland und die Ausweitung des Resettlementprogrammes in Kanada führen in beiden Ländern zu neuen gesellschaftlichen Herausforderungen. Evidenzbasiertes Wissen muss in beiden Kontexten neu generiert werden, um die Integration Geflüchteter erfolgreich gestalten zu können. Das Sammelwerk zeigt institutionelle und strukturelle Rahmenbedingungen auf, um Basiswissen zum Kontext der Integration von Geflüchteten in Kanada und Deutschland verfügbar zu machen. Systeme des Flüchtlingssschutzes und Bildungssysteme werden ebenso dargestellt wie die Rahmbedingungen für den Zugang zu zentralen gesellschaftlichen Bereichen wie Wohnraum, Gesundheitsleistungen, Bildung und Arbeitsmarkt.