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Prepare – Protect – Promote

*Mapping of and report on the
Afghan Diaspora in Germany*



Centre for International
Migration and Development

a joint operation of GIZ and the
German Federal Employment Agency



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11 April 2017

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This study was commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and realized by the GIZ Programme Migration for Development (PME).

Shaping Migration for Development

Migrants are bridge-builders between their countries of origin and the countries in which they currently live and work. With their skills, ideas, experiences and contacts, they are key drivers of change in both settings and help to ensure that their countries of origin can also face the future with confidence. Many migrants contribute to their origin countries' development while living elsewhere: some establish diaspora organisations and carry out projects on a voluntary basis, while others set up businesses and build economic ties between countries. A significant number of migrants decide at some point to return to their countries of origin on a temporary or permanent basis, enabling them to share their knowledge directly at local level. We support all these activities of migrants, because we believe in the potential of global migration for sustainable development. We also advise people who are not yet sure whether they want to leave their country. We highlight legal migration options and show them alternatives in their country of origin. Our expertise and advice in the field of global labour migration also benefit institutions such as ministries of labour in our partner countries. PME is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and is implemented by the Centre for international migration and development (CIM) – a joint operation of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the International Placement Service of the Federal Employment Agency (ZAV).

The “Programme Migration for Development“ has five components:

- >> Knowledge transfer by returning experts
- >> Cooperation with the diaspora community (diaspora organisations and diaspora experts)
- >> Business ideas for development
- >> Migration advice
- >> Migration policy advice

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Acronyms

AA	<i>German Federal Foreign Office</i> Auswärtiges Amt
ADAV	Afghanisch-Deutscher Ärzte Verein
ADG	Afghan Diaspora in Germany
AINA e.V.	Afghanisch-Deutscher Austausch von Kultur, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft und Sport
ALS	Afghan Luminous Sun- Nazo
AMSA e.V.	Afghan Medical Staff Association
BMZ	<i>German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development</i> Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung
DAAD	<i>German Academic Exchange Service</i> Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
DAMF e.V.	Dachverband des Afghanischen Medizinischen Fachpersonals e.V.
ERASMUS	European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
EU	European Union
FDPA	Freiheitliche Demokratische Partei Afghanistans
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GO	Governmental Organization
Gröne TEZ	Gröne Trauma-Erststabilisierungszentrum
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HRK	Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
IAWA	Independent Afghan Women Association
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KUFA e.V.	Committee for the Support of Refugees in Afghanistan and for the Reconstruction of the Destroyed Land
MoRR	Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
PME	<i>Programme Migration for Development</i> Programm Migration für Entwicklung
PPP	Public Private Partnership
REAG/ GARP	Reintegration and Emigration Programme for Asylum Seekers in Germany/ Government Assisted Repatriation Programme
SDT	Vertretung der Demokratischen Partei Afghanistans Tamadon
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VAf e.V.	Association for the Support of Afghanistan
VAIT e.V.	Verein Afghanischer Ingenieure und Techniker in Deutschland
YAAR e.V.	Verein für afghanische Flüchtlingshilfe, Integration und kultureller Austausch
ZAN e.V.	Hilfsorganisation zur Förderung der Rechte afghanischer Frauen

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1 Introduction

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1.1

The Project “Mapping and Report”

This is a study on the Afghan Diaspora in Germany (ADG). It is one of various investigations on diverse diaspora groups in Germany commissioned by the Programme Migration for Development (PME). PME is financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM), which is a joint operation of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the German Federal Employment Agency. The main objective of PME is the promotion of knowledge transfer between diaspora groups in Germany and their home countries to foster development. The main fields of activity are the following:

- **Knowledge transfer by returning experts:** PME supports migrants in their permanent return to their home countries and provides help with regard to job placement, networking and financial aid.
- **Diaspora cooperation:** PME supports diaspora organisations in their development work through financial aid; advice on project management and fundraising; networking; and assistance in the planning and implementation of specific projects. In addition, this activity addresses the temporary return of experts who wish to engage in and contribute to the development of their home countries.
- **Migrants as Entrepreneurs (“Business Ideas for Development”):** Within the framework of this project, PME supports returning migrants through capacity building, individual coaching and networking to launch businesses in their countries of origin.
- **Migration Advice:** PME advises migrants concerning their migration decisions in their origin countries.
- **Migration Policy Advice:** PME further supports partner countries in the elaboration of sound migration policies.

The basic assumption of the present study is that the ADG has a decisive potential for the stabilization and development of Afghanistan, as well as regarding the interaction with Afghan refugees or asylum seekers within Germany. However, in order to attain this goal, good understanding of the ADG is needed.

The present analysis is based on a first study by GIZ¹ to outline this very complex topic in 2006 (GTZ, 2006). The objectives of the current study are to provide (1) a comprehensive overview of the Afghan (organised and individual) diaspora in Germany based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis; (2) an overview of Afghan migrant associations as well as (loose) networks in Germany; and (3) specific recommendations for action for PME regarding context-appropriate and conflict-sensitive ways of addressing organised members of the diaspora, especially concerning new activities of the programme.²

1

Former GTZ; since 01.2011 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

2

More information and quite a few overlapping findings and data are contained in a recent study for the GIZ: “Rückkehrbereitschaftsstudie” (Baslow and others 2017). In this empirical research, a lot of complementary data is provided, mainly regarding the social structure of those willing to return within the ADG. The interface of this study is helpful regarding the development sector, while the Returnees Study additionally provides social factor outlines. However, the authors of this study would not support the way by which different diasporas are compared to each other. Quantities and circumstances of their background and migration history are far too different as to be compared. Methodological approaches between the two studies are worthwhile to be further discussed. The parallel research supports a synchronic interpretation of the findings and an amalgamation of both.

Another sector of information comes from the politically highly sensitive repatriation and deportation policies. We could not yet measure the feedback from this complex reality with the original or authentic readiness to return or the degree of voluntarism. This is the reason why we have not included a highly important recommendation: compare a scale of forced and unforced return motivation with a scale of imminent risk of or relief from deportation threats.

The qualitative and quantitative dimensions require further comprehensive surveys and cannot be deduced from the data collected within the framework of this study.

One precondition for this research was the special role of the ADG, both compared to other diasporas in Germany and concerning the perception by the German public. Afghanistan is the only country since the end of World War II that has experienced a German engagement in a military intervention (2002–2014). Germany and Afghanistan have been maintaining a special relationship for over 100 years; which has, however, never led to the inclusion of the ADG in bilateral politics. This issue became more relevant again due to the start of withdrawal of German military from Afghanistan in 2014 and the simultaneous dramatic increase in the numbers of asylum seekers and other immigrants. This rather exceptional situation raised the awareness of the urgency to learn about the ADG and to potentially include them into an active bilateral policy between Germany and Afghanistan.

PME provides a sound framework for such research; at the same time, it allows to dissociate the approaches to the diverse diasporas which are not well compared to each other yet. Since within the focus on development and voluntary return the special situation in the respective country of origin as well as the starting position of potential returns have to be recognized, Afghanistan and its communication with the ADG have to play a crucial role. The recommendations will be clustered according to the fields of activities of PME (see above). Some of these recommendations have to be followed-up by political considerations and decisions before they can be considered for implementation. Others derive from applying PME guidelines and experience to this special case. In any case, the dialogue between German development cooperation and the ADG needs a solid and differentiated set of activities – a “comprehensive approach”.

In some respects, the study mentions risks that should not be underrated. The mapping shows that there is a highly disparate willingness of members of the ADG to directly communicate with German authorities, ranging from highly inclined to dismissive attitudes. As a follow-up to the mapping, migration profiles should be analysed regarding returnees, from highly trained professionals to rather unprepared juvenile single persons in order to develop prioritized activities for each migration group. Concerning the title of the study “PREPARE – PROTECT – PROMOTE”, the following facts have to be kept in mind: Preparing voluntary returnees is a big task but very rewarding. It will make it easier to protect returnees not only upon return to Afghanistan, but also when arriving at their permanent locations: one aspect of preparing is to give the returnees solid information about their country of origin. Many of them have never experienced life in Afghanistan, being born or having been raised in Iran or Pakistan. Protection is difficult at this moment. If the country becomes more secure again, then the protection policy will be pivotal for bilateral programmes. The aspect of promotion should not only support professionals and start-ups, but all returnees seeking adequate occupation. Successful programmes are already in place, mainly directed by GIZ; some of them are focussing on highly qualified persons, others are engaged in vocational training and the development of economic skills. All three fields will require effective and sustained agency by the ADG. For the well-established groups of the ADG, cooperation regarding development will strengthen integration. Thus, communication between the ADG and their compatriots at home plays an important role on the agenda of PME, as well as the principles of good governance³ and of adequate counselling of migrants.

³

Cf. The broad approach initiated by “Govern4Afghanistan” through GIZ/KfW and GOPA in 2015: the 100th anniversary of Afghan–German relations and a sectoral approach towards good governance were the leading starting points for this project.

Why Diasporas Matter

Germany has been – and still is – militarily engaged in Afghanistan for more than a decade. Despite periodical reporting from the era of engagement, Afghanistan and its culture continue to remain an unknown and inaccessible territory for the majority of the people in Germany – except for the Afghans already living here and their descendants. The knowledge about this group remains modest.

This study deals with the *Afghan Diaspora in Germany*, which has emerged at the intersection of three different, yet often overlapping social groups: (1) the group of Afghan citizens in Germany, (2) the group of people with an Afghan migration background (naturalized first generation and second generation), and (3) the group of German citizens of Afghan descent, which goes beyond the statistical migration background recorded only until the second generation (see figure 1).

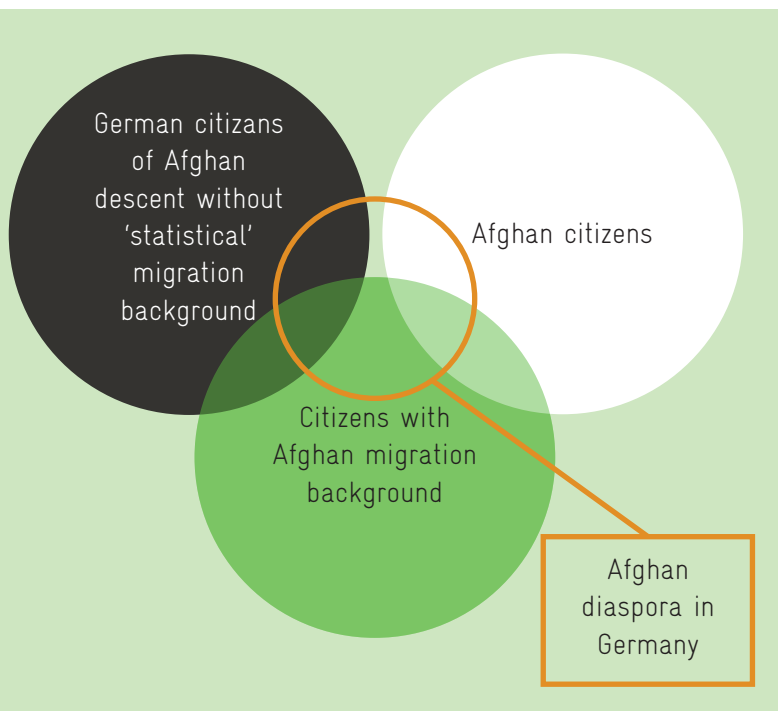


Figure 1:
Interface of the emergence of the Afghan Diaspora in Germany | Own presentation

The maintaining of a relationship with an idealized country of origin by the migrants is decisive. It either reflects an (often) utopian wish to return or the support of development in Afghanistan through collective actions of the members of the diaspora. Nevertheless, the members of the diaspora have also established links within the host society, while often preserving a sense of otherness/uniqueness. Within the framework of this study, those who do not show any interest for their country of origin are not considered members of the ADG as they are not easily distinguishable.

The research on the core parameters for peaceful and sustainable cooperation – bilateral and multi-lateral – has grown steadily since 2001; however, the variable ADG has been not been investigated extensively up to this point. ADG has never been in the focus of the public nor of experts.

Diaspora has neither a positive nor a negative connotation. The people in a host country can feel sympathetic towards a diaspora but change their mind after terroristic incidents which are often ascribed to a certain ethnicity or nationality ("North Africans", "Arabs", "Afghans", etc.). It is also necessary to understand that the activities of a diaspora can be troublesome, even if the narratives of their arrival are perfectly understandable and the motives for its actions are considered genuine. These actions can cause unrest not only in the origin country but also in the host society. For example, sending remittances to conflict parties in the origin country or providing support to diverse political parties can be detrimental to the post-conflict reconstruction of a war-torn society. Such engagement can damage bilateral relations and also cause strong reactions among members of the diaspora and cause new demarcation lines within these collectives (e.g. the split in the Turkish diaspora at this time). The impact that remittances have on the social structure of a society under reconstruction depends on the recipients, their relationship to the sender, and the use the recipients make of the money (Pardee Center 2013).

There is no generally accepted definition of a diaspora.

One of the most pertinent questions in looking at diasporas is the existence of another diaspora in the country of arrival of new migrants, and if so, what are its relations with incoming persons, who may or may not be recognized as “compatriots”. Clear terms will help to sort out discursive blurs.

Any diaspora is under the spell of a narrative that begins with the arrival at a place that is not home, irrespective whether the change of places had been forced or occurred voluntarily. Thus, diaspora is a particular case and a result from migration, which is not an exceptional aspect in the development of society. Not every group of migrants staying in a host country is willing and able to form a diaspora. A diaspora is developing a sense of belonging over time that is different from other forms of integration or assimilation in a foreign country. Nevertheless, even if there is none, the building of an opposition between two groups (1) of foreigners (“They”) and (2) the host society (“We”) is possible.

A few propositions have to be analysed and deconstructed before it is possible to decide which role a diaspora is possibly playing in a specific political constellation. Common sense and pre-formed opinions cannot substitute thorough research. Prejudice and opinionated judgement dominate the discourse on migration and refugees.

“We” and “They” (as defined above) can only be determined in a context which, in itself, is highly political; and the context of such considerations always leads toward relevant questions about the sustainability of the democratic and republican fabric of our society and the resilience of our people and state – which goes beyond the scope of this study. However: no philosophical or theoretical frame can substitute the empirical facts; human beings migrated for certain reasons, and our society has to decide how to deal with each of these persons and his or her

family, never allowing them to become mere objects in domestic politics.

Whereas the general approach to foreigners has to be borne by empathy and human rights, we can deal with a particular segment among the arriving people, i.e. Afghans, in the context of the German society, which has already integrated the ADG. This will be this study’s starting point.



2 General Characteristics of a Diaspora

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In everyday (educated) discourse, a diaspora is a larger group of foreigners who, over time (e.g. a few generations) have settled in a host country. In G. Simmel (1908) words: “Foreigners come and stay”. They have come in order to stay.

However, this definition from 1908 might not encompass more recent research and findings. On the one side, a very old and sustainable narrative is ever present as subtext: the Jewish Diaspora, having provided the term and the fact that a people had been dispersed over the earth while keeping together as a people. Exile is meant to be temporary, even if Jewish people have been living in their host countries for centuries. On the other side, the term is inseparably connected with the push (to be exiled) and the pull (attracted by a real or virtual home country as destination of return).

One often used standard definition is given by IOM/ MPI (2012): *“Emigrants and their descendants, who live outside the country of their birth or ancestry, either on a temporary or permanent basis, yet still maintain affective and material ties to their countries of origin”*. This is clear, however still incomplete. Emigration is the leading element, while immigration is not mentioned. The interdependence between the two is rather important, because it is overarching other problems, like the distinction between involuntary migration and other motives to move from one country to the other. Another critical aspect of forming a diaspora is the impact of the host country’s systemic features (political, economic, cultural, and social) on the emerging diaspora, otherwise we would speak of a parallel society. There is no unified single diaspora worldwide, but each host country normally has one. More than one diaspora per country is a rare case.

The way the relationship towards the home country is being exercised is heavily influenced by the nation state system, the culture of the respective host country but also the trans-societal networks of similar groups (HBS: 2015, Preface). Aron Bodenheimer’s statement about Jews may be an orientation

for the discursive approach: “Participating, but not belonging” (Bodenheimer: 1985). There must be some otherness remaining, even under the pressure of assimilation and integration. The claim by ethnic or religious radicals that this otherness is solely the product of their genealogy and their traditions and heritage can be proven to be one-sided and wrong. The host country is always a co-actor.

The term “diaspora” has become colloquial and multifaceted. Diasporas and other ethnic condensations are very unevenly investigated into, mainly in the host countries (countries of arrival after a more or less strenuous move or pull out from their country of origin), but also in the countries of origin that are not always the seemingly beloved motherlands. The cognitive interest and the pragmatic wish to get better knowledge about the diaspora complex is often very mixed: political, cultural, economic or legal interests may follow different paths of learning about diasporas. They may even compete, e.g. when it comes to the field of religion.

The discussed characteristics from above are also reflected in one of the leading theories regarding diasporas. Cohen (2008, 6) sums the core features of diasporas up as follows:

- A traumatic dispersal from an original homeland or the parting from home in search for work in a broader sense;
- A collective myth and the nostalgic idealization of the ancestral home;
- A return movement⁴;
- A strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over time not limited within the borders of a host country, but complemented by a sense of solidarity with co-ethnics in other countries
- An ambivalent relationship with the host country characterized on the one hand by a troubled relationship with the host society and on the other hand by the possibility of an enriching live in a tolerant host country.

Resa Mohabbat-Kar (2015) regards the last two points as constitutive for the creation of diasporas based on the empirical experience of the *Iranian* diaspora in Germany. The transfer of the status of a person in exile to a member of a diaspora can rather be managed through the nourishing of relations and interaction with people and communities having similar experiences than through the maintenance of a deceiving relation with an idealized homeland. Moreover, just having people from a specific country residing in another one does not suffice for the creation of a diaspora.

The formation of a diaspora is influenced by the willingness of its members to engage in a dialogue which can be considered a (re)negotiation of their affiliation to the host country in order to maintain a certain kind of rooting. There are many Afghans who do not show the slightest interest in the well-being or development of their country of origin. This is an observation from the authors' discussions with Afghan peers but it must not be generalized or taken as a representation of all Afghan migrants. Personal interviews also showed that other migrants are heavily affected by any change in Afghanistan.

The country's political and cultural system and especially policies towards the diaspora play an important role in the diaspora's attitude towards the origin country.

An important dimension is agency. Fischer (2013, 57) offers two concurrent definitions, of which the second one is more suitable for this research on ADG:

- “(i) *The concept of diasporas as coherent social entities that engage in concerted and coordinated action.*
- (ii) *The assumption that the Afghan diaspora has the necessary agency to take up activities geared towards impacting development and polity in Afghanistan.*”

While (i) is certainly not true for the ADG and will not be in the near future, (ii) is more of a hypothesis than a definition, and must be tested against the empirical research conducted within this study and the involvement of the Afghan diaspora with activities designed by PME towards the government and migrants from Afghanistan in order to shape migration in a development-oriented way (e.g. through different forms of engagement, such as (temporary and permanent) return, development projects by migrant associations, business start-ups, migration policy advice).

4

The return movement is certainly a controversial aspect of the authors' theoretical approach. “Return” may be a realistic category, like the Jewish quest for a home country for over 2000 years, or it is an imaginary category that allows to continue the idealistic narrative over the generations. In some cases, the country or society of origin disappears, then we do not have a diaspora (e.g., Huguenots in Germany; however, without having a diaspora, many Huguenots make themselves known as such within a differentiated Christian environment; another example are the Yezidis, for many of whom return is so unreal that “return” is no category at all). There are also examples of immigrants who, instead of imagining a glorious return, try to attain privileged or other respected assimilated positions in their host country, or in specific occupations and positions (Palestinians in Cairo). This can, but does not necessarily have to, coincide with a return narrative. By the way, there exist many examples of a symbolic return motive of maintaining narratives (Silesians); and the Russians of German origin who returned after 1989 to their origin country definitely do not form a diaspora, but a community with a certain nostalgic potential that let appear their Siberian origin country the more appealing the less anyone ever has the intention to return.

When searching for “diaspora” on Wikipedia (2017), one offered example is the Afghan diaspora. However, when clicking on the example for further reading, one is being redirected to an entry referring only to *Pashtuns*⁵; which is an indicator for a sensible reaction to ethnic divisions within the ADG; moreover, the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (BpB 2013) says that around 70% of Afghan refugees having migrated to Pakistan since the end of the 1970s are *Pashtuns*⁶. Recently arrived Afghan migrants form part of the educated Afghan elite, such as journalists, business men, students and artists, and primarily migrate to Western nations (BpB 2013). This is important for return-preparation and the ways of integrating them in Germany.

Thus, not only refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, students, and artists form part of the Afghani diaspora but also citizens of the host country from families with a migration history (second and third generation), as well as people with an irregular or undocumented status (Malek: 2015, 26). In other words, a diaspora is a group of different people with no logical or causal rules for its evolution. Depending on the density of social interaction and the degree of collectivism we can distinguish between formally organized diasporas with stronger ties to the host society or a “patchwork rug of many, small, often informal and ephemeral mergers and micro cosmoses of encounters with a limited reach” (HSB: 2015, Introduction). Most often one can find a mixture of formally organized and well-established groups of a diaspora and loose, informal networks (see objective 2 of this study).

In order to conclude these general remarks on diasporas, it is important to note that this is just a trans-disciplinary medley, and that there are many more options for socio-anthropological, political or historical approaches. The inclusion of a greater variety of sources and viewpoints might be helpful for future comparative diaspora studies.

⁵ Pashtuns are the largest among the country's many ethnic groups (ca. 40+%); other large groups are Tajiks, Uzbeks and Hazara.

⁶ In 2016, the ethnic groups that were most represented among Afghan refugees in Germany were Tajik (43.7%), Hazara (25.5%) and Pashtuns (14%) (BAMF 2016c, p.22)

3 Afghan Migration around the Globe

3.1

15

Afghans in the World

While the population within Afghanistan was estimated to be around 33 million people in 2016 (Statista, 2016), around four to six million Afghans are living outside their country (Majidi et. al, 2016). By the end of 2016, 2.5 million Afghans were recognized as refugees under the UNHCR mandate – 1.4 million alone were hosted by Pakistan (UNHCR Global Trends 2016). Pakistan and Iran are the largest host countries of Afghans, especially Afghan refugees. However, there has always been circular migration between those countries. The continuous movement across the borders between Afghanistan and Iran, and Pakistan, respectively, hampers a realistic prediction of exact numbers. Since 2016, the numbers of deported Afghans from Pakistan have been high – reaching up to 8,000 deportations per day; which creates large additional numbers of internally displaced persons within Afghanistan (UNHCR 2016). In addition to these forced returns from Pakistan, there are persons returning in order to organize a new migration movement to another country; others are seasonal “commuting” labourers, mainly between Pakistan and Afghanistan – these are often called “irregular returns”.

At the same time, differences in numbers also arise due to the various working definitions of the term migrant of different countries.

Apart from the numerous groups of refugees in the neighboring countries Iran (2.35 million) and Pakistan (1.62 million) but also Tajikistan (7,500) and India (8,000) Afghans have also settled in countries of the Middle East, such as Saudi Arabia (365,000), Turkey (13,500) and the United Arab Emirates (7,500) (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2015). In addition, large groups of Afghans are living in Germany (156,000), in the UK (68,000), in the USA (63,000), in Canada (46,000), Australia (37,500), the Netherlands (34,000), and in Sweden (29,000).

Country of destination	Total stock of Afghan migrants in 2015
Australia	37,500
Austria	8,500
Belgium	10,500
Canada	46,000
Denmark	12,000
Finland	5,000
France	5,000
Germany	156,000 (DESTATIS, 2016b)
Greece	6,000
India	8,000
Iran	2,350,000
Italy	6,500
The Netherlands	34,000
Norway	13,000
Pakistan	1,620,000
Russia	5,000
Saudi Arabia	365,000
Sweden	29,000
Tajikistan	7,500
Turkey	13,500
United Arab Emirates	7,500
United Kingdom	68,000
United States of America	63,000

Table 1:
Countries hosting Afghan migrants (more than 5,000)
(2015) | Own presentation



Phases of Afghan Out-Migration

Given these high numbers of Afghan emigrants and the tumultuous Afghan history over the last decades, it can be said that *“mobility has been an essential part of Afghan history”* (IOM: 2014, 29), with several major waves of population movements and displacement. While the first decade of the 20th century was marked by seasonal and other forms of temporary migration for employment reasons to neighboring countries, as well as migration for educational purposes traditionally to the European academic centres, the first large wave of displacement was caused by the Soviet intervention in 1979.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), *“[a]s a result, in 1990 more than 6 million Afghans were displaced as they fled bombing and combat, especially in rural areas. Afghans were the biggest group of displaced persons worldwide at that time, representing almost half of the total population of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)”* (IOM, 2014).

Furthermore, IOM recognizes a second major wave of forced displacement marked by the victory of the Mujahedeen in 1992, which especially caused the urban and educated middle class to flee the country. The so-called “War on Terror” led by the United States’ coalition forces against the Taliban regime (Operation Enduring Freedom) and the recent intervention aiming at a new and stable state after 2001 is considered the third phase of large-scale displacement. This rather critical statement hints at the ambiguity of the whole Afghanistan intervention under two incompatible perspectives: state-building and global wars against all kinds of terrorism (Daxner: 2013; Kühn: 2014).

Another phase of displacement and circular migration has started around 2014 and is still ongoing, marking a new type of migration movement. This latest phase is characterized by increased irregular returns (definition see above), internal displacement, and increasing numbers of asylum seekers in Europe (Majidi et. al, 2016).

Afghan Remittances

As migrants move across the globe for different reasons, new forms of communication and interaction with their origin-countries emerge. One form of remote connectedness – which is already has a long history – are the flows of capital sent from all over the world back to the countries of origin, as support for left-behind family members, or for investments, and savings, etc. These material transfers are usually known as remittances and are not seldom at the heart of heated debates regarding their impact on the reconstruction of post-conflict environments (Pardee Centre, 2013).

Critical voices raise attention to the possibility of unintended effects of remittances flows; the money might, for example, be misused for the support of insurgent or terrorist groups. Furthermore, remittances, just like development assistance, could be detrimental for the development of a functioning economy and might nurture aid-dependency.

From an analytical point of view, however, the largest challenge is to reliably reconstruct remittances flows and amounts in order to better grasp its effects on the origin country. When looking at the Afghan example, IOM (2016) presents the five most widely used modalities of sending cash to Afghanistan: in person; through the Islamic Hawala system; through banks; through money transfer operators such as MoneyGram, WesternUnion, etc.; or through mobile money transfer with providers such as M-Pesa. While all these modalities present different advantages and risks, they are all traceable only up to a certain extent. Due to the informality of various of these corridors, it cannot be said with absolute certainty, how many remittances have been sent to Afghanistan, yet less, where the money exactly was sent from (e.g. the annual amount being sent from Germany).

Around 140 million US \$/year of remittances are sent to Afghanistan in 2015, according to the following figure.



Figure 2: Afghan remittances between 2008 and 2015 | Data from: The Global Economy (2016).

Remittances can serve private and public purposes. Families or clans generally expect a continuous flow of money from family members in whose migration they have invested. Remittances for them are considered a return on investment; or a kind of support transferred by a single refugee or migrant, or by a part of a family, to their kin in Afghanistan. This also has a political aspect, because remittances add to the national assets and wealth: they help the state save money on social and health services in the field of welfare governance. As this happens in Afghanistan under the circumstances of many foreign *interventions* since 1978, the system of remittances is more complex than in other cases.



Afghans in Germany

When taking a closer look at the German case, we notice that approx. 20% of the German population has a migration background⁷. According to the results of the micro-census from 2015, only 156,000 were Afghans or Germans of first degree Afghan descent (17 million people with migration background in total) (DESTATIS, 2016b); thus, comprising less than 1% of the total population with migration background. While the figure is extremely small, the public awareness in Germany about this particular group has risen over time. The period of high awareness has begun 2014; latent perception perhaps earlier. While for a long time the ADG was almost ignored by the German public, this population is today largely over-estimated in terms of numbers (given the increasing numbers of arriving refugees and asylum seekers) and regarding security concerns around alleged Islamic terrorism claims.

Following the German Federal Statistics Office's definition, among the 156,000 people with Afghan migration background one can find both Afghan and German citizens. However, as soon as Afghan citizens choose to obtain German citizenship, their "statistical" migration background will disappear from the records. Second, third and later generations are not portrayed under this definition, which only covers people with a personal migration experience as well as second generation migrants. In the case of the Afghan migration background, 114,000 of the 156,000 people have experienced the process of migration themselves. The remaining 42,000 citizens of Afghan descent were born from at least one parent with Afghan citizenship. They currently either have Afghan or German citizenship (DESTATIS, 2016b).

In case of the children of the latter category, these will not be further included in these statistics, even though they might still nurture Afghan tradition or describe themselves as being of Afghan descent or consider themselves as part of the Afghan diaspora (see definition above, "sense of belonging"). This means that both *ius soli*⁸ German citizens and naturalized German citizens can be part of a diaspora, even though they do not appear in any official migration. However, the same is true for the opposite: not every person of the 156,000 people with an Afghan migration background is automatically part of the Afghan diaspora nor will everyone necessarily identify with this statistical ascription (see above, definition of ADG and "sense of belonging").

Another statistical instrument of help when describing the structure of the society in Germany is the Central Register of Foreign Nationals. In 2015 of the almost 8 million foreign citizens living in Germany, around 131,000 had an Afghan passport. This means that of the group of people with Afghan migration background (approx. 156,000) around 25,000 had a German or other passport (either by being born in Germany or by having obtained naturalization). In 2015, 2,572 Afghans were naturalized, 14.3% less than the year before.^w

⁷

According to the German Federal Statistics Office, migration background is "not strictly limited to foreigners obtaining the German citizenship, but can also refer under certain circumstances even to people born in Germany (e.g. children of late repatriates, *ius soli*-children of foreign parents, Germans with at least one foreign parent). While the migration background derives from the characteristics of one's parents, it cannot be passed on to one's children" (DESTATIS, 2016b).

⁸

ius soli = the Law of the territory (soil), i.e. citizenship is awarded to any child born on the soil of a state. Contrary: *ius sanguinis* = Law of the blood. A child inherits the citizenship of the parents or one parent.
ius soli in Germany is only applicable under the condition that at least one parent has been living in Germany with a residence permit for at least 8 years (Die Bundesregierung, 2000).

	Total	Afghanistan
Citizens listed in the Central Register of Foreign Nationals	7,914,000	131,454
Foreign population according to migration background	17,118,000	156,000
Of those: with own migration experience	11,453,000	114,000

Numbers of naturalizations	Total	Changes to the previous year
Naturalizations in total (Germany)	107,181	- 1.1
Previous citizenship: Afghanistan	2,572	- 14.3

Table 2:
Population 2015
according to
migration back-
ground |
Own composition
based on data
from: DESTATIS,
2016 b and
DESTATIS, 2016a.

Table 3:
Naturalizations
2015 |
Own composition
based on data
from: DESTATIS,
2016 b

The growth trend of the Afghan population in Germany is highly interesting. In 2008 around 48,000 Afghan citizens lived in Germany. The figure rose steadily until 2012–2013 at a pace that might be consistent with the birth-rate of the group. 2014 marks a turning point in this development.

From the beginning of 2014 until the end of 2015, the number of Afghans living in Germany has more than doubled (DESTATIS, 2016a). This fact is explained by the observation of a new Afghan migration movement starting in 2014 as portrayed above.

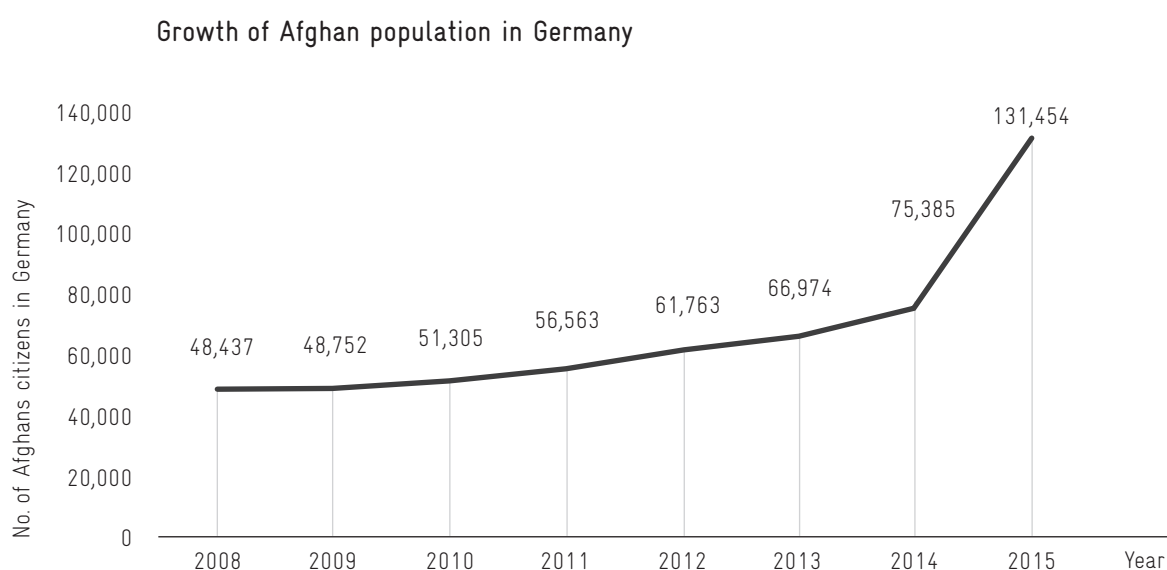


Figure 3:
Growth of Afghan population in Germany | Own presentation based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016a



Afghans in Germany

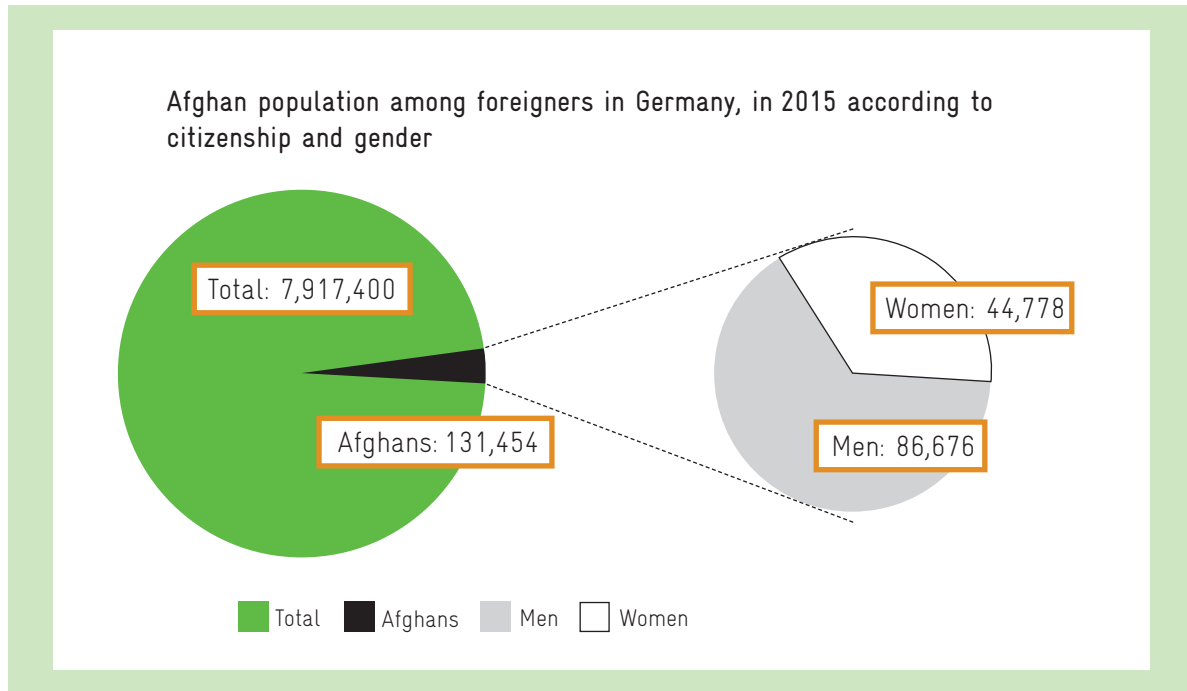


Figure 4:

Afghan population in 2015 according to citizenship and gender | Own composition based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016a

Of the 131,454 Afghans in Germany (registered until 2015), 44,778 were women, which corresponds to approx. a third of the population of Afghan migrants in Germany (34.1%). Nevertheless, this number is only reflected among the Afghans between 25 and 35 years old. The most severe gender disbalance can be seen among the 15 to 20 year-olds among which men make up over 85 % of the age group (DESTATIS, 2016a).

A large male majority especially among the young population tends to spread fear among the host population regarding crime. However, crime rates in Germany are not exceedingly high. Gender issues are certainly best tackled within local contexts. Many contradictory statements were expressed during the interviews of this study (under strict anonymity). Reasons cited for the strong male surplus are religious (succession of the Prophet: exile and return), cultural (the stronger one has to leave and return), emancipatory (migration as a *rite de passage*); in many cases, the young males are husbands to women with child, who are not likely to travel with them. It is

often argued that only very few young women migrate due to risks related to gender-based violence.

Many of the identified migrant associations of the ADG offer special services to women and children; only one has a special focus on young males. One can conclude that young men do not find recognition and attention proportionate to their numbers. They seem to be the “stepchildren” of development cooperation.

The extreme male surplus among the Afghan migrant population is neither typical for the German nor the Afghan society but can be explained by the latest large migration movement, when mostly young men arrived in Germany. Almost one third of the Afghans living in Germany are single (74,325), while 40,201 are married, of which 3,373 with a German citizen (DESTATIS, 2016a).

	Total	Single	Married	Of which with German citizen	Widowed	Divorced
Afghanistan	131,454	74,325	40,201	3,373	2,742	1,381

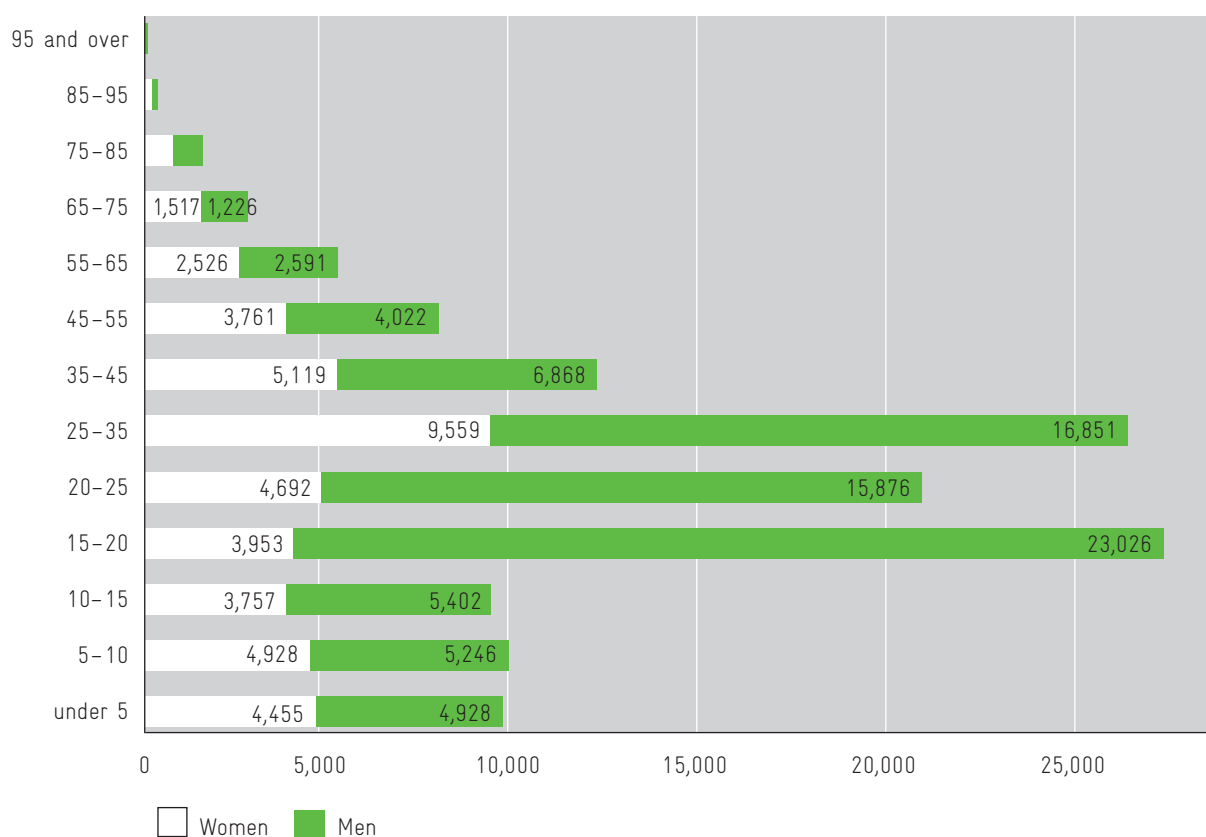
Table 4:

Foreign population on the 31.12.2015 according to citizenship and family status | Own composition based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016b and DESTATIS, 2016a

The imbalance of gender structures in Germany is different from the uneven and unequal distribution of chances and risks between sexes in Afghanistan. No direct conclusion can be drawn from one situation to the other.

Any development intervention should be based on a detailed gender analysis to take into account potential gender-related conflicts (which also applies to age-relations and related marginalization).

Foreign Afghan population on the 31.12.2015 according to gender and age groups

**Figure 5:**

Foreign Afghan population on the 31.12.2015 according to gender and age groups | Own composition based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016a



Afghans in Germany

Given the salience of the youth among Afghan citizens, it is worth taking a closer look at student numbers. During the winter semester of 2015/2016, 1,256 Afghan students were enrolled at universities and higher academic institutions across Germany. The number of enrolled men is almost twice as high as that of women with 833 to 423.

A total of 864 Afghan students (526 men and 338 women) acquired the university entrance qualification in Germany (*"Bildungsinländer"*). 392 Afghan students (307 men and only 85 women) obtained the university entrance qualification abroad or within a

German preparatory college (*"Bildungsausländer"*). The number of Afghans visiting a preparatory college in 2015/2016 was 35 (DESTATIS, 2016c).

When looking at the disciplines studied by Afghan citizens a preference for exact sciences becomes visible. The majority of Afghan students are enrolled in engineering programmes (539), followed by law (431), sciences (117), humanities (including social sciences) (78), and health (68). At the other end of the spectre we find agriculture (11), sports (5) and arts (4). (DESTATIS, 2016c).

Table 5:
Number of Afghan students in Germany 2015/2016 according to gender and university entrance qualification | Own composition based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016c.

	Total of Afghan students	Men	Women
	1,256	833	423
With German university entrance qualification	864	526	338
With foreign university entrance qualification	92	307	85

Academic specializations of Afghan students in Germany - 2015/2016

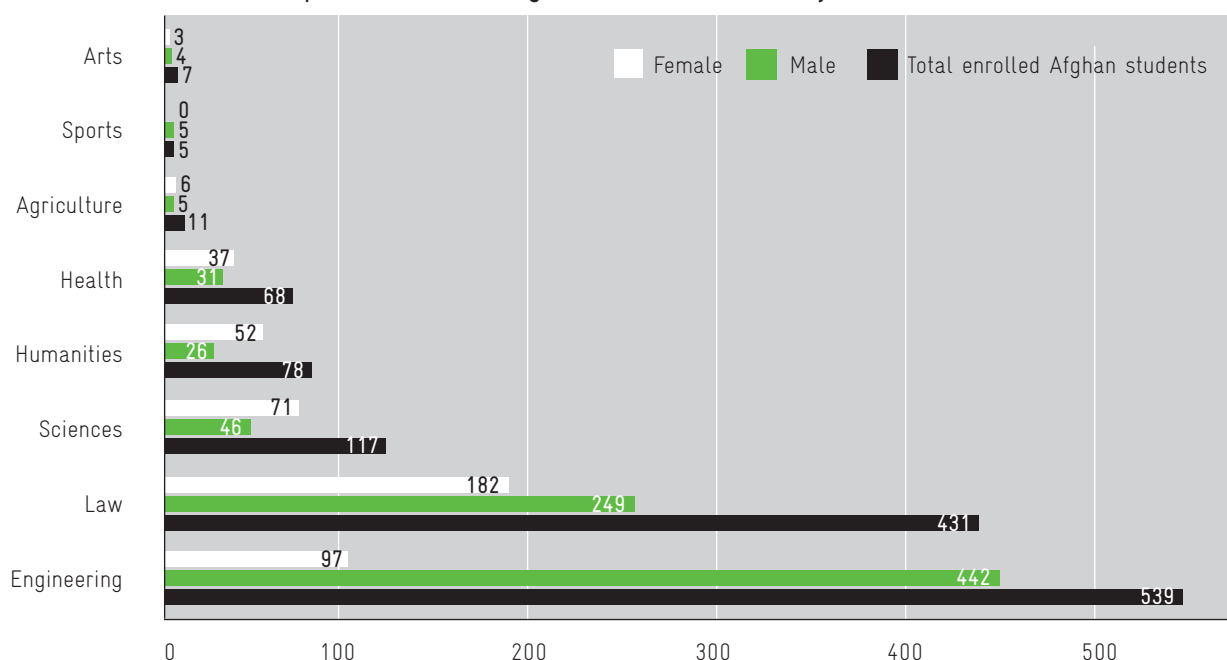


Figure 6:
Academic specialization of Afghan students in Germany - 2015/2016 | Own presentation based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016c.

The German Academic Exchange Programme (DAAD) offers financial support for students from all over the world either on an individual basis or within a programme. In 2015, 568 scholarship holders had Afghan citizenship, 109 of them received their scholarship for the first time (DAAD, 2015).

While scholarships tend to be awarded for a limited period of time, a closer look at the average duration of stay of Afghans reveals that only a small group is well-established and has been living in Germany for a longer period. Nevertheless, the above-described different phases of displacement in Afghanistan are statistically reflected in the average duration of stay (figure 7).

The most recent phase of Afghan immigration since 2014 represents the largest sub-group within the ADG; more than 50% of the Afghan population is relatively new (0–4 years) to Germany. Data also shows that there is a well-established older part of the diaspora that has been living in Germany for approx. 15–20 years, which corresponds to the 1990s and hence, the second largest conflict-based displacement from Afghanistan. Respectively, the oldest documented Afghans in the Central Register for Foreign Nationals came to Germany in the 1970s, consistent with the first conflict-based Afghan displacement of modern times. (DESTATIS, 2016a).

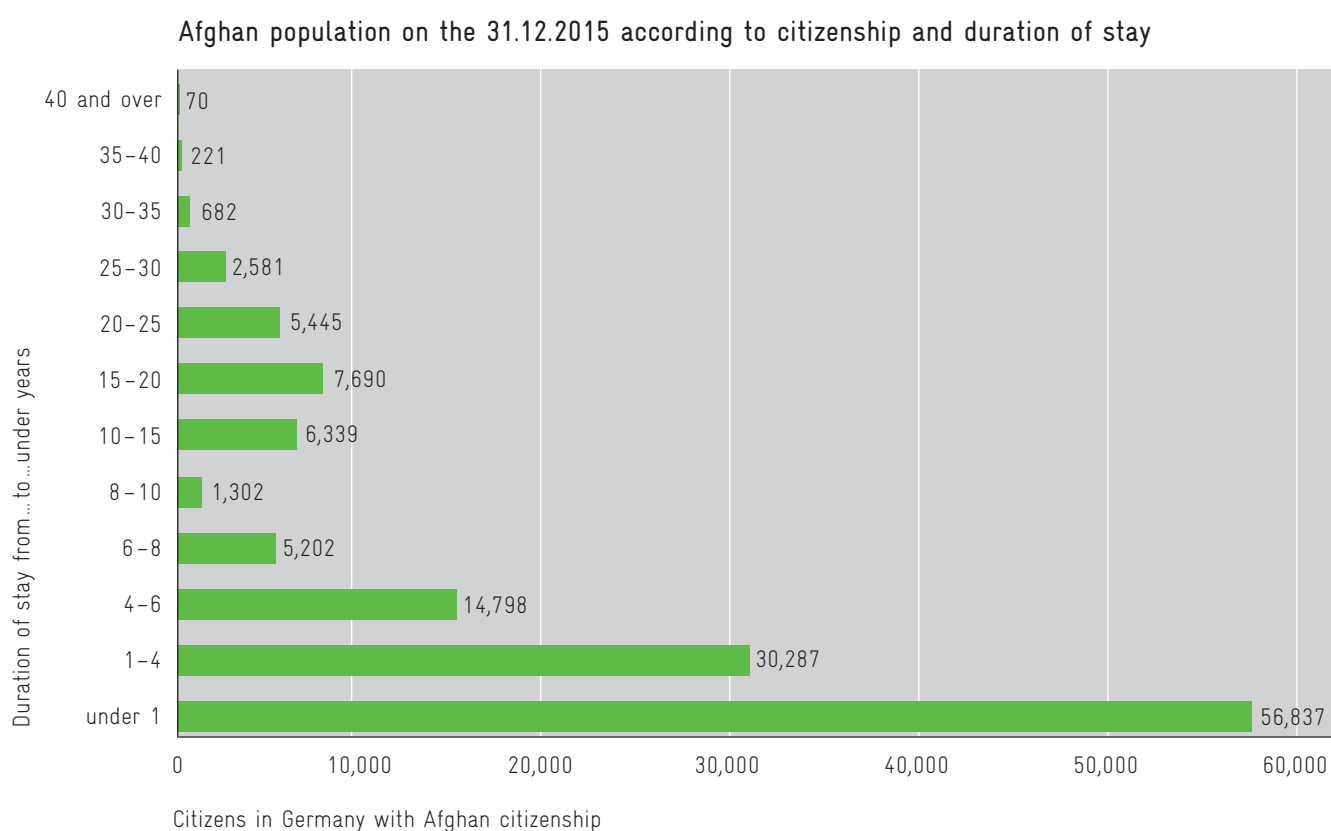


Figure 7: Afghan population on the 31.12.2015 according to citizenship and duration of stay | Own composition based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016 b and DESTATIS, 2016 a



Afghans in Germany

Based on the statistics of the Federal Labour Office, in February 2017, a total of 4,863,915 people in Germany were unemployed and 2,762,095 were seeking employment. Employment seeking citizens are those looking for a job of more than 15 hours/week as an employee and who are older than 15. They might either be already employed or self-employed. Employment seeking citizens can be divided into employed and unemployed. On the other hand, unemployed citizens are those who do not have an employee-status, work less than 15 hours per week, and who are neither younger than 15 nor hit retirement age (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2017).

3,461,835 unemployed citizens are German and 1,386,694 foreign. Regarding the citizens seeking employment, 2,065,413 are German and 689,856 foreign. Afghans rank 9th in statistics on unemployment only looking at migrants. 50,718 are unemployed as of February 2017 and 21,261 are seeking employment (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2017).

Looking at figure 5, a total of 98,844 Afghan citizens is aged between 15 and 65. Presuming the age of 65 as retirement age, the conclusion can be drawn that 98,844 identified Afghan citizens belong to the working age population. Nevertheless, little over 50% of them are listed in the unemployment statistics of the Federal Labour Office. The statistics, however, fail to grasp the number of citizens working as self-employed as well as the number of employed people seeking employment.

Geographic distribution within Germany is mainly concentrated on three German states. Bavaria is the German state with most Afghan citizens in Germany, followed by Hesse and North-Rhineland Westphalia. Over 60,000 Afghans are living in these three states alone, almost half of the entire group of Afghan citizens. At the other end of the spectrum are Saarland, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg Western Pomerania and Saxony Anhalt. A certain difference between the new and the old states is also visible, with more Afghans living in the western states. Apart from legal norms, there is one important explanation for the disparity: Afghans who arrived in Germany before 1989 sought shelter or asylum in the West and would not flee to the then German Democratic Republic (GDR). Thus, diaspora groups emerged rather in Western Germany and are maintained until today. Although relations between the GDR and Afghanistan were consolidated after 1976, those who migrated mostly likely did not support the communist regime.

An important case for further research is Hamburg. While ranking fourth in terms of numbers of Afghan citizens, Hamburg has by far the smallest total population of the four states and thus hosts the highest density of Afghans of all states in Germany.

When looking at the regional distribution of Afghan citizens in Germany and comparing figures from 2004 with the latest available numbers of 2015, several interesting aspects can be observed. Firstly, the overall Afghan population has more than doubled over the past eleven years.

	Total	German citizens	Foreign citizens	Afghan citizens
People seeking employment entrance	2,762,095	2,065,413	689,856	21,261
Unemployed people qualification	4,863,915	3,461,835	1,386,694	50,718

Table 6:

Unemployment figures for German, foreign and Afghan citizens in Germany as of February 2017 | Own composition based on data from Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2017

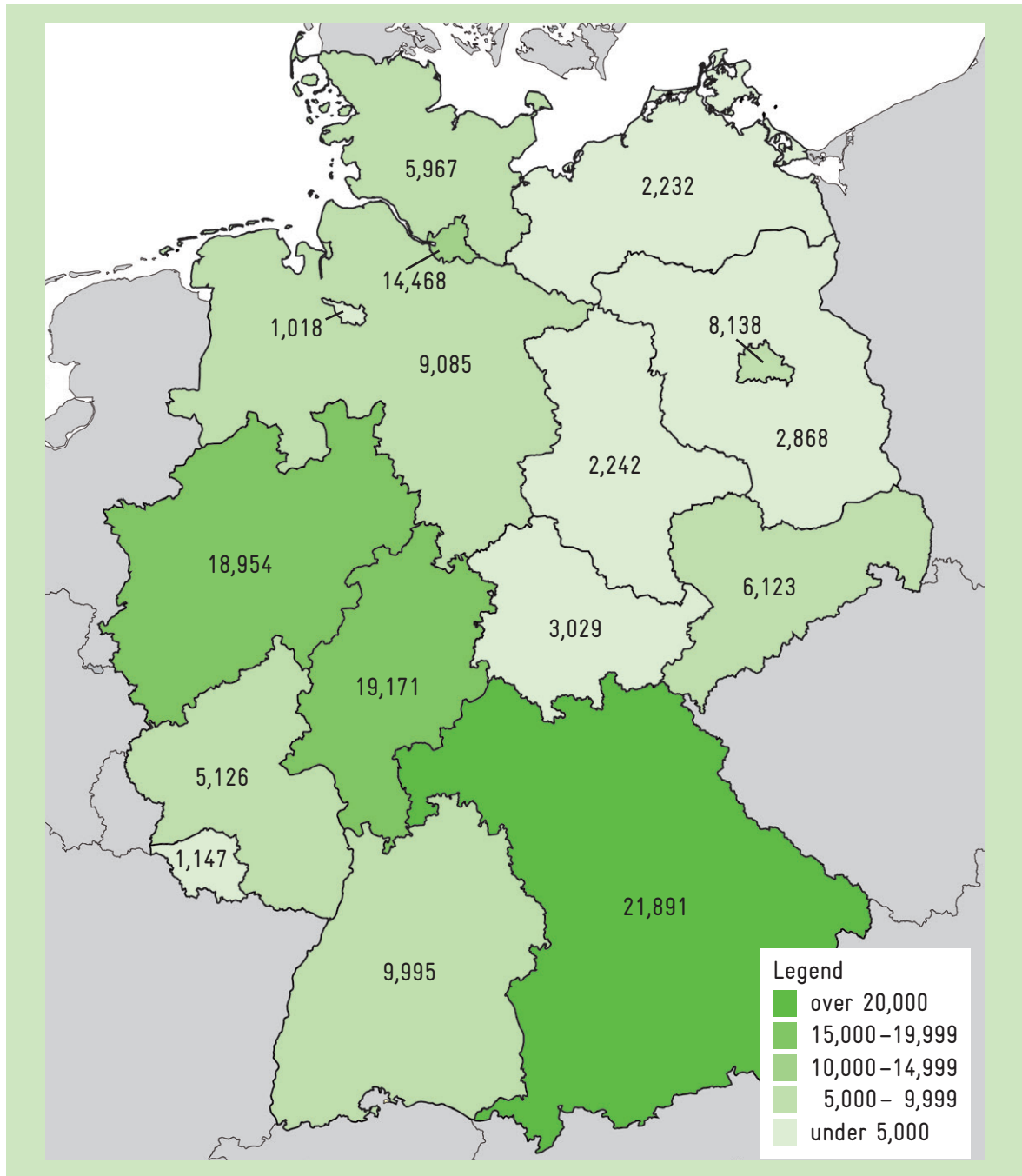


Figure 8: Regional distribution of Afghan citizens in Germany in 2015 | Own presentation based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016a

The geographical distribution has changed significantly. The most striking growth was recorded within the new German states. For example the Afghan population in Thuringia has increased by a factor of 50 since 2004. The fact that the Afghan population

in the two states with the highest Afghan population in 2004, Hamburg and Hesse, has remained almost the same, is striking. The areas with a high density of Afghan citizens have become more diverse and have spread out during the last decade.



Afghans in Germany

One possible explanation for the exponential growth in the new German states is the distribution quota of newly arriving asylum seekers⁹. While Thuringia for example has not attracted many Afghans in the past,

the currently around 3,000 Afghans might have been assigned to the state upon arrival since 2014, based on the “Königstein Key” (GTZ, 2006, DESTATIS, 2016a, BAMF, 2017a).

Regional distribution of Afghan citizens in Germany – comparison 2004 – 2015			
	31.12.2004	31.12.2015	Increase rate over 11 years
Baden Württemberg	2,960	9,995	3.38 x
Bavaria	7,985	21,891	2.74 x
Berlin	790	8,138	10.30x
Brandenburg	525	2,868	5.46 x
Bremen	359	1,018	2.84 x
Hamburg	14,469	14,468	1.00 x
Hesse	13,921	19,171	1.38 x
Mecklenburg Western Pomerania	91	2,232	24.53 x
Lower Saxony	3,580	9,085	2.54 x
North Rhine-Westphalia	9,414	18,954	2.01 x
Rhineland Palatinate	1,396	5,126	3.67 x
Saarland	86	1,147	13.34 x
Saxony	1,373	6,123	4.46 x
Saxony Anhalt	92	2,242	24.37 x
Schleswig-Holstein	1,254	5,967	4.76 x
Thuringia	57	3,029	53.14 x
Total	58,352	131,454	2.25 x

Table 7: Regional distribution of Afghan citizens in Germany – comparison 2004–2015 | Own composition and calculations based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016a and GTZ, 2006.

⁹

The “Königssteiner Schlüssel” (distribution key) is a formula applied to the distribution quotas for refugees. It is annually negotiated and modified among the 16 German states. Calculation is based on tax revenue (2/3) and population (1/3).

Germany administrates different residency statuses. Some trends and differences between the different Afghan migration phases are becoming apparent looking at the illustration below. Those Afghans, having settled in Germany after the event of 1990, have mainly received long-term residence permit (1,162 of the total 1,521 persons). This relation has been

turned around after 2004 when the large majority (36,561 of the total of 53,504) of Afghans has received only a temporary residency permit. This trend is also reflected in the dynamics of the latest Afghan arrivals since 2014. Around 31,607 Afghan citizens have not received any legal residence permit (DESTATIS, 2016a).

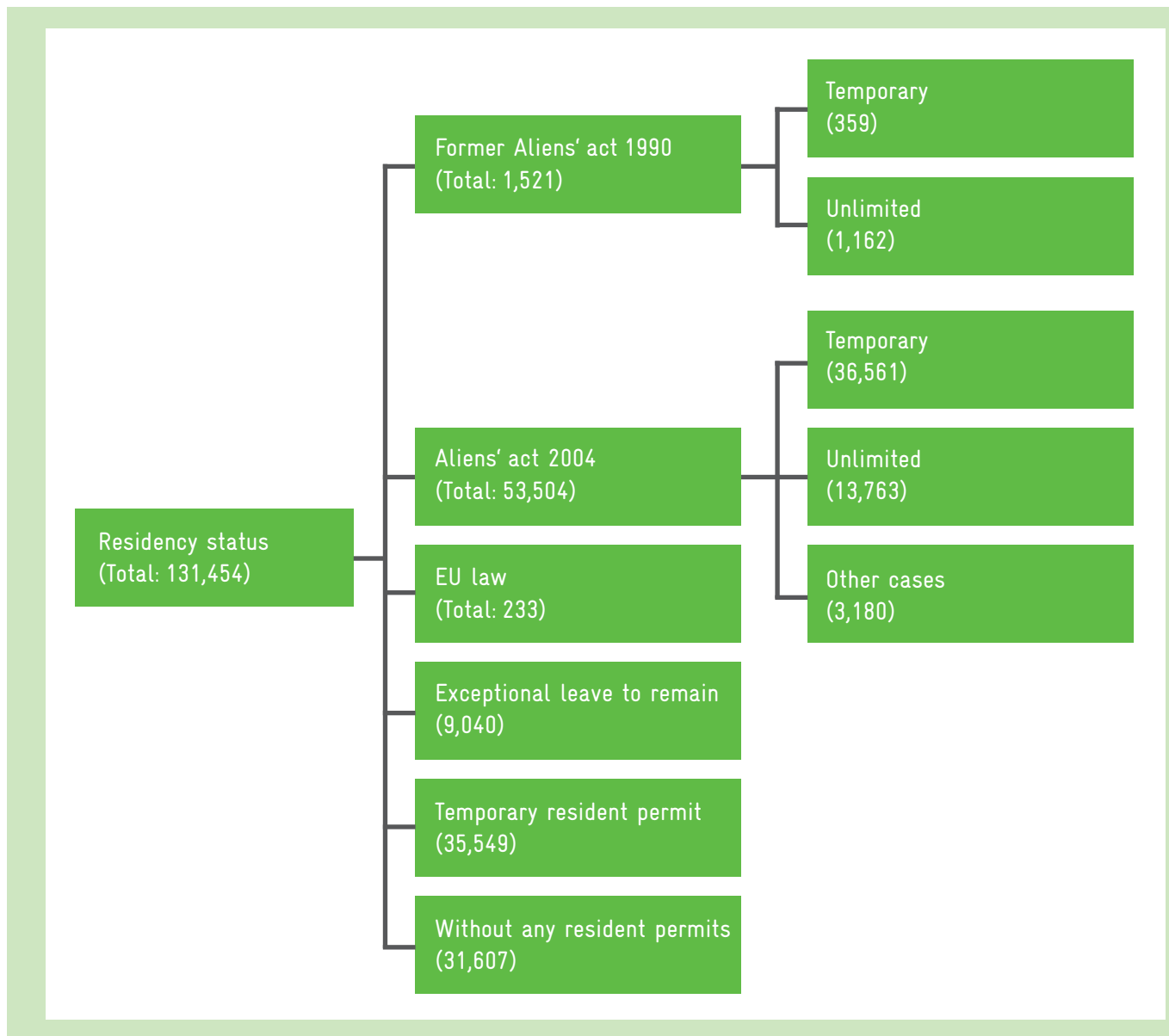


Figure 9: Overview of the different residency status of Afghans in Germany in 2015 | Own presentation based on data from: DESTATIS, 2016a



4 The Afghan Diaspora in Germany. Mapping of the Associations

28

Focusing on the identified citizens with a connection to Afghanistan and applying the diaspora characteristics, it can be observed that the Afghan diaspora in Germany emerges at the intersection of three distinct social groups (see chapter 2.1.). The ADG is not equal with the three overlapping sub-groups, nor is it a conglomerate or a melting pot of the three before-mentioned groups. The ADG shows own perceivable structures and a distinct appearance. Briefly, the summary in describing the ADG would be the following:

The **narrative** is identified by a series of wartime and violence experiences in the 1970s through 1990s. Sub-narratives are the lack of future perspectives or simple economic reasons for migration since the 1960s, increasing insecurity, and a lack of future perspectives since the 2000s. The latter merges with the main reason for seeking asylum or being offered *exceptional leave to remain* (Duldung lt. Ausländergesetz/Aliens Law). The interface between members of the ADG and newcomers since 2014 is often blurred, however can be distinguished methodologically.

Statistics provide only a very narrow reflection of reality. As soon as former Afghans acquire German citizenship and remain in Germany, their ancestral cultural heritage is, from a statistical point of view no longer identifiable after the second generation. Nevertheless, these people might still be active members of the ADG. Their identification then takes place through other criteria, e.g. based on their membership in organizations with an Afghan focus. The present study provides a deeper insight into the ADG, but does not allow for precise quantitative evidence about how many persons “belong” to the ADG, and how many persons of Afghan origin live outside of the diaspora. Regarding the newly arrived Afghans, the question of belonging is even more difficult to answer; based on the interviews, some will try to join the ADG; others who have recently arrived might not even have had the opportunity to decide whether they want to belong to the ADG or not. Even after

taking this decision, one does not automatically become a member of the diaspora, but one undergoes a process of exchange with the group one wishes to belong to. During this exchange processes, both the diaspora and the new member are engaging in a dialogue about their understanding of the emerging relationship. Becoming a member of a diaspora requires time and ongoing negotiations about meaning and belonging.

A diaspora, like any other social group or society, is highly complex and heterogeneous and cannot be represented in its absolute entirety. Nevertheless, some trends and overall clusters for a given diaspora can be described. Such a conclusive insight is offered by portraying the associations that are active inside a diaspora.

Some 130 *associations* with a clear Afghanistan connection have been identified in Germany. The mapping of these associations concentrates on the geographic location, the founding year, the nature of the work they exercise and whether the association tries to make a difference in Afghanistan, Germany or both. While a total of 130 association have been identified, the amount of information available about these associations differs widely.

The mapping is mainly based on the descriptions of their statutes and main projects offered by the associations themselves. Several interviews and focus-group discussions – which are not representative – supported the analysis. One shortcoming of this approach is the risk of being trapped by white wash¹⁰. On the other hand, the approach provides a forum for the associations to portray their own self-perceptions. However, the mapping does not allow two things: one, it does not allow for an immediate conclusion about the quality of the work of these

10

Behaviour adopted in order to impress others or to gain attention and appreciation. Often it is simple pretense.

associations; and two, it does not allow for a statement about the degree of organization among the entire ADG.

Regarding the **geographic location**, it is striking that no association has been found in Saarland, Saxony or Saxony-Anhalt and only one in Brandenburg. The five German states of Mecklenburg Western Pomerania, Thuringia, Bremen, Schleswig Holstein, and Rhineland Palatinate are accommodating two to three associations each. Around ten initiatives have been identified in Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Berlin and Lower Saxony each.

It is striking that Bavaria, hosting the largest number of Afghans, only has a comparatively small number of Afghan associations.

It is noteworthy to mention that Afghan associations agglomerate in three particular German states: Hesse, Hamburg and North Rhine-Westphalia hosting around 60 % of all identified actors. While it can be argued that North Rhine-Westphalia is the state with the highest population density and hence it also hosts a high number of Afghans. The same cannot be claimed about Hamburg, the German city-state with less than 2 million inhabitants and 19 % of Afghan associations.

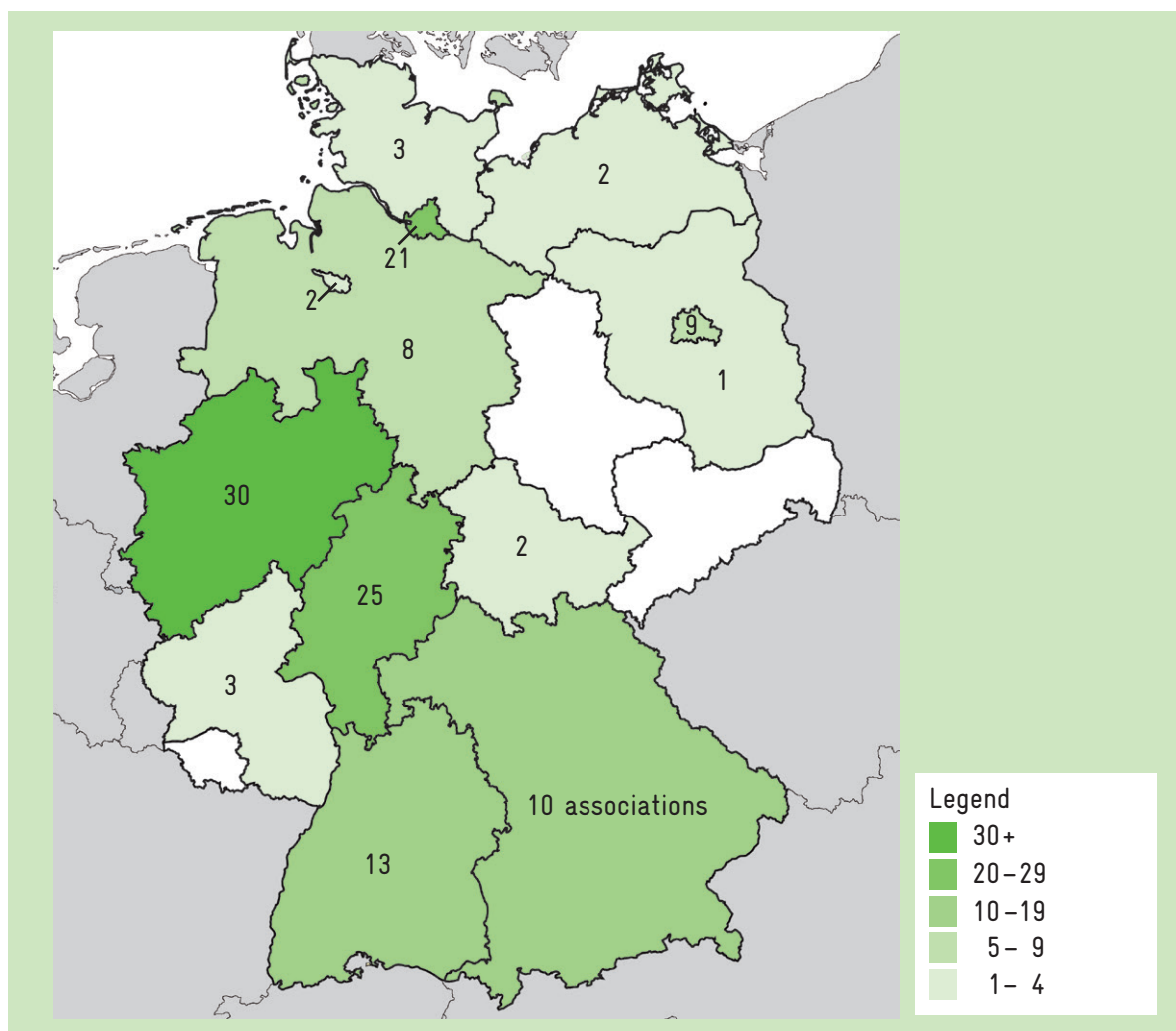


Figure 10: Regional distribution of the Afghan oriented associations in Germany | Own presentation based on own empirically collected data



There are only a few associations dealing with Afghanistan but founded and run only by Germans without Afghan migration background. Most associations were established by *former refugees or family members of first kinship*. While the authors identified 130 associations, the **founding year** of only 57 is known. The founding year of these 57 associations correlates with the above-described phases of Afghan displacement. The first identified and still active associations in Germany were founded in the late 1970s: both the associations KUFA e.V. (Committee for the Support of Refugees in Afghanistan and for the Reconstruction of the Destroyed Land) and VAF e.V. (Association for Afghan Refugee Help, later renamed Association for the Support of Afghanistan) were founded in 1979 and put their focus on working with returning Afghan refugees from the immediate neighbourhood. The work of the latter is impressive: at least 10 million refugees in Pakistan have been provided with basic medical care. While the association used to work primarily with Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, they started a refugee programme in Germany in 2016 for the integration of the newly arrived Afghans.

Throughout the 1980s, four more associations were founded. Of these, “Freundeskreis Afghanistan e.V.” has been constantly active and enjoys a certain name recognition within German society. According to their website, mainly (former) German aid workers, who had worked in Afghanistan in the 1960s and 1970s, founded the association. The German public has been kept up-to-date about the situation in Afghanistan for more than two decades through the association’s annual conference seminars and workshops about Afghanistan. Another long-lasting training academy has been organised annually for 20 years by Afghanic e.V. When comparing the attendance lists of the two events, a group of very active members of the diaspora becomes evident, beyond institutional frameworks.

Afghanic e.V. is an association with long-lasting and stable relations in the humanitarian world since 1993. Its projects are relatively modest and focused on clinics, further professional education, and the production and distribution of textbooks. The impact of the publishing activity of Yahya Wardak, MD, goes far beyond editing activities. He has been working as an integrated expert, supported by CIM, in the MoHE in Kabul and has motivated quite a few academic teachers to write and publish up-to-date textbooks that are affordable for students and for people enrolled in continuing education. Afghanic e.V. is linked to many more organizations. The annual event of the “Afghanistan Week” in Hamburg is co-funded by the BpB and co-organized by the very proficient Hamburg NGO IBH (Interkulturelle Bildung Hamburg e.V.), with Amadeus Hempel as long-time head of the organization.

Another wave of launchings of new Afghan associations can be observed in the 1990s, followed by a striking peak after 9/11 and the subsequent US-led military intervention in Afghanistan from 2001 onwards. Since 2010, a constant number of three to four associations were brought to life every year, with a slight focus change after the latest refugee arrivals since 2014. These latest initiatives are concentrated on meeting the basic needs of newcomers and offering guidance with regard to first orientation and integration in Germany.

Another way of better understanding the structure of the ADG is by looking at the **field of the work** of the different identified associations. These were grouped into seven categories: (1) **Health**, (2) **Education and Social Affairs**, (3) **Culture**, (4) **Religion**, (5) **Environment and Technology**, (6) **Sports**, and (7) **Politics and Integration**.

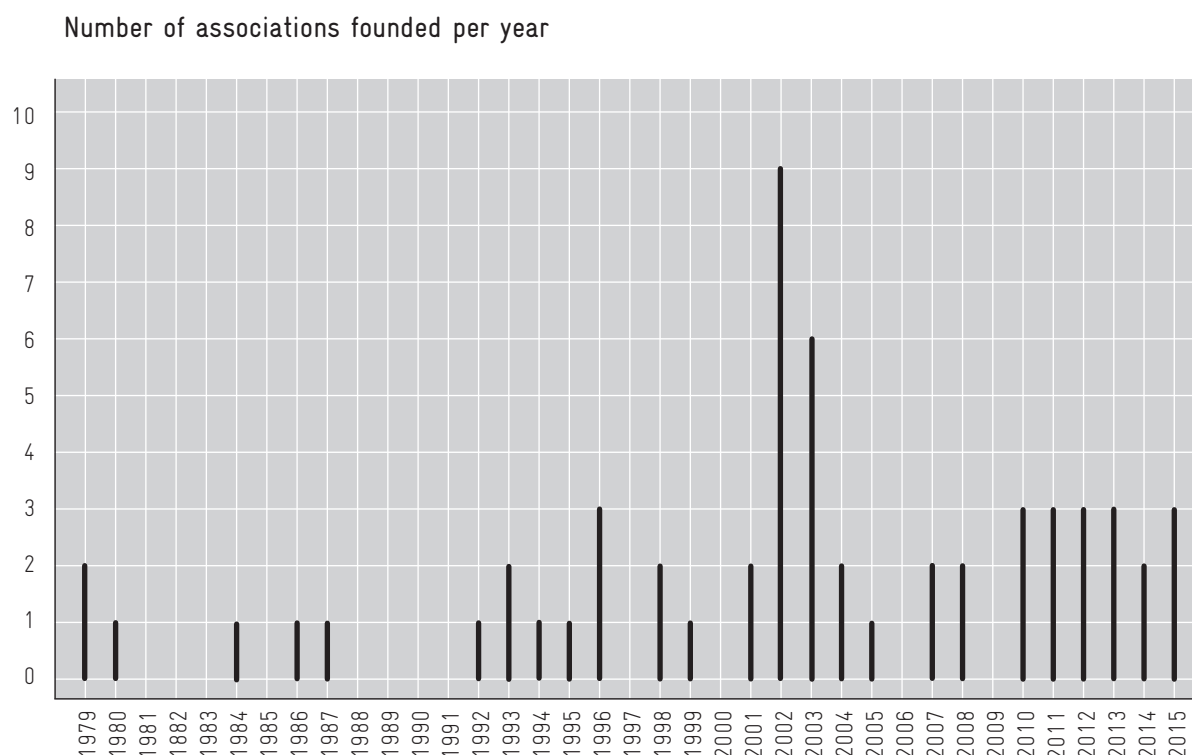


Figure 11:
Number of associations founded per year | Own presentation, based on field work

The categorization proved to be one of the most difficult steps while researching on the ADG. The authors' approach was to start with a desktop online research to identify as many associations as possible. After learning about the projects and the work of the associations, the above mentioned seven clusters were defined. The lines between the categories are very sensitive and blurry, mainly because many associations are all-rounders. While, for example, one association is active in supporting educational programmes in Afghanistan, it cannot solely implement this activity in some cases without the provision of basic humanitarian support.

Thus, seen from a practical viewpoint, the lines between classic definitions of development-oriented and humanitarian associations are not appropriate in the case of the Afghan diaspora. Instead, we propose to cluster the associations according to their **main field of work** and projects. For example, an association building schools and offering, amongst others, training regarding the usage of renewable energy sources through solar panels, this association is classified as an "Education and Social Affairs" association. While the categories Health, Sports, Environment and Technology, Culture, or Religion might be self-explanatory, the others require further explanations.



“Education and Social Affairs” comprises all the associations providing help and support to people beyond health-related issues focusing on educational measures and further measures to protect and support certain vulnerable groups such as children and women. Associations from the category “Politics and Integration”¹² work mainly at the interface between cultures, countries, or societal groups in trying to provide a bridge or an exchange platform. Most of them are carrying out projects regarding the (re)integration of citizens of Afghan-descent either into the German or the Afghan society.

Besides their main fields of work, another crucial differentiation has to be made concerning the geographical focus of the association distinguishing between Germany, Afghanistan, or both countries. While the majority of associations mainly work in Afghanistan, fundraising is most often implemented in Germany. Nevertheless, the shifting geographical focus of the associations is common for all clusters – with the exception of the “Sports” category. However,

environmental, health-oriented, educational, and social associations tend to focus on Afghanistan. While Afghan cultural and religious associations promote Afghan traditions inside Germany, political and integration-oriented associations tend to have two geographical pillars, working in both Afghanistan and Germany.

“Sports”. This category has the fewest entries: one football club in the third division of Mainz is claiming an Afghan link and a sports association led by an Afghan refugee from the 2000s is campaigning for integration through sports; amongst others, one association is supporting swim classes for Muslim girls (not exclusively Afghans).

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As many returnees return to an unknown country due to the fact that they were born in Iran or Pakistan, integration rather than reintegration is the main issue.

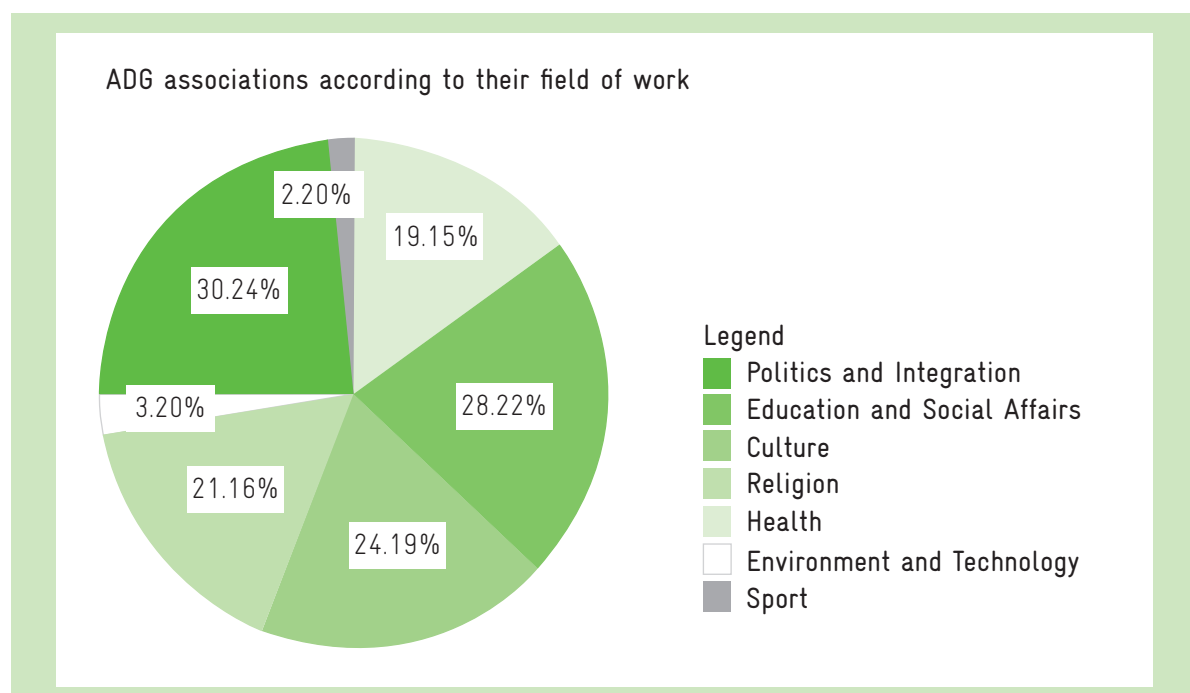


Figure 12:

ADG associations according to their field of work | Own presentation, based on field work

“Environment and Technology”. While only three associations are categorized as environmental and technical, several bigger organizations working in health care additionally offer the possibility to learn a technical profession or the use of renewable energy resources, particularly concerning solar panels for electricity generation. One particular association focusing mainly on solar power generation is the “Afghan Bedmoschk Solar Center e.V.”. Moreover, Afghan engineers and technicians have joined forces under the patronage of an association in Hesse (VAIT e.v.).

“Culture”. “Religion”. The fewest information was available for *cultural and religious* Afghan associations in Germany, despite their consolidated number of 24 respectively 21. Of the 21 religious associations, 17 are Islamic, four Hindu and one Sikh. Interesting enough, many associations of these categories are very hard to identify and even harder to evaluate, as only a postal address is available. It is likely that many more persons of Afghan origin are active in a religious context, like Mosques or Islamic education, but that the Afghan connection or hegemony is not obvious without deeper research. The question of the role of Afghans in Islamic life in Germany is an interesting and necessary theme for further research.

Health-related associations (19) mainly carry out their work in Afghanistan. Only two projects were identified directly addressing the people of Afghan-descent living in Germany. One such initiative – “Gröne TEZ”, a centre for refugees dealing with trauma, based in Hamburg was brought to life by a former refugee, who fled Afghanistan before the beginning of the Soviet-Afghan conflict. The Afghan-German Medical Association Weimar also engages in the psychological support of Afghans living in Germany. Their main project at this time focuses on enabling an exchange (tele-medicine) between five medical universities in Afghanistan and Germany via internet video-chat.

Health-oriented associations are also the ones with the highest organizational level and the only ones

having an umbrella organization. The DAMF e.V. (“Dachverband des Afghanischen Medizinischen Fachpersonals e.V.”) currently gathers 6 independent associations: “ADAV e.V. Freiburg”, “ADAV Weimar e.V.”, “Afghanistan-Hilfe, die ankommt e.V.”, “Avecinna Vereine e.V.”, “Afghanic-Afghanistan Information Centre e.V.”, and “Dr. Safi Stiftung”, which mainly concentrate their work on Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the work is comprehensive, aiming not only at isolated humanitarian relief but also addressing the political framework responsible for medical education at the macro-level¹³. Another association combining Afghan and German medical expertise is “AMSA e.V.” (Afghan Medical Staff Association), supporting the continuous training and qualification of Afghan doctors through capacity-building either in Germany or in Afghanistan.

The Afghan Women’s Organization, founded in 1992 and led by Nadia Nashir is based in Osnabrück and had almost 150 active members in 2015. The Association works exclusively in Afghanistan and Pakistan with an office in Kabul and one in Peshawar. Its main focus is on medical help, disaster relief and education infrastructure. For a long time, until his death, the very prominent author and journalist Roger Willemsen was a figurehead for the German public. The association is organizing many events, exhibitions etc. to raise awareness and to attract a general public.

“Education and Social Affairs”. The associations clustered under this category are by far the most heterogeneous ones. While they all focus on empowering and supporting Afghanistan’s most vulnerable population, their efforts seem less concerted. Each

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Because of the umbrella-organization these associations have a far better lobby and range of action than others. Additionally, since 2003, there is a lot of funding available for all kinds of reforms of the medical sector and health policies.



association tries to improve the lives of a limited number of people, in very narrowly defined regions. Besides usually trying to provide both humanitarian help and development aid, the measures fail to foster self-help to the degree that the initiatives would become sustainable. The number of schools and water wells built by associations and private money from Germany is impressive. Nevertheless, these are loose initiatives, without coordination among them and with little impact on the regional or national level. One project worth pointing out is implemented by the association “Förderverein für das Schulwesen und die Medizinische Versorgung Afghanistan e.V.”. This association supports initiatives brought to life by Afghan returnees (mainly from Pakistan). Furthermore, it cultivates the German culture and language in Afghanistan through the support of the German-teaching schools Amani and Aischa-e-Durani.

The fact that most of the associations concentrate in the North of the country is surprising, in the area around Kabul and the regions of East-Afghanistan and Jalalabad which are not considered secure areas; while the fewest operate in Herat despite the better security environment in the past. Given this observation, it becomes clear that there is also a lack of communication and coordination between these associations.

Within the category of educational and social association, many initiatives can be found which work only with and for *women* in Afghanistan. Oftentimes their executive boards only comprise women. IAWA (“Independent Afghan Women Association e.V.”) is such an example; led by Laila Noor, the daughter of the head mayor of Kabul from the post-WWII period. On the other hand, there is only one association among those identified, which currently implements a programme only for young boys and male adolescents.

IAWA is an example for an outstanding Afghan association in terms of visibility and reputation, connected to the Berlin and Bremen elite and a wider intellectual group of supporters. At the same time, their reputation in effectively building schools in Afghanistan gives them local relevance in the Afghan school districts and the administration in the capital. Thus, the development aspect is a link between both sides. Many school projects are co-funded by German aid. Every fashion show by Laila Noor in Germany is accompanied by cultural and representative events for a sympathetic and well connected audience, which allows IAWA to count on a sustained followership.

While many initiatives concentrate on building schools without providing a sustainable access either to further university education or to the labour market, Afghan Luminous Sun – Nazo (ALS) is an Educational Center for Afghan Women helping women in obtaining a training in artisanship. All training courses are state-approved and recognized since 2009. After graduation, the women can work in one of the independent workshops on tailoring, creating jewellery or processing leather. The products are then sold on the market – and are even available in Germany – which puts the initiative in a context of self-help and sustainability.

“Politics and Integration.” This is the category with most entries (30). Two organizations see themselves as political parties (the SDT Party based in Wustrow and the FDPA based in Garching) and two more consider themselves as democratic unions (one in Hamburg and another one in Essen). The remaining associations do not exhibit the same obvious political link or wish for political involvement, but engage in shaping policies through their commitment for integration or mediation (social, economic or cultural) between Afghanistan and Germany.

The focus of these associations' work has slightly changed. While many are still committed to the rebuilding of Afghanistan, they invest a lot of their efforts in working with people of Afghan-descent or those living in Germany interested in Afghanistan. Such a conclusive example is the "Afghanistan Info Network" based in Hamburg. Besides being engaged in the integration of citizens in Hamburg and the provision of humanitarian relief in Afghanistan, the association is additionally working towards the matching of contacts for professionals willing to work – permanently or temporarily – in Afghanistan. The association organises periodic delegation trips to Afghanistan for interested lawyers, journalists, etc.

A further association specialized in connecting interested business parties for the purpose of developing joint ventures is AINA e.V. (Afghan-German Exchange Culture, Economy, Society and Sport), based in Hamburg. Their focus is predominantly on economic exchange and networking between Hamburg and Afghanistan, mostly focusing on Kabul.

"Patenschaftsnetzwerk Afghanische Ortskräfte e.V." based in Potsdam but running several offices all over Germany, carries out a project with a deep and meaningful political message: The association helps local employees from Afghanistan, who had previously worked with German citizens and institutions in Afghanistan, to settle down in Germany after having fled from Afghanistan. The association supports arriving Afghans covering many different services.

Several integration-oriented associations started new projects and campaigns for the most recent arrivals of refugees and asylum seekers since 2014. ZAN e.V., founded in 2015 in Frankfurt am Main, is a music group for refugee women, providing trauma-music-therapy.

Due to the high number of arriving asylum seekers and refugees, the association for Iranian refugees based in Berlin also included the support of Afghan refugees into their work. The Berlin Senate has

supported this expansion. Some other associations expanded their work by offering German language courses for newly-arriving Afghans.

The association YAAR e.V., founded in 2012, is also located in Berlin. It focuses mainly on Afghan asylum-seekers offering social counselling, orientation programmes, language courses, etc. In 2016, YAAR initiated a cultural and counselling centre, sponsored by the Berlin Senate. Another focus is advocacy work: in December 2016, YAAR together with several other associations supported a large non-violent awareness-raising demonstration against the deportation of Afghans back to Afghanistan, where more than 5,000 people participated. A follow-up demonstration was planned for February 2017.

5 Afghan Newcomers after 2014

36

As seen in the previous section, it is not always easy to describe a social group, especially when looking at a diaspora, when this social group is emerging at the intersection of several other entities, and whenever their members might be changing from one membership to another: such as, for example, from being an Afghan newcomer to becoming a member of the Afghan diaspora. In the previous chapters, two different groups were outlined: the ADG based on the characteristics of associations, which are in some way related to Afghanistan; and the group of Afghan citizens in Germany based on socio-demographic particularities.

This approach has led to two crucial observations. First, politically-oriented associations with an Afghanistan connection are mainly engaged in integration work in Germany; many programmes having been initiated in the wake of the latest phase of Afghan immigration since 2014. Second, the number of Afghan citizens living in Germany has not only

dramatically increased since 2014, but the socio-demographic characteristics have also changed at the same time (e.g. the average age has dropped and the number of male persons has increased in relation to number of female persons).

Based on these two observations we can conclude that there is a well-established Afghan diaspora in Germany, predominantly formed by refugees from previous migration phases (beginning with the 1970s until the first half of the 2000s). Many of these have become Germans, precisely: Afghan Germans (like Jewish Germans, Turkish Germans), and not German Afghans. They are Germans with a “migration background”. It is important to recognize them as Germans, or as Germans and Afghans. Their core narrative is inseparably linked to the history of involuntary migration or forced displacement from their country of origin. This core narrative further has to be understood in relation to an opposite process of rooting in another place different from the origin country: the host society – in our case Germany.

Development of annual asylum applications since 2007

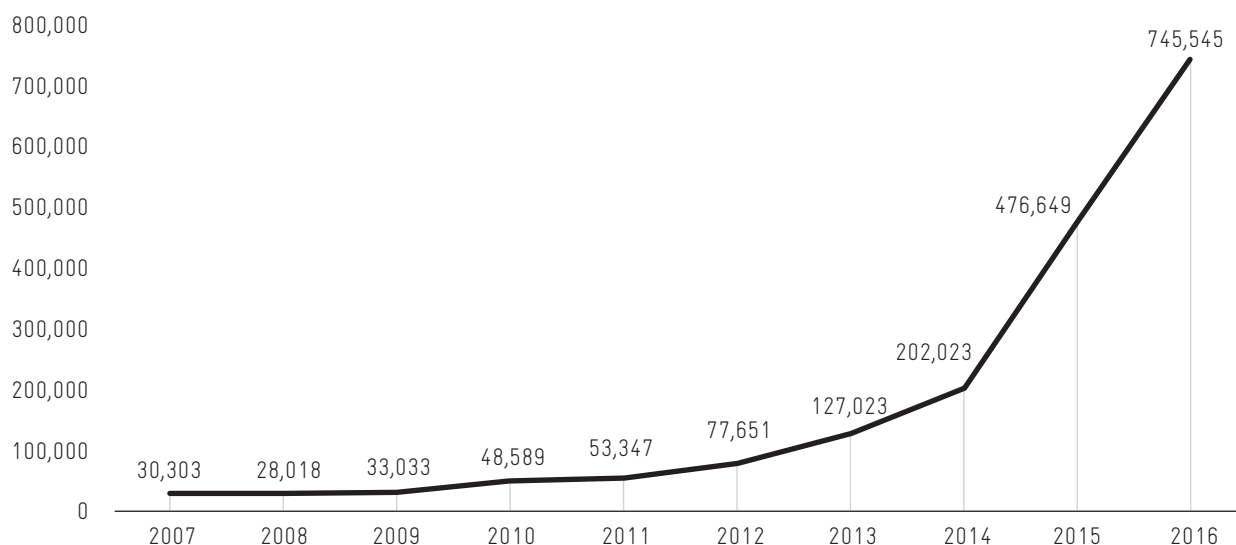


Figure 13: Development of annual asylum applications since 2007 | Own presentation based on data from: BAMF, 2017c

On the other hand, since 2014, a high number of Afghan citizens has come to Germany in another political context than the previous groups of migrants. In Germany, they are likely to meet Afghans of earlier immigration phases who had already been integrated to a certain degree prior to migration due to former connections to Germany through business, trade or professional occupation.

It is very difficult to estimate an appropriate figure of how many Afghan citizens have reached Germany in search for *protection*. While there are several available statistics, they all collect interfering but to a certain extent different data.

One such overview is provided by the BAMF regarding the number of asylum applications. It can be observed that the number of applications from Afghanistan has exponentially risen from 9,115 in 2014 to 127,012 in 2016. However, the statistics do not reveal the period between the day of entering Germany and the day of submitting the application. This might explain the difference between the number of registered Afghan persons in the Central Register for Foreign Nationals and the number of Afghans submitting asylum applications. The required time for the refugee status determination is reflected in a delayed peak in the asylum applications statistics.

Country of origin	2013		2014		2015		2016	
Afghanistan	4	7,735	4	9,115	4	31,382	2	127,012
Albania			5	7,865	2	53,805	6	14,853
Bosnia and Herzegovina			7	5,705				
Eritrea	10	3,616	3	13,198	8	10,876	5	18,854
Iraq	8	3,958	10	5,345	5	29,784	3	96,116
Iran	6	4,424					4	26,426
Kosovo			6	6,908	3	33,427		
Macedonia	5	6,208	8	5,614	9	9,083		
Nigeria							9	12,709
Pakistan	7	4,101			10	8,199	8	14,484
Russian Federation	1	14,887					10	10,985
Serbia	3	11,459	2	17,172	6	16,700		
Somalia	9	3,786	9	5,528				
Syria	2	11,851	1	39,332	1	158,657	1	266,250
Unclassified					7	11,721	7	14,659
Total Top-Ten Countries		72,025		115,782		363,634		602,348
Total Applications		109,580		173,072		441,899		722,370
% of Afghans from Total		7.1		5.3		7.1		17.6

Table 8: Initial asylum applications from top-ten countries of origin (2013–2016) | Own presentation based on data from: BAMF, 2017c



The vast majority of asylum seekers has to wait for a long time until being granted asylum or receiving their notice of rejection, living with the uncertainty whether and where they can stay, and when they will be allowed to start building up a new life. In the case of Afghan citizens, a positive decision (expressed through granting a status of protection, either as a refugee, through subsidiary protection, or a deportation ban)¹⁴ is issued only to approx. 50% of the cases. In the Syrian case, the percentage lies at approx. 90%. This means that every second Afghan obtains the right to remain in Germany.

These quantitative figures are conclusive when seen embedded into their context. The Jestadt (2017) investigation for this research has developed a pattern that is not exclusively focused on *Afghan* refugees: The discourse usually does not distinguish between refugees and migrants. As a consequence the so-called “crisis”, regularly invoked in public discourse, includes both groups (which is politically wrong and ideologically dangerous).

The first contrast is between **refugees as victims and suffering human beings**, hence objects of empathy and welcome; and **refugees as a threat and danger**, which makes welcoming them risky and denounces empathetic policies as a mistake to the disadvantage of German, or even, EU citizens. This leads to another opposition: the heroic **rescuer** is confronted with the **agitator or hate-speaker**. It is not so easy as to attribute certain observations of prime media (all

of them beyond tabloid and extremist editorial policies) to representative public opinions. It is more the notion of effective expressions of either position (i.e. aggrandizing the rescuer vs. vilifying the hater).

Much of this has to do with very specific German lessons from dealing with its history. Other aspects are clearly linked to European ascent of nationalism, with strong elements of ethnic and religious extremism. The final juxtaposition divides the perception of political decision makers into a double bind of inabilities: one group criticizes the politicians for being unable to help the innocent refugees; the other group attacks them for not being able to stop the perceived “wave” of incoming refugees long before they reach the German borders. To make it clear again: this is a critical discourse study looking at media, not at directly uttered opinions. The media perception is important because serious media sources¹⁵ have been attacked in particular for being opinionated

¹⁴ Some states do not deport Afghans despite the legal possibility to forcefully return them; the reason is not juridical, but humanitarian, because the state administrations does not consider Afghanistan a secure country for return. The Federal Minister of the Interior considers specific areas of Afghanistan as safe.

¹⁵ Of course, there is a certain grey zone between serious and less serious media. But media research has made some very clear suggestions on how to distinguish serious media from others (Kirchhoff 2010). This source is rather important, because it analyses specifically media in the context of 9/11 and the “wars on terror”.

Afghanistan	Asylum applications (initials and follow-ups)	Number of asylum applications decided upon	Protection quota (incl. refugee status, subsidiary protection, deportation ban)
2014	9,673	7,287	46.7%
2015	31,902	5,966	47.6%
2016	127,892	68,246	55.8%

Table 9:
Comparison between submitted and resolved applications from Afghan citizens | Own composition based on data from: BAMF 2017b, BAMF 2016a, BAMF 2015

and lying all the way. In the following recommendations, the necessity of a pro-active communication strategy to support critical reporting and commenting by the media will be pointed out.

This is a highly sensitive aspect of the present investigation. One example may show how delicate the ambiguities upon arrival are. As is known, in general Muslims do not tend to convert to any other religion. Conversions to Christianity are rare; if they occur, it is likely that evangelical missionaries have had some influence. The Taliban crisis of the late 1990s is typical for such conflicts; after the intervention, each convert caused a lot of diplomatic trouble. Today (2016–7), one protestant parish in Berlin is converting numerous newcomers, before their asylum request can be answered (most other Christian communities baptise only when the applicant has been granted or denied asylum). A convert with valid certificate of baptism will gain an advantage over their co-refugees in the asylum process. Furthermore, they are discrediting serious conversions and reducing the plausibility of requests for asylum by those who arrive, claiming danger of life because of an earlier conversion in Afghanistan.

We have to add a few specificities to this analysis making the Afghan situation more complicated in the eyes of the public and media, and probably to most of the politicians who are not directly involved in Afghan and Central Asian politics. Among the particular aspects of perceiving Afghans are:

- a) Afghan refugees do not come from an open war scene such as Syrians but from an ongoing violent environment in an insecure country. They are no direct fugitives from civil war. Insofar, comparisons with Syrian and Iraqi refugees are questionable.
- b) Many of them have a refugee history that combines the cascading nomadism of refugees (Each change of regime has produced its own stratum of refugees since 1979, and the spiral of return and re-escapism is very particular to Afghans).

This is unique insofar, as many Afghans, mainly Pashtuns, have had a regular “commuting” history to Pakistan, which occasionally merged with a refugee or escape story.

- c) A large part of the Afghan refugees had found shelter in Iran and Pakistan. Only recently (2016), large numbers of them were deported to Afghanistan, which was an additional incentive to flee from these countries to Europe, mainly Germany.
- d) Germany has a special attraction to Afghans. German-Afghan relations were celebrated in 2015 (100th anniversary), and Germany has gained a reputation among Afghans during their intervention since 2002. This image has partially changed since ISAF withdrew in 2014, while it had not been damaged despite of the Kunduz incident of 2009¹⁶.
- e) It is very likely that recent arrivals have an even less explicit idea of Germany than their predecessors of earlier phases of immigration. If it is not “Germany”, but any safe haven in “Europe”, this may be important for the distribution of refugees among EU partners.
- f) Many arriving refugees count on acquaintances or even family ties with members of the ADG. Communication with members of the ADG shapes the expectations and knowledge of refugees.

Each phase of migration has its own history, and so has each diaspora group. There are numerous reasons for many people to seek opportunities in other countries. Research in the field is complicated, because a lot of information derives from personal communication or from surveys which makes it difficult to verify credibility. Among all methodological approaches, the investigation of push and pull

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On 4 September 2009, the German commander Col. Klein ordered a bombardment of two tank trucks, which was meant to hit Taliban, but killed 92 civilian locals from a nearby town. The order and its effects are still under legal and moral dispute; many Afghan peers, such as the local governor, had lauded the action for ethnic reasons (the victims were mainly Pashtuns), while in Germany the killing of civilians was under ethical scrutiny.



factors is a good starting point. The most recent exemplary study, commissioned by the German Foreign Office, may serve as example¹⁷.

For in-depth research it is necessary to control the validity of the disaggregated results over time in the ADG: If the push- and pull-factors are still valid after having integrated in the ADG, how much have they changed since arrival? Are there barriers for joining

the ADG (intrinsic restraints) or is the difference between expected and real reception by the German host society and administration a trigger for a change of opinions on the reasons for migration (extrinsic restraints)? The answers to these questions will allow further interpretation of the present returnee study (Baslow et al., 2017). The motivations to come to the EU are never one-dimensional, which means that different pull and push factors and a subjective idio-

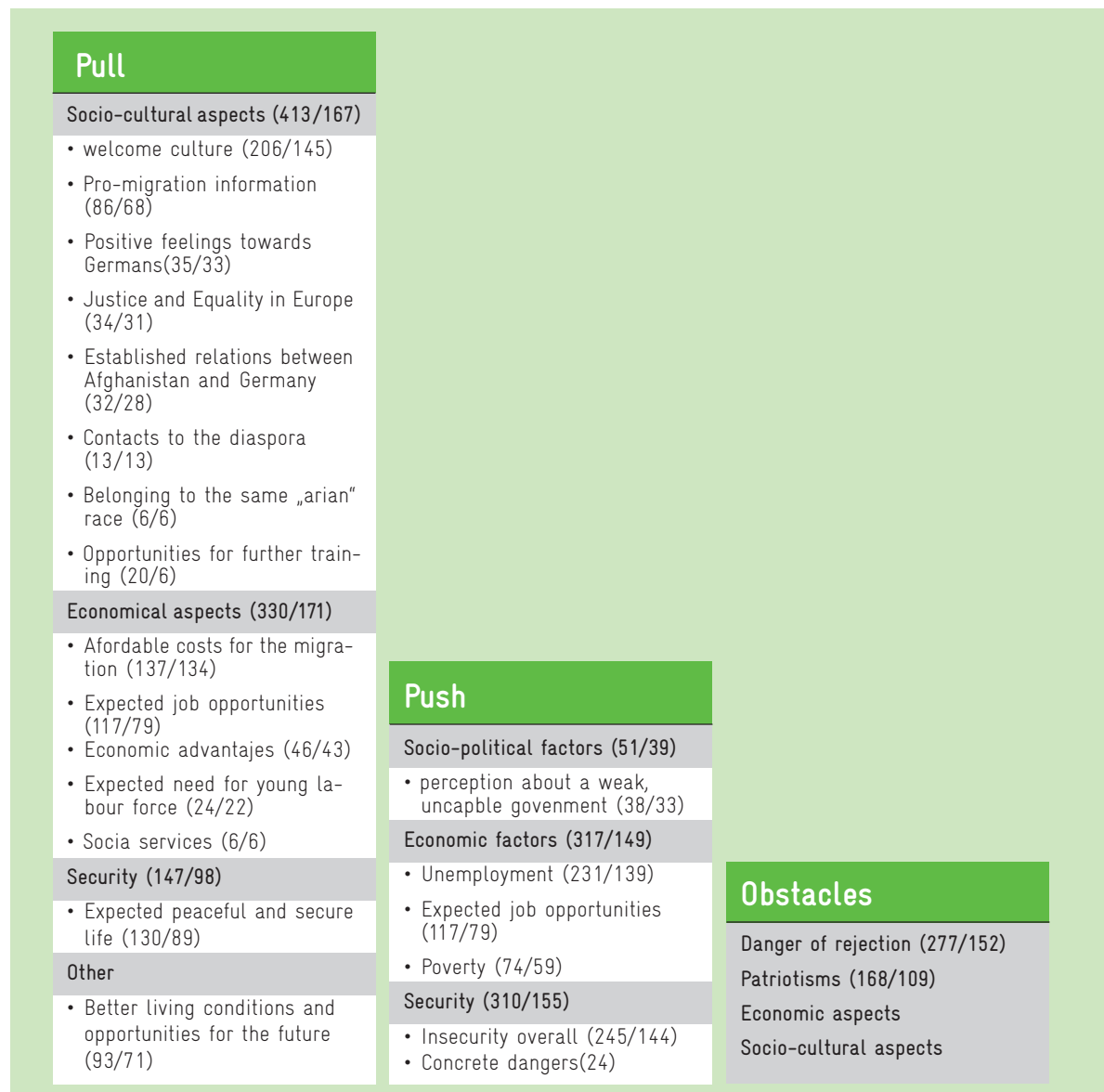


Figure 14: Push and Pull factors of the Afghan migration movement of 2014 | German Federal Foreign Office, 2017

syncrasy influence a person's viewpoint, with the exception of children and unaccompanied minors. Changes in both motivation and behaviour can be assigned to quite a few causes:

- a) Rejection by authorities directly after having arrived in Germany
- b) Disappointment
- c) Rejection by the ADG
- d) No support or counselling available for the next steps
- e) Prevailing trauma or mental/physical deficiencies without relief
- f) Language and communication difficulties
- g) Ideological indoctrination or religious influences

During the interviews for the present study, all of these negative experiences were mentioned but also the very opposite. The “welcoming culture” remains despite the change in official discourse by politicians away from the humanitarian viewpoint in 2015/16.

We can even observe differing perceptions of the “German host” differentiating between politicians administrating the refugee “problem” and citizens personally interacting with refugees. In the framework of this report, it is crucial to understand that the two main (interlinked) factors for any serious return- and development policy are

- a) Security in the country of origin
- b) Adequate preparation in Germany, and continuing assistance upon arrival in Afghanistan.

The third factor is a fear factor that cannot be specified as easily. During the empirical research conducted for this study, antagonistic attitudes have been identified. On the one hand, quite a few Afghans in Germany, some of them having lived in the country for many years, are afraid of deportation and forced return and prefer hiding or dismissing all plans for return. On the other hand, others would accept pressure to return voluntarily rather than being forced. It is not yet clear, which overall reaction the ADG will reveal.

17

This qualitative study confirmed that among the push-factors influencing migration from Northern Afghanistan, insecurity (mentioned in 155 interviews) and economic problems (mentioned in 149 interviews) were predominant. Interviewees widely referenced general insecurity, indicating a lack of trust in the state to effectively manage law and order, and contain insurgency. They mentioned specific, concrete threats less frequently (there were seven cases relating to threats to migrant household members). Economic problems adduced as a push factor predominantly related to unemployment, poverty and the expectation of further hardship. Notably, interviewees did not mention discrimination and oppression on religious or ethnic grounds by the state to any significant extent. Most powerful among the pull factors adduced was the perception of a welcoming culture for refugees (mentioned in 145 interviews), particularly in Germany, the economic pull of anticipated job opportunities across the EU (mentioned in 79 interviews), and, importantly, a sharp drop in the cost of illegal migration to the EU in 2015 and early 2016 (mentioned in 134 interviews). Interviewees also frequently mentioned the role of positive information about the possibility and prospects of migration, as well as peace and security prevailing in European countries (mentioned in 89 interviews). Only a small number of “inhibiting factors”, discouraging migration, mitigated these significant push-and-pull factors. Most important among these was the risk of rejection of asylum claims (mentioned in 152 interviews, but many respondents believed this risk is intentionally exaggerated by the media); a sense of patriotism understood as a need to develop and defend the homeland (mentioned in 109 interviews); and insufficient funds to migrate (mentioned in 79 interviews, despite the sharp drop in the cost of illegal migration). Interviewees knew about the risks of the journey, but this was generally not considered a strong inhibiting factor”. (Jawad, Gosztanyi et al. 2016).



6 Interaction between the ADG and the Afghan Newcomers

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Given the extensive media coverage, one can almost certainly assume that the ADG is fully aware of the high numbers of arriving refugees in recent times from different countries including Afghanistan. This is also reflected in the fact that some Afghan associations have already introduced activities for Afghan refugees (see Chapter 3.).

The interface between these two groups remains, however, modest. The different endemic characteristics of the several Afghan migration phases also suggest difference in the motivation to migrate, as well as their awareness about the differences. Furthermore, one cannot assume that the reasons for return necessarily correlate with the motives of having left the country; neither for the ADG nor the newcomer's group.

Furthermore, it is unlikely that invisible aspects such as motives can be known in advance without any exchange between the two groups. This exchange is however impossible without previous interactions. Whenever people from other countries become part of our society, they are confronted with our preconceived opinions and possibly prejudices about their country and culture, as well as vice versa. We can speak of a *clash of narratives*. Sometimes this clash is trivial or harmless, e.g. when Austrians meet Bavarians. Sometimes, political rifts overarch overlapping views of each other's society, e.g. when Ukrainians meet Russians. In our case, one of the problems is that only a very small minority in Germany has acquired knowledge on the case of Afghanistan. This group consists of experts, development practitioners, diplomats, active and veteran soldiers, a few journalists and pundits, and a complex discourse about some imagined country far away.

Nevertheless, Afghan newcomers might also carry with them a picture of an unfamiliar Afghanistan to many members of the ADG. While some people of the ADG do continue to travel back and forth between Germany and Afghanistan, there are also many who have never been to Afghanistan after having

fled or have never been to Afghanistan because they were born abroad. The picture they nourish about their origin country is as highly idealized as purely fictional.

Moreover, the German Afghanistan discourse is highly fragmented, if not patchy. The military intervention of 2002 has added to a highly superficial view on a country that is rather invented than empirical. Within the German discourse, some of the imaginations also clash along the line of the legitimacy of the German engagement in the Hindukush (a metonymical term for all kinds of "Afghanistan").

This introduction is necessary because Afghan newcomers, with their history and stories of escape, trauma and rescue, meet several competing discourses upon arrival, such as the diverse official and unofficial representations of German opinion about them, from voluntary aid workers to bureaucratic registrars to security professionals. In addition, there are differences in discourse among the existing ADG concerning the inclusion of newcomers.

There are not many options for the ADG to react to the numerous arriving Afghans:

- a) Empathy and humanitarian motives: ADG as part of the *welcoming culture*. This does not necessarily exclusively refer to *Afghans*.
- b) The ADG welcomes newcomers due to family, tribal or clan ties. If newcomers do not have such ties, their relation with the ADG cannot be considered *active*.
- c) Afghan newcomers (refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants) are *generally* rejected, because the ADG is feels threatened in their attained status of integration or assimilation.
- d) Newcomers are partially rejected with the exception of b)
- e) The ADG does not show interest in the refugee situation. However, there can be anxiousness as to not be affected by the terrorism discourse, and therefore a cautious attitude towards refugees is probable.

Based on preliminary observations, the authors assume that the ADG is ready to welcome those newcomers who have been granted asylum or exceptional leave to remain, but is worried about other arrivals, including those Afghans who have not found shelter with family, tribal or clan groups, and whose status is irregular. The recent large numbers of arriving Afghans are unlikely to accumulate enough money as to provide significant remittances beyond a share of social aid; at least, during the first 12–18 months.

Scholars tend to test the relevant hypothesis that the well-integrated group of Afghan Germans (including those without citizenship, but permanent residence permit) function as *attractors to newcomers*; often the attraction is enforced by family ties and other cross-border relationships. There is one highly sensitive alternative assumption, i.e. the ADG might reject newcomers, and thus create a (widening) gap between those who are well integrated, and those who might disturb the carefree life together between the groups.

This problem is widely discussed in different diaspora studies, but not for the ADG. The interest of sustainable integration policy is to bridge the gap between the groups despite two imminent dangers: if the deportation policy interferes too heavily in the established ADG, there might be growing apprehension against refugees, because they are identified as the causes for this policy; or there will be a kind of solidarity between the two groups, not really enlarging the ADG, but building a wall of affected refugees around it. Much will depend upon the strategies of German authorities to prevent either possibility. There are two options in this context: either accepting and strengthening the ADG as a trusted and supported ally in both policies of integrating refugees and providing secure return for those who want to go back; or only to appeal to the refugee group, which is not a diaspora yet. The first option can be recommended as more promising, but will also take more resources and patience. The latter is rather a question of coordination between the authorities and

impact of fast voluntary return to Afghanistan; at a moment, when the country is no longer absolutely insecure.

The main indicator for either hypothesis is the status of respective hegemonic discourse. If the media and politicians feed a sentiment of welcoming and empathy for arriving Afghan refugees, “Afghan” may gain a positive connotation in the everyday discourses regarding “foreigners”, “aliens”, or “strangers”. On the other side, public opinion can shift rapidly, and thus influence the opinion within the ADG: the news that the New Year’s night (2015/16) police actions did not only focus on North Africans, but also Syrians, Iraqi and *Afghans*, immediately nourishes resentments and thus threatens the ADG¹⁸. Another trigger of prejudice is any news regarding incidents between Afghans and other groups of refugees in refugee camps or other facilities. The term “Afghan” then easily gains a negative connotation.

This negative phenomenon is further deteriorated by the fact that the German ongoing military engagement in Afghanistan has attained a negative perception by the public who has hoped for an end of intervention-related troubles after the pullout of 2014. (For an exact and broadly differentiated view on Afghans by *Germans* cf. Daxner and Neumann 2012, and Daxner 2014, on the effects of Homeland Discourse). The other side of the coin is that many among the interview partners fear negative reactions from several sides, also regarding their status of residence and acceptance. The Ministry of the Interior’s policy of announcing deportation and refolement policies are highly adding to this feeling of insecurity, even

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This event has become an emblematic element for the aversion against refugees and foreigners by many people. Hundreds of foreigners had attacked women in the vicinity of the Cologne train station; there was an orgy of sexual harassment, theft and bullying. Until today, the debate has not come to any conclusion about who is to blame for the failing security system; it is also unclear whether the events had been externally governed or were more or less spontaneous.

within groups of absolutely safe status). Thus, the entire ADG is affected and disconcerted about the so called “refugee crisis”.

The big question for development policies is whether privately accumulated assets and a continuous saving rate are sufficient in order to independently act within a private entrepreneurial context or to complement German state programmes for supporting any kind of stabilizing projects in Afghanistan. This is certainly the case in a kind of PPP (Public Private Partnership), where a private association is responsible for the fund-raising and, even more importantly, establishes networks and accumulates social capital in order to be supported with funding or co-funding by German authorities, mainly BMZ, but also AA and other ministries. These associations belong to the well-established ADG with strong ties to their origin country’s elite and the corresponding German persons of influence. We consider the effects of this model as positive for development cooperation. In order to become a model, it is necessary to allow the ADG and, at least partially, newly arriving Afghans, to expand the attraction of the ADG to newcomers and to activate both as guides for voluntary return.

Since the focus on development is pivotal for this research and since much of the impact of PME policies will depend on the reception and rooting on the Afghan side, the policies on the Afghan side will play a relevant role. We should distinguish between the agency Germany can expect from the Afghan side, the performance of the Afghan administration receiving and integrating returnees and the integration of both by the ADG. The last one is important in the context of fostering the interest of members of the ADG in both return and development.

7 Afghan Policies on Refugees

Until 2014, the Afghan state did not have “an overall policy framework related to migration” (Weinar 2014). At that time, legal provisions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) were drafted, and a labour migration policy was drafted with the help of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and IOM. The Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations (MoRR) designed a first policy draft on return migration. The diligent mapping of all legal activities on these issues shows how disparate the Afghan government tackles the issue and how little coordination exists among the actors (Weinar, 2014: 8–14). At least four ministries are involved, and different IGOs, like IOM, and GIZ have presented particular programmes. The Labour Emigration Legislation of 2005 and 2007 is very clear in its policy, sending Afghan workers “overseas...in order to prevent unemployment and achieve better income” (Law of 2007, ref. Weinar 2014, 9).

Since the start of the international intervention in 2001 many operational efforts have been made: the only effects were the bilateral agreements between Afghanistan, UNHCR and several countries regarding the return of refugees (Pakistan, Iran, Netherlands, Denmark, France, United Kingdom, Australia and Sweden, between 2002 and 2011) (UNHCR, 2016: 13). Germany prepared an agreement in October 2016, in the wake of the Brussels Donors Conference.

There were earlier efforts to enhance “Dignified Return of Refugees” such as the Presidential Decree #297 of 2001. The MoRR “aims to finalize the return migration policy by the end of 2014” (UNHCR, 2016: 10). None of this came to a perceivable result. However, all this should be reviewed with care because the situation has changed dramatically. One reason for the delay in policy formulation is that Pakistan and Iran have started a massive policy of forced return of Afghans. A few numbers concerning the forced return of Afghans from Pakistan (UNHCR 2016): In 2016, 221,000 returnees in Afghanistan seek re-integration, while 1,340,000 are still in Pakistan. UNHCR (2016) has developed a comprehensive

plan which foresaw total requirements of USD 291 million for the year 2016 (as of September 2016; numbers for 2017 are not yet available).

Until the end of 2016, 105 million USD were needed to support the repatriation from Pakistan, 90% of which would go to Afghanistan. The number of newly displaced persons in Afghanistan is rising due to the ongoing violent conflicts, thus increasing the resettlement policies (229.000 new IDPs). Equally sound figures for Iran are not available, where about 1 million registered refugees face similar problems.

Since 2014, the return of Afghans to their country of origin has undergone dramatic changes. This has certainly affected the pull-out of ISAF, the increased insecurity and the stark increase in attacks and rising unemployment and. One aspect that has often been overlooked is the poor capacity of sub-national governance in Afghanistan to receive and accommodate returnees.

The very special role of Germany in all this creates another ambiguity. The German welcoming culture is an additional pull factor for deciding where to go and when to escape from Afghanistan. Even now, as more restrictive measures are meeting more rigid border controls, the Germany’s attraction as a receiving country is still very high. On the other hand, as many refugees became subject of the German migration regime means that a sustainable long-term policy would not only apply to Afghanistan. The ADG could be expected to play a supporting role in a wider context.



8 Voluntary Return, Deportation and other Ways of Leaving Germany

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When assessing perspectives for returnees within a framework of sustainable development policy and reconstruction support in Afghanistan, we first have to distinguish between three categories of potential addressees: members of the already established ADG; Afghan newcomers, whose asylum applications have been accepted; and Afghan newcomers, whose asylum applications have been declined or are going to be declined. This latter group of persons probably has less interaction with members of the ADG. However, and this is meant as a strong proposition, this group of rejected asylum seekers (approx. 50% of the overall Afghan asylum applicants – see Table 9) might strengthen the Afghan identity component within the ADG which could clash with other identities e.g. a German identity.

A crucial aspect for return migration is the inconsistent, sometimes public debate about why and how Afghanistan can be described as a *secure country*. Currently, this debate is only held with regard to the return of rejected asylum seekers. Security has a completely different notion in the German discourses, and is used and abused for domestic argumentation rather than as a parameter for deciding on deportation. Security and safety in the Afghan perception is so different from the German understanding of those concepts that we have to insist that the studies on this subject become central to the judgement of refugee and *returnee* policies.

The process of transforming visions, allusions, fake facts and opportunistic images into a sound knowledge of the respective other society has to do a lot with the idea of *hearts, and minds – and bodies*. (The physical dimension of every person has found very little attention by the authorities in the host country; the bodies of foreigners are mainly seen under the aspect of health (e.g., healthy enough to be deported), or are objects of low-level prejudice (foreigners contract diseases); we see the physical condition of refugees as a primary source of concern.

Hearts and minds are, of course, accounts of the colonial history and the efforts to accommodate local populations to the regime of their superiors. Nevertheless, in a metaphorical sense, the model is still valid. Most Afghans of the more recent stages of migration, i.e. post-2011, see Germany in a very particular light. Their sources about Germany prior to migration were personal communication with interveners, civilian as well as military, and their counterparts in cultural and economic cooperation, e.g. GOs, NGOs, teachers, doctors etc.; the second group of sources was information originating from relatives, friends, scouts and vanguards already having migrated to Germany; and an increasingly important third set of sources are social networks. The official image of Germany and unofficial varieties of this image foster expectations motivating Afghans to migrate to Germany (or other countries; we are not sure whether there is a sufficiently concrete image of “Europe”).

The reaction upon confrontation with the reality can have all shades of disappointment and excited approval. It makes a difference if a refugee is received well or threatened with possible apprehension. This is true for personal encounters and for institutional reception and it goes far beyond mere psychological affection. What is needed – as a field of research and actual perception by all authorities and actors – is a kind of anthropology of the ADG. From here we can hope to identify the contribution ADG can add to the refugee and returnee problems.

In simple terms: only if we understand ADG, German refugee and returnee policies can be developed in cooperation with ADG.

The returnee discussion in Europe currently revolves around the refugee issue, which can clearly be seen at the example of the Joint Way Forward (EEAS 2016) on migration issues between Afghanistan and the EU of October 2016. The most significant articles of this paper focus on procedures and perspectives for voluntary return for those Afghans who do not enjoy legal titles to remain in any of the EU countries.

The problem of this document is that the security situation is not addressed sufficiently. The question, *whether* Afghanistan is a *secure country* for returned citizens, is highly disputed. Many experts clearly deny this status, while the German Federal Ministry of the Interior and few advisers regard the country either as secure for returnees (not for German actors in the country), or as safe and secure in certain selected local areas (which is less reliable than other options). The threat of deportation can trigger “voluntary” return, if the conditions are good enough¹⁹. If there is conflict between forced deportation and supported return, many persons are likely to decide for the latter (not children or unaccompanied minors). However, the ethical foundation of such pressure and the risk of arbitrariness affecting those who are really willing to return is high (Ruttig, 2016).

The official voluntary return programme by the German authorities REAG/GARP (Reintegration and Emigration Program for Asylum-Seekers in Germany/ Government Assisted Repatriation Program) shows a mixed report on Afghan returnees: the number of 3,322 approved return cases (as of February 2017) which does not reflect the actually implemented numbers does not seem to be very impressive (BAMF 2017d). Persons, who are not registered with REAG/GARP, are not in the statistics. Forced returns (deportations) are highly unpopular with at least five state administrations. Although, as seen above, the number of approved cases is much higher for 2016, the actual number of returnees for 2015 (no up-to-date numbers available for 2016) is much lower (308 cases) (BAMF 2017d). There are two problems that are not yet resolved: security at any place in Afghanistan, and the immediate reception of returnees by protecting and supporting agencies (there are such organisations, like IOM), but both the REAG/GARP and the reality on the ground tell different stories (BAMF, 2016b).

54,069 persons have received the approval of re-migration in 2016 (as of January 2017) through REAG/GARP (BAMF 2017d).

3,322 of these (approx. 6,1%) were Afghans. In 2015 only 35,514 persons were supported by the same programme.

Another motive for voluntary return can be the disappointment about the conditions of and the perspectives for finding a future in Germany. This disappointment is one ambiguous indicator about the relationship with the ADG. It is unlikely that members of the ADG can console refugees waiting for the decision on their acceptance, at best, they will be diverted. However, for those with negative perspectives, the treatment and advice by the ADG can be encouraging but can also achieve the opposite.

One aspect should be very clear to all actors: governance in Afghanistan is volatile. While many of the explicit declarations and utterings of goodwill from the side of the Afghan government sound reliable, in reality the effects from patronage, micro-management, local peculiarities, corruption and deficient infrastructure meet inconsistencies from Western, also German development policies and concrete projects (e.g. on/off budget policies, parallel actions, and ill-allocated experts). The factors time, trust, effectiveness and legitimacy still play an underestimated role that is, however, increasingly reconsidered.

Regarding the German political and cultural perspective, there is a framework of two major dimensions:

- (a) The connection of the perspectives of development cooperation with potential ADG activities
- (b) The role Afghan refugees play in the context of refugee, terrorism and deportation discourses, with voluntary return as an option.

¹⁹

The regulations in the UK require a withdrawal of the asylum-application in order to get substantial support for voluntary return (ICAR, 2010:7).

²⁰

About the good governance context and the perspective at the bottom of society cf. the 12 year experience of projects C1 and C9 at the SFB 700 (Free University Berlin).
www.sfb-governance.de

Before we conduct further investigations of the ADG, we can assume that the situation is not very different from other diasporas. The prime example would be the Iranian diaspora in Germany (HBS, 2015).

The second generation diaspora is not affected by traumatic experiences. Following, the old homeland becomes idealized and “purer” in imagination; thus the wish to “return” is growing. Those who really leave Germany will be easily disappointed in their re-gained motherland and are likely to come back to the diaspora in Germany after 3 or 4 years²¹. Since the ADG shows a relatively short duration of stay of Afghan citizens in Germany (4,9 years – 2015) on average, compared to other diasporas, circular migration is obviously strong. This phenomena could correlate with the cascades of causes for displacement (since 1978), but it could also indicate that Afghans leave Germany for other host countries.

An important conclusion drawn from the statistics is that the core ADG is amazingly small. If one constituent element of the ADG are the established members with German citizenship, then their number (<30.000) is relatively small compared to the over 130.000 Afghans in the ADG. Among them are many young persons and many residents having lived in Germany only for a few years.

For development politics, this is an important aspect that will be mirrored in the recommendations. The ADG has a high potential for ideas, perspectives, and suggestions, but no real clue of how to include them into practice in Afghanistan. German foreign relations and development policies and programmes such as PME have a strong interest in connecting practices on the ground in Afghanistan with their own programs. When formulating policies, actors have to be aware of the functional and structural realities in Afghanistan. It is important to activate the potentials of the ADG with motivation, incentives, bilateral communication and substantial interest in the stories of the returnees.

This report will be very moderate concerning conclusions and recommendations. Many of the phenomena of the ADG cannot be grasped easily by mere common sense or fragmented observation. On the other hand, we understand that the connection between a singular diaspora and the policies of development in the country of origin has two sides: one must be comparative with regard to the German government’s political priorities and bilateral strategies concerning particular countries and regions; the other one must take into account the rather specific properties of any particular diaspora, in our case the ADG. Most comparative approaches might be formally advanced, but underestimating the qualitative characteristics of each of the diasporas. Only from these one can deduct primary indicators, e.g. to which extent one particular diaspora might be ready for being included in sustainable development programmes.

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Proposal for further research: the reasons for this disappointment should be investigated by GIZ/PME, because projects on short-term returns often go along with misallocated resources and are linked to economic losses; the same can be the case with start-ups.



9 Conclusions

Based on the above-described investigations, the authors conclude the following:

- There is an Afghan diaspora in Germany, which is rather small in quantity and of little relevance to the German social structure; there are also quite a few persons with Afghan migration background who do not belong to the ADG (e.g. they do not have a sense of belonging); the impact of Afghans on the public discourses in Germany is relatively low.
- However, the German engagement in Afghanistan and the particular responsibility of Germany have an exceptional impact on German-Afghan relations; this also influences the public discourse.
- The general interest of the German public in Afghanistan has vanished, while the awareness of Afghans being present in Germany (as asylum seekers and other immigrants) is ambiguous (welcoming or hostile).
- The number of organized associations in the ADG is smaller than statistically expected. There is an unidentified number of Afghans (ADG and other persons) who are members of other associations but not specifically identified as Afghans.
- The ADG, in particular their representatives, can be activated and motivated to support both German development cooperation with Afghanistan and the government's efforts to assist voluntary returnees in preparing return and gaining solid ground upon return.
- The ADG can play an important role with regard to newly arriving Afghans (after 2014) as refugees and immigrants; the ADG may be activated to support voluntary returnees upon return and resettling in Afghanistan; it may also be supportive to integrate those Afghans who will remain in Germany.
- The relevance of the ADG is important considering the political relations between Germany (and the EU) and Afghanistan. The ADG has potential to support German policies towards Afghanistan on political, economic, cultural and social levels; development cooperation should benefit from an inclined and collaborative ADG.
- All findings regarding return policies and activities of the ADG in their country of origin are under the caveat of the security situation in the country.
- The fear of deportation and a great uncertainty among arriving refugees and other Afghan migrants may become a spoiler to the policies mentioned and might even increase hostilities. This might affect the ADG, the relations of ADG with other diasporas and the German host countries as well. This will also affect all motivation and activation policies.



10 Recommendations

50

The authors would like to clarify that the knowledge about the ADG and its rooting in the German society as well as in the awareness of their country of origin is still limited. In some sections of the report, further need for investigation is mentioned.

i. Addressing the ADG – cooperating with the ADG (Suggestions for particular formats of exchange)

- i1: Identify trustworthy and sustained associations and peers in the ADG for further cooperation (see box “Afghan Diaspora Forum”);
- i2: Train and coach a special team at GIZ, preparing the contact persons for approaching and covering the ADG contacts;
- i3: Create a permanent communication scheme, where news, changes in policies, events in the ADG, in the Afghan community and among the Afghan refugees will be discussed and critically evaluated;
- i4: Develop an information scheme that delivers both to the Parliamentary committees in charge and the cooperating authorities outside BMZ/ GIZ (e.g. in the framework of PME’s “migration policy advice”). Make the ADG a running agenda item on the inter-sectoral consultations of BMZ/GIZ, AA, BMI, BAMF etc.; keep IOM Germany posted on all related projects;
- i5: Create a flexible scheme of communication between ADG and GIZ, especially focusing on the development agenda that might affect returnees (e.g., ZAV, professional returnee programmes, or research like Gatter (2016) or Govern4Afghanistan); (potential for PME’s “returning experts”);
- i6: In the case ADG expresses the need of an umbrella organization, provide support (PME diaspora cooperation);
- i7: support the ADG in keeping institutional records and a memory for and of the ADG;



Afghan Diaspora in Germany Forum

Organize a conference, an AFGHAN DIASPORA FORUM, where all active German association with an Afghanistan focus can meet, get to know each other, identify common goals and needs, network and lay down the basis for further cooperation and joint efforts. The conference should last at least three days. The first day inputs from leading experts ought to be provided as to present successful case studies or insights into project work and the challenges of post-conflict reconstruction. The second and third day shall be used by the associations’ representatives to discuss and adopt a joint action plan with short-term (2 years) and mid-term (10 years) goals.

The main purpose of such a conference is to act as a proxy for an umbrella organization and to stimulate reflections about the proper role of the ADG under the given circumstances in Germany.

Give spaces for the associations to build working groups according to their most important objectives and projects; we recommend the 7 working fields identified in this study (cf. Chapter 4)

As soon as these working groups have been established it is of utmost importance to create a permanent exchange platform:

- Twice a year, experts from the working groups rotate and take part in a trip to Afghanistan to visit the areas where their projects are being implemented. These trips should have two foci: (1) on the one hand transport a more realistic image of Germany to the Afghan population and (2) on the other hand: to promote the working areas with potential for professionals wishing to work in Afghanistan for a limited period of time.

- Every trimester, one of the working groups holds a meeting to monitor the progress on their action plan;
- During the forth semester of every second year, the conference, where the associations sit together in session repeats in order to revise the common action plan.

In a parallel process, an *online platform* should be created, where every second week another association is being presented. Through this activity a collective memory of private German projects concerning Afghanistan can be created. It also makes visible the links and affiliations of ADG-members with official (state and GO)

ii. Recommendations on the inclusion and capacity building of the ADG and of individuals (Human Capacity Development, Leadership), regarding the potential temporary or permanent return and their contribution to reconstruction.

- ii1: Identify leaders and peers in the ADG who are likely to be motivated or interested in a permanent or temporary return. Offer incentives in order to get them involved as long-time counterparts (e.g. through PME diaspora cooperation);
- ii2: Give priority to projects and programmes developed by associations in the ADG that have already proven to work effectively and trustworthy; support them with a broader range of autonomy than usually granted in designing and implementing these projects;
- ii3: Train leaders to monitor projects and to report regularly to GIZ and other commissioning authorities;
- ii4: Establish a preparatory programme for leaders, who shall co-organize voluntary return and protected arrival in Afghanistan. This requires their inclusion in all training and further education programmes, also on academic level. Preparatory studies should be arranged with the HRK²²;
- ii5: Develop an attractive programme for temporary rather than for permanent return (e.g. in the framework of PME's offer for temporary return of diaspora experts, which is currently (2017) being piloted in several partner countries);

- ii6: Keep records and information about the bridgeheads of the ADG peers in Afghanistan and try to communicate with their counterparts as an interested third party;

iii. Recommendations on professionalizing the organized ADG and its networking with active Afghans; form alliances with local structures in Afghanistan, professional networks and further potentials in Germany.

- iii1: Enforce stocktaking and impact analysis of all projects and programmes already completed or in progress; a better cross project coordination and a tuning of information and accessibility of programmes will be needed.
- iii2: ADG by majority is not professionalized for the Afghan market, but for the German economy. Therefore, special training and professional education will be needed by those, who have indicated that they might want to return.
- iii3: Primarily support those professionals in the ADG who hold stakes in Afghanistan already, e.g. through investment, business ties, intellectual or artistic exchange.

²²

On academic level, the conference of Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation on 23 November 2016 gave comprehensive information on options for refugees in higher education. They are not congruent with the opportunities for established members of the ADG. We recommend basic coordination between the two sectors of education in order to gain synergies.



iii5: German potentials can often be found in those associations that are mixed in membership and agency, i.e. Afghan-German. Activate those as scouts to identify German groups and communities that would engage in Afghanistan.

iii6: Investigate which municipalities and other local structures in Germany are interested in working with Afghan refugees and helping them to establish the to returnee preparatory and training programmes. Voluntary NGOs, private charity and volunteers might be helpful as well²³.

iii7: Gender disparities among arriving migrants and refugees have to be considered together with the ADG. While special programmes for girls and women are essential, a basic programme for male members both of the ADG and the asylum seeking cohorts is needed with priority.

iv. Recommendations concerning ADG as a partner in the new PME framework for development oriented return.

iv1: when supporting permanent return, be beware of competition between residents and returnees.

iv2: development projects do not only need professional support and vocational skills, but also leadership and supervisors bridging the cultural and communicative gaps between locals and Germans.

iv3: train such proficiency timely and with incentives for the trainees to really accept those positions; Combine with ii4.

iv4: create a discussion forum where expert members of the ADG shall propose their ideas of priority projects to PME but potentially also to others. (Cf. Afghan Diaspora Forum)

iv5: identify those who are regularly directly investing high amounts of money in Afghan local or bilateral businesses.

iv6: since remittances play a big role in the nurturing of family members or other relations of the ADG, a dialogue among ADG members, government representatives, and the private sector (e.g. money transfer operators) on useful allocation and alternative options of transferring regular payments to Afghanistan could be initiated.

iv7: initiate a special start-up programme for joint ventures shared by ADG members or returnees and Germans. Consultation opportunities and legal counselling on both sides is needed.

iv8: development projects should be checked against other strategic propositions by politics and in the international arena of competing or concurring players. Monitoring and assessment should include members of the ADG.

iv9: for any development intervention, a very detailed conflict and gender analysis is necessary.

v. Recommendations in perspective

The authors have named the report PREPARE, PROTECT, PROMOTE: Any development policy based on these pillars would comply with high level principles, such as the diverse conventions and charters of human rights, and the political framework of an appropriate bilateral policy, focused on voluntary return of Afghans to their origin country and on the development of this country in a sustained partnership. Given the German participation in the intervention after 2001, a strong commitment to the *Responsibility to Protect* and an equally honest resuming of

²³

There is a certain risk of indoctrination by radical Islamic organizations that may trouble the gender relations within the established ADG; refugees and newly arriving migrants might be targets of uncontrollable indoctrination.

liability and responsibility for the development of Afghanistan is included. This is in compliance with the Brussels Agreement of 2016, that calls for secure and dignified return of Afghans (Afghanistan & EU 2016). Voluntary returnees can play a strong and effective role in this process.

However, all three elements of such a policy are inseparably linked. Without PREPARATION, no returnee can succeed in performing beyond his or her individual survival or return. We recommend education programmes for all potential returnees, which will include humanities, human rights, ethics, before and besides vocational and professional training. Without PROTECTION, there will be no chance to implement the different components of PME. In other words: none of the five main components of PME can exclude security issues. This does not mean that a *development* programme should not fall under the auspices of *securitization*. This might be one of the invaluable advantages of PME in the very near future. Protection will be difficult and costly, whenever insecurity is so high that nobody can be sent back to Afghanistan against his or her will. Based on the authors' experience, there do not seem to be places in Afghanistan that are safe and secure enough as to risk return. Empirical evidence should be valued higher than particularist wishful thinking. PROMOTING return needs new forms of cooperation and extensions of existing collaboration with Afghans in their country, based on the vast experience of GIZ and many other GOs and NGOs. Only if the ADG understands and appreciates the programmes of German-Afghan development cooperation, we might get an invaluable and effective ally.



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