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An International Think Tank Report on Global Refugee Migration

Editors

Céline Neuenschwander and Lukas Rühli

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Authors and Contributors	Lio Ando-Bourguet, Claudia Crawford, Angeliki Dimitriadi, Marcus Engler, Eduard Gnesa, Herbert Grubel, Ulrich Kober, Pascal Lago, Peter Maurer, Céline Neuenschwander, Marco Salvi, Kostas Vlachopoulos, Shona Warren
Editing	Haig Simonian, Verena Parzer-Epp
Design	Carmen Sopi
Image editor	Urs Steiner

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An International Think Tank Report on Global Refugee Migration

Introduction

Currently, around 80 million people worldwide are fleeing. This marks a new all-time high. Forecasts suggest that this figure will increase in the medium term. The Covid-19 pandemic is causing a slump in the global economy, resulting in political tensions. Consequently, the number of asylum seekers is expected to rise, particularly in Europe and Switzerland (ICMPD 2021).

As of now, the asylum seekers account for 5 percent of total immigration to Switzerland, a minor proportion of all migrants (SEM 2020a). Despite the comparatively small asylum population in Switzerland, labor market integration is a challenge. Five years after their arrival, only 40 percent of refugees are employed (Joyce 2018). Furthermore, low employment rates among the asylum population result in increasing social costs and security related risks (Becker 1968).

Labor market integration of asylum seekers poses an obstacle to other European countries as well and includes consequences for social costs and security related issues. This report provides an overview of existing national policies regarding these three aspects. The report starts with an essay by Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, on the responsibility of liberal states towards refugees and asylum seekers from a meta-perspective. He emphasizes that detention related to immigration should be avoided, as this stands contrary to liberty as a core value of liberal states. Regarding the pandemic, it is concluded that immigrants should be included in protection policies irrespective of their legal status. Asylum policies in Switzerland and five European countries are then presented in the following chapters. Contributions on European countries are followed by a chapter from the perspective of the European Union, revealing overarching institutional challenges. In this regard, the new pact on migration and asylum presented by the European Commission by the end of 2020 is discussed. A chapter on Canada provides a view of asylum policies from overseas, presenting the asylum topic under different conditions. The country chapters show existing disparities in national asylum policies, revealing distinct opportunities and challenges regarding the different measures in place.

The goal of this report is to enable a fact-based and open exchange on other countries' asylum policies regarding labor market integration and their impact on social costs and security related issues. With asylum numbers on the rise, it is important to discuss weaknesses in asylum policies and solutions early on. Country specific migration and asylum frameworks are embedded in the national context of political forces, geography, institutions and the overall economic setting. These factors explain the development of national policies to a certain extent. Furthermore, migration is an issue that requires cooperation and coordination between countries which is highlighted at various points in this report.

Prior to publication of the report, an international Think Tank Summit was held on January 21–22. Over two days, policy makers, researchers and representatives from the public and private sectors presented their ideas on the three aspects of asylum migration at core of this study. Further aspects discussed covered innovative and data-based ways of integrating refugees, transnational conditions of return and reintegration as well as the economic effects of refugee migration. Lessons from the international exchange and the Think Tank Summit are summarized and presented in the middle of this publication.

Key enablers of a well-functioning asylum system

Essentially, three key findings enabling a functioning asylum system emerged from the two-day event and the country contributions: Firstly, after entering a country, any asylum seeker should receive the quickest possible status clarification and rapid repatriation in case of a negative decision. Secondly, rapid access to the labor market has a long-term positive impact on the employment rate of the asylum population. Thirdly, effective migration handling requires cooperation with countries of origin and transit. Asylum policies should start in the countries of origin by informing people on their chances of asylum acceptance before they embark on their journey. Currently, around 40 percent of all asylum applicants in Switzerland are not granted a refugee or provisionally admitted status and need to be repatriated (SEM 2020b). Returning rejected asylum seekers to their country of origin is a time and cost intensive endeavor and requires bilateral cooperation. Measures should aim at keeping the number of repatriations low. Furthermore, inter-European collaboration at the external European border is required to prevent humanitarian crises, enable rapid registration and a target-oriented allocation to facilitate labor market integration. Switzerland is host to most of the key institutions in international asylum policy (such as the International Organization for Migration IOM, UNHCR or the World Bank Group). Together with soft power tools, it can provide a forum to strengthen international dialogue, present innovative ideas for collaboration and increase international cooperation in this regard.

The cornerstones for a future migration strategy are formulated in the last chapter. More specifically, 12 concrete measures aiming at increased cooperation with European countries and countries of origin, stronger involvement of the private sector in refugees' labor market integration, digital and data-driven solutions as well as streamlining of bureaucratic processes are presented. In the end, their fulfillment should strengthen a well-functioning asylum system in Switzerland and beyond. Specifically, by enabling quick decisions on an asylum applicant's status, reduce the number of repatriations, facilitate labor market integration of the asylum population in Switzerland and increase bilateral and European cooperation. These cornerstones have been presented to the State Secretariat for Migration, which evaluated the measures proposed for their feasibility. The following section contains a brief chapter overview.

Chapter overview on national policies handling refugees and asylum seekers worldwide

Chapter 1 looks at the latest developments in international and Swiss migration and asylum policy. The impact of the pandemic on migration, and on refugees more specifically, is outlined, along with expected future developments. Author Eduard Gnesa, former Special Ambassador for international migration of Switzerland, notes that irregular migration increased in 2020, when the Mediterranean route from North Africa to Italy and to Spain regained importance. It becomes clear that migration policy must continue to be shaped via international cooperation between Switzerland and EU/EFTA states, but also with countries of origin. Renationalization of migration policy would be short-sighted and unhelpful in the long run.

Chapter 2 shows distinct employment rates, depending on a person's residence status in Switzerland. Refugees and provisionally admitted people face different rules regarding mobility restriction, housing and access to the labor market. Factors determining labor market integration are generally rooted in the institutional setting, individual characteristics, and labor market regulations. Marco Salvi from Avenir Suisse highlights that minimum wages and rigid collective labor agreements are likely to impede labor market access for the asylum population. This is directly linked to security considerations. Pascal Lago from Avenir Suisse describes how security risks among refugees and asylum seekers also arise as a consequence of the lack of future perspectives, structured lives and employment or constricted space in asylum centers. Rapid asylum procedures, effective repatriation or integration and international cooperation are identified as key measures to reduce security risks.

Chapter 3 analyzes German refugee policies, describing the integration of the 1.8 million people seeking protection in the country, putting Germany in second place after Turkey in terms of states that have accepted the most asylum seekers and refugees. Despite the sheer amount of people, integration into the educational system and labor market has been relatively successful. Additionally, the vast influx did not put an excessive strain on the German social system, thanks to rapid integration into the labor market. Indeed, expenditures have been offset by additional revenues generated by refugees. Nevertheless, despite a well-functioning integration system, author Ulrich Kober from the Bertelsmann Foundation notes the influx of refugees has led to social tensions and populist currents in the country.

Chapter 4 analyzes Austria and outlines its fast-tracked asylum procedures and labor market integration. Claudia Crawford from the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung stresses that the pandemic has made it even more important to place refugees in sectors where their labor is urgently needed, i.e. sectors that have been filled by seasonal or migrant workers in the past. Hence, an alignment between labor market demands and integration policies becomes more relevant given a weakening economy. In this light, the author considers language skills as a key factor.

Chapter 5 describes French migration policy regarding access to the labor market, healthcare, and, more broadly, the national reception scheme. There is considerable differentiation between refugees and asylum seekers in terms of rights and access to the labor market, welfare benefits and public services. Universal access to health care for refugees and asylum seekers provoked national debate and fears of "welfare migration." Hence, a waiting period was introduced, only after which asylum seekers can access health insurance. Lio Ando-Bourguet from Institut Français des Relations Internationales criticizes this policy as being out of line with the public interest, especially in the light of the global pandemic.

Chapter 6 offers the Greek perspective and shows how the counrty has been transformed from one of transit to one of residence for asylum seekers and refugees after the closure of the Western Balkan route. Located at the Europe's external border, Greece marks the entry point for many incoming asylum seekers. The authors Angeliki Dimitriadi and Kostas Vlachopoulos from the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy outline that Greek migration policy is dominated by security measures, at the expense of integration plans for asylum seekers. The authors argue that tragedies such as the Moria fire could provide the opportunity for a fresh start and the development of a much-nee-

ded holistic approach, with an integration policy for asylum seekers.

Chapter 7 depicts two distinct approaches to refugees and asylum systems in the UK over the past two decades. Whereas immigration channels and policies were rather open under the Labour government of the early 2000s, a more restrictive approach was adopted under subsequent Conservative rule. According to the author Shona Warren from the Agora Think Tank, the UK will stick with an approach based on restriction and austerity, and the author explains how migration was a key issue for British voters in the 2016 referendum on EU membership.

Chapter 8 addresses the common European asylum system from an EU perspective. In September 2020, the EU Commission presented its plans to reform European asylum policy. The Author Marcus Engler from Dezim Institute criticizes these plans and points out unresolved questions and unrealistic demands. The lack of a system of responsibility-sharing has been a main obstacle so far and is a key issue in the new plans. The author concludes that not all European states are interested in a functioning asylum system. He highlights that some governments might instead benefit politically from an unresolved refugee question.

Chapter 9 shows how Canada's refugee policies are shaped by its history, institutions and geography, with the latter allowing the country considerable self-determination regarding the number of refugees allowed entrance. The Canadian government sets a yearly immigration and refugee target that defines numbers. The target does not attract major public criticism. Entering refugees are selected from UN refugee camps and are offered employment and public assistance. The author Herbert Grubel from the Fraser Institute concludes that immigration policies have not been a hot topic in Canada but are increasingly under public criticism.

Chapter 10 is dedicated to the lessons learned from the previous chapters. It describes recent developments in Swiss asylum policies and identifies the main challenges. Céline Neuenschwander from Avenir Suisse presents 12 concrete measures set in four key areas for future migration strategy. The main areas of improvement are international cooperation, increased involvement of the private sector, digital solutions and streamlining processes.

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Responsibility of Liberal States with Regard to Refugees & Asylum Seekers

Peter Maurer, President of the ICRC, International Committee of the Red Cross, held a keynote speech at the Avenir Suisse Think Tank Summit on Global Migration.

Dramatic large-scale movements of migrants, including refugees and other people in need of international protection,[1] have prompted mixed reactions around the world in recent years. Significant expressions of solidarity and social mobilization have alternated with aggressive displays of anti-immigration attitudes, stigmatization and deep political unease. The human costs linked to migratory movements, and the impact of certain migration policies, have become increasingly clear.

Most of the 244 million people in the world who have left their homes voluntarily and travelled along safe and regular routes to their host country, where they integrated successfully. But a significant minority is compelled to leave because of armed conflict, other situations of violence or untenable conditions. Every day, in different parts of the world, the ICRC sees first-hand the suffering that pushes people to flee in search of safety to meet their basic needs. They are often exposed to great risks and hardship along migratory routes or upon arrival, notably due to the lack of legal pathways to access international protection. Other people leave a safe place in search of better prospects, but then face similar difficulties en route and need protection and humanitarian assistance as they transit through countries at war or conditions on their journey deteriorate badly.

The ICRC's mandate and exclusively humanitarian mission is grounded in international law, in the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. We work together with the other components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement seeking to ensure that vulnerable migrants[2] receive the protection they are entitled to under international and domestic law (including the special protection afforded to certain categories of people, such as refugees and asylum seekers), and that they can access the assistance they require regardless of their legal status. We play a leading role in the Movement's protection work, notably by visiting detained migrants; engaging with states in a dialogue on the humanitarian consequences and the impact of their migration policies on migrants' rights; maintaining and restoring family links along migration routes; clarifying the fate and whereabouts of missing people and supporting their families, and ensuring proper and dignified handling of human remains and other forensic services. The ICRC also engages directly and confidentially with state authorities to seek to ensure that they fulfil their obligations to protect the lives and preserve the dignity of vulnerable migrants.

A family's decision to leave is always tragic. People have lost so much: they no longer see any future in the place which has been their family's home for generations. Once they are forced to move, the journey is paved with insecurity. Migrants risk being detained or extorted. They may become trapped in a country affected by armed conflict or other violence and face great threats. Families are separated. Relatives go missing. The initial tragedy meets more tragedy.

During the Covid-19 pandemic migrants, including refugees, have been impacted across many fronts: those living in camps and other collective sites already have limited access to basic health services. Physical distancing is difficult and hygiene measures are in short supply. Additionally, the ICRC is seeing how they are disproportionately impacted by the economic repercussions of lockdown measures, given their already precarious circumstances and heavy dependency on external support from host communities and humanitarian actors. These measures have also increased risks of neglect, abuse, exploitation and violence, including sexual violence, particularly for women and children. Moreover,

1 The ICRC, like the rest of the International Red Cross and Crescent Movement, uses a deliberately broad description of "migrants" to include all people who leave or flee their home to seek safety or better prospects abroad, and who may be in distress and need protection or humanitarian assistance. Migrants may be workers, students and/or foreigners deemed irregular by public authorities. They can also be refugees, asylum seekers and/or stateless persons. We seek to ensure that all migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, receive the protection they are entitled to under international and domestic law, but we adopted an inclusive description to reflect our operational practice and emphasize that all migrants are protected under several bodies of law.

2 The term "vulnerable migrants" is used by the ICRC to refer to migrants in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. This includes migrants who find themselves in danger because they are caught in a situation of armed conflict or other situations of violence, are in distress at sea or on land, or lack access to essential services. It also includes specific categories of people, such as children, elderly persons, disabled persons and victims of trafficking.

migrants have also seen their access to international protection restricted due to temporary blanket border closures put in place in several countries in response to the pandemic. Many have become stranded along border areas or in transit, with insufficient access to essential services.

We recognize that states are challenged by the political, social and economic dimensions of migration across borders and that these movements and their management raise difficult questions. How should migration be regulated and governed? How can people's status be properly determined in difficult "mixed flows?" How can vulnerable people be best protected when the reasons for their migration falls into "grey zones" between current legal categories? How can people's protection needs be addressed beyond their legal status? What are the limits to the number of people a country can receive and successfully integrate? How can returns be made sustainable and not lead to further circular migration? How can conditions be improved or better prospects created in countries of origin?

Responses to address such challenges cannot be limited to fulfill security imperatives or political discourse but should aim at preserving migrants' dignity and fundamental rights. We urge states to duly consider the humanitarian dimension of movements of migrants, including refugees, in their policies. This is essential to reduce human suffering, protect vulnerable groups and to weigh the humanitarian impact of migration policies.

Some states have shown remarkable solidarity, generosity and judicious self-interest by admitting and hosting significant numbers of migrants, including refugees and other people in need of international protection, for many decades. Recent years have witnessed a hardening of migration policies. Many states have adopted measures designed to prevent and deter foreign nationals from arriving on their territory, including through the adoption of restrictive admission and stay measures.

The ICRC's key recommendations to states are as follows:

Place the protection of migrants at the core of migration and asylum policies.

The implementation of strict migration and containment policies may not only fail to curtail migration but also induce increasingly complex and risky patterns of mobility. These can result in greater suffering because people may turn to smuggling networks or travel along longer and more dangerous routes exposing them to greater risks including family separation, disappearance and death.

States' migration laws, policies and practices should respect migrants' fundamental rights and be driven by humanity alongside other legitimate concerns. The focus should be on the suffering, safety and dignity of migrants at every stage of their journey. Protection of migrants and security issues should not be seen as mutually exclusive since enacting policies that protect the rights of migrants can contribute to greater security and stability. Prevention of family separation as well as measures to address disappearances and death along migratory routes and clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing migrants should be given due consideration in states' external migration policies.

Ensure that migrants are treated humanely in all circumstances in conformity with relevant legal obligations under international, regional and domestic law.

States have the sovereign prerogative to regulate migration and to decide on the criteria for admission and expulsion of non-nationals, including those with an irregular status. However, that prerogative is not absolute and international law contains a number of limits to it. States must uphold the principle of *non-refoulement*: no migrant shall be sent back to a country where there are substantial grounds to believe that he or she would be in danger of being subjected to violations of certain fundamental rights, in particular torture or other forms of ill-treatment, and arbitrary deprivation of life.

The physical integrity of migrants should also be guaranteed in border management operations. Force may only be used as a last resort and must respect human rights law and standards. In line with international human rights law, any use of force must be consistent with the principles and requirements of legality, necessity, proportionality, precaution and accountability. Authorities should avoid using force simply to prevent migrants from reaching borders or to deter them from seeking access to international protection.

Avoid detention for immigration-related reasons – liberty should be the norm.

Detention is increasingly used by states as a tool to manage and control migration. But immigration detention is not only harmful for individuals, it is also costly for societies – it is in the interest of states to avoid detention and identify non-custodial alternatives. This is especially relevant in the context of Covid-19 where places of detention pose particular challenges in terms of overcrowding and hygiene measures and the risk of propagation of the virus.

Detention of migrants should be a measure of last resort; liberty should always be the default option. If there are grounds for deprivation of liberty, alternatives to detention (such as, for instance, regular reporting to the authorities or the deposit of a financial guarantee) should be considered first. States should end the detention of children and family separation for immigration-related reasons

Prevent forced displacement in armed conflict and other situations of violence – ensure greater respect for applicable norms and increase efforts to prevent and resolve these situations which are often the root causes of forced displacement.

Armed conflict and other situations of violence are major drivers of forced displacement. Increasing efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts and other violence are essential means to protect populations affected and address the root causes of forced displacement.

At the same time, respect for the rules of international humanitarian law, in situations of armed conflict, and/or for international human rights law in other situations of violence can prevent the forced displacement of people within their country or across borders. Respect for such rules can also have a major impact on reducing the scale and suffering involved in displacement.

Include migrants, irrespective of legal status, in Covid-19 responses – this is not only essential to reduce the impact of the pandemic on migrants themselves but is also core to public health management.

The specific vulnerability of migrants should be factored into any national plan to respond to Covid-19. Specific strategies of outreach are required to ensure their access to information, their inclusion in prevention measures and their equal access to testing and health care services. Contingency plans that follow public health guidance are urgently required for collective sites, camps, formal and informal settlements, as well as immigration detention facilities. Measures to address the economic and social impacts of the pandemic on the most vulnerable groups should also include migrants.

Against a backdrop of already prevalent discrimination, migrants are at risk of being blamed for the propagation of the pandemic, exacerbating the risk of violence by communities or xenophobic groups. States must ensure that migrants are treated humanely and protected against stigmatization and violence.

At a time of globalization and strong interdependence between countries confronted with the complex issue of managing migratory movements in the face of Covid-19, cooperation amongst states should prevail, as it is a prerequisite for the effectiveness of national, regional and international responses. Such collaborative approach should be aimed at the well-being of individuals, and not to deter migration and punish those who may be compelled or decide to leave their communities. Security concerns must be balanced against humanitarian considerations.

1 _ Facts and Figures: The Latest Developments in International and Swiss Migration and Asylum Policy

By Eduard Gnesa, Former Swiss Special Ambassador for International Migration, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Bern

Summary

The growth of the world's population, globalization, and the increasingly close economic and social ties between states that go hand in hand with the latter have been accompanied by an increase in international migration. Cross border movements have been changing constantly, especially since 2015.

This chapter provides an overview on migration movements in general, and particularly on developments in the refugee and asylum sector from a Swiss and global perspective. While the worldwide number of refugees has increased, the number of asylum applications to Switzerland has been shrinking since the influx of 2015–16. One reason for this is the Covid-19 pandemic, suggesting the figures are likely to rise in the medium term. With regard to the Swiss migration and asylum sector, the author Eduard Gnesa highlights recent amendments; namely shorter procedures, intensified efforts to integrate people within the asylum sector, better legal protection and improved repatriation practices. It is concluded that effective migration policies should be shaped in cooperation with EU/EFTA states and countries of origin while being based on pragmatism.

1.1 _ Current Migration Trends

The number of international migrants, refugees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) has risen sharply worldwide in recent decades. Between 2015 and 2019 alone, their number has grown from 249 million to 272 million people. Migration has also increased in Europe, both in terms of internal migration in EU/EFTA countries and immigration from third countries to Europe.

More than half of the migration movements take place within the continent. Since 2015, especially intra-European labor and educational migration has increased. In the case of labor migration, the number of temporary labor migrants (seasonal workers and seconded workers) in particular has increased. The same applies to migration for education and training purposes: in the EU/EFTA area, for example, the proportion of international students increased by 12.7 percent between 2015 and 2017.

Immigration from third countries (meaning countries outside of the Schengen area) is also mainly labor and education related (in 2017 these accounted for half of the applications for resident permits). In addition, in most EU countries, there has been an increase in family reunification, accounting for another quarter of migration.

Immigration to Switzerland has increased annually over the past 20 years, although less strongly since 2015 than before. In 2019, 45 percent of immigration was attributable to gainfully employed persons from EU/EFTA countries, 4 percent to gainfully employed persons from third countries (contingent), 29 percent to family reunification and 11 percent to education and training.

Developments in the refugee and asylum sector

According to UNHCR, more than 70 million people were displaced worldwide at the end of 2019. In the EU-28, the number of asylum applications halved from more than 1.2 million in 2015 to 613,000 in 2019. Syria and Afghanistan have been the two most common countries of origin for asylum seekers in the EU-28 since 2015. In addition, there has been a sharp increase in asylum applications from South and Latin America.

In Switzerland, the number of asylum applications has fallen by more than half: Whereas 39,532 people applied in 2015, the figure had dropped to 14,269 by 2019, the lowest since 2007. By contrast, the protection rate in Switzerland has not changed much since 2015: It averaged about 55 percent for recognized refugees and provisionally admitted persons. In Switzerland, the same countries of origin have been at the forefront of the statistics since 2015: Eritrea, Afghanistan, Syria, Turkey, Algeria, Sri Lanka.

Irregular migration

There is no universally accepted definition of irregular migration. The International Organization of Migration (IOM) defines it as "movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit or receiving country" (IOM 2011). Irregular migration has decreased since the strong influx of 2015–16 in Europe, dropping by 83 percent between 2015 and 2019. While more than one million irregular migrants arrived in Europe by sea and land in 2015, their number was still around 124,000 in 2019. However, recent data show that in 2019 and the first 10 months of 2020, the Mediterranean route from North Africa to Italy and to Spain has regained importance.

Changed situation due to Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic led to extensive new migratory movements in Europe, Asia and Africa in spring 2020. This included the largest ever repatriation operation of European nationals, as well as the unorganized intra-European return of temporary workers and international students to their home countries due to the closure of companies and tertiary educational institutions. In addition, as the pandemic spread, borders were closed worldwide, travel restrictions imposed, and visa and asylum procedures curtailed. The volume of international air, sea and land traffic decreased significantly; international migration and internal migrations has been hampered. One consequence was the public becoming more aware of the dependence of the European agricultural economy and health systems on migrants.

Irregular entry into EU countries and Switzerland decreased with the pandemic, and asylum applications dropped sharply, especially from February to June 2020, only to increase again in the EU and Switzerland from June 2020.

Globally, the pandemic affected, among other things, the fate of two billion people without legal and social protection who were at the mercy of lockdowns in the informal sector. The loss of income for these people in the first month of the crisis alone is estimated at an average of 80 percent. In Africa, up to 20 million jobs could be lost as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, African commodity exports have collapsed. At the same time, remittances from abroad have declined sharply. In 2018, these had amounted to $ 616 billion – four times the total official development assistance. By 2020, the World Bank expects that remittances to low and middle-income countries will decrease by about 20 percent and foreign direct investment to them to fall by more than 35 percent. The foreseeable consequences: millions of people will be denied access to education and health care. Combined with famine, droughts, climate change and war – the traditional causes of migration and flight – increased pressure to emigrate to neighboring countries and in some cases to the industrialized countries can be expected in future.

1.2 _ Swiss Migration and Asylum Policy

Swiss migration policy is based on three core values: prosperity, solidarity and security. Switzerland's prosperity is closely linked to the economy, which is highly dependent on foreign labor. Switzerland's humanitarian tradition is represented by solidarity; the reception and integration of refugees as well as development cooperation play an important role. Security of the population as the third value means that natives and immigrants should feel safe.

Since 2002, Switzerland has implemented a dual admission system to its labor market: highly qualified and less qualified persons from EU countries can work on the basis of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons with the EU, provided they have a job. The number of cross-border commuters alone amounted to approximately 350,000 in 2019. Only highly qualified persons from third countries are admitted on a quota basis, with an average of approximately 7,500 short-term and annual residents per year over the past 10 years. Given the high wages and low unemployment rates of Swiss and foreign workers, immigration to the Swiss labor market has been largely positive, at least until the Covid-19 crisis. The vast majority of studies conclude that under free movement with the EU and flanking measures introduced in Switzerland, immigration had no adverse effects on natives' wages or employment prospects. Likewise, given the high number of foreigners in Switzerland – about 25 percent of the total population – integration has been largely successful.

Regarding refugees, Switzerland has taken various measures to improve the asylum system due to the sharp drop in asylum applications after 2015, namely with shorter procedures, improved legal protection, more intensive and efficient integration of refugees and temporarily admitted persons, and finally also with improved repatriation practices. These measures have proved their worth, as has the distribution key in place for years: if longer procedures are expected, asylum seekers are distributed among cantons in proportion to the population. With its measures, Switzerland provides an example to the EU, which has major deficits in individual member states regarding burden sharing, rapid procedures and procedures that comply with the rule of law. Whether long overdue efficiency improvements can be devised with the new EU migration pact and the revision of the Dublin system, which is also of central importance to Switzerland, cannot be judged today (cf. chapter 8).

For Switzerland, the following fields of action will be of particular importance in the future:

Access to the labor market

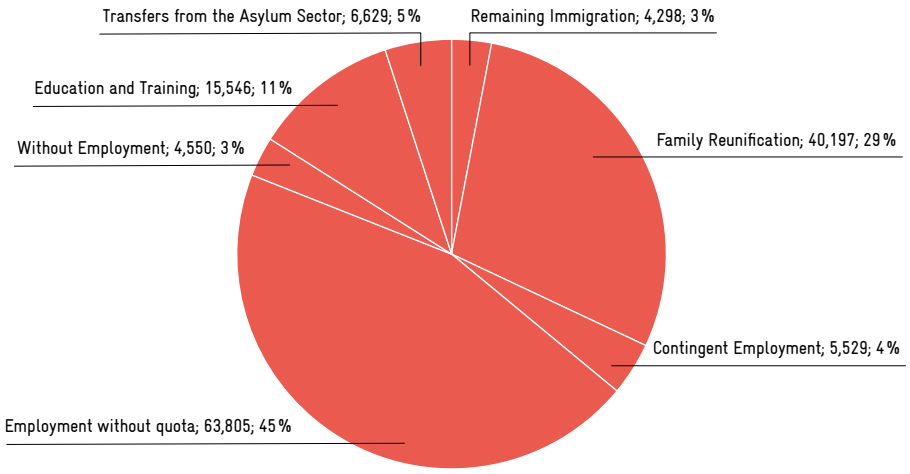
High unemployment rates, hundreds of thousands on short-time work and the closure of companies will weaken the European and Swiss labor markets and reduce the recruitment of foreign workers. The duration and severity of the recession as well as the timing and extent of the economic recovery – and thus also the future sector and occupation-specific demand for labor – cannot yet be predicted. However, European and Swiss labor migration policies will be more strongly influenced by short-term needs (especially for temporary seasonal workers in agriculture and for health care professionals) and labor market developments than in the past.

With the proven dual admission system to the labor market, and good cooperation with the EU based on the free movement of people, Switzerland will continue to be able to compete in the increasingly tough market for structurally needed labor in Europe. In the medium term, it will not

Figure 1-1

Reasons for Immigration 2019

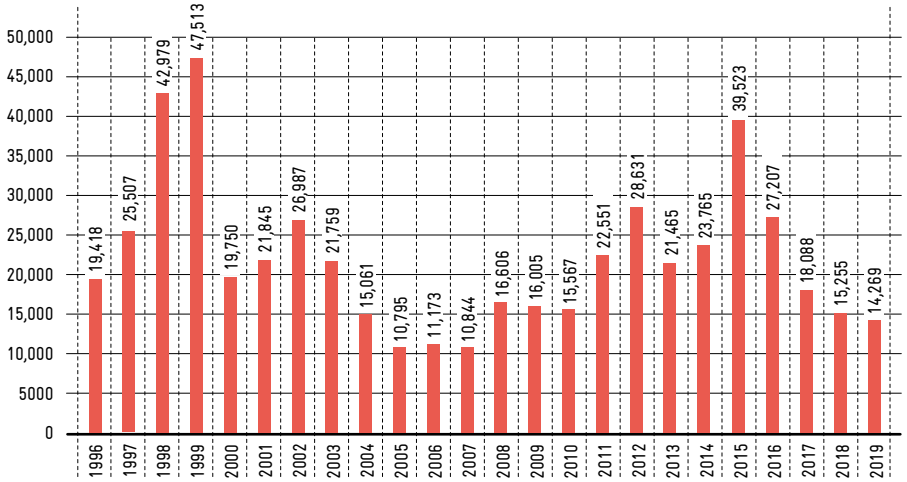
The largest share stems from employment without quota, whereas asylum migration comprises 5%.



Source: State Secretariat for Migration SEM (2020a)

Figure 1-2

Number of Asylum Requests in Switzerland 1996–2019



Source: State Secretariat for Migration SEM (2020b)

be sufficient for Switzerland to focus its recruitment efforts primarily on the EU/EFTA countries. Qualified workers will also be needed from third countries. In health care especially, it will simply not be possible to recruit enough staff from the EU countries alone.

Asylum and refugee politics

In the wake of the Corona crisis, tighter border controls and mobility restrictions have reduced the number of asylum seekers and refugees entering Europe for a time. However, also as a result of the pandemic, increased displacement pressure is to be expected, especially from Africa, leading to more irregular entry attempts. These will be associated with higher risks and costs for immigrants, which in turn will benefit people smugglers. It can be assumed that asylum applications will increase again because of the dissonance in the EU over an effective asylum policy, the still too long asylum procedures and the currently very difficult repatriation of persons staying irregularly in Europe and who ultimately attempt to obtain a regular residence status by applying for asylum.

Switzerland took the necessary domestic policy measures with the asylum reform of 2016. The country is also prepared for a possible increased influx of asylum seekers. For the federal government and the cantons to implement the 2018 Integration Agenda will require a great deal of commitment at all levels of government as well as from civil society to ensure the continuation of so far successful integration programs for refugees and provisionally admitted persons in language, education and employment. By the end of 2020, almost 50 percent of refugees and provisionally admitted persons were employed. With the registration procedure introduced in 2019, the integration pre-apprenticeship and other measures, Switzerland has also created better opportunities for these people to find a job. They are often employed in the hospitality, construction and cleaning industries, where workers are sought who are already in the country.

At European level, Switzerland should continue to show great interest in working very closely with the EU on Schengen and Dublin regulations regarding border and visa policy, asylum and refugee policy, and security cooperation. Bern can contribute to the discussions and negotiations with the EU with tried and tested measures in the area of refugees at home, but also in foreign migration policy.

Foreign migration policy

In the context of its foreign migration policy, Switzerland should work more intensively bilaterally and regionally with the countries of origin and transit in the area of migration. Support for the suffering population in conflict regions in terms of education or environmental concerns alone will no longer suffice. To prevent further destabilization of countries of origin and transit and to reduce irregular migration to developed countries, Switzerland as well as the EU/EFTA zone will have to cooperate more with countries of origin and transit of migrants and refugees, especially with regard to economic, development and health issues related to migration.

Switzerland already has appropriate instruments, such as migration agreements and partnerships, which cover a wide range of issues; they institutionalize and legitimize long-term cooperation on matters like regular and irregular migration, return and reintegration, capacity-building, development; they are reciprocal, flexible and build relationships based on trust; and they focus on long-term, holistic approaches. Experience to date has been positive.

Other topics could be included in the already broad field of application, e.g. health policy aspects, remittances, legal fast-track immigration routes, temporary internships, and education and training opportunities. With the "Whole of Government Approach" introduced in 2011 and the "Interdepartmental Structure for Foreign Migration Policy" (IMZ) set up for this purpose, the Federal Council can further develop cooperation between the

various federal agencies to achieve the greatest possible coherence in migration policy.

These proposals are in line with the "strategic linkage of 'International Cooperation' (IC) with migration policy for the next four years" decided by the Federal Council and the Parliament. In addition to the goals of economic development, combating climate change, and commitment to peace and the rule of law, the Federal Council now also wants to address the reduction of the causes of forced and irregular migration. The priority regions include North Africa, the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa, i.e. regions of the greatest poverty and where there is the greatest potential for migration to Europe.

International migration governance

Finally, international migration governance should not be underestimated. Switzerland has been very active in international bodies for many years. Today, Geneva is the hub of the global migration dialogue. The most important international organizations in terms of migration policy, such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), are based there. Switzerland joined the UN Refugee Pact in 2018, and only recently it approved the Migration Pact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The Migration Pact marks a conceptual framework for future global migration policy cooperation and is not a legally binding instrument, as each participant retains the sovereign right to determine its own migration policy. The approval marks an important signal in terms of global migration policy cooperation.

1.3 _ Concluding Remarks and Outlook

Renationalization of migration policy does not solve any problems. A realistic and successful migration policy must continue to be shaped by Switzerland in cooperation with the EU/EFTA states and, in the area of asylum, also with the countries of origin – without scaremongering and ideology, but rather with Swiss pragmatism.

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2_Switzerland: The Asylum System in Transition – Labor Market Integration as a Necessary Precondition for Security

By Marco Salvi, Head of Research "Equal Opportunity Society," and Pascal Lago, Senior Researcher Smart Government and Swiss Security Policy, both Avenir Suisse

Facts and Figures 2019

Total Population: 8,574,832	Total Refugee Population: 110,162
Asylum Applications: 14,195	Positive Decisions: 10,790
Foreign-born population: 29.7 %	Foreign-born employment rate: 77.1 %
GDP per capita: $ 81,993	GDP: $ 703 bn

Sources: Eurostat (2019); OECD (2021); The World Bank Group (2019)

Summary

This chapter offers an overview of the asylum population in Switzerland in terms of labor market integration and aspects of security. The first part indicates that labor market integration poses a challenge. Several factors impeding increased employment are discussed and areas of improvement suggested. The second part focuses on security impacts of the asylum sector. The two areas are interrelated, as increased labor market integration reduces security related issues such as criminality.

The asylum population in Switzerland shows a low participation in the labor market compared to native citizens or third-country migrants. In comparison to other European countries, the employment rate of the asylum sector in Switzerland is lower. The authors identify hurdles to refugees' and provisionally admitted persons' labor market participation on institutional, company and personal levels. The research also focuses on links between labor market integration and security related issues. Essentially, unemployment, uncertain prospects or space constraints increase the chances of for criminal activities among the asylum population.

2.1 _ Increasing the Employment Rate Among Refugees Poses a Challenge

Many countries, including Switzerland, draw a sharp distinction between economic migration and humanitarian asylum seekers. While economic migrants are admitted only when their integration into the labor market is guaranteed, this is not the case (but a goal) for migrants who flee their countries because their lives are in danger. The labor market integration of refugees is progressing slowly in many places: In 2018, for example, around 80 percent of refugees from Syria were unemployed in Europe (Economist 2018). In Switzerland, the labor force participation rate of asylum seekers and refugees is around 40 percent five years after their arrival. This puts Switzerland in the midrange compared to other European countries (Chart 1; Joyce 2018). Compared to the labor force participation rate of working-age individuals in Switzerland (well above 80 percent), the figure is rather modest. In Germany, 60 percent of refugees were employed after 5 years in 2018–14 percentage points below the native employment rate of 74 percent. In Canada, by contrast, the labor force participation rate of refugees is 50 percent after just one year.

Refugees' attachment to the labor market also tends to be weaker, reflected by higher risks of unemployment and strongly above-average social assistance rates among adults (SEM 2020). In comparison with other third-country migrants, the overall balance is negative: Individuals who migrate to Switzerland for family reunification are, on average, employed much faster. Also, 80 percent of the unemployed find a job within one year (Bieberschulte et al. 2014).

What are the reasons for the comparatively low participation of the asylum population in the labor market? Before discussing possible explanations, it is worth taking a more differentiated look at this heterogeneous group. At the end of 2020, around 60,000 people were in the asylum process, 12,000 of them asylum seekers (status N) and 48,000 classified as provisional admissions (status F). In addition, there were around 62,000 recognized refugees (with a B or C permit) and 4,000 "persons in return assistance" and other special cases (cf. Table 2-1). Thus, the asylum population currently comprises about 125,000 people, corresponding to 6 percent of the total foreign resident population.

Access to the labor market is regulated differently depending on an asylum seeker's type of residence permit and canton (D'Amato et al. 2019: 30).

- Asylum seekers (N permit) are granted access to the labor market in Switzerland after a three-month waiting period, relatively short compared to other European countries (Hainmüller et al. 2018). Employment requires a permit and is subject to

Table 2-1:

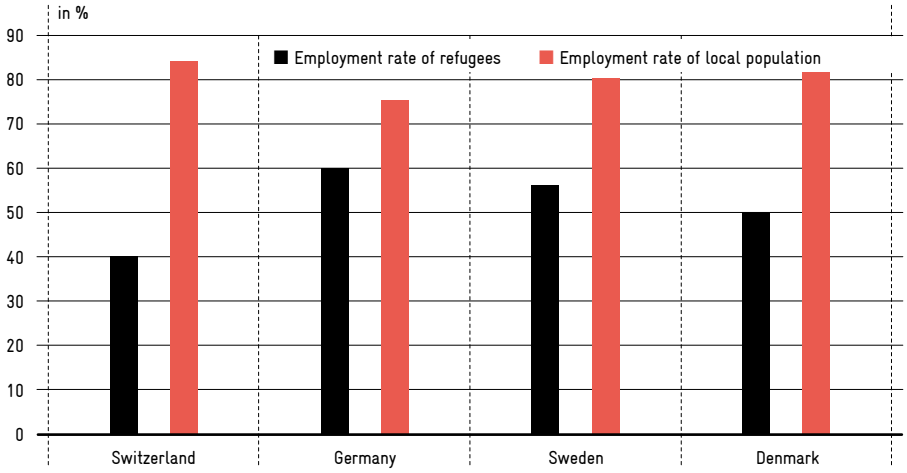
The Alphabet Soup of Residence Permits

	Category	*Terms*	*Amount (T, 2019)*	*2002/19*	
Permanent residents					
C	Settled migrants	None	1,376	+27 %	
	Refugees thereof		19		+146 % since 2010
B	Foreign residents	Employement	714	+100 %	
	Refugees thereof		44		
L	Longer short-term residents	Temporary employment	21	+1 %	
Non-permanent residents					
L	Short-term residents <1 year	Temporary employment	53	+10 %	
Asylum					
N	Asylum seekers	Asylum application pending	12	-48 %	
F	Temporarily admitted persons	Application rejected, not deported	48	+92 %	
	Without papers (estimated)		75		

Source: BFS (2020b)

Figure 2-1

International comparison of employment rates (5 years after immigration)



Source: Joyce (2018), own calculation

priority being given to Swiss nationals, although this is not strictly implemented in most cantons (D'Amato et al. 2019, p. 104). Some 13 cantons further restrict access to the labor market for asylum seekers via a special regulation. In four cantons, asylum seekers are only allowed to work in sectors with labor shortages.

- For temporarily admitted persons (F permit), the Swiss priority rule does not apply. However, such individuals are subject to the usual local, professional and industry wage and working conditions, and their employment is subject to registration. Registration processes are time and money intensive: nine cantons state that they need between 11 and 30 days to issue a permit.

Mobility restrictions affect all categories of the asylum population: an application, for example, must be submitted to move to another canton, and can be denied if the person involved is dependent on social assistance. Such restrictions are far-reaching: a construction worker, for example, may not be employed at a building site outside the canton of domicile. A change of residence is only permitted by the State Secretariat for Migration if both cantons agree, if the family is entitled to unify and if there is no other reason for revocation. These institutional hurdles provide an initial explanation and partly underlie the low labor market integration of refugees and asylum seekers. But there are also other factors at stake, addressed in the next section.

Empirical studies on the factors determining asylum population's labor market integration

In addition to the institutional hurdles, there are several other possible factors behind the low labor force participation rate. These include inadequate skills, employers' unease with hiring an asylum seeker, or a lack of demand. Practitioners, interviewed by Bieberschulte et al. (2014), gave contradictory explanations, making a number of empirical studies over recent years all the more relevant.

Slotwinski et al. (2019), stressing that asylum seekers are randomly assigned to a domicile canton, find that from 2011 to 2014, cantons with the most liberal admission requirements had an 11 percentage point higher refugee labor force participation rate compared to those with the strictest regulations. This estimate is corrected for other possible confounding factors, such as social assistance benefits. According to this study, the latter do not exert a significant influence on the probability of employment.

Hainmüller et al. (2016) emphasize a lengthy duration of procedures as a deterrent to future employment. They examine asylum applications between 1994 and 2004 and conclude that each additional year causes the employment rate to fall by

5 percentage points. By contrast, when controlling for language skills, education level, and migrant age, the impact of origin on employment is small. If refugees are proficient in the official language of the canton, their chances of employment are significantly higher.

The language issue is examined in more depth by Auer et al. (2017). These authors also conclude that language skills play a crucial role in employment. They estimate that labor market participation doubles if a migrant's native language is the same as the official language of the canton of domicile – true, for example, in the case of French-speaking refugees from Africa in Western Switzerland.

Furthermore, Gnesa (2018) identifies 12 key points hindering companies from hiring a refugee or provisionally admitted person. These include companies' efforts in information gathering, permit issuing or skill assessment together with rigid wage or labor agreements. Insecurities regarding an applicant's motivation or the possibility of a sudden repatriation (in cases of provisionally admitted persons) also pose constraints. Investing in a refugee can pay off financially for companies: Baic et al. (2017) suggest that financial outlays are covered within the first year of employment.

The new integration agenda of Switzerland

In June 2016, Swiss voters approved a major reform of the Asylum Act by 56 percent. The new provisions entered into force on March 1 2019. The main goals of the reform were shorter asylum procedures and more intensive integration efforts. To achieve this, the federal government's contribution to the cantons for each refugee increased from CHF 6,000 to CHF 18,000 per person. These funds are used to finance language courses, employment programs, vocational training offers and basic skills courses.

It is still too early for a detailed evaluation of the reform. Nevertheless, it has tackled some of the problems highlighted by the aforementioned labor market research, such as the length of proceedings. In this regard, the federal government and the cantons have recorded some tangible improvements: for example, the average duration of proceedings has decreased. However, this may reflect the current low number of applications. Until the onset of the pandemic, the employment situation was improving: the employment rate after 5 years had increased by around 3 percentage points to 40 percent. However, that is still far from the official – and not particularly ambitious – target of 50 percent. Moreover, this happened during a boom phase for the Swiss labor market. It is to be feared that the pandemic will bring a

setback, since it has disproportionately affected industries offering jobs to low-skilled workers (catering, hotel industry, certain personal services).

It would therefore be desirable to address further institutional problems of the Swiss asylum process, such as the allocation of refugees among cantons, which should take better account of existing competences, and the removal of further artificial barriers to employment, such as required permits, restrictions in labor market access or mobility between cantons. Also, the potentially negative effect of mandatory cantonal minimum wages on refugee employment should be given greater attention.

These changes would also create incentives for companies to employ more asylum seekers. After all, efforts to increase labor market participation also impact other related areas, such as security related issues among the asylum population.

2.2 _ Security Impacts of the Asylum Sector in Switzerland – The Need for Rapid Asylum Procedures and Fast Integration into the Labor Market

Police crime statistics only show aggregated data for the asylum sector: asylum seekers (residence status N) and refugees (provisionally admitted persons with residence status F) are combined. In addition, recognized refugees (residence status B or C) are not explicitly differentiated from other foreigners. Future police crime statistics should publicly disclose more differentiated data, allowing a more specific analysis by resident status over time.

In the following, if not otherwise stated, we focus on statistics showing accused persons (Beschuldigten-Statistik) rather than convictions (Verurteilten-Statistik) because Switzerland's conviction statistics do not explicitly report the permanent resident population.

Offense rate of the asylum sector higher than of Swiss residents and foreign permanent residents

To compare crime between population groups, it is necessary to consider the population development by means of offense rates (the accused persons registered by the police per 1,000 persons of the corresponding population group). Note that criminologists advise caution in calculating and interpreting offense rates of the asylum sector, due to the low numbers of asylum seekers and their large variation from year to year (Simmler & Schär 2017; Baier 2020).

As table 2 shows, in 2019, the offense rate of the asylum population was about nine times higher than that of the Swiss (only 6 per 1,000 Swiss were registered as accused persons by the police in 2019). By contrast, the offense rate of foreign permanent residents (12 per 1,000) was twice as high

Table 2-2

Offense rates and total number of accused persons (2019), by origin

	Total number of accused persons	Share of Total	Population size	Offence rates
Total of all accused persons	81,709			
Swiss residents	39,907	49 %	6,430,658	6
Asylum sector	3,362	4 %	59,734	56
Foreign permanent residents	25,925	32 %	2,175,375	12
Other foreign accused persons	12,968	16 %	no data available	-

Sources: BFS (2020a), BFS (2020b); own calculations

than of the Swiss and 4.5 times less than of the asylum sector.

The offense rates for persons in the asylum sector (residence status F and N) is in decline though. In 2012, there were 139 accused persons per 1,000 people from the asylum sector, whereas in 2019 there were 56, a drop of more than 50 percent (BFS 2020a; BFS 2020b; own calculation).

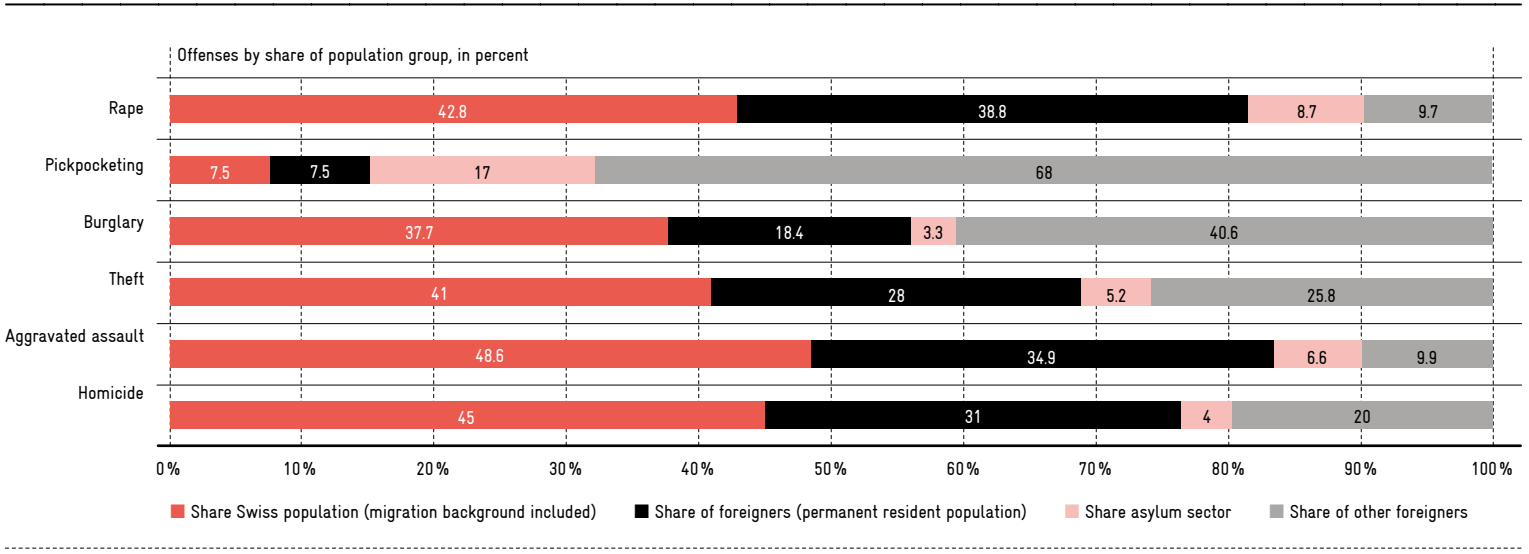
Although offense rates cannot be calculated for the category of other foreign accused persons (übrige ausländische Beschuldigte), because there are no population statistics for these groups (Baier 2020), it is known this group commits the most crimes relative to their population size (Baier 2020).

Note that, in absolute terms, crimes committed by the asylum sector are hardly significant: Out of the total of 81,709 accused persons registered by the police in 2019, 3,362 were from the asylum sector, which corresponds to just 4 percent (BFS 2020a, own calculations). The analysis by a selection of the most serious crime categories (serious violence, property crime and sexual assault), as shown in figure 1, demonstrates that the asylum sector accounts for the smallest share across all crime categories bar pickpocketing. And even for pickpocketing, the asylum sector's share (17 percent) is still significantly lower than that of the other foreigners (68 percent). Note that figure 1 shows that Switzerland is confronted with a high amount of criminal tourism, since the other foreigners, i.e., those without permanent resident status, account for the biggest share in the categories of burglary and pickpocketing.

It should also be noted that most victims of asylum sector crime are asylum seekers themselves. The propensity to vio-

Figure 2-2

Asylum sector shows lowest crime share across crime categories except for pickpocketing



Source: Federal Statistical Office (2020), own calculation

lence is around three times higher against compatriots than against Swiss nationals (Couttenier et al. 2019). Those "imported conflicts" are intensified if asylum seekers are excluded from the labor market and continue to spend a lot of time in asylum centers (Couttenier et al. 2019) **(See next sections)**.

Possible causes of the higher crime level of the asylum sector

The popular explanation that the higher crime rates in the asylum sector are due to sociodemographic peculiarities (e.g. age and gender – asylum seekers are mostly young men aged between 14 and 40) is only partly true for Switzerland: Simmler & Schär (2017), controlling for gender and age, show that the offense rate of young male refugees is still six times higher than that of the corresponding Swiss cohort.

Cultural differences might be a more powerful explanation. Baier (2020) shows, in a youth survey among migrants, that controlling for norms of masculinity which "legitimize" violence, reduces the rate of violence of migrants nearly to the level of Swiss adolescents (5.3 percent compared to 4.8 percent). However, Bayer's (2020) study focuses on youth and analyses migrants in general. The specificity regarding (adolescent and adult) asylum seekers has yet to be studied.

Another explanation might be the reporting behavior of Swiss residents. Police crime statistics are prone to bias because refugees are reported to the police twice as frequently as national residents, as a study conducted in Germany shows (Baier et al. 2018).

Another driver of crime is the "in between" residency status. Provisionally admitted persons are expelled asylum seekers who know that someday they will be sent back to their country of origin, but remain in Switzerland without the possibility to work. The duration of the "in between" status is mostly uncertain; sometimes such individuals remain for up to 10 years **(cf. chapter 10 in this report)**. Those provisionally admitted asylum seekers show an increased tendency to commit crimes (NZZ 2020a, Simmler & Schär 2017). Economic migrants from western African countries in particular show a higher crime level than refugees from conflict and war zones in need of protection. Foreigners from Gambia and Nigeria show a particularly high crime rate (offence rates of 172, respectively of 151), in contrast to persons from Eritrea (19), Syria (36) and Afghanistan (31) (Simmler & Schär 2017; Baier 2020).

Rapid asylum decisions

To reduce the criminal potential means tackling irregular migration before the asylum seeker enters the country and establishing fast asylum procedures and a clear-cut residency status. The status of provisionally admitted persons in particular must be avoided in future **(cf. chapter 10 in this report)**.

Moreover, consistent prosecution, punishment and, if necessary, expulsion and deportation of accepted asylum seekers who do not comply with the rules of the criminal code is politically requested and executed according to Article 66a of the Swiss criminal code StGB **(see Box 1)**. In 2019, out of the total of the 2,829 people convicted under Art. 66a StGB, 58 percent were deported (BFS 2020c). The more serious the crime, the more likely the deportation. When judges impose prison sentences of more than six months, they also order deportation in 86 percent of cases. While 83 percent of the total convicted "other fo-

Box 1:

Termination of asylum status and expulsion in case of criminal behavior

Asylum seekers and refugees must be deported if they show serious criminal behaviour. The State Secretariat for Migration revokes asylum if a refugee has violated or endangered the internal or external security of Switzerland or has committed a particularly reprehensible criminal act (SEM, 2021a). Refugee status is withdrawn if the foreign person has obtained asylum or refugee status by making false statements or concealing material facts, as well as for reasons under Article 1c of the Refugee Convention, namely because of a new protection order, for example, in the case of homebound travel (Heimatreisen). In addition, asylum may be revoked if the refugee has resided abroad for more than one year or has been granted asylum or permission to remain permanently in another country.

On 28 November 2010, the popular initiative «for the deportation of criminal foreigners (deportation initiative)» was adopted (SEM 2021b). As a result, the criminal court has been instructed to order a mandatory expulsion if it finds a foreign person guilty of clearly defined offenses (Art. 66a para. 1 StGB), in particular, crimes in which people are killed, seriously injured or their life and limb are endangered, serious sexual offenses and all serious crimes against property.

Also, the Federal Office of Police (Fedpol) may order the expulsion of foreign nationals to safeguard Switzerland's internal or external security (Art. 68 para. 1 AIG). Threats to Switzerland's internal and external security include, for example, threats posed by terrorism, violent extremism, prohibited intelligence services, or organized crime. With the combined removal and detention measure, all existing residence rights expire (Art. 61 para. 1 let. d AIG). The measure can also be ordered against persons who have never been in the country or who have been abroad at the time of the order.

reigners" (the asylum sector is subsumed in this category within these statistics) were deported, only 19 percent of the resident foreigners were. In other words, an asylum seeker is much more likely to be deported than a foreigner with a C permit (NZZ 2020b; BFS 2020c). Therefore, the discussion about application of the hardship clause – the possible exception from article 66a StGB in the serious case of a personal hardship – should focus, if at all, on foreigners in general and not on the asylum sector (alone).

Fast integration into the labor market reduces the propensity to commit crime by two-thirds

Once the Swiss authorities have (rapidly) decided who is allowed to stay, it is key to offer those with granted positive resident status fast integration into the labor market. Couttenier et al. (2019) exploited a novel and unique dataset on all crimes reported in Switzerland by the nationalities of perpetrators between 2009 and 2016, and found that the propensity to commit crime among asylum seekers could be reduced by two-thirds if early integration into the Swiss labor market was granted. Their main variable coding for labor market integration was open job access. Thus, a binary variable equal to 1 for regions where asylum seekers can start working in all sectors of activity three months after arrival and equal to 0 if the working ban extends three months or restricts work to certain sectors or altogether. Couttenier et al. (2019) also found evidence that integration via courses in Swiss politics and culture led to a reduction in the propensity to commit crime (reinforcing the labor market integration effect).

A general rationale for this may be that economic and social integration increase the opportunity costs of a crime, since refugees do not want to jeopardize their gained privilege of legal work by criminal activity (Becker 1968). Working people (including refugees) have simply less time for crime. Also, work expands the personal network of contacts, leading to a mitigation of «imported conflicts» among compatriots.

Note that political measures that aim for restrictive asylum doctrines to inhibit the pull factor of asylum migration might aggravate security risks. For the UK, which restricts access to its labor market, research has shown that limited access to welfare or labor correlates with an increase in property crime among migrant groups **(cf. Chapter 7).**

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3_Germany: The Refugee Challenge – Successes and Risks for the Future

By Ulrich Kober, Director Program Integration and Education, Bertelsmann Foundation, Germany

Facts and Figures 2019

Total Population: 83,132,799	Total Refugee Population: 1,146,682
Asylum Applications: 165,615	Positive Decisions: 70,320
Foreign-born population: 16.1 %	Foreign-born employment rate: 70.8 %
GDP per capita: $ 46,445	GDP: $ 3,861 bn

Sources: Eurostat (2019); OECD (2021); The World Bank Group (2019)

Summary

Germany was among the countries that took in the most asylum applications during the refugee crisis in 2015 and 2016. Chancellor Angela Merkel shaped this momentum by promoting the "culture of welcome." This chapter draws a rather positive balance regarding refugees' integration into the educational system and labor market five years after the peak of the refugee crisis. Certain positive aspects are also noted with regard to the social welfare system. Despite that, it has to be acknowledged that the social climate towards refugees has become more polarized and populist movements have been on the rise. Therein lies another potential source of risk this chapter highlights.

Germany invested in refugees' and asylum seekers' integration by means of education and labor market measures. All asylum seekers are allowed to work three months after their arrival. Additionally, participation in integration courses is rewarded with social benefits. Overall, accommodation and integration of people seeking protection in Germany has been managed relatively well as concluded in this chapter. Even more, it is assumed that integration measures pay off in the long term and help overcoming the demographic challenge of an ageing society. However, the corona pandemic and the economic crisis resulting from it might threaten labor market integration of the asylum population and put a strain on social cohesion while strengthening populist movements.

At the end of 2019, there were 1.8 million people seeking protection in Germany. This number has more than tripled in 10 years, putting Germany in second place behind Turkey among countries that have accepted the most asylum seekers and refugees worldwide.[3] Around 1.3 million of those seeking to remain in Germany had a recognized protection status, 266,470 cases had not yet been decided. A further 212,815 had had their asylum applications rejected, yet most were granted temporary suspension of deportation. Around 34,085 were required to leave the country at the end of 2019.

3.1 _ Integration into the Educational System and Labor Market Has Been Relatively Successful

Of those seeking protection, children and adolescents have been integrated quickly into the school system in Germany's different states, albeit at varying rates. It is estimated that around 130,000 refugee children and adolescents entered the school system between January 2015 and March 2018, equivalent to establishing around 500 additional schools.[4] Over 80 percent of the refugee students feel comfortable at the school they attend and have been able to establish good social contacts (Spiess and Wittenberg 2020). These are important prerequisites for developing both the motivation to learn and self-confidence, and schools are thus paving the way for the young people to move on later to vocational training, higher education and the job market.

Integrating older refugees into the vocational training system has been more difficult, but here again, the integrative power of Germany's dual system has become evident: 55,000 people with the nationalities asylum seekers most commonly have were in training programs as of September 2019, a significant increase from the 6,600 people with the same nationalities in 2015.

Integration courses, with a focus on German-language acquisition, have been organized rapidly for adult refugees with a recognized status. The Integration Act of 2016 (together with Asylum Packages I and II) aimed at advancing linguistic and professional integration according to the principle of providing assistance while also setting requirements (Thym 2016). Access to the integration courses was given to asylum seekers who had good prospects of staying, but not to those from safe countries of origin. Under certain circumstances, there was an obligation to participate in the social integration courses, as in the program for integrating refugees into the labor market. To ensure participation, benefits were reduced for those who refused to take part. Trainees – regardless of the outcome of their asylum proceedings – were granted a temporary right to stay and, subsequently, the opportunity for regular employment. Most importantly, all asylum seekers were allowed to take up employment three months after arrival.

These measures set the course for refugees to enter the labor market quickly. The Institute for Employment Research (IAB) has calculated that, of those who arrived as refugees in 2013, about half were employed at the end of 2018. Refugees were thus integrated into the labor market more quickly than in previous years. At the end of 2018, around 60 percent were gainfully employed or in vocational training and integration programs, 23 percent were actively seeking work, 4 percent on maternity/parental leave and only 13 percent were inactive (IAB Kurzbericht 2020). In July 2020, 359,000 people from the eight countries asylum seekers most commonly originate – from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Eritrea, Somalia, Nigeria and Pakistan – held jobs that required social security contributions. In addition, about 71,000 were marginally employed. However, 281,000 refugees were registered as unemployed. The unemployment rate for individuals with the nationalities asylum seekers most commonly have was thus about 40 percent, significantly higher than for foreigners as a whole, at about 16 percent (Da Paiva Lareiro et a. 2020).

Overall, the results have been mixed but encouraging: by the end of 2019, measures to promote labor market integration had been relatively successful, but there is still a long way to go. Moreover, the corona pandemic is threatening the progress that has been made, since many of the refugees who are working only have unqualified jobs (some 44 percent at the end of 2018) and are especially at risk of becoming unemployed if the economy slows down.

3.2 _ Burdens on the Social Welfare System Have Been Manageable

It is difficult to quantify the exact costs of the refugee crisis for the state. This is because refugee-related expenditure cannot always be precisely distinguished from spending for other groups, and because it takes place at different levels (federal, state and local). The federal budgets for the years 2016 to 2019 showed an annual average of € 21.7 billion. A considerable part of this went into combating the causes of displacement, i.e. it was not spent directly on people seeking protection in Germany. Excluding this expenditure, some 4 percent of the 2019 federal budget was com-

3 UNHCR statistics only counts refugees with a recognized protection status putting Germany in fifth place *(Global Trends 2019)*.

4 In 2019/20, there were around 8.33 Mio. pupils in 32,232 in schools (of general education), i.e. around 260 pupils per school

mitted to refugee-related spending. For the years 2020 to 2023, an average of € 1.2 billion per year has been earmarked for providing accommodation during asylum procedures, € 2.2 billion for integration programs and € 5.1 billion for social services after asylum procedures have been completed. In addition, € 1.9 billion per year has been earmarked to relieve the burden on state and local governments (Bundesministerium für Finanzen 2019).

In the long term, expenditure can be offset by additional revenue for the state if refugees are successfully integrated into the labor market, and there may even be a "fiscal dividend" (Brühl 2016 and Bonin 2016). In the short term, much of this government spending has benefited Germany's businesses, so it could be argued that the spending on refugees has served as a "hidden economic stimulus package." The German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) has calculated that GDP increased by 0.2 percent in 2016 and 2017 as a result (Spiess and Wittenberg 2020). However, the funds could alternatively have been spent on infrastructure projects or promoting innovation.

Overall, German budgets seemed to have coped well with the challenges stemming from the influx of refugees. In particular, measures that help refugees integrate into the labor market are paying off for the state.

3.3 _ Impact on Cohesion Varies

The social climate in the host country also determines whether refugees are integrated successfully. In fact, the refugee crisis has been one of German civil society's "finest hours." Since 2015, 55 percent of the population has supported arriving refugees with donations (financial or material), public advocacy or active assistance (BMFSFJ 2018).

However, concerns about the negative consequences of immigration have increased among the population. The willingness to accept more refugees has also declined since 2015 and a narrow majority currently believes that there is too much immigration into Germany (Kober and Kösemen 2019). At the same time, the country's "culture of welcome," as seen by German society, has proven "robust" and, in most cases, stable at a high level: According to survey respondents, immigrants who work or study in Germany continue to be welcomed by the authorities (79 percent in 2019 compared to 77 percent in 2017) and by local people (71 percent in 2019 compared to 70 percent in 2017). Refugees are also seen to be welcomed by public authorities (71 percent in 2019, compared to 73 percent in 2017) and by local people (56 percent in 2019, compared to 59 percent in 2017). Refugees themselves continue to feel welcome in Germany (Da Paiva Lareiro et al. 2020) However, their concerns about xenophobia increased slightly between 2016 and 2018 (DIW-Wochenbericht 2020). Around 60 percent had regular contact with Germans, in rural areas even two-thirds did.

The refugee challenge has also led to the rise of populists in Germany, who, by international standards, had previously been relatively weak and divided. The AfD party ("Alternative for Germany") won a large enough share of the vote, almost 13 percent, to enter the national parliament in 2017. Meanwhile, the party has been successful in elections in all of the states, winning over 20 percent of the vote in some eastern states. Factors contributing to this success were the events on New Year's Eve 2015/16 in cities such as Cologne and Hamburg, and the isolated acts of Islamist terrorism in Hanover, Essen, Würzburg and Ansbach in the course of 2016, culminating in the attack on the Berlin Christmas Market. Terrorist acts against asylum seekers by right-wing extremists increased and were also directed against locals with a migration background, as well as against local politicians who supported refugees.

Increased polarization in society – especially in social media – appears to be one cost of the refugee crisis, with regional differences being considerable and linked to experiences in dealing with immigration. In the face of the trends towards radicalization, politicians and security forces in Germany must continue to prepare for right-wing extremist and Islamist terrorist acts; they must combat these dangers across the board to effectively protect the native and immigrant populations. The "Orderly Return Act" came into force in August 2019 to ensure rejected asylum seekers can actually be deported (Thym 2019). However, a good relationship and close cooperation with the countries of origin will be decisive if refugees are to return to their native countries without delay.

Overall, Germany has so far passed the "stress test" presented by the refugee challenge relatively well. The vast majority of politicians and the population are committed to maintaining Germany's open society and its humanitarian obligations. However, the consequences of the pandemic pose risks: they jeopardize refugees' successful integration into the labor market; and they threaten the social situation of many natives. As long as the state is able to cushion these negative effects with extensive aid packages and the economy does not slide into a permanent crisis, Germany will continue to be able to promote the integration of refugees and maintain social cohesion. The government would be well advised to continue to cooperate closely with civil society (Thränhardt 2020). What will be decisive will be whether political leaders take middle-of-the-road positions and whether the previous consensus, endorsed by a majority of the population, persists for solving the refugee challenge in a values-based and pragmatic manner.

3.4 _ Initial Investments in Integration Might Pay Off

Germany has so far coped relatively well with the challenge of accommodating and integrating some 1.8 million people seeking protection. The key here has been investing in education and the labor market, efforts that were relatively successful until the corona crisis struck. The financial impacts remained manageable given the stable economic situation. In the long term, these investments may pay off and mitigate the negative effects of demographic change. Another key factor has been the openness seen in broad sections of the population, something that was reflected in civic engagement on behalf of refugees; it also provided the basis for the major parties to advance solution-oriented policies. The security situation proved to be more robust than feared after the right-wing extremist and Islamist terrorist attacks of 2016. However, the refugee challenge has also led to a political backlash, one that is right-wing, populist and anti-migration and particularly strong in regions that have had little experience with immigration. Risks remain for the future: a pronounced economic crisis resulting from the corona pandemic could jeopardize the integration of refugees into the labor market, as well as social cohesion, and a changed security situation could once again strengthen the currently weakened populist forces.

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4_Austria: Complex Support Structures and Lasting Challenges

By Claudia Crawford, Head of KAS Office Multilateral Dialogue, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Austria

Facts and Figures 2019

Total Population: 8,877,067	Total Refugee Population: 135,951
Asylum Applications: 12,860	Positive Decisions: 7,425
Foreign-born population: 19.3 %	Foreign-born employment rate: 68.9 %
GDP per capita: $ 50,137	GDP: $ 445 bn

Sources: Eurostat (2019); OECD (2021); The World Bank Group (2019)

Summary

Austrian society is internationally diverse with almost a quarter of its population having a migration background. As with other European countries, Austria faced a peak in asylum applications during the refugee crisis of 2015 and 2016. This chapter outlines Austria's priorities in migration and asylum policies as well as the extent and access of social benefits for the asylum population.

The Austrian support system provides services on a local, regional and national level to integrate people with a migration background. As soon as an asylum seeker receives a residence permit, responsibility for social benefits switches from the federal government to the federal state. This decentral structure resulted in a complex support system helping people with a migration background integrate.

There is no strict distinction between employment services available to people with an asylum background and native Austrians who need assistance with labor market integration. Regarding welfare instruments, basic care marks the most important tool available to refugees over the first few months and up to four months after the decision on their residency. It covers basic needs such as housing, food, health insurance and clothing. Yearly integration reports evaluate the implementation of services. Austria focuses heavily on language and cultural integration courses, which are mandatory to all recognized refugees as language skills and cultural understanding are considered necessary means for labor market integration. The conclusion is that security related issues could play a role in cases when people with migration background lose hope for the future.

Since many first and second generation immigrants live in Austria, a complex system of services for integration of foreigners including refugees has developed over the years. Language and integration courses are important tools. Integration into the labor market has top priority.

The year 2015 represented a turning point for Austria and a number of other EU countries. Against the escalating war in Syria and other trouble spots in the Middle East, refugees came to the European Union on an unprecedented scale. Austria was one of the main receiving countries. In 2015 alone, 88,340 asylum applications were submitted, 2016 brought a further 42,285 and 2017 24,735 more.

It was only in 2018 that the number of asylum applications, at 13,746, fell to a level comparable to 2014 and the years before (Statistik Austria, Migration und Integration 2020, p. 36). In the period 2015–17, measured by the number of inhabitants, Austria had the highest number of asylum recognitions compared to other EU member states, about 698 per 100,000 inhabitants (Bundeskanzleramt 2020). At 76 percent, the recognition rate is particularly high for refugees from Syria.

At the beginning of 2020, the share of the foreign resident population in Austria was 17.5 percent, up 36 percent on 2010. Adding first and second generations, the proportion of people with a migration background in the total population is 23.7 percent (Bundeskanzleramt 2020).

Such data helps to explain why a complex support system has been built up over the years to help integrate people with a migration background. These services are combined with regular services generally available to Austrians. The services are provided by different local, regional and national agencies and providers, as is customary for a federally structured state. In addition, with the National Integration Plan of 2010, there is a strategy, the implementation of which is evaluated with the help of annual integration reports. An expert council has been advising the federal government on integration issues since 2010.

4.1_Basic Care Covers Refugees' Needs During the First Few Months

The most important service for refugees in their first few months is basic care (Grundsicherung), financed by the federal government. This, in addition to accommodation and food, contains other essential elements such as health insurance and clothing. Housing is decentralized in all federal states and can be private or shared. The amount of money paid ranges from 40 euros a month of pocket money to 150 euros if meals are not provided. During this time, there is a fixed place of residence. Work is allowed only in very limited cases. Basic care is granted during the asylum proce-

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dure up to a maximum of four months after the asylum recognition procedure. On average, approval takes less than three months, not including possible extensions for objections. In 2019, asylum applications came mainly from people from Afghanistan (3,000, comprising 23 percent of all applications), Syria (2,700 comprising 21 percent), and Somalian, Iraqi and Iranian nationals, with around 700 each (6 percent of applications) (Statistik Austria 2020).

As soon as refugees receive a residence permit, responsibility for benefits switches to the federal states. As long as it is not possible to provide for oneself, there is a right to a minimum income (Bedarfsorientierte Mindestsicherung, BMS), a social benefit regular in Austria and based on need. The amount differs by individual federal state.

The arrival of many refugees in 2015 and 2016 meant their share of minimum income recipients increased significantly, but fell again in 2019. By the beginning of 2020, 37 percent of all recipients were people granted asylum. If the economic situation worsens due to the corona pandemic, an increasing number of benefit recipients can be expected again. People entitled to asylum from Syria, Afghanistan and the Russian Federation are most strongly represented among foreign recipients of minimum income benefit. This group is therefore also most affected by the risk of poverty (Bundeskanzleramt 2020).

4.2 _ Integration Is Seen as a Two-Way Process

Integration efforts for refugees with a recognized residence permit are based primarily on achieving self-sufficiency as quickly as possible. Integration is understood as a two-way process that is measurable and must be promoted. Equal opportunities for social participation are to be created, which in turn must be used by immigrants.

Integration into the labor market is central to achieving self-sufficiency. This in turn depends largely on existing language skills and a minimum level of cultural understanding of the host country. Against this background, the main aim of the measures taken in recent years has been to impart language and cultural skills. Language and integration courses became mandatory with the Integration Act (Integrationsgesetz) of 2017. To this end, recognized refugees sign a declaration of integration. The Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) is responsible for implementing the Integration Act and organizing German and integration courses.

The central service provider for placing refugees in the job market is the Public Employment Service (Arbeitsmarktservice, AMS), a government agency acting for the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection. It offers advice, information, qualification measures and the placement of vacancies for all jobseekers in Austria and is therefore not an instrument just for refugees. Refugees tend to be more represented in the lower and upper qualification segments. In the past, it was always a problem adequately to assess qualifications acquired abroad. The Recognition and Assessment Act of July 2016 was passed to provide a better basis for the educationally appropriate employment of third-country nationals. As a direct consequence of the law, the homepage berufsanerkennung.at was established, offering orientation for those affected.

The longer their stay, the more people entitled to asylum find access to the labor market, although participation rates remain significantly below those of other population groups. Of those entitled to asylum or subsidiary protection living in Austria since 2007, around 64 percent were in employment after 12 years in 2019 (at least 90 days per calendar year). Of those who had lived in the country since 2015, 37 percent were employed. Of those who applied for asylum in 2016 and were still in Austria, 22 percent had started work (Endel et al. 2020). Those from Syria were able to integrate into the labor market more easily than citizens from Russia (Chechnya) and Afghanistan.

4.3 _ Labor Market Integration Is More Difficult for Women and Younger Men

Two groups in principle face greater difficulty finding jobs; women and younger men without any training. In 2019, the labor force participation of female third-country nationals was 57.5 percent – significantly below that of Austrians (74.2 percent). Only 3.2 percent of women from Chechnya in 2016 were employed; women from Syria had a likewise low rate of 9.9; and those from Afghanistan of 10.8 percent (Bundeskanzleramt 2020).

Many refugees come from countries where women have a different status than in Austria. They often experience more difficult access to professional and public life. So in recent years, efforts to promote women in particular have been greatly expanded. Since 2015, the integration department has funded 184 projects with female gender-specific funding, to the tune of more than 8.8 million euros from national and European funds (AMIF) (Bundeskanzleramt 2020).

Men between 18–34 without any training find it also difficult to find a job (OECD 2018). The corona pandemic is likely exacerbating matters given the economic slump in Austria, estimated to be -7 percent in 2020. Temporary measures taken to contain the pandemic, particularly closing borders, shops, restaurants, cultural and

leisure facilities, are already having a massive impact on the economy and jobs.

Foreign workers are hardest hit by job losses. With this in mind, training remains high on the priority list. However, the crisis has also highlighted the dependence of the agricultural and care sectors on workers who cannot be accommodated by the mainstream labor market. The sudden absence of migrant workers from neighboring countries to the east due to temporary border closings has spotlighted matters. So there are certainly opportunities for employment for this group of refugees.

The Integration Year Act (Integrationsjahrgesetz) came into force in June 2017. It regulates the so-called integration year, which is an offer for persons entitled to asylum and subsidiary protection who received their status after December 31, 2014, as well as for asylum seekers with a high probability of recognition. During the integration year, integration into the labor market is to be particularly supported. Corresponding measures include advanced German courses, clarifying existing qualifications, and professional orientation, application training and work preparation measures.

4.4 _ Costs and Benefits Are Hard to Measure

The cost of caring for refugees is a reoccurring issue in public debate. Due to the complex system, it is difficult to calculate exact costs. A 2017 response on the budgetary burdens caused by refugee migration from the budget service of the Austrian Parliament (Budgetdienst Nationalrat 2017, p. 8) attempted to show the expenses. In 2017, some 2 billion euros were spent at various levels nationally. The comparative figure for 2014 was 565.4 million. The study explicitly points out that the analysis excludes indirect income effects from growth impulses or the employment relationships of persons entitled to asylum or subsidiary protection. But other studies try to prove these play a role. A study by the Society for Applied Economic Research (Gesellschaft für Angewandte Wirtschaftsforschung (GAW)) in Innsbruck from December 2018 concluded that refugees in Tirol brought an economic gain by the fifth year. Refugee associations and churches in particular try to provide clarification and factual information to counter false reports and populist misrepresentation.

The latter are not limited to money, but also crime. The statistics do not reveal any noticeable increase in crime by refugees. Rather, matters turn critical when people with a migration background lose hope for the future. This happens, for example, when they have only temporary refugee status or their integration is not successful. A publication by Baberowski et al. (2017) on integration and security noted that the feeling of insecurity was fomented by the unknown, and such reactions occur not only regarding societal views towards refugees, but also among refugees themselves.

One problem regarding security risks is that many women entitled to asylum come from countries and cultures where women have fewer rights and cannot live independently and on an equal basis. Patriarchal structures and role models promote violence against women. At the beginning of March 2020, the Austrian Minister for Women and the ÖIF launched a call to fund projects against violence and empower women and girls in the context of integration throughout Austria, with a total of 2 million euros. Due to the pandemic and associated restrictions on movement, there is a risk that violence against refugee women and girls will intensify.

The pandemic carries broader risks for refugees. Inadequate language skills make it more difficult to educate them about the dangers of the virus and necessary protective measures. It is also more difficult to avoid contact in shared accommodation. There have been several refugee hostels with corona outbreaks in the past few months.

Integrating refugees will remain challenging for Austria. The number of asylum applications has stabilized. But the economy will likely weaken in coming months, maybe years, due to the pandemic. If refugees could be placed in areas where workers were urgently needed and which have until now been filled by seasonal or migrant workers, the economy could profit. This could alter the image of refugees for the better. Special efforts are required, especially in teaching language skills. And special attention must be paid to children and women.

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5_France: Major Legal Differences Between Refugees and Asylum Seekers

By Lio Ando-Bourguet, Center for Migration and Citizenship, Institut français des relations internationales IFRI, France

Facts and Figures 2019

Total Population: 67,059,887	Total Refugee Population: 407,915
Asylum Applications: 151,070	Positive Decisions: 28,140
Foreign-born population: 12.8 %	Foreign-born employment rate: 58.9 %
GDP per capita: $ 40,494	GDP: $ 2,715 bn

Sources: Eurostat (2019); OECD (2021); The World Bank Group (2019)

Summary

This chapter seeks to reflect on the evolution of the French public debate about the obligations and national interests of the country regarding asylum, and the impact these have had on the various policy measures taken. It is important to acknowledge that asylum seekers and refugees benefit from two very different sets of rights in France and thus have differing access to the labor market, welfare system and public services. Moreover, the set of actors and institutions involved in their integration also vary.

Labor market access for asylum seekers in France is restrictive and takes six to nine months. Statements on refugees' labor market integration are difficult to make since reliable data stopped being collected in 2017. Asylum seekers' access to language and integration courses is slightly more flexible although it is not organized in a systematic manner. Concerning refugees' access to welfare benefits, many theories on possible "refugee burdens" exist raising fears of costly consequences for French taxpayers in the area of health care or housing. An additional aspect refers to security related issues in the light of immigration. The author acknowledges that terrorist attacks in recent years have reinforced debate on immigration posing a possible security risk. In addition, he criticizes the strict border controls and militarization of borders in place to increase security in France.

5.1 _ Labor Market Integration Is a Lengthy Process

France takes pride in its tradition of being a land of refuge and welcome. It is indeed one of the European countries to have granted the greatest international protection since the number of civilians fleeing war and persecution massively increased due to the new conflicts that erupted in 2011.

Access to the labor market is one of the principal concerns of refugees and asylum seekers and certainly one of, if not the most, potent factor in integration. The Asylum and Immigration Law of 2018 precisely aimed to relax certain conditions of access to the labor market for asylum seekers. Since 1991, they have had to request a specific administrative authorization to have partial access to the labor market. However, from 2018, the delay required before requesting this authorization was reduced from nine to six months after submission of the asylum application.

Nevertheless, the legal and administrative framework for asylum seekers' access to the labor market remains restrictive to say the least. For example, they may not request an authorization while they appeal their asylum decision before the National Court of Asylum (CNDA) – although this process can take up to another nine months in certain cases and leads to a majority of positive decisions for a number of nationals (e.g., up to 60 percent for Syrians and 75 percent for Afghans). Additionally, no measures have been taken to effectively enable their access to the labor market, and as such, they may not register at employment centers nor receive the back-to-work allowance (CNDA 2020).

The 2018 National Strategy for the Reception and Integration of Refugees provided slightly more flexibility in terms of asylum seekers' access to language training, although this remains extremely conditioned and unsystematic. Thus, it was indicated that those with a high probability of obtaining international protection would be offered conversation workshops as soon as they arrived. Moreover, under specific conditions, some would be able to benefit from certain schemes of the Skills Investment Plan (PIC), which provides language and professional training. While, according to the General Directorate for Foreigners in France (DGEF), 73 asylum seekers participated in the conversation workshops, there is no available data regarding their access to the various PIC schemes.

Furthermore, no statistics have been collected since 2017 regarding asylum seekers' effective access to the labor market. According to the latest available data, less than 1,000 were authorized to work out of 100,755 new asylum requests (Barrot and Stella 2020). Nothing suggests that this rate has increased since.

On the other hand, refugees in France benefit from the same rights as non-EU residents, meaning they have limited access to the labor market (that is excluding, inter alia, positions in the public service, which account for around 20 percent of the country's employment). Evidence suggests they may even be favored for employment over non-EU residents, as the duration of their resident permit is of 10 years, as opposed to one year for a majority of the latter (Saint-Martin et al. 2020). Policy measures in regard to refugees' effective access may be characterized as proactive: they can benefit freely from the personalized Republican Integration course, which includes up to 600 hours of language training, as well as receive professional training. However, while chances of access to the labor market are thus extremely different for asylum seekers and refugees, there has been for both a lack of on-the-ground coordination and homogenization in regard to the effective implementation of integration mechanisms.

5.2 _ Access to Universal Healthcare Is Provided After a Three Month Waiting Period

The many popular theories of the so-called "refugee burden" have long been disproven, and d'Albis et al. (2018) have also shown that increased public spending due to the inflow of asylum seekers is more than compensated for by an increase in tax revenues as some become permanent residents. Nevertheless, the French public debate regarding the pressures that these populations may exert on the welfare system is alive and kicking.

A major theme of these debates is that of access to health care – and notably the idea of a "migration for care" that would be enormously costly to the French taxpayer. As such, an evaluation of the State Medical Aid (AME), a health insurance specific to irregular residents living in France for at least three months that constitutes 0.6 percent of public spending in health care, was launched by the General Inspectors of Social Affairs and Finance in October 2019. The report established that beneficiaries of AME had remained stable since 2015, while the number of asylum seekers (who benefit from universal health insurance) had risen rapidly (Saulière et al. 2019). It notably prescribed the introduction of a waiting period of three months before asylum seekers could access universal health insurance to reduce the risks of asylum being used for purposes of free health care (despite providing no substantiated evidence that this may actually be the case, or showing how the new provision would effectively lead to an alleviation of public costs). Médecins du Monde (2020) in fact reported that 14.5 percent of people visiting their reception centers in 2019 were asylum seekers, of which only a quarter had effective health coverage, suggesting that the rate of use of public care among this category of people was actually very low. The waiting period was nevertheless adopted through a law in December 2019. In light of the current international pandemic, this measure now seems particularly out of line with public interests.

Another topic of debate is the idea that asylum seekers and refugees exert pressure on housing. There is a great variety of reception facilities for asylum seekers and refugees, built year after year in an attempt to keep up with the increase in need for urgent accommodations. Since 2015, the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) can redirect asylum seekers towards accommodation located in another region to better distribute reception efforts nationwide, as around 40 percent of applications are made in the Paris region, where there is already considerable pressure on housing. Yet, official and stable places remain insufficient and very unequally occupied across the country (some regions presented less than 90 percent occupancy at the end of 2019, although the national rate seems to have improved during the pandemic). This comes in sharp contrast to the fact that only half of asylum seekers were effectively sheltered in October 2020, again with very unequal rates across regions.

Although refugees may in theory benefit from social housing through the Inter-ministerial Delegation for Housing and Accommodation (DIHAL), they in effect experience great difficulty in finding accommodation: during 2018 and 2019, only half of housing due to be made available was effectively made so. This also comes in sharp contrast to the 8.4 percent vacancy rate in mainland France. Thus, refugees benefiting from accommodation as asylum seekers tend to overstay, further contributing to the lack of space. The dysfunction of the national reception scheme is particularly disheartening considering the constantly rising need for decent housing during the pandemic and prolonged lockdowns.

5.3 _ Recent Terrorist Attacks Raise Fears of Uncontrolled Immigration

The tragic terrorist attacks of 2020 by an asylum seeker and by a refugee who arrived in France as a child have triggered an immensely heated debate about the security risks these categories of people could pose, increasing existing fears of uncontrolled immigration. The Minister of Interior declared the country would refuse asylum to anyone who has committed an act of delinquency, further confusing the lines between immigration policy and asylum, a muddling that has been periodically denounced by the National Consultative Commission for Human Rights (CNCDH).

This reading of immigration policies as security measures is however not new, and finds its most recent origin in the terrorist attacks of 2015. On 13 November 2015, border controls were reestablished at the French-Italian border for what was supposed to be a month in the context of the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris, derogating from the tradition of free movement in the Schengen agreement. The same day, the deadly Paris terrorist attacks rushed the country into a state of emergency that would last two years, tightening border controls between France, Italy, and Spain (Liga 2020). A few days later, the then Prime Minister declared that some of the terrorists had taken advantage of the refugee crisis to enter the country, effectively placing immigration as a target of anti-terrorism strategy. However, in 2017, only 20 out of 86,320 notified refusals of entry at France's borders were attributed to threats to public order, incentivizing various associations to denounce a misappropriation of so-called security measures for purposes of illegal anti-immigration practices (Anafe 2019).

At the same time, the restrictive border controls and extreme militarization of France's frontiers have forced people in exile to use increasingly dangerous routes to reach security, as well as making an effective control of regular migration more difficult and further offering smugglers and human traffickers opportunities. The restrictive and arbitrary tightening of borders very much contradicts regulated and controlled migration, as public authorities would have it.

Terrorists who blend in with authentic asylum seekers to enter the territory do not do so alone, but are aided by tight-knit networks along the way and are received on arrival. Yet the lack of effective reception and accompaniment of asylum seekers in France suggests that, once terrorists manage to enter the country, they are extremely difficult to trace and identify. After the October terrorist attacks, President Macron announced a doubling of border police from 2,400 to 4,800. His defiant stance, as well as that of his government, towards the right of asylum, more than suggest difficult times ahead for asylum seekers and refugees.

Conclusively, France shows three characteristics and trends: first, very unequal access to the labor market between asylum seekers and refugees; second, restrictive access to health care for asylum seekers and a dysfunctioning and insufficient national reception scheme; and finally, an ever-accelerating tendency of reading immigration policies as security measures.

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Summit Review: Plenty of Room for Innovation in Refugee Politics

Takeaways from the 5th Avenir Suisse Think Tank Summit, by Verena Parzer-Epp, Head of Communications, Avenir Suisse

In late January, scholars and experts in the field of migration gathered for the 2021 Think Tank Summit. Due to Covid-19, it was held for the first time as an online event, which ultimately helped to gather even more participants than in previous years. In two intense days of stimulating speeches and panel discussions, one thing became obvious: migration policies should be a subject of reform around the world. In addition, a lack of money is not even the key for most problems. The relevant starting point is the mindset; specifically, the way we look at refugees and migration.

The wealth of refugees

In legal terms there are two kinds of migration: "forced migration" and "economic migration." International refugee laws apply to the first category only. Maybe because of this, refugee politics are often constructed around the narratives of "helping," "supporting" and "providing shelter" (Betts and Collier 2015). Core elements of humanitarian work should not be questioned here. But given the fact that many refugees will remain in their destination countries for decades and most "forced migrants" wish to build an economically self-sustaining life for themselves, the picture should be complemented with some new research about the longtime impact of refugees for societies.

Alexander Betts from the University of Oxford focusses his research on the quest for the conditions that enable refugees to become economic contributors to societies, and his findings underline the unsustainability of the "refugee camp model." Betts points out the economic costs for society when people are not allowed to bring their talents and aspirations to the table (Betts 2021; Betts et al. 2018). His team's long-time study comparing migration politics in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia has shown that Uganda's "self-reliance model" of guaranteeing refugees' right to work and freedom of movement has proven the most successful, in terms of income levels of refugees as well as social cohesion and their acceptance in the host country (Betts et al. 2018). Betts identifies five success factors for building an economic framework that allows refugees to "thrive," and not just "survive:" political will, access to public infrastructure (such as transportation), their "fit" in the local labor market, the socio-cultural environment, and the extent of external support (preferably from philanthropy or businesses) (Betts 2021).

In Western perceptions, the "refugee phenomenon" is often one of North and South, rich and poor countries. This is fundamentally wrong: 85 percent of the world's refugees live in low and middle-income countries. People coming by boat to Europe are clearly the minority, and levels of international migration are a very small part of overall migration (Clemens 2014; Betts and Collier 2015).

In general, the potential of refugees to contribute to the economy of their host society should not be underestimated. Michael Clemens from the Center for Global Development in Washington reminded participants about András Gróf, a refugee from Hungary: Clemens doubted, that Grof would have been able to found Intel later (under his new name of Andrew Grove), if he had been locked away in a refugee camp and denied education or the right to work after entering the US. Other speakers at the summit also conceded that classical "immigration countries" have been historically more successful than many European states in integrating refugees and allowing them to build successful careers (Clemens 2014).

Technology could be part of the solution

Dominik Hangartner from the Immigration Policy Lab at ETH Zurich has developed an intriguing technological solution for problems in migration politics. His team has embarked on a data-driven approach to improve refugee allocation in the different regions of Switzerland. Together with the Swiss Secretariat for Migration, he is running the first randomized control trial worldwide, in which the ministry can test the outcome of its placement policies. Based on key personal characteristics the "geomatching algorithm" produces a list of recommendations of those cantons where a given refugee has the best opportunity to find employment within three years. The ultimate decision is then taken by the placement officer (Bansak et al. 2018).

First results are promising, given that the probability of employment could be increased by at least 40 percent, and that the recommendations proved beneficial for all subgroups. Despite the promising outlook, Hangartner insists on the importance of consistent feedback loops to improve the performance of the algorithm and a slow roll-out: tests with randomized control trials are being made, similar to the way vaccines are tested.

Hangartner pointed out the potential scalability of his model and its applicability worldwide. Various outcomes (employ-

ment, income, school success, housing) could be matched against characteristics like gender, age, origin countries or language capabilities.

The general need for a closer look at refugees' personal situations was highlighted in one of the panel discussions: Axel van Trotsenburg, Managing Director of Operations at the World Bank, highlighted that women often faced more hurdles in the integration process than men. Trotsenburg demanded a greater "gender sensitivity" in refugee politics among other things (World Bank 2020).

No repatriation without international cooperation

Not all refugees are ultimately granted the right to remain in their host countries, and not a few are sent back to their countries of origin. Michael Spindelegger, General Director of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) in Vienna had another interesting lesson to offer. Repatriation of refugees to Nigeria became more efficient and less costly after Austria opened a local job training center for returnees. This proved beneficial for all parties involved. First, because a refugee who is given a perspective for future development in his or her home country may return voluntarily. Second, because Nigerian officials soon recognized that the new organization helping to arrange "sustainable returns" created know-how and jobs on site. Third, because the state of destination (Austria) could reduce the number of difficult – and ultimately rather costly – forced returns. A "win-win-win-situation" so to speak. According to Michael Spindelegger, the biggest success ultimately lay somewhere else: the pilot project increased mutual understanding between the two countries and triggered further cooperation in other fields (ICMPD 2020).

Marcel Suter, Head of Cantonal Migration Offices (Grisons), confirmed these findings during the panel discussion. "You cannot effect return without the consent of both countries," he said and thereby emphasized the importance of international cooperation.

The ongoing discussion stressed another point of friction and field for more international cooperation: the provision of transparent information about asylum procedures, more possibilities to embark on legal emigration, and, ultimately, similar standards and "rules of the game" in countries of destination.

Buying in the local communities

The task of integration refugees as smoothly as possible is a challenge for many countries around the globe – from rich to poor.

The rather common strategy to allocate refugees to the poorest areas of a country is certainly not very promising, because it risks increasing local frictions and – ultimately – the influence of populist politicians, who could use refugees as "scapegoats" for general economic problems. Research has shown that those European areas hit by deindustrialization are significantly more opposed to refugees than others (Betts and Collier 2015).

Instead, political leaders should try to identify opportunities for interaction between refugees and the resident population. Public money is not always the solution. A particularly promising example of cash-based assistance is the Ikea Foundation in the Dollo Ado Camps in Ethiopia. The investment of $ 100 million was the largest ever private sector spending in refugee camps. Different cooperatives piloted areas such as agriculture, livestock, energy, and the environment, and were supported with complementary infrastructure, microfinance, and training (Betts 2019).

It is to be hoped that such examples set a precedent and permanently raise the standard of living locally. They could reduce the incentive to risk one's life on a boat across the sea by creating perspectives locally. All this shows: more global cooperation in refugee politics would be to the benefit of all.

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6_Greece: A Reluctant Host to Asylum Seekers & Refugees

By Angeliki Dimitriadi, Senior Research Fellow, Head of the Migration Program and Kostas Vlachopoulos, Ph.D. candidate, Junior Research Fellow. ELIAMEP, Greece.

Facts and Figures 2019

Total Population: 10,716,322	Total Refugee Population: 80,454
Asylum Applications: 77,275	Positive Decisions: 17,350
Foreign-born population: 12.5 %	Foreign-born employment rate: 53.3 %
GDP per capita: $ 19,583	GDP: $ 209 bn

Sources: Eurostat (2019); OECD (2021); The World Bank Group (2019)

Summary

Located at Europe's external border, Greece marks the gateway to Europe for many asylum seekers. This puts a strain on Greek infrastructure and requires a great effort in registering all arriving asylum seekers. In previous years, asylum seekers did not settle in Greece. Instead, they moved on with the goal of reaching more central European countries.

It is only since 2016 that Greece has become a destination country for asylum applicants. This chapter identifies structural shortcomings in the Greek system. Concerns that arise from Greece's reluctant adaption to its new role as a destination country and lack of coherent integration strategy are highlighted. Among them is the scarce or missing access to basic services, growing mistrust towards authorities, overcrowding and worsening of the humanitarian crisis. Furthermore, the missing link between the asylum process and integration policies is criticized. Essentially, these circumstances result in slow and bureaucratic processes and even xenophobic perceptions hindering effective labor market integration of the asylum population. The author emphasizes the need for a comprehensive policy providing access to basic services for refugees. Furthermore, events like the fire at the Moria refugee camp could provide an opportunity to start a new approach to refugee policy. However, it is concluded that the chances of improvement are small since Greece seeks to avoid being perceived as an attractive country of destination.

6.1 _ From a Country of Transit to a Country of Destination

Greece's relationship with migration has long been characterized by ambiguity. The country has functioned consistently since the early 2000s as a transit nation for asylum seekers continuing their journey to northern Europe. In 2015, more than one million people entered the external borders of the EU, with the majority arriving via the Turkish-Greek maritime border. The "long summer of migration" (Kasparek & Speer 2015) crystallized a series of problems and deficiencies primarily at the EU, but also at the national level.

Transitory movement was allowed and encouraged by virtue of the de facto open Western Balkan corridor (Dimitriadi 2018). Yet since March 2016, Greece has become a destination country for thousands of asylum applicants stranded following the closure of the Western Balkan route, the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement and hotspot approach on the islands of the south-eastern Aegean. Greece had been on the receiving end of migration since the early 1990s, predominantly from neighboring Albania, but had not, until recently, been a preferred choice for asylum applicants. Since 2016, an estimated 121,100 refugees and migrants remained in the country. Of those, around 23,000 were on the islands, with the remaining 98,200 on the mainland (UNHCR 2020).

Despite indications Greece is now a destination, the country is still reluctant to accept its newfound role. This is reflected in how asylum seekers are received and in the integration plans and measures in place. The two are linked, since reception should in theory facilitate the integration of those who will receive international protection. Yet this linkage is missing from Greek migration policy. It is also absent in government discourse, which is dominated by a strong emphasis on security at the expense of integration. Asylum policy is consistently underscored by a security logic that seeks to control and reduce irregular migration instead of developing a comprehensive integration model. Asylum also remains distinct from integration, resulting in a fog that recipients of international protection must negotiate either alone or with assistance from civil society. In this, Greece significantly diverges from other EU member states.

6.2 _ (In)security and Asylum Seekers

Reception precedes integration. In the EU, reception is partly defined in Directive 2013/22/EU which indicates a series of material conditions that should be available to asylum applicants including clothing, food, education, basic health care, and accommodation. The duration of reception in principle begins with arrival and concludes either with the rejection of an asylum application or with the granting of international protection.

Since March 2016, Greece has faced multiple interrelated challenges regarding reception. By virtue of its geography, the country-had to "receive" thousands of asylum seekers, mainly on five islands in the Aegean (Samos, Leros, Chios, Kos, Lesvos). The EU-Turkey Statement of March 2016 required applicants to remain on the islands until their applications could be accepted or rejected (inadmissible) and therefore be returned to Turkey. At the same time, with more arrivals than returns, it became impossible to maintain good standards.

Facilities on the five islands were consistently overcrowded, lacking basic services and unable to meet the daily needs of asylum seekers. Originally designed for 7,000, by 2018 numbers had exceeded 40,000. Occasional transfers to the mainland of the most vulnerable offered temporary relief, but not a long-term solution. Covid-19 has exacerbated already inhumane conditions, worsening the plight of asylum applicants (Dimitriadi 2020a). The density of the population, the nonexistent or very limited access to services, mistrust of local authorities and limited access of NGOs, have all increased risks for asylum seekers, resulting in a humanitarian crisis on the islands. Matters culminated in the fires that broke out on September 9th in the reception centre of Moria on Lesvos. Approximately 12,000 refugees and asylum seekers were affected, including 4,000 children.

The Moria fire could have provided the opportunity for a fresh start; the development of a holistic policy beginning with decent reception conditions and concluding with an integration policy approaching migrants and refugees as important contributors to the host society. Instead, during and after the fire, asylum seekers continued to be portrayed as a security challenge (Dimitriadi 2020b), while the more than 40,000 people received since 2015 for refugee or subsidiary protection status are faced with stark prospects of integration.

Unwillingness to discuss integration is a common theme across all political parties. Greece consistently seeks to avoid appearing as an "attractive" destination for asylum seekers and refugees, predominantly by lowering social benefits and service provision to an absolute minimum. The latter is in fact outsourced to international organizations and civil society, with the Greek state having a minimal presence.

6.3 _ The Difficult Path Towards Integration

Recent years have brought some progress in developing a policy and legal framework (education, vocational training, housing, access to the labor market). Yet, Greece's integration strategy remains "fragmented,

short-lived and without continuity" (Ministry for Migration & Asylum 2018). Critically, there is no direct link between the asylum process and integration schemes, as the latter are unable to cater to enough beneficiaries. This leaves many refugees without necessary assistance. International organizations have raised serious concerns for the limited opportunities for integration offered to refugees. According to Andrej Mahecic, spokesperson of UNHCR, Greece's assistance "for many refugees is ending prematurely, before they have effective access to employment and social welfare schemes, foreseen by Greek law" (UNHCR 2020).

Refugees' and asylum seekers' access to the labor market is currently regulated through a set of laws, policies and initiatives. The 2018 Integration Strategy, submitted by the Syriza government, favors access to the labor market as a significant element and makes the Greek state responsible for its successful implementation.

In July 2019, the government introduced the Hellenic Integration Support for Beneficiaries of International Protection (HELIOS 2), a pilot program promoting integration in various fields – including employability support for beneficiaries of international protection. The program is implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM 2020). Nevertheless, the provisions for a limited number of participants reveal the fragmented character of the planning. From July 2019 to November 2020, over 21,000 beneficiaries had been enrolled in the HELIOS program (IOM 2020) out of more than 80,000 recognized refugees residing in Greece (Newspaper Proto Thema 2020).

The current legal framework poses serious obstacles to asylum seekers' access to the labor market, compared with what was defined in the past. Law 4636/2019 was one of the first bills passed by the newly elected government in November 2019. Article 53 introduces a six-month time limit before access to the labor market is allowed for asylum seekers. With regards to recognized refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries, the new law brought no changes.

As for the recognition of skills, certificates and diplomas, beneficiaries of international protection have the same rights as Greeks. If they cannot provide substantiated evidence of their qualifications, the state is committed to facilitate them, by offering access to programs that assess and certify skills and certificates acquired in the past.

Nevertheless, reality is different from what the legal framework prescribes. Greece's 10-year financial crisis has affected absorption rates for refugees and asylum seekers into the labor market. In 2017, only 7.25 percent of young Syrian refugees were working full time in Greece, and more than half worked in the shadow economy, with

no rights and access to social insurance (Council of Europe 2018). Systemic problems such as slow and bureaucratic procedures in recognizing certificates and skills of third country nationals, and xenophobic perceptions, have also impeded employment. Of those who succeed, most are employed in precarious conditions, i.e. usually in the informal labor market, with no basic social rights, poor wages, and vulnerable conditions (European Commission 2017).

Whereas the Greek state has a legal framework that regulates such issues, it is NGOs, municipalities, regions and grassroots organizations that have undertaken most vocational training, language courses and assistance with finding employment. They are complemented by OAED, the state Organization for Manpower Employment, which provides services to asylum seekers and to beneficiaries of international protection, including job seeking support, advice on CV formatting and opportunities for training programs (Leivaditi et al. 2020). A pilot program for 3,000 unemployed beneficiaries of international protection in refugee shelters and housing in Attica and Northern Greece is currently being implemented with the partnership of OAED. This program is funded by the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

Local and regional authorities are also increasingly involved in integration. Although the National Integration Strategy has promoted an enhanced role for municipalities and regional authorities and some of them had already made substantial moves towards inclusion and integration of third country nationals into social life – the current New Democracy government has suggested a different approach aiming at boosting security and neglecting such efforts.

6.4 _ Outlook

Greece has made some progress towards integration as regards access to the labor market and employability. Still, there is significant room for improvement. Many beneficiaries either remain unemployed, or those who have a job are underpaid and working in difficult conditions. Hence, the state and the other parties involved actors (local authorities, organizations etc.) need to increase their efforts to create more programs including as many beneficiaries as possible. A comprehensive policy is also necessary as regards unhindered access to housing, public health services and education, especially during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Effective integration measures can boost and improve the human rights conditions for those already in the country and benefit both host and guest, but above all act as a bridge that guides new arrivals on the path to becoming members of society in an organized and structured way.

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Unlike other member states, Greece lacks a coherent migration policy facilitating inclusion of migrants, including refugees in society. Though a shortcoming, this can also be an opportunity to develop integration measures that build on the contribution of civil society and local/regional authorities, drawing from the lessons and experiences of 2015–2019.

Yet it is unlikely this will happen soon. There is a convergence of European migration and asylum policy towards restrictive measures, as reflected in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum. Deterrence is the norm, exemplified by the increase in border guards, strengthening of border patrols and "active surveillance" at sea for interdiction. Without a holistic integration strategy and its implementation, it is unlikely matters will improve for the thousands of migrants and refugees residing in Greece.

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7_United Kingdom: How the Hostile Environment, Brexit, and Now Covid-19 Have Shaped the UK's Immigration Policy

By Shona Warren, Head of the Migration Programme, Agora Think Tank, United Kingdom

Facts and Figures 2019

Total Population: 66,834,405	Total Refugee Population: 133,083
Asylum Applications: 46,055	Positive Decisions: 14,995
Foreign-born population: 13.7 %	Foreign-born employment rate: 74.7 %
GDP per capita: $ 42,330	GDP: $ 2,829 bn

Sources: Eurostat (2019); OECD (2021); The World Bank Group (2019)

Summary

With Brexit ratified and freedom of movement ended, Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Government has signaled that it will continue a path of restrictive immigration policies.

This chapter outlines how immigration policy in the UK changed from a liberal and open pathway to a rather restrictive stance introduced by a series of migration reforms in 2012. Immigration policies in the UK aim at the detention of future asylum applicants by creating a "hostile environment." This entails restricted access to the labor market and limited welfare services. Despite these policies, the number of asylum applications did not decrease over past years. Instead, the chapter depicts how restricted labor market access for the asylum population is linked to increased security related issues, specifically to an increase in property crime. Furthermore, by strengthening the hostile environment the physical and mental health of refugees and asylum seekers deteriorated, resulting in additional costs for taxpayers. The chapter concludes that better access to labor market and welfare services would be beneficial not only for the asylum population but for the UK in general.

7.1 _The Last Two Decades: A Brief History of UK and Immigration

The UK has had a complex relationship with immigration, shaped by which political party is in power; in the early 2000s immigration channels and policies were relatively open under Tony Blair's Labour government, by contrast later Conservative governments introduced restrictive immigration policies aimed to lower net migration to the UK.

In 2012, then Home Secretary Theresa May introduced a series of immigration reforms which served to create a "Hostile Environment" for migrants in the UK; border enforcement became entrenched in society as landlords, health care providers, and employers all became legally responsible for ensuring someone's immigration status. The Hostile Environment was intended to create an institutionalized environment which would make life as difficult as possible for migrants living in the UK and is still in place today.

However, the UK's Hostile Environment was preceded by years of liberal immigration pathways to residency in the UK, formed by the UK's then Labour Government. From 1997 to 2002, the UK received 71,000 applications for asylum, and during this period asylum seekers formed over a fifth of non-British migrants entering the UK (Bell et al. 2013). Following the enlargement of the European Union in 2004, which saw the addition of the A8 countries (comprised of Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia), the UK continued a liberal approach to migration; the UK was one of three countries in the EU to not impose any restrictions on the freedom of movement for A8 workers.

Over the next decade, the UK became an attractive destination for migrants, and by 2015/2016 net migration had reached a peak of 335,000 per year (+189,000 EU citizens, +196,000 non-EU citizens and -49,000 British citizens) (ONS 2016). However, immigration was becoming contentious and was the key issue for the British public at the 2016 referendum on EU membership (Ipsos MORI 2016).

Despite Prime Minister David Cameron's promises on net migration targets and more control on immigration from the EU, the UK public voted for Brexit in 2016. Since the Brexit vote, the UK government's approach to immigration has remained tough on both economic migrants and refugees and asylum seekers, and net migration to the UK has stabilized since 2016 (ONS 2019b).

The recent Covid-19 crisis has brought to the forefront of public opinion the positive attributes of migration, including the appreciation of the contribution migrants make as key pillars of society. For example, some 12 percent of healthcare workers in the UK are from migrant backgrounds

(ONS 2019a). During the Covid-19 pandemic, Boris Johnson's government passed The Immigration Act 2020 into law, solidifying Brexit and ending free movement on 31 December 2020.

As the UK enters a period of uncertainty following its exit from the EU, it must consider the benefits of migration to the UK and ensure that the points-based system is equitable and fair, whilst increasing the routes of safe passage for asylum seekers to settle in the UK.

7.2 _ The Correlation Between Labor Markets and Security

The UK government's Hostile Environment includes restrictive legislation on access to labor markets for asylum seekers, with detrimental results to their well-being and quality of life. Those seeking asylum in the UK are unable to work or volunteer while their applications are being processed. In March 2020, of the 51,905 people who were waiting for their Asylum claim to be processed by the Home Office, 31,516 had been waiting more than six months (Refugee Council 2020). During this period, the welfare payments for asylum seekers is only £ 5,37 a day (Refugee Council 2020). According to Colin Yeo (2020), in addition to a lack of proper welfare support, asylum seekers are methodically dispersed across the UK, often without consideration to established ethnic communities, and housing is provided by private contractors with sometimes "squalid" conditions.

The exclusion of asylum seeker applicants from the labor market is another facet of the Hostile Environment; a way for the UK government to reduce perceived pull factors that prospective migrants might have to come to the UK. The UK Government states, "...entering the country for economic reasons is not the same as seeking asylum, and it is important to keep the two separate." (UK Visas and Immigration 2014)

However, the exclusion of asylum seekers from the labor market has not reduced the number of asylum applications to the UK, and instead has left many asylum seekers destitute, with further negative impacts on their mental and physical health (Goodfellow 2019).

By restricting access to labor markets, research has shown that limited access to welfare or labor correlates with an increase in property crime among migrant groups. Bell et al. (2013) conducted a quantitative study into the correlation between migration and crime in the UK, comparing the asylum seeker wave of the early 2000s with the A8 migration wave. Their research found that the A8 group of migrants, who had full access to the labor market, had no correlation with increased

criminal activity in the UK. However, areas with large numbers of asylum seekers (with no access to the labor market) were found to have an increase in property crime, although no increase in violent crime was reported (Bell et al. 2013). Access to labor markets not only reduces pull factors towards property crime as found by Bell et al. (2013), but also helps begin the integration process for newly arrived persons and builds relationships in local communities (Yeo 2020).

International bodies and migrant rights groups have voiced their concern at the UK's restrictive policies towards asylum seekers. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights reviewed the UK's asylum seeker policies in 2009 and recommended "that asylum-seekers are not restricted in their access to the labor market while their claims for asylum are being processed"(UNHCR 2011).

The UK is party to a number of international treaties relating to asylum seekers and refugees, including the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. As part of its international responsibilities, the UK has met its target of resettling 20,000 refugees from the conflict in Syria by 2020 through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS). Interior minister Priti Patel has emphasized the importance of these programs going forward, saying that the UK government will welcome those arriving through "safe and legal" routes (Patel 2020). However, the safe and legal routes such as the VPRS have been paused since March 2020 due to Covid-19.

7.3 _ Security Risks and Migration: Looking Forward

The UK Government has a number of policies in place to protect its citizens, and migrants are subject to the UK's legal system when settled in the UK. Prior to arrival, the government has a number of precautions in place to mitigate against security threats: applicants for visas and asylum status have their criminal records disclosed. Then at the UK border, immigration officials have the right to stop, question and turn away arrivals. Those who do successfully make it to the UK face deportation if breaking the law.

However, when considering security risks, it is important to consider not only threats to the nation's citizens, but also the security risks to the vulnerable persons of immigration, refugees and asylum seekers. The Hostile Environment's policies have been reactive to public opinion, rather than being an evidence based or humanitarian approach to policy. The overarching purpose of the Hostile Environment is to reduce attractive "pull" factors to the UK. However a consequence is that, for those asylum seekers who are in the UK already, or are fleeing persecution and seeking asylum, these hostile policies have reduced

welfare payments, increased wait times, and restricted access to the labor market.

For refugees and asylum seekers, the UK has placed a new emphasis on legal arrivals and has introduced tough new policies to deter those seeking to arrive in the UK through Channel crossings. Interior minister Priti Patel has securitized the issue of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK. In August 2020, she created a new role in her department, the Clandestine Channel Threat Commander, whose responsibilities include collaborating with the French government to strengthen borders and interceptions at sea.

However, while the legal and safe route of resettlement through the VPRS scheme has been suspended, small Channel crossings have increased (BBC 2020). These irregular routes of migration are dangerous. At the time of writing, more than 7,400 people had tried to cross the English Channel in 2020, and since 1999, 292 had died attempting the crossing (The Guardian 2020). The UK government has focused on deterrence and border strengthening – compassionate policy approaches ensuring safe passages for asylum seekers through the VPRS scheme and paths to settlement have not been prioritized during the pandemic. Other EU countries party to the resettlement scheme have continued their settlements, however the UK government has cited Covid-19 concerns as a reason to pause the program.

The last decade of immigration policy in the UK has been one of restriction and austerity. The current government has signaled that it will continue a restrictive approach to immigration. However, the UK would benefit from balancing immigration controls with a humanitarian approach to asylum seekers and migrants. This approach would include allowing asylum seekers access to the labor market while waiting for their application to be processed, or by increasing welfare payments. As the UK nears an uncertain, post-Brexit future, it must ensure that an immigration system designed to deter adapts to properly support the welfare needs of those migrants who are lawfully seeking to settle in the UK.

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8_EU: The New Common European Asylum System – Can the Model of Limited Flexible Solidarity Work?

By Dr. Marcus Engler, Research Fellow, Dezim-Institut, Germany

Facts and Figures 2019

Total Population: 447,512,041	Total Refugee Population: 2,591,349
Asylum Applications: 744,810	Positive Decisions: 221,020
Foreign-born population: 17 %	Foreign-born employment rate: 64.4 %
GDP per capita: $ 2,942,340	GDP: $ 16,630 bn

Sources: Eurostat (2019); OECD (2021); The World Bank Group (2019)

Summary

At the end of September 2020, the EU Commission presented its plans to reform European asylum policy. At its heart were three pillars covering increased protection of external borders, intensified cooperation with third countries and increased burden sharing among European countries. Proposals for implementation of the latter, however, raise questions and sometimes appear unrealistic. This chapter reflects on the Common European Asylum System and especially on the new attempt to achieve increased responsibility sharing and the shortcomings thereof. Since 2015 the European Union tries to establish a compromise among its member states that enables burden sharing between the nations as well as an efficient asylum system.

Essentially, these build on four scenarios that allocate responsibilities between EU nation states and the European Commission. Scenarios differ in their degree of severity ranging from “return” and “relocate sponsorships” to a “migration pressure” or “crisis situation.” Countries can choose which scenario should be applied whereby responsibility sharing becomes more binding in a more serious situation. However, the pact on migration and asylum remains too vague in important questions, ultimately damaging the EU’s credibility in establishing migration policies. It is concluded that the new system does not pave the way for more cooperation and lasting burden sharing between participants in the Dublin agreement. Essentially, this inhibits progress and improvements in refugee protection in Europe.

On September 23, 2020 – one week after the Moria refugee camp burned to the ground – the Commission finally presented its long-awaited new pact for migration and asylum (European Commission 2020). This comprehensive package consists of three pillars: even more rigorous protection of the external borders, further intensification of cooperation with third countries and reorganization of the division of responsibilities in Europe. This article will focus on a more detailed analysis of this last aspect.

As matters stand, the European Union (EU) only system of responsibility allocation lies in the so-called Dublin system, but lacks any responsibility-sharing structure for persons seeking protection. This system currently applies to all EU member states, but also to the non-EU countries like Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland. Accordingly, there are rules on which state is responsible for a particular asylum application. However, no guidelines exist as to whether the distribution between member states is fair and what happens if a state is overwhelmed with a large number of asylum applications. According to the criteria of the currently valid Dublin-III-Regulation, in most cases, states of first entry are responsible for asylum procedures – and thus also for the integration or repatriation of applicants. However, and contrary to what is often stated, in practice many asylum applications are made both in the states at the external borders of the EU (such as Italy, Greece, Spain), and in non-border states such as Germany, France or Sweden. One reason for this is that not all asylum seekers are registered at the external borders on entry. In addition, after certain time limits, responsibility is transferred to the states in which the asylum seekers are staying and have made (sometimes renewed) asylum applications.

The lack of an effective responsibility-sharing mechanism within Europe has far-reaching consequences. It encourages national policies of deterrence and undermining of legal standards by states and leads to political conflicts between EU members. The establishment of a long-term stable system of responsibility-sharing would therefore be of great importance for refugee protection in Europe (Engler 2019, Engler 2020).

When presenting the asylum and migration package in late September, the responsible Commissioner and vice president Magritas Schinas announced that the Dublin system had now been superseded. This may be formally correct, since the Dublin Regulation is to be repealed. But at the same time, it is misleading, because many of the rules it contains have been transferred to the new Asylum and Migration Management Regulation. Moreover, the goal of preventing so-called secondary movements remains a top priority. The

Detention of asylum seekers and people in readmission procedures will continue to exist in the future. So what exactly is new?

The European Commission plans that all persons apprehended at the external borders should first go through a screening procedure to establish their identity and to check safety and health conditions (Angenendt et al. 2020, Markard 2020). A similar procedure is already being applied on the Greek islands under the EU-Turkey agreement. This procedure is to serve as a filtering process. Persons without a request for protection are to be returned or deported directly from the border. Asylum applications from persons from countries with a low protection rate and from persons who, in the view of the authorities, do not wish to reveal their identity or pose a threat, are to be carried out in a fast-track manner at the borders. According to the plans the respective states can carry out these procedures in closed facilities. However, the governments of Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain have made it clear that they do not want large closed centers on their territories. Applications from persons from countries with a higher protection rate, from unaccompanied minors and from families with children under the age of twelve should be carried out in a regular asylum procedure.

8.1 _ A Differentiated System of Responsibility-Sharing

Under the Commission's plans, there is not one system of responsibility-sharing, but several. A distinction is made between four scenarios or situations in which the sharing of responsibilities is to take a slightly different course. Basically, there are three forms of responsibility-sharing between EU member states: states can admit persons from other states ("relocation"). This applies primarily to asylum seekers, but can be extended to other groups of persons depending on the scenario. A newly created possibility is the assumption of responsibility for the return of persons who are in other EU member states ("return sponsorships"). It was established that member states that declare themselves responsible will have eight months to carry for the repatriation of rejected asylum seekers (or other migrants). If they are not successful, they still remain responsible for the persons concerned even after this period and must admit them to their territory. A third form of responsibility-sharing can be provided through assistance in capacity-building, operational support or the provision of expertise.

If one or more states should come under "migration pressure," responsibility-sharing will become mandatory for all. The triggering of the associated solidarity mechanism is to be carried out by the European Commission. After triggering, the

Commission would, as a first step, identify the needs for redistribution, returns or other forms of support. Member states would then be required to indicate in a pledging procedure which form of support they wish to offer and to what extent. In doing so, states can choose in which of the three forms of responsibility-sharing they wish to engage, whereby a combination of the three forms of support is also possible. In this scenario, asylum seekers who are not in the border procedure and persons who have received international protection in the last three years can be relocated. If the offers made by member states are insufficient to meet needs, a correction mechanism can be applied. A fair share is calculated on the basis of a distribution key and the Commission can order all states to participate in relocation or repatriation.

Responsibility-sharing becomes even more binding when a "crisis situation" occurs. Similar to the "migration pressure" scenario, a procedure is to be applied in which the Commission can identify a crisis and commit member states to solidarity. This will be regulated in a separate legal instrument and include accelerated procedures with shorter deadlines. The solidarity mechanism will be broader, meaning that asylum-seekers from the border procedure and other migrants can also be relocated. In this procedure, member states would only be able to choose between relocation and return sponsorships, whereby they would have to admit non-returned persons to their territory after only four months.

The Commission also proposes a separate solidarity mechanism for asylum seekers rescued at sea. In a report, the Commission plans to estimate arrivals in the following year, with the possibility of adjusting the identified needs if the numbers increase. Member states will then be required to contribute to a solidarity pool. In contrast to the solidarity mechanisms outlined above, only relocation and other types of support can be offered at first. If the contributions are not sufficient, the already described correction mechanism will be applied, in which member states can then also offer return sponsorships. Only asylum seekers who are not in border procedures can be included in relocation.

8.2 _ False Assumptions and Possible Effects

The Commission's proposals must be read against the background of the ongoing and fierce conflict between member states and the extremely difficult process of finding a compromise since 2015. It is an attempt to go beyond the minimum compromise of increasing external border protection and externalization and to make a proposal which, although raising few cheers, could gain a majority precisely for this reason, it is hoped (Beirens 2020). The

following outlines false assumptions regarding repatriations, the application of crisis mechanism and legal access to protection.

If the plans are accepted, a larger proportion of those seeking protection would be redistributed than at present. How many people could be redistributed depends on several factors and is difficult to predict. This depends in particular on the number of people registered at the external borders. So far this concerns only a small part. Against this backdrop, the southern border states have criticized the plans as too vague. A few other states mainly from Eastern Europe have repeated their refusal to admit asylum-seekers.

States hostile to the admission of refugees would have to accept only a few people, especially those they could not repatriate. This is one of the cruxes of the model. Returns (voluntary and forced) will continue to function only partially. There are important obstacles – including humanitarian reasons, but also the opposing interests of many countries of origin – which will continue to exist (Sundberg-Diez and Trauner 2021).

Despite the announced additional measures on return and repatriation, which the Commission's package also contains, a significant increase in return rates is unlikely. Assuming states such as Hungary would nevertheless agree to take on return sponsorships, this would mean that they would have to allow a substantial number of persons who are not in need of protection and not willing to return to their country of origin. These persons would have very little interest in remaining in Hungary or other return sponsoring countries. They would very likely move to those countries where they can rely on social networks and where job opportunities for irregular workers exist. Against this backdrop, renewed conflicts between states seem inevitable.

Many questions also remain with regard to the application of the "crisis mechanism." If a situation similar to that of 2015 recurred, it seems unlikely that the envisaged procedure would actually be applied in an orderly manner. For fear of a "pull effect" or because it is likely to meet with little domestic political approval, it could be expected that most governments would simply not act early enough. Rather, conflicts between governments are to be expected here too.

Moreover, the question of legal and safe access for those in need of protection remains unresolved. Even under the new system, most of those seeking protection would still have to risk their lives on the way to Europe. The goal of expanding legal and safe access channels, which had been given an important place in earlier announcements by the Commission, was not further specified in the proposals. The EU is losing credibility here once again.

After the first rounds of negotiations under the German EU presidency, it became even more obvious that a compromise would be anything but easy, despite the extensive consultations that preceded the proposals and all the "fresh start" rhetoric from Brussels. To make matters worse, negotiations are running parallel to the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, which led to renewed lockdowns and, in the medium term, will result in deep economic problems such as rising unemployment and national debt, and potentially to social conflicts. It is hence to be feared that the scope for solidarity with those in need of protection will be narrowed. This would be tragic, because the need for global refugee protection is growing, as many receiving countries in the global south are severely affected by the pandemic and many refugees in them are particularly vulnerable.

The Commission's strategy presupposes that all national governments – or at least a clear majority – also have an interest in reaching an agreement as well as in setting up a functioning asylum system in line with European values and international law, and that has the stability of the global refugee regime in mind. It is unfortunately highly doubtful whether this is the case. On the contrary, for some governments the permanent political escalation of the refugee question has proven a valuable tool in domestic politics.

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9_Canada: The Canadian Model for Dealing with Asylum Seekers and Refugees

By Herbert Grubel, Emeritus Professor of Economics, Simon Fraser University, Senior Fellow, The Fraser Institute, Canada

Facts and Figures 2019

Total Population: 37,589,262	Total Refugee Population: 101,757
Asylum Applications: 29,365	Positive Decisions: 18,443
Foreign-born population: 21 %	Foreign-born employment rate: 73.2 %
GDP per capita: $ 46,194	GDP: $ 1,736 bn

Sources: Eurostat (2019); OECD (2021); The World Bank Group (2019)

Summary

This chapter describes the system used by the government of Canada to determine the number of refugees and asylum seekers allowed to settle in the country annually, how they are integrated into the labor market and how threats to national security are dealt with. Unlike European countries, Canada has not been suddenly confronted with a peak in asylum applications, mainly due to its geographical location. However, any person reaching Canadian soil has the right on a refugee board hearing and is given the possibility to claim asylum. With increasing numbers of asylum applicants, the capabilities of the refugee board were exceeded and further measures limiting the inflow were put in place. Additionally, unguarded Canada-US borders pose a gateway for many immigrants and refugees. Welfare benefits for refugees in Canada are provided either by the government or by private sponsors such as relatives or charitable organizations.

Canada has natural and legal barriers to prevent unplanned entry of refugees and asylum seekers. On a yearly basis, Canada defines a number of asylum seekers who are selected in UN refugee camps and allowed to enter the country. Ready employment and public assistance are provided to those chosen. Consequently, refugees are publicly perceived as a valuable means to overcome labor shortages and boosting the economy. Additionally, Canada has almost no experiences with people having a migration background posing a risk to security. However, the author concludes that the refugees' positive image in Canada has started to diminish recently as discontent regarding Canadian immigration policies has started to grow.

The analysis below draws heavily on the distinction between asylum seekers and refugees: "An asylum seeker is someone who is seeking international protection but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been determined. In contrast, a refugee is someone who has been recognized under the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees to be a refugee." (Phillips 2011).

The status of asylum seekers in Canada is adjudicated by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (Refugee Board for short), a quasi-judicial organization financed and controlled by the federal government. This system brings Canada two different but related problems: controlling the arrival of asylum seekers and adjudicating their claims.

The following analysis considers the ways in which the government approaches these two problems, describing for each first the theoretical model and then its real-world performance.

9.1 _ Determining the Number of Asylum Seekers

In theory, Canada has in place a system that allows it to precisely determine the number of asylum seekers arriving in the country by sea, land, and air. This system is very important because in 1985 the Supreme Court of Canada made what is known as the "Singh Decision," which mandated that all persons who have reached Canadian soil and informed a border guard that they are seeking asylum, are entitled to refugee board hearings, could not simply be denied their request and forced to return to another country. After they entered Canada, these asylum seekers are legally entitled to receive many costly services at the expense of Canadian taxpayers.

Canada has adopted the following measures to prevent the arrival of potential asylum seekers:

- No measures are needed to prevent their arrival by sea, which is a serious problem for the European Community, since Canada's coasts cannot be reached by the kind of vessels asylum seekers have access to and are used in the Mediterranean.
- Arrival by land from the United States is prevented by the existence of the Safe Third Country Agreement, which requires guards in both countries to turn back asylum seekers arriving at their borders. This policy is justified on the grounds that it is more efficient to have asylum seekers apply in the country in which they first arrived and that it avoids "welfare shopping." This policy avoids the problem existing in the European Union, where the Schengen Agreement makes it possible for asylum seekers to cross national borders without hindrance to the country believed to have the most generous social and economic assistance programs.
- Arrival by airlines and passenger vessels is prevented by requiring that all airplane and ship passengers have official Canadian documents, which show that:

01 _ They are tourists, temporary workers or students who have persuaded Canadian visa officials abroad that they have strong family and economic ties which will make them return to their home countries after their business in Canada has been completed.

02 _ They are citizens of countries with which Canada has an agreement allowing tourists and business agents visa-free entry. These countries have stable, democratic and liberal systems of government so that their citizens have no causes to seek asylum.

03 _ They are individuals who are slated to become landed immigrants under the government's official immigration plan. They arrive with proper documentation certifying their status and have no incentive to apply for asylum.

04 _ They are individuals who have been selected in refugee camps abroad by Canadian and UN agents and are part of the government's official immigration plan. After arriving, they are subjected to health and security checks, but they have no need to seek asylum.

Shippers are incentivized not to bring to Canada passengers who fail to meet these requirements since they must at their expense remove these passengers from Canadian ports.

The Performance of the Model

In fact, the system has not worked well. 29,365 asylum seekers (Government of Canada 2020a) arrived in 2019. At the end of 2021, 100,000 asylum seekers (National Post 2019) were awaiting adjudication of their claims.

What caused the failure of the policies designed to prevent their arrival?

Some of the asylum seekers are tourists, students, and temporary workers who had obtained visas by deceiving visa agents about their true intentions or who decided to move to Canada after they had experienced living conditions and learned about economic opportunities in the country.

Many are visitors from stable, democratic and liberal countries who arrived without visas and are seeking a better life in Canada by seeking to be declared refugees rather than go through the normal but lengthy and uncertain immigrant selection process that they otherwise would have to use.

Recently, so many citizens from visa-free Mexico and Hungary claimed asylum that they began to overwhelm the capacity of the Refugee Board to adjudicate their claims. Minister Stephen Harper's government reacted to this problem by ending visa-free travel for citizens of these count-

Table 9-1

Immigration Level Targets for 2020

Economic Immigrants (individuals with skills or good prospects for economic success, plus their spouses and under-age children)	195,800
Members of the families of immigrants already settled in Canada	91,000
Refugees and Protected Persons	49,700
Humanitarian and Other	4,500
Total	341,000

Source: Government of Canada (2020b)

ries. This policy reduced claims sharply. However, they increased rapidly again after the newly elected government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau restored the visa-free agreement with Mexico.

The arrival of asylum seekers crossing the long and mostly unguarded Canada-US border has long been minimized effectively through the efforts of Canadian law enforcement agents. However, this success has ended as 50,000 asylum seekers (CBC News 2019a) have entered Canada during the last two years at the rural Roxam Road crossing in Quebec. This inflow of asylum seekers came about because a Canadian judge had ruled that the United States was no longer a safe country that respected human rights and that therefore the Third Safe Country Agreement no longer applied to asylum seekers coming from that country. The judge's ruling was based on reports that asylum seekers who earlier had been turned back at the Roxam Road crossing had been deprived of their human rights after their return to the United States.

9.2 _ Determining the Number of Refugees

The Government of Canada annually submits to parliament a plan in which it presents the target number of immigrants for the coming year. Refugees are included in this target number. Table 9-1 shows the plan for the year 2020 [5] with refugees targeted to be 49,700 or 13.8 percent of the total.

Since refugee policies are such a contentious political issue in Europe, it is worth noting that this is not the case in Canada. The annual immigration and refugee targets are produced by cabinet and civil servants and put into effect without parliamentary discussion. They attract little media and public attention, let alone controversy. One reason for this situation is that Canadians are used to accepting many immigrants, who the government argues are needed to deal with labor shortages and a slow-down in the growth of national income.

Another reason is that Canadians widely agree with the idea that they live in a "land of immigrants" (Government of Canada no date) as is evidenced by statistics derived from the 2016 census: 58.4 percent of the population were the offspring of parents who were both born in Canada, 17.7 percent had at least one parent born abroad, and 23.9 percent had both born abroad. Often heard in discussions about immigration policies is the remark "If my parents had not been allowed to immigrate, I would not be here," which is used to explain individuals' support for the government's plans to bring large numbers of immigrants to Canada.

Figure 9-1 shows the number of immigrants in Canada between 1990 and 2019. These immigrants have added considerably to the growth of the country's population. For example, according to a report by Statistics Canada in the year 2018–19: "Canada's population rose by 531,497 to 37,589,262 – with immigration accounting for 82.2 percent of the growth. The growth of 1.4 percent in population – is the highest among all G7 countries, more than double the rate of 0.6 percent witnessed by both the US and the UK." (Canada Immigration News 2019).

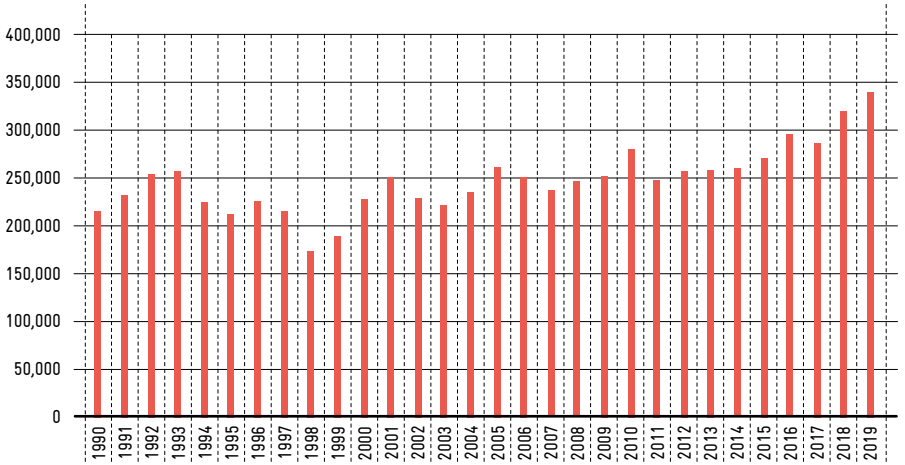
As was noted above, refugees are a percentage of all immigrants, comprising 13.8 percent in 2020. Figure 9-2 shows this percentage for 1993 to 2016. The average of these years is 13.4 percent with a low of 8.3 in 2012 and a high of 24.3 in 2016. Like the fluctuations in total immigration, these variations are due to cycles in economic activity and related conditions in the labor market. It is worth noting that the high number for 2016 is due to the arrival of 30,000 refugees from Syria, which represents the Canadian government's contribution to the global effort to alleviate the suffering of refugees from the military conflict in Syria. [6]

5 The Covid-19 epidemic has made the 2020 plan obsolete. Announcements about the effect of the epidemic on future targets are expected to be made soon.

6 Canada has a history of relieving such suffering. It accepted 37,000 Hungarians who had fled to Austria after the failure of the uprising of 1956–57; 12,000 Czechoslovaks in 1968 after revolution that year; 7,000 Ugandans in 1972 forced to leave Idi Amin's terror; 7,000 Chileans in 1973 after the downfall of Salvador Allende's government; over 100,000 Vietnamese refugees after the fall of Saigon in 1975; and 11,000 Lebanese during the civil wars in the late 1970s. This information was provided by James Bissett in an unpublished speech to the Library of Parliament. James Bissett is a former Executive Director of the Canadian Immigration Service 1985–1990.

Figure 9-1

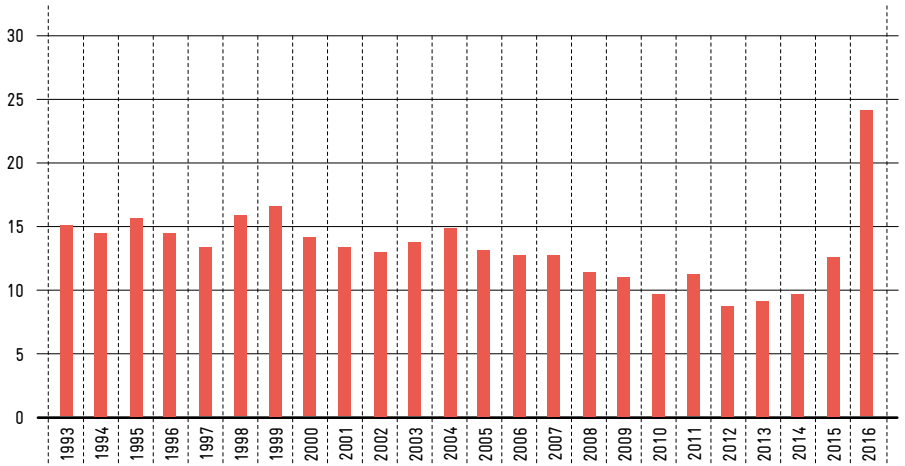
Immigrants Canada 1990–2019



Source: Government of Canada (2020c)

Figure 9-2

Refugees as Percentage of all Immigrants



Source: Statistics Canada

How does Canada's intake of refugees compare with that of Europe and the United States?

In 2020 Canada's target of 50,000 refugees comes to 0.13 percent of the population of 38 million.

For the European Union with a population of 448 million, 0.13 percent comes to 514,000. In fact, the EU admitted 1,25 million in 2015–2016 and an average annual 613,000 in 2017–2019 (Eurostat 2020). With the US population of 327 million, 0.13 percent equals 390 thousand. The actual number of refugees for 2016 was 84,989 (US Department of Homeland Security 2016).

These statistics suggest that Canada is more than pulling its weight in relieving the misery of refugees in the world in comparison with the record of the US, but falls short with respect to that of the UE.

9.3 _ Refugees and National Security[7]

The number and scale of terrorist attacks (Wikipedia no date) by immigrants and refugees in Canada has always been small, especially compared with those in Europe. The only significant event involved the mid-Atlantic downing of an Air Canada flight to India in 1985, which resulted in the loss of 329 lives. It was motivated by political struggles in India and carried out by and aimed at Canadian citizens born in India. The low incidence of terrorist events caused by refugees is attributable in part to the work of security agents, though by the nature of the work, little is known of the extent to which they have prevented terrorist attacks by refugees.

However, the work of these agents has been facilitated by the ways in which refugees are selected by government policies that minimize the arrival of terrorists. These ways are shown in Table 9-2. As can be seen, the 2020 target is for the admittance of 49,700 refugees. Of these, 18,000 will be "Protected Persons in Canada and Dependents Abroad," who are asylum seekers in Canada who have passed the evaluation of their claim by the Refugee Board, including the assessment of the security risk they pose. The second category of "Resettled Refugees" consists of individuals selected by Canadian and UN agents in UN-operated refugee camps abroad based on their good economic prospects, health and threat to security.

It is noteworthy that 20,000 out of a total of 49,700 refugees are sponsored privately. Most sponsors are relatives already living in Canada or private charitable organizations with links to the refugees' home countries. The remaining resettled refugees are supported by the government.

Canada has some enclaves in which immigrants dominate the population, but it does not have Europe's problems with enclaves in which refugees preserve their national culture and language and which are also centers of unemployment, crime, religious intolerance and breeding grounds for terrorists. This is not the place to explain this benign situation in Canada, but one important possible explanation is that most refugees and immigrants in Canada stem from China, India, and South Asian countries where militant Islamists are in a small minority. Other factors contributing to the absence of terrorist-breeding enclaves in Canada is that refugees and immigrants enjoy good employment opportunities, generous social assistance programs by governments and private charities and a generally welcoming atmosphere by a public which believes that immigrants increase economic prosperity and enrich the diversity of Canadian culture.

7 The terrorism threat in Canada is periodically provided by the Government of Canada (2018).

9.4 _ Number of Refugees According to Labor Market Demand

Canada's economy and labor market have always benefited from the production and export of natural resources found in abundance in the ground and harvested in fields, forests, and oceans. In addition, Canada's manufacturing and service industries have grown and prospered through exports to and supply chains with the United States facilitated through free trade agreements.

Under these conditions, immigrants normally are readily absorbed by the growing demand for labor from these industries. They also often reduce shortages of labor with special skills and find ready employment in occupations that Canadians are reluctant to fill, such as janitors, home and health care providers, truckers, security guards, bus- and taxi-drivers.

Table 9-2

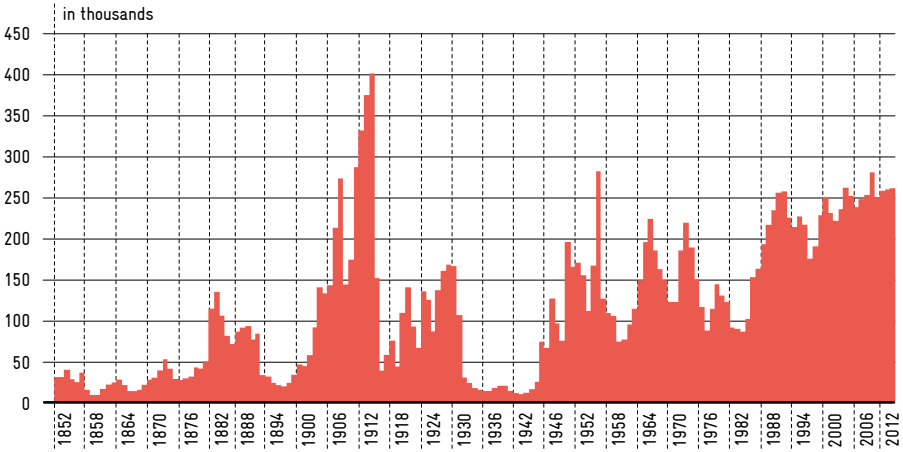
Types of Refugees 2020

1.	Protected Persons in Canada & Dependents Abroad		18,000
2.	Resettled Refugees		
	a	Government Assisted	10,700
	b	Blended Visa Office Referred	1,000
	c	Privately Sponsored	20,000
Total			49,700

Source: Government of Canada (2020d)

Figure 9-3

Number of immigrants who landed annually in Canada, 1852 to 2014



Source: From 1852 to 1979: Employment and Immigration Canada, 1982. For 1980: Immigration Statistics, Immigration and Demographic Policy Group, Catalogue no. MP22-1/1980. From 1980 to 2014: Immigration Refugees Citizenship Canada.

The growth of the Canadian economy and demand for labor has fluctuated in the wake of business cycles that were highly correlated with and often caused by recessions and booms in the United States. Figure 9-3 shows the variations in immigration that existed for most of Canada's history. Showing up clearly are recessions in the 1890s, post-World War I, the 1930s and several financial and technology driven recessions in the period following the Second World War.

Noteworthy is that no such major fluctuations are evident after 2000 shown in Chart 3 and Chart 1. Even the sharp and deep recession of 2008 brought no major reduction in the number of immigrants and refugees. These facts seem to reflect a basic change in government policy that was not justified or discussed by the politicians responsible.

9.5 _ Immigration Policies Are Coming under Criticism

Canada's refugee policies are shaped by its unique geography, history, and institutions. The refugee policies are part of general immigration policies driven by politicians, have not encountered major public criticism and meet the country's

commitments to the relief of human suffering around the world.

However, in conclusion, it needs to be noted that while Canada's refugee and immigration policies have broad public support, they are coming under increasing criticism by policy experts and academics.[8] Opinion surveys show a growing public dissatisfaction with existing immigration policies.[9] These developments appear to have no effect on the government's immigration targets, which have been raised to the record levels of 400,000 annually for the three years 2021–2023.

8 Two papers critical of Canada's immigration and refugee policies have been published by the former Executive Director of the Canadian Immigration Service James Bissett. The first paper *(C2C Journal 2010)* tellingly is entitled "The Rise of Treason and the Decline of Canadian-Based Terror Threats" and the second *(National Post 2018)* "How Canada Can Actually Fix the Migration Mess on Its Borders." Herbert Grubel's (2017) study entitled Canadian Immigration Policies: Blueprint for Europe? draws heavily on his critical evaluation of Canada's policies; the study by Grubel and Patrick Grady (2015) Immigration and The Welfare State Revisited: Fiscal Transfers to Immigrants in Canada documents how the low incomes and tax payments of recent immigrants impose a serious fiscal burden on non-immigrant Canadians; Grubel's *(C2C Journal 2020)* study "Can Canada Handle A Rational, Polite And Fact-Based Debate About Immigration?" argues that the shortcomings of the country's immigration policies should be discussed openly.

9 CBC (2019b) reports on a poll which found "Sixty-three percent of respondents…said the government should prioritize limiting immigration levels because the country might be reaching a limit in its ability to integrate them." See Public Polls (2016) for other poll results such as "one quarter of respondents believe that Canada accepts too many immigrants and about 50 percent believe that the number is about right."

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10 _Lessons Learned and Cornerstones of a Future Migration Strategy

The country chapters show that national approaches towards refugees and asylum seekers vary to a great extent. It has become clear that certain countries, such as Greece, lack a coherent strategy to foster integration in general. Other European countries mainly differ in the length of asylum procedures, the duration and scope of access to the labor market or social benefits, and the institutions involved. Furthermore, most countries, among them Switzerland, treat refugees and asylum seekers or temporarily admitted persons differently, with specific agencies involved for each group. In line with distinct policy approaches, the employment rate of the asylum population varies between European countries (Joyce 2018).

New political and also populist movements and resentment towards asylum seekers increased in many European countries after the Syrian crisis. Canada, by contrast, which is less targeted by refugees due to its geographical location, self-determines the number of refugee arrivals per year. Refugees can also be viewed as a valuable resource bridging labor shortages and without causing much political discussion.

Research has shown that providing asylum seekers unhindered access to the labor market as soon as possible increases their employment rate significantly (Hainmüller et al. 2018; Hainmüller et al. 2016). A meta-study on the impact of refugee migration on social expenditures across Germany, Switzerland and Austria shows no, or a slightly positive, effect (Spahl et al. 2017). Successful integration of refugees into the labor market possibly generates additional revenue for the state (Brühl 2016; Bonin 2016). Furthermore, employment plays a crucial role in preventing security risks among refugees and asylum seekers (Couttenier et al. 2019). Essentially, the three key aspects of labor market integration, social expenditures and security risks are interrelated.

Recent developments and reforms in Swiss asylum policies

The Swiss asylum system underwent some changes since the influx of refugees in 2015. Swiss citizens voted on the asylum reform of 2016. The package aimed at providing accelerated and fair asylum procedures. In 2018 the federal council and the cantons agreed on the Integration Agenda (see Eduard Gnesa's article on Swiss asylum policies, **chapter 1**). As part of these policy reforms, integration spending per person increased from 6,000 to 18,000 Swiss francs. Additionally, federal asylum centers were built to ensure efficient handling. The infrastructure is designed to handle around 24,000 asylum applications a year. As a comparison: around 14,000 asylum applications were claimed in 2019 and even fewer in 2020, which is also due to the pandemic.

In 2019 the Integration Agenda Switzerland and the Integration Pre-Apprenticeship program ("InVol"), were launched as part of the reforms. Both aim at increasing the employment rate among refugees and temporarily admitted persons. Accordingly, three years after their arrival, refugees and provisionally admitted persons are supposed to have obtained basic knowledge of a national language. After seven years, the employment rate should reach 50 percent of adults, and at least 66 percent of all younger refugees should have started vocational training. To this end, every refugee is provided a job coach to assess skills and enhance placement in the labor market (SEM 2018a). In total, the Integration Agenda entails five measurable goals and targets covering language skills, education, labor market, social integration and managing everyday life. Implementation remains the responsibility of the cantons. Realization of the reforms started in 2019 and it is still too early to provide an evaluation of them as corresponding data are not yet available.

Criticisms of the Integration Agenda

It is to be welcomed that the Integration Agenda sets quantifiable goals which will enable evidence-based policies in future. However, certain points of improvement remain and are discussed below. On the one hand, greater involvement by the private sector – gatekeeper for labor market access – is critical. In order to reach an increased involvement of the private sector, Swiss institutions are in charge of setting the right incentives for employers. This includes better planning reliability when hiring a provisionally admitted person, providing more leeway in wage terms to companies and requiring minimal bureaucratic efforts from employers willing to hire a person from the asylum sector. In a recent motion, employers called for provisionally admitted apprentices to be allowed to complete their training in all circumstances. Their request should be met as a matter of urgency. In this regard, the reluctance of the Federal Department of Justice and Police is incomprehensible (NZZaS 2021).

On the other hand, criticisms can be directed at the tripled expenditure per refugee and provisionally admitted person, which increased from CHF 6,000 to CHF 18,000 (SEM 2018a). These funds should be used to finance language courses, employment programs, vocational training offers and basic skills courses and increase social

and economic integration overall. However, monitoring the use of funds could increase transparency and ensure target-oriented use. Furthermore, it is claimed that this approach pays off in the long-term, as every Swiss Franc spent on integration efforts early on should save four Swiss Francs in the future (SEM 2018b). However, future returns on investment are based on assumptions that remain shaky (BaZ 2018).

Main challenges for the Swiss asylum system

Despite these recent reforms, not everything is as yet working as it should. The duration of asylum procedures frequently exceeds the legally set limits. Exceeding such limits stems from medical and security-related evaluations (SEM 2020). The successful repatriation of rejected asylum seekers also presents a time and cost intensive challenge. Difficulties stem from countries that do not cooperate in taking back their citizens, prolonged identification processes or a lack of documents (NZZ 2018). These points indicate the need for increased bilateral cooperation with countries of origin and streamlining administrative processes to prevent lengthy procedures.

Regarding refugees' and provisionally admitted persons' employment rate, the figures are – as outlined in chapter 2 – significantly lower than levels for Swiss nationals. Compared with refugee employment rates in other European countries, Switzerland shows only middling results (Joyce 2018). Increasing labor market integration among the asylum population remains a key challenge for the Swiss Asylum System. This becomes even more important, as around 70 percent of the asylum population of working age are capable of working and reaching self-sufficiency for themselves and their families (EJPD 2019). To this end, enhanced involvement of the private sector in migration and labor market integration policies and the use of data-driven solutions could offer great potential in labor market integration.

Cornerstones for a future Swiss migration strategy

Ideally the Swiss asylum system attracts people with a justified reason for receiving protection and a minimal share of asylum seekers that need to be returned. Furthermore, decision making on a person's asylum status should take place rapidly and fairly. Refugees are provided quick and unhindered access to the labor market and show increased employment rates, or people are in vocational training. Repatriations should be kept to a minimum and take place effectively.

Country chapters in this report showed the lasting positive impact if the asylum population is given quick and unbureaucratic access to the labor market. Furthermore, it has become clear that different stakeholders from the public and private

sector need to work more closely and have greater mutual understanding of each other's needs in order to increase employment rates. Integration measures such as language or cultural courses are an additional means that are taken into consideration in the Swiss framework. Furthermore, innovative data-based measures that allow for an optimal matching of refugees and locations should be considered. Lastly, asylum migration requires international collaboration and cooperation. Each country involved benefits from this and individual national efforts are not helpful in this regard. Instead, Switzerland provides the ideal forum for a multilateral dialogue and for promoting joint action.

This study identifies four key areas of improvement for Swiss migration strategy. In total, 12 concrete measures across those key areas are formulated in the following section, which could provide the cornerstone for future migration strategy.

10.1 _ Key Area 1: Enhance Bilateral Third Country and European Cooperation

01 _ Bilateral third country cooperation: check for a strategic linkage of international cooperation with migration policy

International cooperation aims at supporting people affected by poverty and crises. Coordination between international migration-related areas is in many cases desirable. Migration partnerships are a valuable tool here. Switzerland already fosters migration partnerships with some refugees' countries of origin (SEM 2019a). First experience of such partnerships and transit is positive, and the Swiss example of migration partnerships has been a model for the recently presented plans to reform the Common European Asylum System (Angenendt and Gnesa 2020). Migration partnerships simplify cooperation between destination countries and countries of origin, especially regarding missing documents or if a country refuses to take back its citizens. In return, Switzerland offers educational or job training programs designed to increase local economic development and self-sufficiency. Such coupled cooperation should – where sensible – be extended and intensified. In this sense, it is to be welcomed that the new strategy for international cooperation calls for a strategic linkage with migration policies, and that the Federal Council ensures the incorporation of international cooperation in all its foreign policy strategies (DEZA 2021). However, it is not generally advisable to link development aid to cooperation in migration issues. Such a decision should always be taken on a case-by-case basis.

02 _ **Bilateral third country cooperation: inform future migrants on their admission chances before they embark on their journey**

Information in the country of origin and among asylum seekers regarding their chances of admission is sometimes flawed or insufficient. Migration centers in countries of origin should be created to inform local would-be refugees on the actual situation, their chances of admission and the labor market skills in demand. People with unfounded refugee status should be e prevented from leaving their country. Pilot projects with migration centers have already been launched and should be expanded (ICMPD 2021).

03 _ **European cooperation: build economic zones at the European external border to increase migrants' labor potential**

Approaches exist to enhance refugees' economic potential. Refugees should not be perceived solely as burdens, but also as potential benefits and sources of economic opportunity to the host country. An innovative idea refers to the establishment of "economic zones" as an alternative to refugee camps, where companies can invest in people's skills and offer training while asylum seekers develop their talents (Betts and Collier 2015). After a first pilot project in Jordan, more economic zones should be fostered and established at Europe's external borders. Not only do they provide asylum seekers with on the job training, they also increase asylum seekers' labor potential upon arrival in the destination country.

04 _ **European cooperation: conduct a digital status check at the external European border**

External European borders resemble the national borders of any country belonging to the Schengen agreement. Consequently, all countries should be incentivized to cooperate in securing European borders and conducting status checks on incoming asylum seekers. The current situation shows that gatekeeper countries such as Greece, Italy and Spain are overwhelmed and cannot handle the influx efficiently. Investments in digital and logistical infrastructure and additional assistants working at the external borders are necessary. Status checks of incoming asylum seekers should be digitized to be more efficient and transparent. Switzerland should advocate for increased cooperation and investment in digital infrastructure to accelerate status checks at the external European border.

05 _ **European cooperation: extend using the international database to prevent asylum applications in several countries**

Rejected asylum seekers are likely to "disappear" and apply for asylum in another Schengen country, or they might lack personal documents, hampering their identification. Both cases lead to lengthy and inefficient asylum procedures, with identical processes being required in different countries. Extending the Eurodac international database, in which all incoming asylum seekers get registered at Europe's external border helps to avoid delays and duplication. Registration based on fingerprints should be maintained to enable a single identification, even in cases when documents are lost multiple times. This would prevent several asylum applications from the same person and increase overall system efficiency. And people without any documents could be registered and identified by countries in the Schengen area. Switzerland should promote the extended use of the international database.

10.2 _ Key Area 2: Increase Private Sector Involvement in Labor Market Integration

06 _ **Increase private companies' involvement in clarifying refugee labor market potential**

Companies are crucial enablers for refugees and provisionally admitted persons to access the labor market. Currently, public sector job coaches try to place refugees in the Swiss labor market. However, job coaches or integration workers sometimes lack an employer's perspective or industry specific knowledge (Gnesa 2018). Instead, private companies should be included directly in the clarification and skill assessment of refugees. This connects future employers directly with refugees and provides them the possibility to find out for themselves whether a person has the necessary skills, thereby increasing transparency before hiring. This could be realized via an online platform connecting employers with people in the asylum sector with a possibility of direct contact. Another possibility would be recruitment days for refugees, who could then interact with employers. Companies themselves know best what skills they are looking for and whether a candidate fits.

07 _ **Lower bureaucratic hurdles when hiring people of the asylum sector**

A survey of Swiss companies showed that rigid minimum wages and collective labor agreements for people in the asylum sector posed obstacles to them employing refugees or provisionally admitted persons (Gnesa 2018). Companies bear higher costs when hiring people from the asylum population due to permit or registration requirements, lengthy bureaucratic procedures and efforts to gather information. If bureaucratic efforts to hire an asylum seeker exceed the income generated, especially if it is unclear how long the person can remain in the country, the incentives for hiring are diminished. Loosening collective labor agreements for refugees and providing more leeway over wages could increase incentives for employers (Grünenfelder et al. 2018).

Box 1:

Evaluation of 12 cornerstones for a future migration strategy by the State Secretariat for Migration SEM

Cornelia Lüthy, Vice Director of the State Secretariat for Migration and Member of the Board of Management

The State Secretariat for Migration is responsible for handling asylum applications and grants asylum to persecuted people. Furthermore, it designs policies concerning refugees' and asylum seekers' integration in Switzerland, return and repatriation. The State Secretariat for Migration was presented with the cornerstones for a future migration strategy and stressed key points in current migration policies. Important measures to streamline bureaucratic processes or increase the private sector's involvement were implemented recently. More can be done regarding data-driven solutions and multinational or bilateral cooperation. The Swiss government invests strongly in a close partnership with industries and sectoral bodies, as well as employers. The same applies to cooperation between all state actors in labor market integration, the public employment service, disability insurance, integration promotion and social welfare.

To continue on this path, many administrative obstacles have been removed in recent years with the objective of promoting the potential of the domestic labor force. The special levy on the income of temporarily admitted persons and refugees was abolished on 1 January 2018. Moreover, as of 1 July 2018, social assistance agencies register every refugee or temporarily admitted person ready for work with the regional unemployment agency. The aim is both to support refugees in their professional integration and also to encourage employers to give them a chance. Successful labor integration can only work if employers are directly involved in clarifying the labor market potential of refugees and in developing training offers that meet the needs of the economy.

So far, the indicators of the Federal Statistical Office do not allow the target group of refugees and temporary admitted persons to be separately analyzed (BFS 2017). With the Swiss Integration Agenda, Switzerland is making a significant shift in its integration policy towards an evidence-based policy. For the first time, measurable goals exist nationwide, which is why monitoring will be established. The data allow study of the long-term progress and professional integration of people supported by integration measures, as opposed to people who have not benefited from these. In addition, an evaluation program has been put into operation to assess the effectiveness of the measures implemented in this framework. This enables us to anchor our policy in practice and to continuously improve our approach and commitment. Successful integration policy builds on data-based evidence, impact-evaluation, and monitoring. As the human and economic return on investment often come with a substantial time lag, long-term perspectives and keeping a steady course in periods of crisis are key. From that point of view, the Swiss Cantonal Integration Programs and the Integration Agenda are successful, but heavy, tankers on a long journey. They need the company, challenge and pioneering spirit of smaller agile boats, reaching out for new ideas and new partners. Pilot programs and private initiatives can take this role. Against the backdrop of the Covid-19 crisis and its challenges, we might need more private investors, foundations or other private actors to mobilize seed capital for integration projects, e.g. to foster entrepreneurship of refugees. We might also need to better understand the needs of traditional integration sectors, such as gastronomy, that have been hit heavily by the pandemic, and how migration flows react to the crisis. In other words, the pandemic and its effects call for solid investments in integration policies and new, innovative partnerships.

08 _ Any asylum person who starts a (pre)-apprenticeship should be guaranteed to finish the education program

In the case of provisionally admitted persons or cases of hardship, people must leave Switzerland as soon as conditions allow a safe return to their country of origin. This can happen anytime and affect people in a (pre)-apprenticeship. The negative consequences are twofold: It creates uncertainty for employers potentially reluctant to invest further resources in an asylum trainee. And a completed apprenticeship helps anyway, as a returning migrant can use the skills acquired once back home. Finishing a (pre)-apprenticeship should be allowed apart from cases when a person becomes a criminal. As proposed by the political motion launched by employers in December 2020 (NZZaS 2021), this would require a legal amendment and both chambers of parliament supporting it. After the lower chamber voted in favor, the upper chamber was opposed, settling the issue for the time being. But further efforts should be made.

10.3 _ Key Area 3: Apply Data-Driven Solutions

09 _ Apply data-driven matching system when allocating refugees

Refugees and provisionally admitted persons are randomly allocated to Swiss cantons without taking their skillset or languages into account. Therein lies great potential for improvement, as showed by an innovative approach matching people's skills with cantonal languages or with demand for labor (Bansak et al. 2018). Compared to current assignment practices, the authors showed that refugees' employment outcomes increased by 40 to 70 percent. Improving labor market participation by data-driven matching systems should be fostered. Quicker access and integration into the labor market also improve a person's future economic integration (Hainmüller et al. 2018).

10.4_ Key Area 4: Streamlining Administrative Processes

10_ **Simplify administration of migrants by concentrating responsible contact points**

Clarification as well as admission and issuance of permits should be concentrated and unified, regardless of whether a person has refugee status or is provisionally admitted. The current approach results in duplications, particularly between the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) and cantonal migration authorities. For example, to apply for a change of canton, refugees must contact the cantonal migration office, while provisionally admitted persons must report to the SEM (SEM 2019b). Streamlining administrative tasks and concentrating on one level regardless of a person's refugee status would avoid inefficient duplication.

11_ **Questioning the legal differentiation between refugees and provisionally admitted persons**

Refugees and provisionally admitted persons are provided different legal rights and opportunities. Distinctions refer to mobility restrictions, access to housing or changing canton (SEM 2019b). To avoid structural disadvantages between refugees and provisionally admitted persons, legal discrepancies should be questioned and abolished as far as possible. Otherwise, integration is constantly harder for one group, with consequences for labor market access, social costs and security risks. Despite the legal alignment between the two groups, provisionally admitted persons are required to return as soon as conditions allow. Hence, legal alignment does not provide right of residence. By contrast, the Netherlands has already ceased legal differentiation between refugees and provisionally admitted persons and provides regular accompanying legal advice to all asylum seekers which is considered a qualitative contribution to the asylum process as a whole (Thränhardt 2016).

12_ **Collect precise data on labor market access to design targeted policies**

Currently, data describing the asylum population's access and behavior on the Swiss labor market is either incomplete or unspecific. Labor market data on refugees are mixed with data from third-country nationals. And data collection does not start from the beginning, but five years after entering the country. More precise data, both at individual level and related to certain sectors or company characteristics, is needed. This would enable the design of targeted policies. Additionally, panel data allows conclusions to be drawn on the intrapersonal level and over time. A more specific quantitative basis makes comparable assessments and causal inference possible.

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Claudia Crawford

Claudia Crawford is the Head of the Multilateral Dialogue KAS office in Vienna since May 2019. Prior to this, she headed the foundation's offices in Belgrade, London and Moscow. Mrs. Crawford was a member of the German Bundestag from 1990 to 2005 and the federal minister for family affairs, senior citizens, women and youth from 1994 to 1998. During her work in the parliament, she was a member of the foreign affairs committee as well as the deputy chairwoman of the subcommittee for United Nations. She also was member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE. She studied cybernetics and automation technology at the Technical University of Ilmenau.

Angeliki Dimitriadi

Dr. Angeliki Dimitriadi is Senior Research Fellow and Head of the Migration Program ELIAMEP. Her work focuses on irregular migration and asylum policies in the EU. Between 2015 and 2016, she was Visiting Fellow in residence on migration and asylum policy at the European Council on Foreign Relations in Berlin. Angeliki Dimitriadi holds a PhD in Social Administration Migration track, a MA in War Studies and a BSc in IR and History.

Marcus Engler

Dr. Marcus Engler is a social scientist working for the DeZIM Institute since September 2020. His research focuses on refugee and migration movements as well as on German, European and global refugee and migration policy. He is member of the board of the "Netzwerk Fluchtforschung," co-director of the "FluchtforschungsBlog" and co-founder of the "Arbeitskreis Aktive Aufnahmepolitiken." In recent years, Dr. Engler has held various positions in migration research and policy consulting, most recently working as a freelance researcher and consultant for numerous organizations and research projects in Germany and abroad. Dr. Engler studied social sciences and economics at Humboldt University in Berlin and at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Sciences Po) in Paris. He, then, completed his doctorate in sociology at Humboldt University and at the Franco-German research center Centre Marc Bloch.

Eduard Gnesa

Dr. iur. Eduard Gnesa was Special Ambassador for International Migration Cooperation at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) from 2009 until his retirement in 2017. Before his Ambassadorship, he used to be Director of the Federal Office for Migration,

which corresponds to today's State Secretariat for Migration (SEM). Today, he is a lecturer on Swiss and international migration policy at the University of St. Gallen and a member of various international expert committees on migration and refugee issues. Mr. Gnesa is also a speaker and expert on migration issues and works for several foundations.

Herbert Grubel

Herbert G. Grubel is Professor of Economics (Emeritus) at Simon Fraser University and a Senior Fellow at the Fraser Institute in Vancouver. He earned his PhD in Economics from Yale University in 1963 and had teaching and research positions at numerous universities including Yale, Stanford, Oxford and Bologna. He has published numerous books, peer-reviewed articles and opinion pieces covering issues in international monetary policy, international trade, fiscal policy, immigration and regulation. Additionally, he was a Reform Party Member of Parliament in Ottawa from 1993 to 1997, serving as the Finance Critic from 1995 to 1997.

Ulrich Kober

Ulrich Kober is Director at the Bertelsmann Stiftung, a German philanthropic "think and do tank". He focuses with his team on migration partnerships and integration. Before joining the foundation in 2000 he worked with the international Jesuit Order in the field of education and integration in Germany, Belgium and Colombia. He holds master degrees in Sociology from the London School of Economis and in Theology from the Frankfurt St. Georgen University.

Cornelia Lüthy

Since 2016, Cornelia Lüthy is Vice Director of the State Secretariat for Migration, Switzerland (SEM), Head of Immigration and Integration Division and a member of the Board of Management. Her areas of responsibility include entry/border regulations, naturalization, residence and work permits, the Free Movement of People with the EU and integration policy. Cornelia Lüthy is a Doctor of Law and completed an Executive Master of Public Administration at the London School of Economics, where she is now also involved as a guest lecturer. Before joining the SEM, Cornelia Lüthy worked at the Federal Office of Justice, as a lawyer in various law firms and at the Directorate of Education in the Canton of Zurich.

Peter Maurer

Peter Maurer is the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which carries out humanitarian work in over 80 countries. His priorities for the presidency include strengthening humanitarian diplomacy, engaging States and other actors for the respect of international humanitarian law, and improving the humanitarian response through innovation and new partnerships. Previously, Maurer was Switzerland's State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and worked as appointed ambassador and permanent representative of Switzerland to the United Nations in New York. Also, he was elected chairman of the Fifth Committee and chairman of the Burundi configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission by the UN General Assembly. This after entering diplomatic service in 1987 and holding various positions in Bern and Pretoria.

Kostas Vlachopoulos

Kostas Vlachopoulos main research interests focus on Migration, Security and Discourse Analysis. Kostas holds a BSc in Public Administration-Public Institutions (Panteion University) and an MSc in International Relations (University of Edinburgh). He is a Researcher-Country Expert at the Erich-Brost-Institut für Internationalen Journalismus, at the Technical University of Dortmund.

Shona Warren

Shona Warren is Head of the Migration Programme at Agora Think Tank, a grassroots, foreign policy Think Tank based in London. She also works as a Public Affairs Consultant. Shona Warren has a background in community outreach and migrant rights policy, having spent several years in the NGO sector in Australia and Nepal. She holds a Masters of International Relations, specializing in security studies, and a Bachelor of Arts in French and Politics from the University of Melbourne.

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