

Resettlement in Germany - What is the programme for particularly vulnerable refugees accomplishing?

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Resettlement in Germany –

What is the programme for particularly vulnerable refugees accomplishing?

By Tatjana Baraulina and Maria Bitterwolf

The brief analysis indicates the key principles on which Germany's resettlement programme is based. The programme has been implemented by the Federal Government in 2012 in agreement with the Federal States. 2,919 people have been admitted so far between 2012 and 2017.

AT A GLANCE

- Resettlement is an international tool for resolving protracted refugee situations. It is intended to provide protection for refugees whose lives, liberty, safety, health or other fundamental rights are at risk in the country where they have sought refuge – so-called first countries of asylum. It also protects people, for whom it appears unacceptable to remain in the first countries of asylum permanently.
- This brief analysis shows that the German resettlement programme follows the key principles of the UNHCR very closely overall. Thus, the majority of people who have been admitted in Germany through the resettlement programme meet at least one UNHCR criterion related to “particular vulnerability”.
- The proportion of women, children and elderly people who are admitted in the German resettlement programme is higher than for asylum applicants. Organised reception procedures such as resettlement therefore provide better protection for particularly vulnerable groups.
- The norm that families should be resettled together if possible plays a central role in the German resettlement programme. In 2012, for example, the proportion of individuals resettled as part of a smaller or extended family unit was 73%. 88% of all people who were resettled in 2014 came to Germany together with family members.
- Germany had taken in refugees from seven first countries of asylum in various regions of the world by the end of 2017. These include both countries that are themselves affected by conflicts (Syria and Sudan), as well as countries neighboring the regions in which such conflicts are taking place (Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia and Indonesia).

Key principles of resettlement

2012 – 2014 Germany implemented a pilot resettlement scheme. Since 2014, Germany has participated in the international community of more than 30 resettlement states with a permanent resettlement programme.¹ Resettlement is a humanitarian admission programme for people who have fled across the borders of their countries of origin and are residing in so-called first countries of asylum.² In the framework of the programme, refugees who demonstrably do not receive adequate protection under the current residence conditions are admitted.

The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) assesses the refugee status and needs of refugees and proposes the appropriate refugees for resettlement. The final selection of the resettlement refugees is made by the admitting states. Each year, they set a voluntary admission quota.³ In the years 2012 to 2014, Germany's admission quota was 300 people per year. In 2015 this quota was increased to 500 people. In the years 2016 and 2017, Germany participated in the EU resettlement pilot programme with the admission of a total of 1,600 refugees, which included the national admission quota. Resettlement programmes of the admitting states pursue the objective of enabling refugees to lead a self-reliant life in safety.⁴

Against the background of the refugee policy challenges in the years 2015 to 2017, in which more than one million people sought protection in Germany (BAMF 2018), the resettlement programme with its relatively low quotas received little attention in the public debate. It is only since April 2018 on the

occasion of Germany's undertaking to the EU to provide a total of 10,200 places for the resettlement programme, that the purpose of resettlement-policy is being publicly discussed.⁵ In this discussion, resettlement is variously assessed. Some commentators emphasise the regularized admission procedure in the framework of resettlement and hope that the programme will be able to develop into a genuine "alternative to the German asylum procedure".⁶ Other protagonists criticise the project as a "moral fig leaf". They feel that the increased involvement in quota admissions such as resettlement bears the risk that refugees will be denied individual access to fair asylum procedure on European territory.⁷ Pro Asyl, for example, demands "the application of the individual right to asylum instead of collective acts of mercy".⁸

The discussion outlined above emphasises that resettlement represents – depending on the assessment – a desirable or rather problematic tool for the controlled quota-based admission of refugees. It is frequently claimed that the resettlement admissions involve the strategic selection of refugees in accordance with national migration or integration policy interests (Bessa 2009). These allegedly manifest themselves, for example, in the national acceptance criteria, which the respective states are able to set for their resettlement quotas in addition to the UNHCR criteria. In Germany, these are, for example, family or other ties to Germany which facilitate integration, as well as indicators of integration capability (level of education and vocational training, work experience, language skills, religious affiliation, low age). However, preservation of the family unit, and the need for protection also play an important role in the German admission procedure.⁹

Dedicated observers, such as the welfare associations, fear that the national admission criteria could conflict with the humanitarian concept of

1 For more information on all resettlement states, see UNHCR, Resettlement Data Finder, online: <http://rsq.unhcr.org/> (02.05.2018).
 2 In addition to resettlement, Germany has implemented further humanitarian admission programmes in recent years. These include, for example, the Federal Government's humanitarian admission programme for Syrian refugees or privately financed admission programmes of the Federal States. For an overview of the schemes, see Grote et al. (2016).
 3 For an overview of the resettlement programmes in the global or European context as well as the analysis of the German resettlement-policy in the framework of the national refugee-policy, see the study of the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (2018).
 4 With the entry into force of the Law on the redefinition of the right of residence and the termination of residence (Gesetz zur Neubestimmung des Bleiberechts und der Aufenthaltsbeendigung) on 01.08.2015 Section 23 para. 4 Residence Act (AufenthG) created an independent legal basis for the admission of resettlement refugees, which was previously based on Section 23 para. 2 Residence Act. The revision was intended to give resettlement refugees a long-term life perspective in Germany, online: <https://dip21.bundestag.de/dip21/btd/18/040/1804097.pdf> (14.05.2018).

5 See the announcement by the project resettlement.de, online: <http://resettlement.de/eu-resettlement-programm-deutschland-beteiligt-sich-mit-10-000-plaetzen/> (02.05.2018).
 6 Alan Posener, „Resettlement“ ist besser als Flüchtlingslager in Deutschland, Welt.de from 03.04.2018, online: <https://www.welt.de/debatte/kommentare/article175131757/Resettlement-Fluechtlinge-und-Staaten-im-Provisorium.html> (02.05.2018).
 7 Online: <https://www.proasyl.de/thema/fakten-zahlen-argumente/> (04.05.2018).
 8 Online: <https://www.zeit.de/news/2018-04/19/deutschland-sagt-aufnahme-von-10200-fluechtlingen-zu-180419-99-957961> (04.05.2018).
 9 Online: <https://www.bmi.bund.de/DE/themen/migration/asyl-fluechtlingschutz/humanitaere-aufnahmeprogramme/humanitaere-aufnahmeprogramme-node.html> (26.04.2018).

protection.¹⁰ In their opinion, resettlement should focus mainly on the admission of refugees in need according to the UNHCR. The UNHCR defines three basic principles of resettlement (UNHCR 2011: 3). Firstly, resettlement should primarily provide a perspective for refugees most in need of protection. Secondly, people should be admitted who are in protracted refugee situations without a return option and without the possibility of integration in their first country of asylum. Thirdly, resettlement is an expression of shared responsibility with the first countries of asylum which are strongly affected by forced migration.

In the context of this discussion, this brief analysis raises the question of which principles the German resettlement programme follows. It analyses whether the resettlement programme is based on an interest in the selection of “desired refugees” or whether the humanitarian concern for protection is foremost. The analysis of the current programme implementation is important in order to objectively and positively discuss the further development of resettlement in Germany.

The analysis is based on evaluations of statistical data of the German programme, for example on the gender or age of those persons admitted to Germany, and on UNHCR data. The analysis also uses further data, for example on educational background of resettlement-refugees admitted in Germany. This data have been collected within the framework of the resettlement study (Box 1) on all resettlement-refugees admitted in 2012 and in 2014. The analysis of these years serves as an illustration. The key principles of the resettlement admissions in these two years can be transferred to other years.

In order to better understand the situation of refugees in the first countries of asylum, the analysis also uses data based upon the interviews with refugees admitted in Germany. The interviews were carried out in the research centre of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) within the framework of the resettlement study (Box 1).

BOX 1: THE RESETTLEMENT STUDY BY THE RESEARCH CENTRE

The research centre of the BAMF is monitoring the German resettlement programme. It is analysing the administrative data of the resettlement programme from 2012 on and takes the subjective perceptions of refugees themselves of the admission and integration process into account. Overall, 112 resettlement refugees admitted to Germany in 2012 and in 2014 shared their experiences in qualitative guideline-based interviews. The interviews were carried out nationwide in a total of 23 municipalities. The study makes it possible to make recommendations for the resettlement programme taking the needs and perspectives of refugees into account.

Key principle I: Protection for refugees who are at risk in the first countries of asylum

The UNHCR defines resettlement as a tool to provide international protection for those refugees whose life, liberty, safety, health or other fundamental rights are at risk in the countries where they have first sought refuge (UNHCR 2011: 3). In other words, only those refugees are recommended for the resettlement programme who have entered first countries of asylum and are classified there by the UNHCR as “vulnerable refugees in need of protection”. In order to determine the vulnerability, the UNHCR has developed various criteria¹¹. People who meet at least one of the following criteria may be considered for resettlement: people with special legal and physical protection needs; people with special medical treatment needs; victims of violence and torture; women and girls at risk; refugee children and adolescents at risk and older refugees.

The majority of resettlement-refugees admitted to Germany fulfil at least one of the criteria indicated. Below, the analysis uses the example of the admittance quota from the year 2014 and demonstrates the extent to which the criteria of the vulnerability are taken into account in the German resettlement

¹⁰ This position manifests itself, for example, in the official statements of the associations to the proposals of the Union Resettlement Framework for EU resettlement, online: <https://www.ecre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/NGO-joint-comments-resettlement-141116.pdf> (01.06.2018).

¹¹ A detailed description of the criteria can be found in the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook (2011), online: <http://www.unhcr.org/46f7c0ee2.html> (26.04.2018).

programme. In the admittance quota for 2014, individual persons or families have special protection needs in up to four areas, depending on the case configuration.

People with special legal and physical protection needs

The criterion of special legal and physical protection needs is met, among others, by people threatened with deportation to their country of origin, arbitrary arrest or imprisonment or danger to life and limb in the first country of asylum.

In 2014, for example, people from various countries of origin, including from Sri Lanka, Somalia and China, were admitted. In their first country of asylum, in Indonesia, they had been detained in deportation centres, some of them for several years. The living conditions there are heavily criticised by aid organisations.¹² People who seek refuge in Indonesia have no legal right of residence there, so they face up to ten years imprisonment and are threatened with deportation to their country of origin.

People with special medical treatment needs

This category includes people with serious illnesses or disabilities who cannot receive appropriate medical treatment in the first country of asylum or through a temporary stay in a third country and whose health would deteriorate significantly or even become life-threatening without appropriate treatment. In such cases, the prognosis produced in the medical examination assumes that treatment in the country of resettlement can significantly improve the state of health of the people concerned.

For example, in 2014 a young man was flown out of Indonesia before his family members, who were also entitled to admission, due to an urgently needed operation which was successfully carried out in Germany. However, the admission capacities for such serious medical cases are limited. The admission requirements of the Federal Ministry of the Interior prescribe a proportion of up to 5% of severely ill people among the total number of admissions.

Survivors of violence and torture

People proposed for resettlement on this basis have experienced extreme forms of abuse in their countries of origin or in the first country of asylum.

Resettlement is considered necessary if those affected suffer from persistent physical or psychological effects of torture and violence, and when further traumatising in the first country of asylum, for example due to a lack of health care and psychological assistance, cannot be excluded.

The resettlement refugees admitted in 2014 have undergone different experiences of extreme violence in the countries of origin and refuge. For example, many of the people have fled ethnic and religious conflicts in Sri Lanka, Iraq, and Afghanistan, where they experienced persecution, forced displacement, and mistreatment by the state or paramilitaries. In many cases, the refugees have also witnessed the violent death, severe mistreatment or abduction of family members.

“We are a family of seven. I am the only one still alive. Father and my brother were abducted and the other members of my family, like my mother and siblings, my sisters, were killed.”

Mr. A. from Sri Lanka came to Germany in 2014.

Women with special risk exposure

The resettlement of girls and women is proposed by the UNHCR and others if they are affected by protection or safety problems particular to their gender (e.g. sexual violence, physical abuse and exploitation). This applies to women who have lost the support provided by male family members, for example. Resettlement is also an option for vulnerable women or girls whose special protection needs result from past persecution and/or traumatising.

Among the refugees admitted in 2014 there were, for example, several women who were victims of sexual violence in their families and who were forced to leave their hometowns, mainly in Somalia and Ethiopia, because of this. Several of these women first sought protection in Syria and Yemen, where they worked as housekeepers in families. They reported of exploitative employment relationships and associated health problems.

¹² Online e.g.: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/07/01/confronting-refugee-abuse-indonesias-detention-centers> and <https://www.globaldetentionproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/GDP-UPR-Submission-Indonesia-Sept-2016.pdf> (04.05.2018).

“I am from Ethiopia. My father died. My mother married another man who was very bad to me. I attended school up to fifth year and was not allowed to continue learning. [As a 15-year-old, Ms. T. was sold to a private household where she was mistreated and sexually abused. At 17, she managed to escape to a relative who helped her to leave the country.] I was able to travel to Syria... In Syria, I worked for a family for three years and six months. They told me I would work for the first three months without pay. I had no alternative. I didn't know where to go, so I accepted it.”

Ms. T. from Ethiopia came to Germany in 2014.

“I want to tell something about my children and it's also because of the situation they experienced there [in Syria], because you heard constant bombing and shootings, even when we went to D., a place nearby was bombed so that the splinters flew so we also saw the splinters. And my children, my daughter, she became so loud. Maybe it's because it was loud everywhere there because they bombed everywhere. She is always nervous and very loud.”

Mr. M. is from an Iraqi-Palestinian family. He came to Germany with his wife and children in 2014.

In general women make up a large proportion of refugees admitted in the German resettlement programme: between 2012 and 2017, an average of 47% were women. The proportion of women is steadily increasing, so that around half of the resettlement refugees admitted in the last two years were female (Table 1). The proportion of women admitted is significantly higher than among asylum applicants, where an average of 35% were women in the comparable period (2012-2017).¹³

Refugee children, adolescents and older refugees

Since the safety and well-being of children and young people in refugee situations are particularly at risk, the UNHCR considers minors as vulnerable group in need of protection. This especially includes those who are separated from their parents and other relatives in the first country of asylum.

Among the resettlement refugees so far admitted in Germany, the average proportion of children under the age of 18 is slightly higher at 39% than among the asylum seekers (36%). However, the number of children resettled in the annual resettlement quotas is increasing significantly, accounting for almost half of all those admitted in the last two years (Table 1).

Vulnerable refugees in need of protection also include the elderly, who are especially impacted by the effects of conflicts and crises. Among the resettlement refugees to Germany, at an average of 11%, there is a relatively high proportion of over-51-year-olds. Among the asylum seekers, this age group (over-50) is constantly below 5%.

Resettlement from failed states

For many vulnerable refugees with special protection-needs, resettlement is the only lifesaving solution. This especially applies to people in so-called failed states. When states are no longer able to fulfil their basic functions and have no or only limited control over their territory, for example because armed conflicts persist there, this is called a failed state (APuZ 2005).

¹³ Own calculation on the basis of the Bundesamt in Zahlen from the years 2012-2017, online: <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Infothek/Statistiken/Asylzahlen/BundesamtInZahlen/bundesamt-in-zahlen-node.html> (26.04.2018).

Table 1: Resettlement-refugees by age and gender (2012-2017)

	2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017	
	Number	in %	Number	in %	Number	in %	Number	in %	Number	in %	Number	in %
Gender												
Male	205	67%	153	52%	166	52%	243	51%	578	47%	140	50%
Female	102	33%	140	48%	155	48%	238	49%	661	53%	138	50%
Age												
up to and incl. 17	102	33%	110	38%	98	30%	191	40%	573	46%	130	46%
18 to 35	124	40%	100	34%	105	33%	179	37%	302	24%	77	24%
36 to 50	60	20%	56	19%	60	19%	78	16%	206	17%	56	17%
51 to 65	18	6%	25	9%	46	14%	30	6%	116	9%	12	9%
66 and older	3	1%	2	0%	12	4%	3	1%	42	3%	3	3%

Source: BAMF, Unit 213 | Resettlement, Humanitarian Reception, Relocation; own calculation and presentation (status: 01/02/2018).

The failed states are unable to protect either their own nationals or immigrant and refugee groups of the population from despotism and violence. Humanitarian admissions from such states pose special challenges due to poor infrastructure, high security risks and lacking institutional partners. Nonetheless, Germany is involved in resettlement admissions from such countries, for example Syria. Furthermore, e.g. admissions of people are planned who were evacuated from Libya to Niger (German Bundestag 2018a).

The Syrian conflict has devastating consequences for the civilian population. According to UNHCR estimates, about half of the Syrian population has had to flee so far, either within their own country or across the borders. 13.5 million people in Syria currently depend on humanitarian aid (UNHCR 2018a).

Not only are Syrian nationals affected by the humanitarian disaster, but also people from other countries who sought refuge in Syria before the conflict broke out or who were in Syria as migrant workers (Bitterwolf et al. 2016). For many of them, it was not possible to escape from Syria as they lacked identification documents, money or other support. The UNHCR currently estimates the number of refugees and asylum seekers “stuck” in Syria at around 49,000. Iraqi nationals make up the largest group at 83%. They reside in urban areas and in three UNHCR refugee camps (UNHCR 2018c).

Between 2014 and 2017, a total of 13 states provided around 4,000 resettlement places for vulnerable refugees in Syria. The main receiving countries were Canada, the USA and Switzerland. In 2014 Germany also admitted 207 people, the majority of them from Damascus and the suburbs, where food shortages, fear of bomb attacks and criminalised paramilitaries determined everyday life (Box 2).

Key principle II: A durable solution for refugees in precarious situations

In addition to protecting vulnerable refugees in need of protection, with resettlement, the UNHCR also aims to provide a durable solution for those who are unable to return to their country of origin or integrate into the first countries of asylum (UNHCR 2011: 3).

BOX 2: LIFE SITUATION OF AN IRAQI-PALESTINIAN FAMILY IN SYRIA

The wife: *“Four months after we escaped from Iraq to Syria, the house we were living in was destroyed. And my left leg was injured [...]. We went to my parents’ house [in the neighbouring Syrian town] and stayed there for about four days. After that, the Free Syrian Army came into the area. And there were battles between the government army and the Free Syrian Army. Our neighbourhood was surrounded for about four days, we couldn’t leave the house [...]. We had nothing to eat in those days. After that we left the area together with the neighbours...”*

The husband: *“We stayed in another part of Syria for about a year and a half. There I was injured by bomb splinters in the stomach, foot and shoulder. My stomach was operated. The splinters in my foot and shoulder are still there.”*

The wife: *“The situation was very bad there at that time, missiles were falling. And there were tanks in our area and my daughter was in a very bad way. Just missiles and bombs in our ears, and the tanks [...]”*

The family came to Germany in 2014.

The current research discussion on the selectivity of refugee movements assumes that especially the socially disadvantaged groups are unable to undertake an ambitious and costly escape to Europe and rather “get stuck” in hopeless refugee situations (Betts/ Collier 2017). Alongside the gender selectivity – men tend to travel longer distances than women and take more dangerous routes – selectivity is also assumed in relation to the age of the refugees – younger people rather tend to migrate than older people. It can also be assumed that those who seek protection in Europe have financial resources (Sirries et al. 2016) and social contacts (Schapendonk 2015) that facilitate the journey or even make it at all possible. People who do not have such resources have very limited options for getting to safety outside of the nearby regions.

As the interviews from the resettlement study show, on their migration path or in the first countries of asylum, refugees repeatedly find themselves in situations in which they have to use up their existing financial resources and cannot expect any support from their social contacts. The life conditions can become so precarious that they mean that refugees

Box 3: MIGRATION BIOGRAPHY OF Ms. F.

Ms. F. already sought refuge with her aunt's family in Yemen as a child, due to the violent conflicts in her region of origin around Mogadishu (Somalia). Still underage, she worked in Yemen as a household employee. When the civil war broke out in Yemen in 1994, the family returned to Somalia. Ms. F. stayed at her parents' house, where she witnessed the murder of her father and her uncle by armed militia. The girls and women in the village were extremely afraid of sexual violence by the paramilitaries. The family collected money so that Ms. F. could escape.

Ms. F. went to Yemen for the second time, was registered with the UNHCR as a refugee and worked in Sanaa as a household employee. There she married and had two children. Her husband also comes from Somalia. As he lost his job as a driver because he didn't have a residence permit, he left the capital and sought work in a remote region of Yemen. In 2011, the political conflicts in Yemen developed into armed conflicts, with fierce clashes in the capital city. At that point, the contact to her husband broke off. Ms. F.'s family in Somalia managed to raise 4,000 US dollars to help her and her children flee Yemen.

The plan was to get to Europe by plane with the aid of smugglers. However, what Ms. F. didn't know was that instead, she arrived in Jakarta, Indonesia. At the airport, a passerby helped her to get to the district where many refugees live. Despite being recognised as a refugee by the UNHCR, Ms. F. had no right of residence in Indonesia and was not allowed to work. Her children also experienced obstacles in accessing the education system because of their illegal status. She lacked the financial means for further migration. Her family's resources were exhausted. In Indonesia her son fell ill with a chronic kidney disease. Further irregular migration was out of the question as the risks to the child would be too high. Thus, Ms. F. and the children were permanently dependent on basic support from the UNHCR.

After three years in Indonesia, she and her two sons were admitted to the German resettlement programme. Speaking to the research team just after their arrival, she said: *"All we can think about, is that we want and need to start a new life here. All other things that will come, we will take us by surprise... I really feel like a prisoner who has just been released from her cell."*

Ms. F. from Somalia came to Germany in 2014.

are forced to remain immobile (Lubkemann 2008). They are unable to improve their life through their own efforts either where they are, by returning or through onward migration (Box 3).

In particular, people who have to flee with small children, with disabled or older family members, need extensive resources to survive (e.g. money for medical care) or to move on (e.g. costs of irregular border crossings), which they often cannot afford. For refugees in precarious situations, resettlement is often the only sustainable solution.

Contrary to general assumptions, the interviews in the context of the resettlement study show that not only "the poorest of the poor" but also originally well-off people and families can find themselves in precarious life situations. For example, several of the families who participated in the resettlement study were forced to flee quickly and without preparation due to the advance of armed conflicts in their hometowns. They had to leave their houses and their property behind, and despite their originally

relatively good economic situation, they had hardly any financial resources at their place of refuge.

"In Libya it was actually good. We had no papers because we are from Eritrea. I studied and worked there as well. But the work I did was unofficial, because I didn't have a work permit there. My siblings, they also studied there and went to school. When the war started, the difficulties came. [...] Because we were very brown, we were afraid to go out on the street. [...] We weren't far from where Gaddafi was located, about ten minutes. At the moment the war broke out, the grenades started. With every attack, the whole house shook. [...] We were forced to leave everything we had there and flee. We drove to Tunisia by car. But we were really scared. The situation was rather confused, the war was everywhere [...]. In Tunisia, we were picked up by the UNO. It was a camp in the Sahara Desert. 49 degrees outside and we were in a tent."

Ms. A. was born in Eritrea and grew up in Libya. She came to Germany in 2012 with five siblings and parents.

The existing human capital had no use in the refugee situations. For example, 30% of the adults admitted in the year 2012 and 25% of those admitted in 2014 had a qualification that would entitle them to study in their respective countries of origin or residence. Some of them had started or completed their studies in their country of origin. Nevertheless, only 10% of those admitted in 2012 and 3% of those admitted in 2014 worked in qualified or highly qualified occupations in the last five years before admission to Germany. The interviews with refugees make it clear that the refugees' good educational qualifications were either unusable due to the desperate situation in their countries of origin or because of work and education prohibitions and discrimination in the first countries of asylum.

Importance of family unity

When people flee their countries of origin, family members are often torn apart during the flight. In many cases, families are separated if a family member is unable to accompany them. As part of a sustainable solution, the UNHCR proposes refugees for resettlement whose close or dependent relatives reside in a resettlement state.

Family ties play a key role in the German admission process: for example, the admission requirements of the Federal Ministry of the Interior stipulate that the family unit is to be preserved as far as possible and families should be admitted together.¹⁴

In the admission year 2012, for example, the proportion of people admitted with their close or extended family was 73%. In 2014, 88% of all those admitted came to Germany together with family members. In addition, according to the admission requirements of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, family ties to Germany should also play a role in the admission decision. In the year 2012, in around 20% of the cases admitted (single persons or family groups) and in the admission year 2014 in around 30% of the cases there were family ties to Germany.

Consideration of existing family relationships and the admission of entire family units in the German resettlement programme are rated very positively by the refugees themselves. Worries about the well-being of relatives can be avoided and relatives can provide each other with help and support.¹⁵

14 Online: <https://www.bmi.bund.de/DE/themen/migration/asyl-fluechtlingschutz/humanitaere-aufnahmeprogramme/humanitaere-aufnahmeprogramme-node.html> (26.04.2018).

15 In addition, on the basis of the admission year 2012, Baraulina/Bitterwolf (2016) show that taking the humanitarian needs

“We all came together. We are six siblings. And father and mother are eight. We were lucky that we are all together. The USA, they mainly take the young people and we know families, for example, where only the children went to America, but the parents stayed [in the camp]. And thank God it's not like that in Germany, and I'm glad that our parents are with us too. It was very, very important that we all stay together.”

The siblings came to Germany in 2012 from Tunisia.

The entry into force of the Gesetz zur Neubestimmung des Bleiberechts und der Aufenthaltsbeendigung (law on the redetermination of the right of continued abode and the termination of residence) in August 2015, facilitated family reunification with people already admitted to Germany as part of the resettlement programme. Thus, for example, in case of reunification of spouses and underage children, the condition of an independent livelihood is waived provided the application for family reunification is made within three months of the granting of the residence permit (Section 29 para. 2 of the AufenthG - Residence Act).¹⁶ People reuniting with their spouses also no longer have to demonstrate simple knowledge of German (Section 30 para. 1 sentence 3 AufenthG).

The parents of underage resettlement-refugees are to be issued with a residence permit if there is no parent entitled to custody residing in the Federal territory (Section 36 para. 1 AufenthG). The reunification of parents is possible even if the livelihood is not secured, or no sufficient living space can be made available. These legal changes harmonised the rights of resettlement-refugees with the rights of people entitled to political asylum and recognised refugees.¹⁷

of the refugees into account (for example, by preserving the family unit during the admission process) creates sustainable trust in the resettlement state. The resulting basic trust helped the refugees with their first steps in Germany and had a positive effect on their willingness to integrate.

16 Online: https://familie.asyl.net/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Nachzug_zu_Resettlement_-_FLA_chtlingen_mit_einer_Auf-enthaltserlaubnis_gemN___i_23_Abs_4_AufenthG.pdf (02.05.2018).

17 German Red Cross (2015): Änderungen im Familiennachzug nach dem AufenthG ab dem 01.08.2015 durch das „Gesetz zur Neubestimmung des Bleiberechts und der Aufenthaltsbeendigung“ vom 27.07.2015, announced on 31.07.2015, online <https://www.nds-fluerat.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/MERKBLATT-DRK-Aenderg-Familiennachzug.pdf> (03.05.2018).

Key principle III: International solidarity with the first countries of asylum

The UNHCR also sees resettlement as a statement of solidarity with those states primarily and particularly affected by refugee movements (UNHCR 2011: 3). These are often countries in the immediate vicinity of the regions in which events cause people to flee. For the year 2018, the UNHCR identified 63 so-called first countries of asylum, which need support by the international community (UNHCR 2017a: 9). By the end of 2017, Germany took part in admissions from a total of seven first countries of asylum (Figure 1).

The German participation in the international responsibility sharing can be illustrated by the data on resettlement of refugees who initially sought protection in Egypt. Egypt is an important destination and transit state for refugees as well as for other migrants from more than 60 countries. Germany and other EU states recognise that Egypt faces considerable challenges in coping with the refugee

and migration movements and the integration of immigrants.¹⁸

In particular, people from sub-Saharan African countries, but also Syrian and Iraqi refugees, reside in Egypt (UNHCR 2018b). They mainly live in urban areas. The living conditions for refugees and immigrants are estimated by the UNHCR to be very difficult due to the hurdles presented by the alien laws, high unemployment, high living costs and due to limited access to health care, discrimination and language barriers (UNHCR 2017b). In the years 2014 to 2017 the UNHCR classified between 250,000 and 300,000 people in Egypt as persons of concern (Table 2).¹⁹ Every year, the UNHCR proposed between 1% and 2% of those persons of concern in Egypt for resettlement.

Between 2014 and 2017, a total of 14 states took part in the resettlement admissions from Egypt. Whereas in 2014 only 10% of the refugees proposed

18 German Bundestag (2018b) and European Commission, online: <https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/> (19.04.2018).

19 UNHCR include refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees, stateless people and other people in need of protection into the category "persons of concern, online: <http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/overview> (19.04.2018). In Egypt, refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people constitute over 95% of the persons of concern according to the UNHCR.

Figure 1: Resettlement admissions to Germany by first countries of asylum (2012-2017)

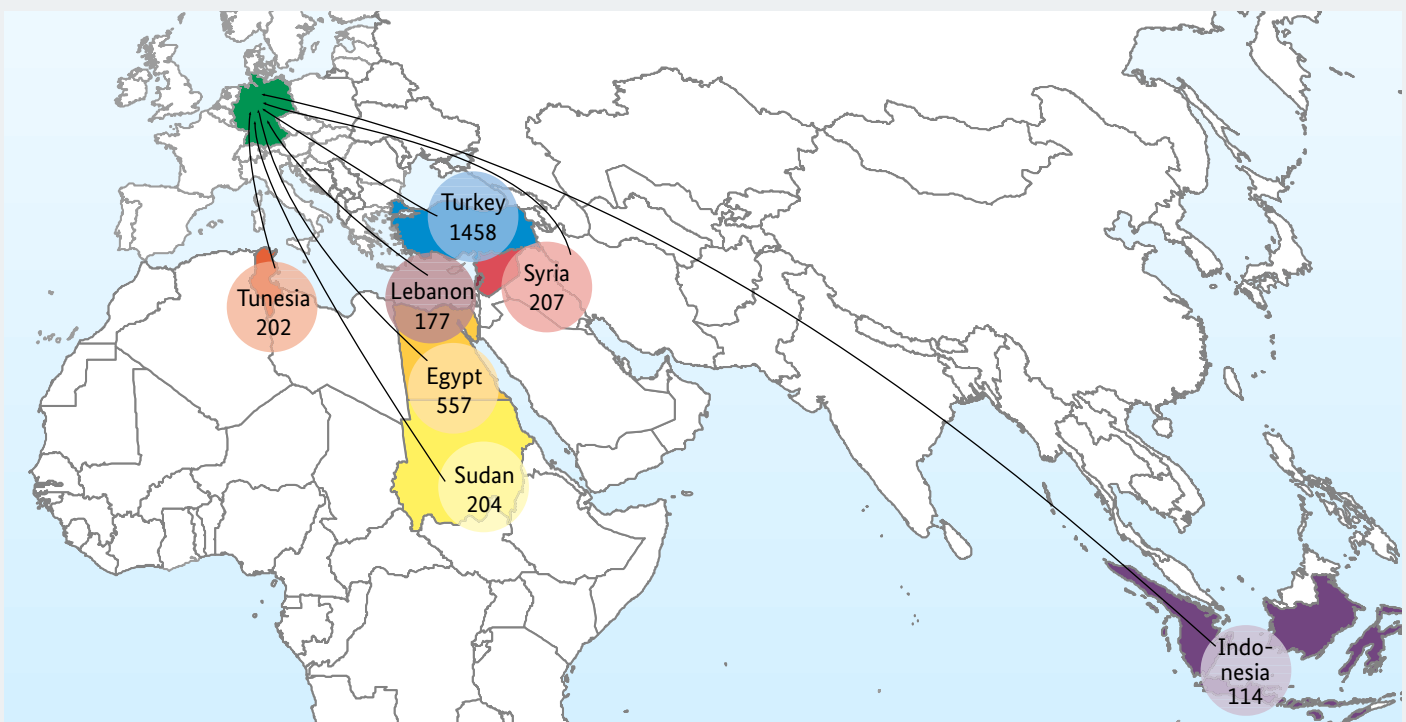


Table 2: People in need of protection within the meaning of the UNHCR and resettlement admissions from Egypt, 2014 – 2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Persons of concern	261,741	250,697	263,426	≈280,000*
Resettlement places required	3,674	6,292	7,006	3,003
% of all people of concern	1.4%	2.5%	2.6%	≈1.1%
Actual resettlement admissions	329	2,924	4,035	1,932
Coverage ratio (Coverage of the resettlement need by actual admissions)	10%	45%	58%	64%

*The estimate of the number persons of concern by the UNHCR for the year 2017 is based on the provisional figure of 211,000 people registered with the UNHCR Egypt in 2017, and the estimate of approximately 70,000 Palestinian and Syrian refugees in Egypt who are (still) not registered with the UNHCR.

Source: UNHCR, Global Focus and Resettlement Data Finder, own calculation and presentation.

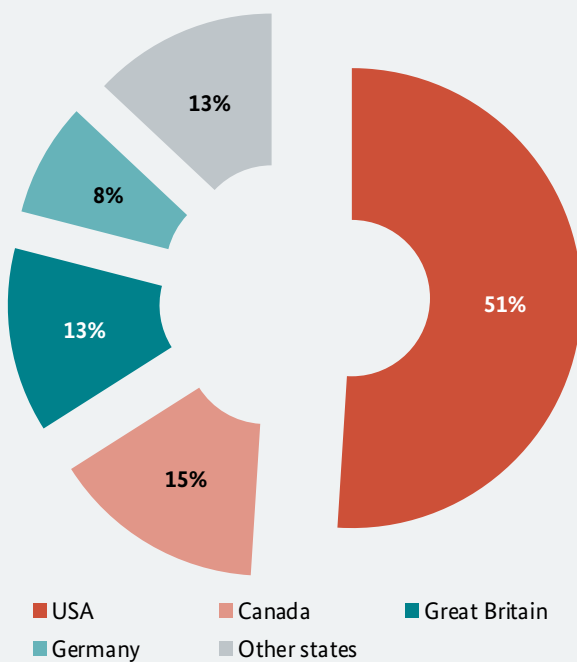
by UNHCR-Egypt actually received a resettlement placement, in 2017 the USA, Canada, Great Britain, Germany and other states admitted 64% of the vulnerable refugees in need of protection who were proposed for resettlement (Table 2). In the admission years 2014 to 2017 around half of all resettlement refugees from Egypt came to the USA (Figure 2). Germany was the fourth most important admission state.

What does the resettlement programme accomplish, and how should it develop?

On 27 September 2017, the EU Commission presented a new European resettlement programme for at least 50,000 people in need of protection who are to be admitted to the Member States by October 2019 (EMN/BAMF 2018). For the years 2018 and 2019, Germany plans to participate in the EU resettlement programme by providing a total of 10,200 places. Of these, 9,200 places are to be provided at the federal level, and 500 refugees are to be admitted as part of a pilot project for a private sponsorship programme of the Federal Government.²⁰ Another 500 places are planned for an admission quota announced at the state level.

The admission quotas announced are several times greater than quotas up until now. Therefore it seems appropriate to reflect on current Germany's resettlement strategy.

Resettlement, as it is currently implemented in Germany, is a programme that consistently complies with the key principles of the UNHCR. This brief analysis shows that Germany above all admits refugees who are especially at risk in their first countries of asylum and who are in precarious life situations without prospects for improvement. In addition, with its resettlement programme, Germany sup-

Figure 2: Admission states according to their share of all resettlement admissions from Egypt 2014 – 2017

Source: UNHCR, Resettlement Data Finder, own calculation and presentation.

²⁰ Online: <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/kurzmeldungen/DE/2018/02/internationale-konferenz-resettlement.html> (20.06.2018).

ports first countries of asylum significantly affected by refugee migration. The national criteria, such as the ability to integrate, do not challenge these key humanitarian principles.

The key resettlement principles should also be systematically taken into account in the future increase of the admittance quotas. Nevertheless, resettlement can be a refugee policy tool that makes it possible to react flexibly to the current humanitarian situations in the first countries of asylum. Under certain circumstances, for example, prioritised admittance of refugees in protracted precarious life conditions may make sense, while in other first countries of asylum, it is vital to admit those people in urgent risk situations.

In general, the analysis indicates that regulated admittance procedures such as resettlement offer better protection for particularly vulnerable groups and for refugees in emergency situations by sparing them irregular and risky (further) migration.

In the discussion on the resettlement programme and its further development, it is important, not to lose sight of the refugees' perspective. The interviews in the framework of the BAMF resettlement study show that admission to Germany is the only option for refugees to start a new life. A large majority of the interviewed refugees are very highly motivated to participate in German society and to settle permanently here.

“Here [in Germany], the most important thing for us is that we have escaped hell. There [in the first country of asylum] you had no right to go to school or work. You had no identity card. Here you have good opportunities, and the children can go to school. You can live much better, like a human.”

Mr. and Mrs. H. were Palestinian refugees in Syria. They came to Germany in 2014 with four children.

also on the sustainable integration of resettlement refugees. Especially municipal and local integration actors and immigration authorities should receive more information about the programme. Information on the legal residence aspects, on the long-term residence perspective and information on the participation opportunities of resettlement refugees are highly relevant. How the additional humanitarian programmes, such as the private sponsorship scheme announced by the federal government, will fit into the context of local integration remains to be seen.

Less than 1% of the refugees who received a residence title according to Section 23 para. 4 Residence Act (resettlement), had left Germany again by the reference date 01.01.2018.

Due to the relatively small resettlement quotas and the high level of attention paid to the large number of asylum applicants, resettlement is often an unknown protection instrument to many in Germany. The increase in the admission quotas should not only raise the focus on the admission criteria, but

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