Fair Labour Market Integration of Refugees

Workshop 6.17, Everest 2
Doritt Komitowski (IQ Competence Center on Immigration, Berlin)
Stephan Schiele (Tür an Tür / MigraNet - IQ Landesnetzwerk Bayern)

INTERNATIONAL METROPOLIS CONFERENCE 2017
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<td>Speaker statements:</td>
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<td>➢ Labour market integration of refugees in Germany: framework, challenges, initiative „Fair Integration“ (Doritt Komitowski, IQ Competence Centre on Immigration and Stephan Schiele, Tür an Tür/MigraNet IQ Bavaria)</td>
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<td>➢ Labour market integration of refugees in Sweden (Bernd Parusel, Swedish Migration Agency)</td>
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Labour Market Integration of Refugees in Germany

Doritt Komitowski (IQ Competence Center on Immigration, Berlin)
Stephan Schiele (Tür an Tür / MigraNet - IQ Landesnetzwerk Bayern)
Summary

1. Immigration to Germany
2. Legal framework for the access to the labour market of refugees and asylum seekers
3. Labour market integration: current situation and main challenges
4. Policy strategies aiming at fair labour market integration
1. Immigration to Germany

- By the end of 2016 1.5 million refugees lived in Germany: recognised refugees, asylum seekers, non-returnable refused asylum seekers (the so-called “tolerated persons”) and persons with a residence permit based on humanitarian reasons (humanitarian residence permit)

- Current migration dynamics:
  → 2015: 1,091,894 EASY-Registrations → approximately 890,000 incoming refugees (Federal Ministry of the Interior)
  → 2016: 321,371 EASY-registrations → approximately 280,000 incoming refugees (Federal Ministry of the Interior)
  → 2017 (January to July): 106,604 (new Asylum Application Statistics)
1.a. Asylum applications in Germany: countries of origin 2016

Number of asylum applications in Germany by country of origin in 2016
(Source: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees 2017) © Minor
1.b. Asylum applications in Germany: countries of origin 2017

Number of asylum applications in Germany by country of origin in the 1st half of 2017
(Source: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees 2017) © Minor
1.c. Asylum applicants: decisions of the Federal Office

Decisions of the Federal Office on asylum applications in 2015, 2016 and 2017
(Source: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees 2017) © Minor
1.d. Asylum applicants: age and gender

Age of asylum applicants 2017 (1st half)
(Source: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees 2017) © Minor

Gender of asylum applicants 2017 (1st half)
(Source: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees 2017) © Minor
2.a. Legal framework for access to the labour market

- Refugees have unlimited access to the labour market
- Historically, asylum seekers were barred from the labour market; later on they could access it after four years of residence in Germany
- Recent developments: various laws and regulations gradually opened up the labour market to asylum seekers and “non-returnable“ refused asylum seekers (the so-called „tolerated“ persons)
- Asylum seekers and “tolerated” persons can start working or begin vocational education or an apprenticeship after three months of registered residence
- Asylum seekers and “tolerated” persons can participate in the professional education system from the first day of registered residence
- Asylum seekers and “tolerated” persons from the so-called safe countries of origin* are still barred from the labour market

*Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ghana, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Senegal and Serbia
2.b. Policy for access to the labour market of asylum seekers

- Early access to integration courses, vocational language courses and financial support as instruments of labour market integration

**But**: Many of the early-access measures are limited to the group of asylum seekers who are said to have a long-term perspective to stay in Germany (Syria, Iran, Iraq, Somalia and Eritrea)

- Identification and recognition of job qualifications acquired in the country of origin
- New since August 2016: Guaranteed residence permit limited to the duration of the apprenticeship for „tolerated“ persons („non-returnable“ refused asylum seekers)
3.a. Labour force participation

- Significant differences between immigrant groups
- Different prerequisites and conditions
- Highest employment rate: EU citizens (free movement)
- Lowest employment rate: nationals from Asian and African countries of origin, considered volatile
- Reversed figures for unemployment rate

Labour force participation rate of German and Non-German citizens 2016
3.b. Level of skills utilised in the work place

Skill-level requirement of German and Non-German workers as of December 31st 2016
(Source: Federal Employment Agency 2017) © Minor
3.c Push and pull factors of successful labor market integration

- 73.8% younger than 30 Years
- 59.7% younger than 25 Years
- 36.2% younger than 18 Years

School education of over 18-year-old
- 19% said they had not attended any school or only elementary school
- 36% have attended an intermediate or technical school, 25% completed this
- 37% visited a secondary school, 32% had completed this

In the Group of under 18-year old the number of refugees who had not completed school is much higher
3.d Push and pull factors of successful labor market integration

**Push-factors:**
- Formal recognition through Recognition law (included §14 BQFG)
- Volunteer-networks
- many programs for the target group refugees (employers involved)
- positive attitude towards refugees
3.e Push and pull factors of successful labor market integration

Pull-factors:
- Lack of knowledge of education and training system
- Lack of knowledge about labour law and wage agreement
- Non-formal and informal skills will not be validated
- Language learning opportunities are not adapted to the individual needs
- Programs provide false incentives for education providers
3.f Recommendations for a successful labor market integration

Recommendations:

- use existing qualifications
- if there are none, bring refugees into job training
- If some refugees are too old for job training, use company training, partial qualification or on the job training
- …
3.f Recommendations for a successful labor market integration

Recommendations:

- Educational background must be connection capability:
  - Individual educational advice
  - School-system must be able to integrate also „older“ students (16 +) and should be able to refer to the right types of school
  - Formal conditions are in many cases still a big problem
  - Validation of non-formal and informal skills
  - Successful way: professional recognition recognized by law
3.f Recommendations for a successful labor market integration

Recommendations:

- Provide information on education and training system
- Support structures for employers must be available
- Individual offers of extra occupational qualifications must be offered
- Language courses adapt to individual needs (language course advice)
4. Policy strategies aiming at fair labour market integration

- Numerous programmes, policy measures, initiatives and projects conducted by the federal and local government(s), municipalities, NGOs and volunteers
- New initiative „Fair Integration of Refugees“ starts in 2018:
  → Part of the funding programme „Integration through Qualification“
  → Provision of nationwide consulting services for refugees and asylum seekers concerning:
    » Basic employee rights and labour standards
    » Forwarding to the trade unions if enforcement of labour rights is necessary
    » Counselling services and structures
    » Recognition of foreign qualifications and professional education
    » Labour market participation
Thank you for your attention!

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Bibliography and further information


