

• C A N A D I A N •  
**DIVERSITÉ**  
C A N A D I E N N E

**COMPARING THE GERMAN  
AND CANADIAN EXPERIENCES  
OF RESETTLING REFUGEES**

*A 21st Century Response*

**COMPARER LES EXPÉRIENCES ALLEMANDES ET  
CANADIENNES QUANT À LA RÉINSTALLATION  
DES RÉFUGIÉS**

*Une stratégie pour le 21<sup>ème</sup> siècle*



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## LETTERS

Comments on this edition of *Canadian Diversity*?  
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# FIVE YEARS LATER: REFLECTING ON THE GERMAN AND CANADIAN RESPONSE TO REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

LORI WILKINSON, University of Manitoba and LJUDMILA PETROVIC, The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of British Columbia (AMSSA)

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Over the past 20 years, the number of displaced persons has steadily increased. The past five years have been unique in that more and more refugees wish to make their new lives in places much further away from conflict. In 2015, Germany was thrust into the international spotlight when over one million people sought protection there. German Chancellor Angela Merkel remained one of the few European leaders to openly welcome the arrival of refugees. In Canada, the refugee welcome became an election issue after three-year-old Aylan Kurdi's photo shocked the world. The image became a symbol for human suffering that Canadians could no longer ignore. Shortly after their election, the Liberals under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau declared their intention to sponsor more refugees, a commitment they carried forward into 2018.

Five years later, both countries have had time to reflect and take stock of their responses to the refugee arrivals. While our challenges were similar in many ways, they were also different and unique in their context. In Germany, settling and housing over a million refugees was a major challenge. To put this challenge into perspective for a Canadian context, Munich is roughly the size of Calgary and saw over 63,000 refugee arrivals over three days. This is double what Canada received in a whole year. However, Canada had challenges of its own. In the first few months, many Canadians worked hard to open their doors, wallets and hearts to sponsor refugees through the private sponsorship program. The response was overwhelming and meant that refugees were often settled in areas where refugees had never settled before, bringing about new challenges in settlement. The two countries looked

to one another for help and advice. This special issue is the culmination of some of these new partnerships.

This special issue of *Canadian Diversity* brings together 15 papers that discuss the outcomes of refugee integration in both Canada and Germany. The three papers in section one describe the legal implications and public receptivity toward refugees. Labman's paper outlines Canada's role in refugee resettlement and identifies some of the glaring gaps in our legal system. Winter and Patzelt conduct an extensive media analysis of both Canada and Germany in order to compare public sentiment towards refugee arrivals. Beißert measures the attitudes adolescent Germans have toward their Syrian peers. In the next section on children and youth refugees, Pelley examines some of the challenges to youth integration in mid-sized Canadian centres by examining the context in Halifax. Shamim and her colleagues provide evidence from refugee parents and teachers of refugee children in Germany and Canada with regard to literacy development. Macleod and her research team provide an overview of an exciting new language support program called StimuLER. Abojedi and his colleagues dive into an in depth review of existing research to help summarize the effect of loss and separation on the learning outcomes of refugee youth. Höfler's paper concludes this section by discussing refugee youth and resilience.

The next three papers outline the economic and employment outcomes of refugees. Logan's analysis of service delivery for entrepreneurs in Germany reminds us that there is no "one size fits all" approach to refugee integration. Russert and her

team describe the challenges they faced when developing a social competence training program for newly arrived refugees. Boyd and Parin take us back to the early 1980s to discuss how the Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian refugees fared in the labour market forty years after their arrival. The news was good!

Two papers discuss issues with settlement services. Akbari and Palenburg compare the responses by the settlement sector in both countries. Jacobsen and his colleagues follow by discussing a pilot project that connected settlement service providers with researchers in Germany – very similar to the Canadian model. Our issue ends with a discussion of family issues and resettlement. Bhattacharyya and her colleagues examine some of the challenges that Yazidi refugee women face in accessing and attending language classes in Canada. De Dieu Basabose and his colleagues end the special issue with an excellent discussion of how the Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre helped newly arrived refugees cope with their new lives in Canada.

We hope that you enjoy the papers in this special issue!

# CINQ ANS PLUS TARD : RÉFLEXION SUR LA RÉPONSE ALLEMANDE ET CANADIENNE À LA RÉINSTALLATION DES RÉFUGIÉS

LORI WILKINSON, University of Manitoba et LJUDMILA PETROVIC, The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of British Columbia (AMSSA)

Au cours des 20 dernières années, le nombre de personnes déplacées n'a cessé d'augmenter. Les cinq dernières années ont été uniques en ce sens que de plus en plus de réfugiés souhaitent faire leur nouvelle vie dans des endroits beaucoup plus éloignés des conflits. En 2015, l'Allemagne a été propulsée sous les projecteurs internationaux lorsque plus d'un million de personnes y ont demandé protection. La chancelière allemande Angela Merkel fait partie des rares dirigeants européens à accueillir ouvertement l'arrivée de réfugiés. Au Canada, l'accueil des réfugiés est devenu un enjeu électoral après que la photo d'Aylan Kurdi, âgé de trois ans, ait ébranlé le monde entier. L'image est devenue un symbole de la souffrance humaine que les Canadiens ne pouvaient plus passer sous silence. Peu après leur élection, les libéraux du Premier ministre Justin Trudeau ont déclaré leur intention de parrainer davantage de réfugiés, un engagement qu'ils ont maintenu jusqu'en 2018.

Cinq ans plus tard, les deux pays ont eu le temps de réfléchir et de faire le point sur leurs réponses à l'arrivée des réfugiés. Bien que nos défis soient similaires à bien des égards, ils étaient également différents et uniques dans leur propre contexte. En Allemagne, l'installation et le logement de plus d'un million de réfugiés ont constitué un défi majeur. Pour mettre ce défi en perspective dans le contexte canadien, Munich est à peu près de la taille de Calgary et a vu l'arrivée de plus de 63 000 réfugiés en trois jours. C'est le double de ce que le Canada a reçu en une année entière. Cependant, le Canada a dû relever des défis qui lui sont propres. Au cours des premiers mois,

de nombreux Canadiens ont travaillé avec acharnement pour ouvrir leurs portes, leurs portefeuilles et leurs cœurs afin de parrainer des réfugiés dans le cadre du programme de parrainage privé. La réponse a été massive et a signifié que les réfugiés étaient souvent installés dans des régions où ils n'avaient jamais été installés auparavant, ce qui a entraîné de nouveaux défis en matière d'établissement. Les deux pays se sont alors tournés l'un vers l'autre pour obtenir de l'aide et des conseils. Ce numéro spécial est l'aboutissement de certains de ces nouveaux partenariats.

Ce numéro spécial de Diversité Canadienne rassemble 15 articles qui traitent des résultats de l'intégration des réfugiés au Canada et en Allemagne. Les trois articles de la première section décrivent les aspects juridiques et la réceptivité du public à l'égard des réfugiés. L'article de Shauna Labman décrit le rôle du Canada dans la réinstallation des réfugiés et identifie certaines des lacunes flagrantes de notre système juridique. Winter et Patzelt effectuent une analyse médiatique approfondie tant au Canada qu'en Allemagne afin de comparer le sentiment du public à l'égard des flux de réfugiés. Beißert mesure les attitudes des adolescents allemands envers leurs pairs syriens. Dans la section suivante consacrée aux enfants et aux jeunes réfugiés, Pelley examine certains des défis que pose l'intégration des jeunes dans les centres canadiens de taille moyenne, en se penchant sur le contexte à Halifax. Shamim et ses collègues fournissent des témoignages de parents et d'enseignants d'enfants réfugiés en Allemagne et au Canada concernant le développement de l'alphabétisation.

Macleod et son équipe de recherche donnent un aperçu d'un nouveau programme passionnant de soutien linguistique appelé StimuLER. Abojedi et ses collègues se plongent dans un examen approfondi des recherches existantes pour aider à résumer l'effet de la perte et de la séparation sur les acquis scolaires des jeunes réfugiés. L'article de Höfler conclut cette section en abordant la question des jeunes réfugiés et de leur résilience.

Les trois articles qui suivent décrivent les perspectives économiques et professionnelles des réfugiés. L'analyse de Logan sur la prestation de services aux entrepreneurs en Allemagne nous rappelle qu'il n'existe pas d'approche « passe-partout » pour l'intégration des réfugiés. Russert et son équipe décrivent les défis auxquels ils ont été confrontés lors de l'élaboration d'un programme de développement de compétences sociales destiné aux réfugiés nouvellement arrivés. Boyd et Parin nous ramènent au début des années 1980 pour discuter de la manière dont les réfugiés vietnamiens, laotiens et cambodgiens se sont adaptés au marché du travail quarante ans après leur arrivée. Les nouvelles étaient bonnes !

Deux articles abordent les questions relatives aux services d'établissement. Akbari et Palenburg comparent les interventions du secteur de l'établissement dans les deux pays. Jacobsen et ses collègues discutent ensuite d'un projet pilote qui a mis en relation des fournisseurs de services d'établissement avec des chercheurs en Allemagne – un projet très similaire au modèle canadien. Notre numéro se termine par une discussion des enjeux familiaux dans le cadre de la réinstallation. Bhattacharyya et ses collègues examinent certains des défis auxquels sont confrontées les femmes réfugiées yazidis qui souhaitent accéder et participer à des cours de langue au Canada. De Dieu Basabose et ses collègues terminent ce numéro spécial par une excellente discussion sur la façon dont le Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre en Ontario a aidé les réfugiés nouvellement arrivés à se tailler une place dans leur nouvelle vie au Canada.

Nous espérons que vous apprécierez les articles de ce numéro spécial !

# REFUGEE PROTECTION IN CANADA: RESETTLEMENT'S ROLE

SHAUNA LABMAN, University of Winnipeg

Both a condensed summary of the book *Crossing Law's Border: Canada's Refugee Resettlement Program* (UBC Press, 2019) and updated observations, this article examines Canada's resettlement program from the Indochinese crisis of the 1970s to present day. The article considers how resettlement and particularly private sponsorship are employed in relation to access to asylum in Canada. While the Canadian system allows in principle for complementary routes to refugee protection, the article outlines how government messaging can imply that resettlement is the proper means to access refugee protection and those who come to Canada on their own to access the asylum system are not genuine refugees. The role of private sponsorship as a component of Canada's resettlement program is examined through the lens of responsibility shifting and the tension of additionality as sponsorship numbers now surpass government resettlement.

*À la fois un court résumé du livre Crossing Law's Border: Canada's Refugee Resettlement Program (UBC Press, 2019) et des observations plus récentes, cet article examine le programme de réinstallation canadien depuis la crise indochinoise des années 1970 jusqu'à nos jours. L'article se penche sur la manière dont la réinstallation et en particulier le parrainage privé fonctionnent par rapport à l'accès à l'asile au Canada. Bien que le système canadien permette en principe des voies complémentaires à la protection des réfugiés, l'article décrit comment le message du gouvernement peut laisser entendre que la réinstallation est le moyen approprié pour accéder à la protection des réfugiés et que ceux qui viennent au Canada de leur propre chef pour accéder au système d'asile ne sont pas de véritables réfugiés. Le rôle du parrainage privé en tant que composante du programme de réinstallation canadien est examiné sous l'angle du transfert des responsabilités et de la tension liée à l'additionnalité, le nombre de parrainages dépassant désormais celui des réinstallations gouvernementales.*

Canada's refugee resettlement program predates the country's commitment to asylum-seekers in the 1951 Refugee Convention. Before refugees were ever mentioned in Canada's immigration laws, Canada was resettling refugees referred by the International Refugee Organization following the second world war and through sponsorship negotiations between the government and religious organizations keen on encouraging and supporting refugee protection. Canada financially supported the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UNHCR) from its establishment, and took a lead role in the drafting of the 1951 Refugee Convention which dictates that when asylum-seekers reach a state's territory they will not be sent back if they meet the refugee definition. It was not until 1969, however, that Canada ultimately committed to the convention and announced: "Although Canada's treatment of refugees has been, as a matter of policy, in accordance with the letter and spirit of the international instruments for the protection of refugees, the act of acceding will denote official

acceptance of the international standards for the protection of refugees and the approved international and universal definition of the term refugee” (Department of Manpower & Immigration 1969, 11). With this commitment, Canada set forth to include refugee recognition in the federal immigration legislation and, at the same time, refugee resettlement and the sponsorship of refugees by private Canadians was brought into the law.

This historical synopsis, primarily condensed from my book, *Crossing Law's Border: Canada's Refugee Resettlement Program* (2019), is important as it helps to understand resettlement's role in refugee protection and the interplay between resettlement and asylum.

In the late 1970s, resettlement was playing a primary role globally. In 1979 a UNHCR representative reported that “resettlement was viewed as the only viable solution for 1 in 20 of the global refugee population under the responsibility of UNHCR” (Troeller 2002, 87). Even once inland refugee protection was brought into Canadian law with the 1976 *Immigration Act*, Canada still saw itself as primarily a country of refugee resettlement and not a country of first asylum. Canada is surrounded by oceans on three sides, what Hyndman et al. term “cold ocean geography,” (2016, 11) shares a border with only the United States, and simply does not, and did not, have numerically significant air travel into the country compared to its southern neighbor. Canada is a difficult country for refugees to get to. While in country asylum claims for refugee status occurred, the Canadian government did not consider itself a country particularly involved in asylum claims even once legislation was in place. In both the 1986 and 1987 annual reports to parliament on immigration, the Minister of Immigration declares that “Canada's refugee program is directed primarily toward persons in legitimate need of third country resettlement; that is, people who cannot be repatriated voluntarily or settled in first-asylum countries” (Employment and Immigration Canada 1986, 8; 1987, 10). During this same timeframe, resettlement and private sponsorship were surging. The first sponsorship agreement was signed between the Government of Canada and the Mennonite Central Committee in 1979 (Janzen 2006). Canada resettled approximately 60,000 Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian refugees between 1979 and 1980 alone with over half arriving through private sponsorship (Employment and Immigration Canada 1982, 14). It is well celebrated that in 1986 Canadians were awarded the Nansen Medal for their resettlement of Indochinese refugees.

And yet, asylum seekers were also arriving to claim refugee status. Canada's initial processing of inland claims involved only written submissions, assessed by a committee in private

with decision-making by the Minister of Immigration. It took six Sikh refugee claimants from India and one of Indian descent from Guyana to challenge the the procedures for the adjudication of refugee claims as violating the *Canadian Bill of Rights* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights*. In 1985, the Supreme Court of Canada agreed and held that refugee claimants in Canada are entitled to an oral hearing of their claim.<sup>1</sup> To recognize and implement this right, the Immigration and Refugee Board was established in January 1989. The Minister of Immigration's annual report to parliament in 1991 included, for the first time, a new section titled “Refugee Determination System.” Significantly, the report positioned Canada's shift from resettlement focused refugee protection to asylum claims:

The government remains committed to its program for resettlement of refugees from abroad. However, Canada's program is moving away from resettling mass movements of persons... towards emphasis on protection cases. At the same time, the UNHCR is focusing its efforts on voluntary repatriation and local resettlement of refugees. Third country resettlement is considered only in exceptional cases (Employment and Immigration Canada 1991, 7).

Canada's positioning aligned with messaging from UNHCR at the time that resettlement should be a “last resort” behind the durable solutions of local integration and voluntary repatriation (UNHCR 1991).

Canada's resettlement numbers dropped drastically in the 1990s tied to processing delays, the end of the Cold War, and a recession (Treviranus and Casasola 2003, 187). Private sponsorship numbers dropped from 17,433 in 1991 to 2,838 in 1994 and sat somewhere in the range between 2,000 and 4,000 privately sponsored refugees each year until 2008 (Labman 2019, 41). During the same period, the number of asylum claims in Canada were increasing as was the Canadian response. In 1987, 174 mostly Sikh refugees landed on the coast of Nova Scotia triggering national debates on refugee admissions and an emergency session in parliament to amend the immigration act (Knowles 2007, 222). In 1999, four boats carrying a total of 599 Chinese migrants arrived off the coast of British Columbia, again prompting panic and protest (Armstrong 2000, A7). Within this context, the Government of Canada was revising the Immigration Act. The *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*<sup>2</sup> was introduced in April 2000. While maintaining the custom of framing Canadian refugee law within a humanitarian intent, this was now tied to proposals to be “tough on those who pose a threat to Canadian security”, (Kruger, Mulder, and Korenic 2004, 77). Michael Casasola, a UNHCR resettlement officer in Canada noted:

1 *Singh v. Canada (Minister of Employment and Immigration)*, [1985] S.C.J. No. 11, [1985] 1 S.C.R. 177

2 *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, S.C. 2001 c. 27.

Unfortunately, the most negative aspect of the legislative package was that the many positive resettlement initiatives were presented as a counter to some of the more punitive actions the government planned in order to limit access to the refugee determination system in Canada. In fact, the resettlement initiatives became an important part of the selling of the bill to the Canadian public. [...] Resettled refugees were presented as part of the refugees using the 'front door.' And by providing refugees greater access, Canada suggested it had the moral authority to limit access to those refugees described as using the 'back door' (2001, 79).

Between the introduction of the new legislation and its passing in Parliament in November 2001, the terrorist attacks in the United States heightened the fear of outsiders and attached suspicion to their motives for seeking asylum. It was in this same period that Canada successfully negotiated the Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement with the United States effectively limiting access to Canada's inland refugee claim system. Increasingly, those entering the country were seen more with suspicion than humanitarian recognition as refugee claimants. Audrey Macklin argued that refugees were discursively disappearing through "the erosion of the idea that people who seek asylum may actually be refugees" (2005, 365). She forewarned: "this erasure performs a crucial preparatory step toward legitimating actual laws and practices that attempt to make them vanish in reality" (2005, 369).

Through this period, Canada's resettlement continued along quietly with little academic, public or political attention. Yet, with the arrival of more boats off the coast of British Columbia – first the *Ocean Lady* in October 2009 and then the *Sun Sea* in August 2010, the government increasingly positioned resettlement as the right way to obtain refugee protection in Canada. Jason Kenney, the Minister of Immigration suggested the arrival of the *Ocean Lady* put Canada at risk of developing "a two-tier immigration system – one tier for legal, law-abiding immigrants who patiently wait to come to the country, and a second tier who seek to come through the back door, typically through the asylum system" (Armstrong and Ibbitson 2009, A1). Earlier the same month he had declared private sponsorship "a vital part of Canada's international humanitarian commitment" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2009). As the *Sun Sea* approached Canadian waters less than a year later, the Minister's spokeswoman declared: "Our government is committed to cracking down on bogus refugees while providing protection to those that truly need our help" (Bell 2010, A1). The implication was that those who approach Canada on their own to access the asylum system are not genuine refugees. Meanwhile, Minister Kenney was meeting with community groups across Canada to encourage private sponsorship (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010a).

It was within the context of these arrivals and the promotion of private sponsorship that the government announced an expansion of Canada's resettlement program and introduced Bill C-11, the *Balanced Refugee Reform Act*. The legislative change was pitched as a streamlining of asylum claims to reduce delays and abuse but advocates argued it tightened borders making access to asylum even more challenging (Canadian Bar Association 2010). The resettlement announcement, made one day in advance of the legislative change, served to counter allegations that government reform signaled a move away from refugee protection. The resettlement announcement concluded: "Providing increased support for resettled refugees clearly demonstrates Canada's ongoing humanitarian commitment and affirms our long-standing tradition as a leader in international refugee protection" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2010b). The humanitarian commitment was firmly placed on the shoulders of private sponsors with the commitment amounting to an increase of 500 government resettlement spaces and 2,000 private sponsorship spaces.

From this point forward, resettlement was increasingly at the forefront of the government's humanitarian response to refugees, with responsibility placed on private sponsors. The government positioning of resettlement refugees as the only genuine and deserving refugees in contrast to those crossing into Canada to seek asylum ramped up during this period. In 2011, a government backgrounder on Canada's resettlement program states: "All of these individuals who immigrated to Canada through our resettlement programs waited patiently in the queue for the chance to come to Canada legally [...] The Government will stand up for these refugees' rights to be processed in a fair and orderly fashion, consistent with our laws and values[...]" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2011). The document fails to make any mention of the government's obligations in Canadian or international law to refugees claiming asylum.

In 2013, the government made an initial commitment to resettle 1,300 Syrian refugees by the end of 2014. The bulk of this resettlement was again to be through private sponsors with 1,100 of the spaces allotted to private sponsorship and 200 spaces allotted to government resettlement (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2013). In the House of Commons, as the government was receiving criticism for this minimal commitment, the response by the Immigration Minister Chris Alexander focused on private sponsorship: "we would ask that all members of the House reach out to private sponsors and sponsorship agreement holders across this country to make sure that we fill the 1,300 places available. They have not—" (Canada 2013). As the crisis in Syria escalated and the United Nations pushed for more resettlement commitments, Minister Alexander again noted, "We know we'll be able to

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3 *Balanced Refugee Reform Act*, S.C. 2010, c.8 (assented to 29 June 2010) (formerly Bill C-11).

do much more if we combine our government assistance with innovative forms of private sponsorship” (Mas 2014). Ultimately the government did commit to resettle 10,000 Syrian refugees over 3 years in 2015 with 60% of this commitment resting on private sponsors (Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada 2015). However, for the first time, in 2015, refugee admissions were at the forefront of a federal election in Canada.

A new government was elected in October 2015 with a campaign promise of resettling 25,000 government-assisted Syrian refugees by the year’s end. The number, 25,000, was a massive increase from government resettlement that in recent years had averaged 7,500. While commendable, the logistics of such a significant and sudden increase to resettlement numbers proved challenging. A revised goal to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees by the end of February 2016 through both government resettlement and private sponsorship was set and achieved (Zilio 2016). On the momentum of this internationally applauded effort, Canada used the UN Summit on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants and the resulting 2016 New York Declaration for Refugee and Migrants, to announce a joint project with the UNHCR and the Open Society Foundations to export the Canadian sponsorship model to interested states. The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative was thus created. Since this time, Canada’s resettlement numbers have risen considerably. Yearly government resettlement targets are in the 10,000 range, marking a significant increase from the recent past but the real increases are in private sponsorship where the numbers now double government resettlement in the 20,000 range (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2018).

From the outset, private sponsors have always been wary of absolving the government of responsibility for resettlement. During the Indochinese resettlement efforts when the government drew back on a commitment to match 1-1 government and privately sponsored refugees, the Standing Conference of Canadian Organizations Concerned for Refugees, the original name of the Canadian Council for Refugees, sent a letter to the Prime Minister and other leading ministers stating unequivocally “We are not prepared to release the government from its obligations” (Adelman 1980, 25). Private sponsors have always considered the principle of additionality as framing their involvement in refugee protection. In the early 2000s, Barbara Treviranus and Michael Casasola noted “this concern about ‘off-loading’ remains an issue within the program, as sponsors see the ‘additionality’ of their efforts as key to the program’s success” (2003, 177). While sponsors continue to see “additionality” as underlying the program (CCR 2013), the government position differs in a 2016 notation that “the principle of additionality is not part of the PSR program theory” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2016). While in Geneva for the first World Refugee Forum in December 2019, Minister of Immigration Marco Mendicino joined the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative to share Canada’s private

sponsorship experience and commented “The work that is being done at the grassroots level is truly transformational and Canada is in that space, and we are playing a leadership role” (Harris 2019). In response, Janet Dench, the executive director of the Canadian Council for Refugees qualified: “The efforts that civil society makes to resettle refugees should be additional to the contributions of governments, not instead of them. The Canadian government could and should do much more to resettle refugees” (Harris, 2019). The tension of additionality continues to frame the sponsorship relationship. But alongside of this concern, it is necessary to consider how resettlement and particularly private sponsorship are employed in relation to access to asylum in Canada.

In the spring of 2019, the Canadian government celebrated 40 years of the Refugee Sponsorship Program citing the impressive fact that private sponsors have resettled more than 327,000 refugees since the start of the program. Then Minister of Immigration, Ahmed Hussen is quoted as noting “Thank you to all Canadians for opening both their hearts and homes... We can all take pride in the example Canadians set for the world. It is truly emblematic of the character of Canadians and the fabric of our great country” (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2019). However, the day before this announcement was made, the Finance Minister tabled the budget bill which includes a significant new limit on the eligibility to make a refugee claim. The Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers labeled the changes an “alarming clawback of human rights of refugees” (2019). The bill passed in June 2019.

Jamie Liew and I have recently argued that Canada is employing a manner of moral licensing with refugees whereby laws limiting access to asylum can be justified because Canada has demonstrated its humanitarian concern for refugees through resettlement (2019, 190). Resettlement absolutely plays a crucial role in global responsibility sharing for refugees and citizenship involvement can greatly expand this support but the weight of this responsibility should not be put on private citizens nor should resettlement be used to blur an understanding of Canada’s legal obligation to refugees who come to Canada on their own to claim protection.

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# NATION AND REFUGE: MEDIA DISCOURSES IN CANADA AND GERMANY

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Media representations simultaneously represent discursive trends and influence social attitudes toward refugees and their integration. Our analysis of the representations of Syrian refugees in the German *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the Canadian *Globe and Mail* in the fall of 2015 confirms that both newspapers reflect the national traditions of their respective countries, i.e. Germany as a so-called ethnic nation and Canada as a multicultural society. However, our study also adds important nuances pertaining to an increasing acceptance of otherness within the German national imaginary and, to a certain degree, complacency surrounding refugee integration within a self-proclaimed “caring” Canadian nation.

*Les représentations médiatiques représentent des tendances discursives et, simultanément, influencent les attitudes sociales envers les réfugiés et leur intégration. Notre analyse des représentations des réfugiés syriens au sein d'un journal allemand (Süddeutsche Zeitung) et au sein d'un journal canadien (The Globe and Mail) à l'automne 2015 souligne que les deux journaux reflètent les traditions nationales de leurs pays respectifs, à savoir l'Allemagne en tant que soi-disant nation ethnique et le Canada en tant que société multiculturelle. Cependant, notre étude témoigne également des nuances importantes, liées à une acceptation croissante de l'altérité dans l'imaginaire national allemand et, dans une certaine mesure, à la complaisance entourant l'intégration des réfugiés au sein d'une nation canadienne qui se veut « bienveillante ».*

## INTRODUCTION

Between 2011 and 2017, approximately 5.5 million Syrians sought refuge internationally while 6.3 million became displaced within their own country (International Displacement Monitoring Centre 2017). This paper is interested in national discourses responding to Syrians seeking refuge, particularly in Canada and Germany. Both countries experienced the arrival of a significant number of Syrian refugees in 2015 and 2016. In Canada a total of 41,595 Syrian refugees arrived in 2015 and 2016 (Government of Canada 2017), while in Germany a total of 424,907 Syrians asked for asylum during that time (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2017). While the initial reception of Syrian refugees in Canada and Germany was mainly positive, controversial representations about their integration and settlement remain. Considering that media representations simultaneously represent discursive trends and influence social attitudes toward refugees and their integration (Esses et al. 2017), we use these media representations to elucidate the integration trajectory of refugees in both countries and exemplify how these trajectories differ based on contextual differences.

Inspired by the work of Bauder (2011), this paper explores representations of refugees as potential members of the national community. Bauder (2011) analyses inclusion and exclusion in the national community through the theoretical lens of the nation-immigration dialectic, which employs two features of Hegelian philosophy. First, negation assumes that the nation can only be constructed if its members define who they are not. In negation, migrants are seen as a symbol of otherness and cannot be integrated. Second, sublation refers to a process that facilitates integration into the national imagination, assuming that the “other” can become an integral part of “us.” The nation-immigration dialectic is said to manifest itself differently within different national settings. Bauder (2011) maintains that within so-called ethnic nations like Germany, only negation takes place, while multicultural nations like Canada will experience both negation and sublation.

Comparing the German *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the Canadian *Globe and Mail*, our study explores the representations of Syrian refugees between September 2015 and January 2016. During this time, public perception of refugees changed from massive compassion after the drowning of Alan Kurdi, to reservation and suspicion after the terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015 (which killed 130 individuals and where a fake Syrian passport was found next to the bodies of one of the alleged perpetrators) and the sexual assaults of 1,200 women in Cologne on New Year’s Eve 2015/16 (where the majority of perpetrators were identified as asylum seekers and refugees from North African countries). In both Germany and Canada, the latter two events resulted in the depiction of refugees as potential terrorists and criminals and, thus, increased suspicion against them. Although, arguably, the negative repercussions of these events were stronger in the European context. Over-

all, our results align with the well-documented relationship between media representations of immigration and asylum and fundamentally different types of national identities in Europe versus North America. However, our research also uncovers traces of sublation in German media representations, suggesting that German national identity may be becoming more open to the inclusion of migrant “others.”

## GERMANY AND CANADA: FACING THE “REFUGEE CRISIS”

Canada and Germany differ significantly with regard to their understanding of nationhood, their geographical location, and their approach to admitting refugees. To understand the media representations of refugees in both countries, it is thus necessary to take a closer look at these differences.

Canada is often described as a multicultural nation or a settler colonial society, which is associated with immigration, an ethnically diverse population, and political support for the expression of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. In September 2015, the story of the drowned Alan Kurdi catapulted the “refugee crisis” into the centre of the Canadian federal election (Ramos 2016). Canadians began to claim that the Conservative government was not doing enough to help Syrian refugees, and Justin Trudeau’s Liberal Party promised to resettle 25,000 Syrians by the end of the year if elected. By 2019, more than 40,000 Syrians had arrived in Canada by means of three refugee resettlement programs, automatically recognizing them as refugees and granting them permanent residency (Government of Canada 2019).

Germany, by contrast, is often identified as an ethnic nation founded on the belief of shared language, culture, and ancestry, and characterized by the refusal to accept migrants and refugees into the national community. In 2015, Syrians fleeing civil war entered Germany as asylum seekers, entering the country by walking across land borders and not as resettled and legally recognized refugees. The arrival of refugees in Germany mobilized two opposing movements. On the one hand, it resulted in a wave of support from volunteers wishing to help the newcomers. On the other hand, and especially after the incidents in Cologne, there was an increase in support for right-wing anti-refugee movements such as “Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamicisation of the West” (PEGIDA) and the Eurosceptic political party “Alternative for Germany” (AfD).

## NEWSPAPER REPRESENTATIONS

Data for this study was collected through the electronic databases Factiva and Canadian Major Dailies using a combination of keywords. To account for changing representations over

time in two national newspapers – the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *The Globe and Mail* – articles published up to two weeks after the three major events mentioned above were analyzed, i.e. the death of Alan Kurdi on September 2nd, 2015, the terrorist attack in Paris on November 13th, 2015, and the sexual assaults perpetrated in Cologne during New Year's Eve 2015/16. We collected 74 articles from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and 94 from *The Globe and Mail*. Both newspapers are politically liberal, and while they may not perfectly reflect public opinion, they offer a window through which we can see how national identity and refugee reception were articulated in the German and Canadian media. Articles were examined using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which assumes that discourses reflect and reproduce concrete social realities and power inequalities (Fairclough and Wodak 1997). Thus, the aim of CDA is to describe, explain, and understand how discourses construct and legitimize these social realities and inequalities. Newspaper articles are identified by the name of the newspaper, year, month, day and name of the journalist (for example, SZ20151119-Neshitov). All translations are ours.

## TRADITIONAL UNDERSTANDINGS OF NATIONHOOD IMPACT REPRESENTATIONS OF REFUGEES

In Germany, discourses in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* demonstrate that there is opposition toward refugees among a large part of the German population, which is partly based on the fear of a “cultural or foreign infiltration.” This is articulated through three different discursive trends. First, the challenge of integrating refugees arriving at the borders is a dominant theme in the newspaper representations. Articles often represent the arrival of refugees as “uncontrolled and illegal immigration” (SZ20151116-Gammelín) and highlight Germany's limited ability to host and integrate refugees. They also use pejorative language such as “waves of refugees” (SZ20151119-Neshitov) or “the refugee problem” (SZ20160111-Kanamüller). Second, following the events in Paris and Cologne the newspaper suggests a threat posed by male refugees as either terrorists or sexual predators. Articles often focus on the risk refugees may pose to German society and suggest that the Islamic State might “infiltrate” refugee groups (SZ20151116-Krüger). This discourse frames the arrival of refugees as a danger to public safety, warranting stricter border controls. Third, some articles represent refugees as being ignorant of German social norms and values, especially that of gender equality. This discourse is particularly present after the sexual assaults in Cologne and is expressed by the need to educate refugees on “how our [German] society functions” (SZ20160115-Setzwein).

Overall, otherness is constructed around two axes: (a) the language of risk, in which refugees (“others”) threaten the perceived security of the nation (“us”); and, (b) social values

and norms, where refugees are seen to adhere to foreign values and must learn German (“our”) values to integrate. Based on these observations, the discourses in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* reinforce the assertion by Bauder (2011, 197) that Germany, in contrast to Canada, has indeed not yet obtained the status of a “country of immigration.”

In Canada, several articles in *The Globe and Mail* describe Syrian refugees as “new Canadians” (GM20150910-Hager) who will stay in Canada on a long-term basis and are “active contributors to Canada's success” (GM20151116-Curry). These representations are reflective of Canada's policy of refugees becoming permanent residents. They demonstrate that sublation, i.e. the integration of the “other” into the Canadian national imagination is possible. At the same time, many articles represent Canada as a “society of peace” (GM20151121-Editorial) and “a place of sanctuary and a place of welcome” (GM20151119-Mason) that is caring, generous, and culturally tolerant. These discourses reinforce the image of Canada as a country of immigration, confirming Bauder's (2011, 98) findings on the construction of Canada “as a liberal and compassionate nation.”

## TRADITIONAL VIEWS OF NATIONHOOD ARE CHANGING (ALBEIT SLOWLY)

While the aforementioned representations cannot be neglected, there are important nuances that pertain specifically to the context of (Syrian) refugee reception and perception in the fall of 2015. For example, it is noteworthy that the majority of articles in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* focus on the need to help refugees. These articles portray refugees as victims who are escaping the “murderous” (SZ20151116-Prantl) terrorism of the Islamic State and the violence of the Syrian civil war. In contrast, Germans are represented as human rights activists assisting refugees by volunteering, offering translation services, or medical care (see e.g. SZ20160111-Kanamüller). In this discourse, the negation (or “otherness”) of Syrian refugees in German society manifests itself by their need for help and security. Germany is constructed through its ability to offer this help, with Germans (“us”) being vital for refugee (“their”) integration. Some articles in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* also give refugees an active voice and represent them as agents able and willing to integrate. These articles show the “good refugees” who are in the process of learning the German language (SZ20160114-Bielicki), finding employment (SZ20151117-Geschendtner), and sharing “the values of the population of this country [Germany]” (SZ20160112-Ludwig). Refugees are thus given the opportunity to be seen as a part of the German nation (“us”). Therefore, while inconsistent and often contested, there are nevertheless instances where the articles in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* demonstrate sublation, with refugees represented as (a potential) part of

German society. This may indicate a shift away from an ethnic conception of German national identity toward a more accepting society that is open to the integration of “others.”

In Canada, several articles highlight the many initiatives to help refugees that were undertaken by local political actors, organizations, and citizens (see e.g. GM20150904-Sachgau-Chowdhry and GM20150904-Howlett). However, this positive representation is mainly used to emphasize and may even “celebrate” the “true” character of the Canadian nation, as generous and benevolent toward minority groups. Moreover, it implies that it is Canadian citizens who provide the possibility for integration, whereas refugees are not appointed agency in this process. Thus, the ability of refugees to transcend beyond representations as “others” is contingent on the generosity of Canadians. This precarious status of belonging is also reinforced by several articles demonstrating that the question of security (and “otherness”) in Canada is profoundly gendered. After the violence in Paris and Cologne, some articles emphasize the perceived risks of resettling those from a “war zone in which multiple terrorist organizations are operating” (GM20151116-Curry). Others highlight that this risk could be lowered by excluding single male refugees from the resettlement process (e.g. GM20160114-Leblanc). Thus, male refugees (“them”) represent a threat to Canadians (“us”) and had to be excluded. Female refugees (“them”) mitigate this risk and were thus deserving of sublation or becoming part of Canadian society. Consequently, even though processes of sublation can be identified in these articles of *The Globe and Mail*, belonging to Canadian society remains precarious as the “other” is so diminished that its integration depends on their gender and the goodwill of Canadians.

Although sublation remains precarious, it should be noted that the coverage of Syrian refugees in *The Globe and Mail* is less negative when compared with that of other refugee groups, specifically those not entering the country through resettlement programs. Depictions of a generous and multicultural Canada that is welcoming Syrian refugees are a distinctive feature of the Canadian media coverage. It seems to be prompted by the fact that the Syrians who arrived in 2015 and 2016 were not asylum seekers, but rather refugees in the legal sense of the word, i.e. individuals who were screened and recognized by the Canadian government prior to resettlement. Additionally, this positive depiction of Syrian refugees may be explained by the fact that, in comparison to the experience of Germany, Canada resettled a fairly small number of refugees. In fact, Syrian refugees represented 0.13 percent of the Canadian population compared to 1.2 percent of the German population. Lastly, in contrast to Germany, Canada also did not experience terrorist attacks or sexual assault cases associated with refugees (Amarasingam 2017). The representations of Syrian refugees in Canadian media were therefore impacted by international rather than national conflict.

## THE WAY FORWARD

At first glance, our results confirm the widespread idea that Germany and Canada represent opposite national responses to immigration. However, a closer analysis demonstrates that the arrival of Syrian refugees allowed both Canadians and Germans to imagine their countries as generous and caring nations. In both newspapers, this imagination coexists with representations of Germany and Canada as adhering to superior cultural and civic values which are not shared by refugees, which then require the adoption of restrictive measures in response to newcomers and asylum seekers.

While traditional conceptions of the nation have a significant impact on the representations of refugees, national identities are neither static nor deterministic. In particular, they do not fundamentally prevent social change through civic engagement. One contribution to the national belonging of Syrian refugees in Canada has been the involvement of a broad settlement community within civil society. In fact, the interpersonal networks of refugees have been an important factor in the success of Syrian integration in Canada over the past three years (Fratzke and Dorst 2019, 9). Similarly, the German shift towards sublation may be partially explained by the widening of civil society networks. Newly formed and institutionalized organizations developed in response to the “refugee crisis” in Germany and seeking to influence public debates, these organizations were heterogeneous, but most could be characterized as activist, rather than simply as volunteer organizations (Schmid et al. 2019, 169-70). The proliferation of networks linking civil society and the Syrian refugee communities in Germany, and the focus on steering public opinion, may have created an opportunity to shift the national response to immigration through engagement with refugees (Schmid et al. 2019). While more research is necessary to confirm this, we dare to suggest that civil society activism provides greater instances of refugee representation in public discourse, thereby building greater momentum toward sublation of immigrants into the national imagination.

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# THE OPENNESS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS TOWARDS SYRIAN REFUGEES IN GERMANY

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In our research, involving 100 high school students from Germany between 10 and 17 years of age, children and adolescents were generally very open towards integrating Syrian refugees in their peer activities – with girls being even more inclusive than boys. We used hypothetical scenarios in which adolescents were asked if they would include refugee peers versus local peer in their leisure time peer group activities or not. In the first part of the study, we identified host country language skills as a key element for positive social integration of refugee youths in Germany. In part two of the study, we revealed an interesting asymmetry between youths' own decisions and what they think their group would do: whereas the youth themselves were very inclusive towards Syrian peers, they expected their group to prefer German peers and expected them to less likely choose a Syrian peer for their leisure time activities.

*Dans le cadre de notre recherche, à laquelle ont participé 100 élèves allemands âgés de 10 à 17 ans, les enfants et les adolescents étaient généralement très ouverts à l'intégration des réfugiés syriens dans leurs activités avec leurs pairs – les filles étant encore plus ouvertes que les garçons. Nous avons utilisé des scénarios hypothétiques dans lesquels il était demandé aux adolescents s'ils incluraient ou non leurs pairs réfugiés par rapport à leurs pairs locaux dans leurs activités de loisirs en groupe. Dans la première partie de l'étude, nous avons identifié les compétences linguistiques du pays d'accueil comme un élément clé pour une intégration sociale positive des jeunes réfugiés en Allemagne. Dans la deuxième partie de l'étude, nous avons révélé une asymétrie intéressante entre les décisions des jeunes eux-mêmes et ce qu'ils pensent que leur groupe ferait : alors que les jeunes eux-mêmes étaient très inclusifs envers leurs pairs syriens, ils s'attendaient à ce que leur groupe préfère les pairs allemands et s'attendaient à ce qu'ils choisissent moins souvent un pair syrien pour leurs activités de loisirs.*

Since the start of the war in Syria in 2011, more than a million refugees have crossed into Europe, with Germany attracting the highest number among European countries (BAMF 2018; UNHCR 2017). As a result of this influx, the integration of refugees has become an increasingly important issue in Germany as well as in many other European countries. However, it is important to note that integration is not a unidirectional process requiring effort only on the part of the refugees. Integra-

tion is a reciprocal process of mutual accommodation between the incoming refugees and members of the host society (Berry et al. 2006). The members of the host society need to be open to integration and welcoming toward the refugees (Berry 2011). Thus, the attitudes of the Germans toward refugees are crucial for integration. If we want to understand the experiences of refugees, we need to find out more about how open Germans are toward including refugees in their social interactions. This

is an important topic as research has documented how harmful social exclusion can be for one's health and well-being (Buhs 2005; Buhs and Ladd 2001; Juvonen and Gross 2005; Rutland and Killen 2015).

Almost one third of the refugees in Germany are children and youth (UNICEF 2019), with individuals from Syria representing the largest group (Statistisches Bundesamt 2019). Children and adolescents from refugee families deserve special attention. Having been forced to leave their country, their homes, their friends and families, they face a particularly challenging situation. Many of them have endured traumatic experiences in their home country or on their way to the new host country, and have been exposed to various psychological stressors (Ruf, Schauer, and Elbert 2010). They have left behind everything they knew and have to adapt to a new environment and culture. The expectation is that they will smoothly integrate in a new society with new values, norms and perspectives. Not least among these expectations is having to learn a new language. Given this special situation, youth from refugee families can be considered to be an at-risk population (Gavranidou, Niemiec, Magg, and Rosner 2008). Thus, being accepted by others and belonging might be particularly important to refugee youth and social exclusion might have an even greater impact on them than on other groups. Further, social exclusion during the acculturation process is a significant acculturative stressor, making integration more difficult (Verkuyten and Thijs 2002; Ward, Furnham, and Bochner 2005).

According to the Child Rights International Network, many refugee children face social exclusion and marginalization when coming to a new country (Child Rights International Network, Article 22). Research has shown that children and adolescents who are exposed to social exclusion experience anxiety, low self-esteem, health and behavioral problems, as well as difficulties in interpersonal relationships (Araujo and Borrell 2006; Eisenberger, Lieberman, and Williams 2003; Gazelle and Druhen 2009; Murray-Close and Ostrov, 2009; Sanders-Phillips et al. 2009; Tummala-Narra, Alegria, and Chen 2012). Further, facing social exclusion can have a negative impact on academic engagement and achievement (Buhs, Ladd, and Herald 2006).

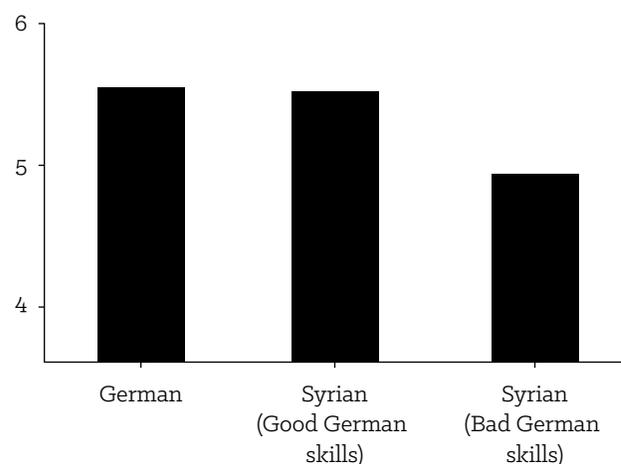
Thus, in order to improve the situation of refugee youth, one aim should be to support them and provide opportunities to build friendships with local peers in order to foster positive connections and develop relationships in school and in their host society (Marshall et al. 2016). However, in order to realize this goal, we need to know more about the attitudes of the youth of the host society, i.e., Germany. We need to know how open German children and adolescents are towards including

refugee youth into their social and peer interactions, and which factors might have an impact on their inclusivity.

## OPENNESS TOWARDS REFUGEES AND THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE SKILLS

In our research<sup>1</sup>, involving 100 high school students from Germany between 10 and 17 years of age, children and adolescents were generally very open toward integrating Syrian refugees in their peer activities – with girls being even more inclusive than boys. We used hypothetical scenarios in which adolescents were asked if they would include a peer in their leisure time peer group activity or not. This peer was either a German native, a Syrian refugee with good German skills, or a Syrian refugee with bad German skills. Participants demonstrated a strong tendency to inclusion as they were generally willing to include the German peer as well as the Syrian peers in their activities. However, German language skills were a key element for inclusion: the Syrian peer with good German skills was more likely to being included than the Syrian peer with bad German skills. That is, children's and adolescents' inclusivity was based on language skills rather than status as German native or a refugee (see figure 1). Adolescents did not differ in their inclusivity towards a German peer and a Syrian peer with good German skills. In contrast, a Syrian peer with bad German skills was less likely to be included in peer interactions than the other two.

FIGURE 1: YOUTHS' LIKELIHOOD TO INCLUDE PEERS BASED ON ORIGIN AND LANGUAGE SKILLS (HIGHER VALUES REPRESENT A HIGHER LIKELIHOOD OF INCLUSION)



<sup>1</sup> A full description of the procedural details and a thorough description of all analyses of this study can be found in Beißert, Hanna, Gönültaş, Secil, and Mulvey, Kelly Lynn (2019). Social Inclusion of Refugee and Native Peers Among Adolescents: It is the Language that Matters! *Journal of Research on Adolescence*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12518>

This implies that host country language skills are a key to positive social integration for refugee youths. Whereas prior research already documented the crucial role of language skills for integration in terms of academic achievement (Duong et al. 2016; Stanat and Christensen 2006) or labor market entry (Auer 2018; Esser 2006), our research demonstrated the significance of language skills for integration in terms of social interactions and for inclusion of refugees in peer groups.

There are several reasons why language is crucial for social inclusion and on a societal level for integration. First of all, language is a medium for communication which enables comprehension between people within a society. As many refugees do not have host country language skills upon arrival, language barriers can lead to difficulties in social interactions and communication (McBrien 2005) and might result in social exclusion. If refugees want to get in contact with people of the host society, it is very helpful to speak the national language in order to communicate properly (Esser 2006). Thus, for refugee youth, language is an important tool to foster positive contact and friendships with majority youths. Having better contact with peers, in turn, promotes engagement of refugee youth in the host culture and supports the development of better language skills (Berry et al. 2006).

Further, language is a symbol for relatedness or dissimilarity and thus reflects a marker of group membership (Kinzler 2013; Kinzler et al. 2009; Esser 2006). That means that we perceive people who speak another language as different to us. And prior research demonstrated that people who are perceived as different from others are more likely to be rejected (Killen and Rutland 2011). In other words, language reflects a meaningful intergroup category (Kinzler 2013; Kinzler et al. 2009) which can be a basis for exclusion (Mulvey, Boswell and Niehaus 2018). Speaking a different language may heighten the perceived difference or dissimilarity between peers, creating a greater sense of their “otherness” and decreasing their social acceptance. In line with this, most theories of immigrant integration assume that exposure to the host country’s language facilitates integration as immigrants become more similar to the culture via language (Alba and Nee 2009).

So, this is once again a strong argument that integration programs should focus on the immediate acquisition of language skills of the respective host country. As soon as possible after arriving in the new country, refugees should participate in language classes. Further, they should be provided with opportunities to get into contact with local peers. For instance, tandem or buddy programs could be a good option for creating positive opportunities for contact between refugees and locals. Thereby, we can make use of the bidirectional relationship between language and intergroup contact (i.e., meaningful interaction between the refugee youth and their local peers) and interethnic friendship (Wright and Tropp 2005). For refugee youth, language is an important tool to foster positive contact

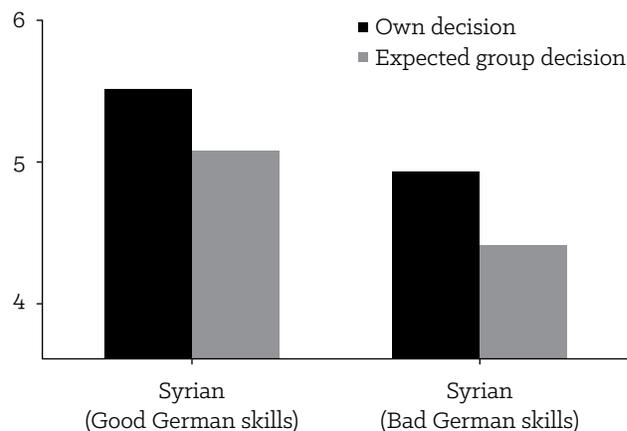
and friendships with peers from the host society. Having better contact with peers, in turn, promotes engagement of refugee youth in the host culture and supports the development of better language skills (Berry et al. 2006).

## THE ROLE OF GROUP DYNAMICS

Besides the key role of language skills for inclusion, we must not forget that group dynamics become more important with age. Social inclusion and exclusion and expectations of what others think become increasingly meaningful (Killen and Rutland 2011). Thus, it is not enough to focus on children’s and adolescents’ own opinions and attitudes when investigating social inclusion and exclusion of refugee peers. It is also important to understand what local youth expect their peer group to think or to do in a specific situation because these expectations might impact children’s and adolescents’ own decisions and behavior.

In order to explore adolescents’ perceptions of their group’s inclusivity, we asked participants to rate their own responses to including refugees and also to consider what their peers would do if they were making decisions about including refugee youth. Interestingly, adolescents expected their peer group to be less inclusive towards the Syrian peers than they themselves would be (see figure 2). This represents an interesting asymmetry between youths’ own decisions and what they think their group would do. Expecting your group to be less inclusive than you would be has concerning implications for one’s own behavior, as group norms are critically important for shaping group inclusivity (McGuire, Rutland and Nesdale 2015; Nesdale et al. 2010). In other words, even though adolescents may desire to be inclusive, it is possible that their expectations of their group’s desires may inhibit them from actually engaging in inclusive behavior.

FIGURE 2: YOUTHS’ OWN INCLUSION DECISIONS AND WHAT THEY EXPECT THEIR GROUP TO DO (HIGHER VALUES REPRESENT A HIGHER LIKELIHOOD OF INCLUSION)



In order to find out more about this asymmetry and investigate it more directly, we presented the participating children and adolescents another hypothetical scenario. In this scenario, participants had to decide which one of two peers they would include in their peer activities – a German peer or a Syrian refugee peer. Again, we asked them about their own choice and about what they expect their group to choose. And again, we found this interesting asymmetry: whereas the youth themselves were very inclusive towards their Syrian peers, they expected their group to prefer the German peer and expected them to less likely choose their Syrian peers. This finding is very important as group pressure is a very strong issue for children and adolescents and as a result youths' expectations about their groups' attitudes can have a strong impact on their own decisions and behavior (Brown 2013). If children or adolescents in their daily lives expect their friends not to be willing to include refugee peers in their social interactions, this could also prevent them from behaving in inclusive ways. Thus, integration programs should not only focus on the refugees. It would also be very helpful to work with the local youth in order to encourage them to do what they think is right, no matter what they think their group would do. Further programs for the prevention of group based exclusion should raise the issue of integration and inclusion in open conversations in class. This can help children and adolescents understand that most of their peers would be very inclusive towards refugees, too, and that hence there is no need to expect their peer groups to be less inclusive. Interventions should aim to help children and adolescents to share their opinions without being afraid of group pressure. If they find out that most of them are very open towards refugees they don't have to "hide" their true beliefs in real life interactions. This is an issue that should really be considered when talking about prevention of exclusion and supporting inclusion in intergroup contexts. Other factors that might promote inclusion and thus should be taken into account for prevention and intervention are school norms of inclusion (Nipedal, Nesdale, & Killen, 2010), individual variation in empathy (Nesdale, Griffiths, Durkin, & Maass, 2005) and parental intergroup attitudes (Degner & Dalege, 2013).

## CONCLUSION

In sum, this line of research is documenting a few key findings. German youth are invested in including their refugee peers, but they perceive language barriers to be a challenge when seeking ways to be inclusive. Further, German youth may not always accurately judge their own local peers' inclusivity. While our sample was universally inclusive, they also expected their peers to be much less inclusive. This discrepancy suggests that more work should be done to highlight the inclusive nature of German youth and to help promote open dialogue about the benefits of intergroup friendships and building connections with refugee peers. Although the findings of this study centered on German youth, inclusion of refugee youth

is a global concern and the results of this study can be used to consider ways to promote successful integration of refugee youth in diverse contexts.

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# INTEGRATION OF REFUGEE YOUTH IN HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA: THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMALLER URBAN CENTRES IN CANADA

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How can cities, like Halifax, Nova Scotia, move forward in serving refugee youth effectively? The reality is that resettlement is a temporary, short-term process while integration is a more long-term process. According to IRCC, over half of refugees who arrive in Canada are under the age of 18. They are a unique part of the newcomer population and understanding their needs can help cities become more effective in supporting them. As Canadian cities become more diverse, local institutions need to be intentional about promoting integration and preventing the exclusion of newcomers. There needs to be more dialogue around what integration support really looks like, and how communities can be involved. Though there are challenges to effectively meeting the needs of young refugees in smaller cities in Canada, there are also opportunities to creatively and resourcefully respond to and serve these young people.

*Comment des villes comme Halifax, en Nouvelle-Écosse, peuvent-elles aller de l'avant pour servir efficacement les jeunes réfugiés? La réalité est que la réinstallation est un processus temporaire à court terme, alors que l'intégration est un processus à long terme. Selon l'IRCC, plus de la moitié des réfugiés qui arrivent au Canada sont âgés de moins de 18 ans. Ils constituent une catégorie distincte de la population des nouveaux arrivants et la compréhension de leurs besoins peut aider les villes à les soutenir plus efficacement. À mesure que les villes canadiennes se diversifient, les institutions locales doivent s'efforcer de promouvoir l'intégration et de prévenir l'exclusion des nouveaux arrivants. Il doit y avoir davantage de dialogue sur la nature réelle du soutien à l'intégration et sur la façon dont les collectivités peuvent y participer. Bien qu'il soit difficile de répondre efficacement aux besoins des jeunes réfugiés dans les petites villes canadiennes, il existe également des possibilités de répondre et de servir ces jeunes de façon créative et ingénieuse.*

We know that over half of all refugees coming to Canada are under the age of 18 (IRCC, 2019). Yet despite this fact, there is a void in Canadian federal policy specific to the resettlement and integration of these young people. Refugee youth come from a variety of contexts, and often have experienced very difficult and traumatic circumstances. It is thus imperative for host communities to understand these issues in order to have relevant programs and resources available to them.

Cities across the country are trying to find ways to support the integration of refugee young people. Resettlement and integration require cities to be key players in creating wel-

coming environments for newcomers. The existing literature on refugee young people in Canada largely focuses on the three largest cities in the country- Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal- with more research needed in smaller urban settings. This is a gap that this research has attempted to address through its case study of the experience of Halifax.

I recently completed my PhD research on Canada's response to refugee youth, in which I did a case study of Halifax, Nova Scotia. I was looking at how smaller urban centres in Canada, like Halifax, are prepared to support refugee youth in their resettlement and integration. My findings show that Halifax

has the capacity to provide better integration support for refugee youth, but we need to find ways to mobilize the resources we have as a city to better serve them. What is important for effective integration in the community is for supports for newcomers to exist not solely in settlement service organizations, but across public services and sectors throughout the city.

This concept of a “small city” is an inherently relative one. In relation to Canada’s largest cities, such as Toronto (2.93 million) (World Population Review, 2020) or Montreal (1.78 million) (World Population Review, 2020), Halifax is a smaller city, with a population of just over 400,000 people. Other cities of comparable size include Kitchener, ON, Saskatoon, SK, and Oshawa, ON. Halifax is the main urban centre in Nova Scotia, and there are important comparisons to be drawn with smaller cities in the Atlantic region, including St. John’s, NL and Moncton, NB, who also function as hubs in each province for government, business, transportation, and services.

One key feature of refugee resettlement support in smaller cities is that resettlement services are usually provided by one settlement organization, as opposed to several organizations in larger cities (Akbari & Ramos, 2019). For example, according to the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) Montreal has 28 different organizations involved with the resettlement support for refugees and newcomers in general (Canadian Council for Refugees, 2019); these are just the ones who are members of the CCR. In the case of Halifax, ISANS (Immigration Services Association of Nova Scotia) is the one body responsible for the settlement of refugees, with 5 other organizations in the city that also provide newcomer-specific supports. ISANS’ offices are in the Halifax area, where government-assisted refugees (GARs) are settled. In addition to ISANS, there are 4 other sponsorship agreement holders in Nova Scotia who can privately sponsor refugees to come to the province. ISANS is responsible for providing resettlement support to refugees, operating with a case-management approach. In Canada, government support for refugees through the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) lasts for the first year of that refugee’s time in Canada. The other sponsorship agreement holders are themselves responsible for providing that same support to the refugees they sponsor.

Halifax has received refugees from all over the world for decades. While there have been times during which larger refugee groups have been settled in the province, the largest influx to date were the Syrian refugees who were settled between 2015 and 2018. January 2015 and August 2018, following the Canadian government’s commitment to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees, Nova Scotia received 2,435 Syrian refugees (IRCC, 2018).

This is almost 5 times the usual number of refugees who are settled in the province each year.

In 2016, a donations centre was opened in a warehouse just outside of the main city core. A 100,000 square foot building

was soon filled with donations of clothing, furniture, toiletries, and school supplies, in response to the needs of the Syrian refugees. This is just one example of how the city was able to mobilize people and resources quickly in order to meet an urgent need. They had the infrastructure in place to make this provision of goods to refugees as efficient as possible. This was a short-term project that did a lot of good for the Syrian newcomers, though once the crisis began to slide off the public’s newspapers, it has been more difficult to rally the same public support for the needs of refugees in the city.

This influx of newcomers shone a bright light on the current resettlement process in our province. In terms of services specifically for newcomer youth, ISANS and the YMCA are the two main organizations in Halifax that provide these supports. The young adult services provided through ISANS are targeted at people between 18 and 25 years old, while youth programs through the YMCA include those as young as 12. The young adult services provided through ISANS are targeted at people between 18 and 25 years old. These services include employment support, life skills development, recreation partnerships in the community, support groups, and language support.

The reality is that resettlement is a temporary, short-term process, while integration is a long-term requirement of refugee youth. However, a lack of available funding and resources for long-term integration support can impede potential resilience resources. There are no federal mandates in Canada to set a standard for settlement agencies concerning what they must provide to young people (outside of immediate settlement needs). That makes their integration experiences of exceptional importance for us to understand and improve upon. They are a unique part of the newcomer population and understanding their needs can help services be more effective in supporting them.

Employment opportunities are an essential part of the successful integration of refugee families (Hyndman, et al., 2006). Fostering these opportunities for refugee young people in smaller cities is an integral part of resettlement. Organizations, like “Helping Newcomers Work.ca” (Helping Newcomers Work.Ca, 2019) have started in recent years, connecting refugees with work opportunities across Canada. In Halifax, the Atlantic Immigration Pilot (Nova Scotia Immigration, 2019) is an important initiative explicitly focused on supporting employers to sponsor and hire newcomers in their business. The pilot has been an important incentive program for employers in Nova Scotia to hire foreign workers, including refugees.

Another noteworthy project is the Halifax Local Immigration Partnership (HLIP)-(Halifax Regional Municipality, 2019), which was founded in 2013. Such local immigration partnerships are a type of initiative taking place across Canada. HLIP builds alliances across sectors in the city to make Halifax a more welcoming and inclusive place for newcomers. They

work with partners to improve access to the labour market for newcomers, help coordinate newcomer services, and strengthen cultural competency in the community, all to support integration. These local immigration partnerships exist across the country. In a recent evaluation of the immigration settlement program (IRCC, 2016), one of the main recommendations to the IRCC was to develop a plan for realizing the potential contributions that these groups can make to the settlement process.

Recreation is one crucial space for social integration to be supported (Benimmas, et al., 2017). Community initiatives that exist outside of newcomer-specific services have the potential to support this long-term integration. The opportunities for this in Halifax, like other cities, are much more prevalent than they would be in more rural areas. One of the barriers to refugee youth engaging in municipal recreation programs is money. While local sports clubs do offer subsidies to newcomer youth, the subsidized fees, in combination with the gear to participate and the transportation to and from the location, remains an obstacle.

School-based supports are also an important space for integration. In areas with smaller populations, however, the diversity of services available in schools is limited. In Halifax, certain neighbourhoods have more diverse populations than others. For the most part, refugees are settled within a few central areas in the city, meaning that local schools are faced with the task of helping these newcomers settle in and adjust to a new education system. There are fabulous EAL (English as an Additional Language) teachers but their caseload is unrealistically large. Youth can turn to ISANS for language support, though spaces are limited. Language is such an important part of the integration, and in a smaller city with few language training opportunities, this can be a barrier for young people.

In the same way, limited access to mental health services is a significant struggle for small cities. The pre-migration experiences of both groups do influence a different integration experience, as refugees often come from more unstable situations and are more likely to have experienced violence and/or trauma. Often a young person needs to be in crisis before care can be accessed, and even then, it is a struggle. There is a void in Halifax of more community-based psychosocial support for refugee youth that could help prevent them from reaching a crisis to begin with (Ferede, 2010).

As Canadian cities become more diverse, local institutions need to be intentional about promoting integration and preventing the exclusion of newcomers from the labour market as well as the city's more extensive resources. Creating environments that attract industry and innovation complement policies that aim to reduce the exclusion of newcomers (Papillon, 2002). For smaller cities like Halifax, retaining refugees after the first year of settlement has proved difficult. The retention rate of refugees in Atlantic Canada following their first year in

the country is low. According to Statistics Canada (Statistics Canada, 2015), 60% of refugees who are settled in Nova Scotia stay, while the retention rate in New Brunswick is 43.5%, and in PEI 37.5%. One of the outcomes of this concentration of refugees in larger cities is the presence of more resources for them.

Several cities across the country, including Toronto and Winnipeg, have become signatories to immigration agreements with the federal government (Frideres, 2011). These agreements are intended to streamline resources available to newcomers as well as include cities in the decision-making process. Intergovernmental cooperation can promote better coordination of resources for resettlement programs and services. Unfortunately, these agreements with municipal governments have not caught on in other parts of the country, and there has been significant criticism as to the meaningful involvement these cities have in decision-making (Rose & Preston, 2017).

Cities with smaller populations, like Halifax, have an opportunity to learn from each other. They can optimize the inherent strength in coordinating their services to create a wrap-around support network for young refugees. The research undertaken to date with refugee youth in Canada suggests that the solution to the integration needs of newcomers is not separate programs and services but an increase in the cultural competency of existing services to reach out to the population in an effective way while not segregating them from the rest of the population. The current literature shows us that there are some significant barriers to their integration that often stem from a lack of policy or insufficient policy. Whether it is the education system, transportation, community services, or health care, when policy decisions are made without accounting for newcomers, this becomes a significant obstacle to effective service provision. The "system" is not an amorphous structure beyond our control. It is the result of policy and its implementation. Therefore, responding to this obstacle requires a concerted effort by policymakers and service providers to evaluate how programs need to be provided or adapted to meet the objectives of policy and meet the needs of refugees in their resettlement and integration.

So how can cities, like Halifax, move forward in serving refugee youth effectively? While there are challenges related to the capacity of a small city like Halifax to respond to the needs of refugees, there are also advantages to being a smaller, more closely inter-connected city. The importance of collaboration in providing services cannot be overstated, as supporting people through the settlement process requires different moving pieces, such as housing, education, financial support, recreation, and health care, to operate in conjunction with each other ideally (Burchard, et al., 2002)

In Dutch scholar Maarten Hajer's work, he presents an argument for "policy without polity." He argues that policymaking today often takes place in an 'institutional void' between the bound-

aries of the traditional polity. Cities provide an epicentre for such polities to be crossed in order to address issues like support for refugee youth. Solutions for resettlement and integration require the crossing of traditional lines for effective and cohesive, municipal policies to be created (Ratkovic, et al., 2017). The answers we seek will not come from one organization or government agency, but rather in their collaboration. Urban centres can optimize their geography to see this goal of partnership realized by facilitating connections between agencies and individuals who can all contribute to better services for these young people.

This collaborative provision of services has not been fully realized in Halifax, mainly because of the siloed nature of service provision and funding. Some traditional youth-serving organizations in the city did not participate in my Ph.D. research because they felt they did not have a newcomer-specific lens from which to discuss how to serve this population. There needs to be more dialogue around what integration support looks like, and how communities can be involved, even if they do not target newcomers specifically in their programming. Potential still exists for Halifax. The solution to this is not to create new organizations or programs, but rather to optimize and improve upon the current array of services we have so that they can better meet the needs of this population. Though there are challenges to effectively meeting the needs of young refugees in smaller cities in Canada, there are also opportunities to creatively and resourcefully responding to and serving these young people.

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# THE EXPERIENCES OF SYRIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN AT SCHOOL IN CANADA AND GERMANY: INTERVIEWS WITH CHILDREN, PARENTS & EDUCATORS

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Recently, there has been an increase in the number of Syrian refugee children in Canadian and German schools. The current study examined the challenges they face in adapting to a new learning environment. To do so, language and literacy measures in English and German were administered and interviews were conducted with children, parents and teachers. Overall, we found that majority language learning presented a significant challenge for refugees. As expected, children's performance on the English and German measures revealed significant gaps in proficiency relative to native speakers. Parents reported that lack of majority language proficiency was an impediment to involvement in their children's schooling. For teachers, limited proficiency was a barrier to establishing relationships with refugee students. Moreover, the educators reported having no professional development specific to refugee children. The practical implications of this study include the use of small-group instruction and in-class supports that bridge the home and school.

*Récemment, on a constaté une augmentation du nombre d'enfants syriens réfugiés dans les écoles canadiennes et allemandes. L'étude actuelle a examiné les défis que représentent pour eux l'adaptation à un nouvel environnement d'apprentissage. Dans le cadre de ce projet, des évaluations linguistiques et d'alphabétisation en anglais et en allemand ont été effectuées et des entretiens ont été menés avec les enfants, les parents et les enseignants. Dans l'ensemble, nous avons constaté que l'apprentissage de la langue de la majorité constituait un défi important pour les réfugiés. Conformément aux attentes, les scores des enfants quant aux niveaux d'anglais et d'allemand ont révélé des lacunes importantes en termes de compétences par rapport aux locuteurs natifs. Les parents ont rapporté que le fait de manquer de compétences dans la langue de la majorité constituait un obstacle à leur implication dans la scolarité de leurs enfants. Pour les enseignants, une compétence linguistique limitée constituait un obstacle à la création de liens avec les élèves réfugiés. De plus, les éducateurs ont déclaré ne pas avoir reçu de formation professionnelle spécifique aux réalités des enfants réfugiés. Sur le plan pratique, cette étude préconise le recours à l'enseignement en petits groupes et au soutien en classe qui fait le lien entre la vie familiale et l'école.*

## INTRODUCTION

The civil war in Syria has led to the displacement of millions of individuals. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 5.6 million have been displaced externally (UNHCR 2019). Canada and Germany opened their doors to Syrian refugees in response to this crisis. By 2019, Canada had accepted more than 50,000 Syrian refugees (Government of Canada 2017), while more than 270,000 Syrian refugees had been resettled in Germany (BAMF 2019). Refugees must learn to adapt to life in the host country; for refugee children, this means adapting to the school environment. To understand the challenges they face, we interviewed Syrian refugee children and their parents from four families (8 children, aged 9-16 years; 7 parents) in Toronto, Canada and three families in Munich, Germany (6 children, aged 12-15 years; 8 parents). Language and literacy measures were also administered to the children in the language of the host nation (English or German). Principals (2 in Toronto; 1 in Munich) and teachers (4 in Toronto; 3 in Munich) of some of the children were also interviewed with an eye towards examining their experiences integrating at school.

Both countries have programs to support the language and literacy development of newcomer children. In Canada, the children involved in this study were enrolled in either an English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Language Development (ELD) program upon arrival. Five of the eight child participants were still enrolled in these programs at the time of the study. The ESL program offers English-language support for immigrant children with age-appropriate schooling in their home country. Children initially spend the bulk of the school day in an ESL classroom with a dedicated ESL teacher. As their levels of English proficiency increase, ESL class time is decreased until students are fully transitioned into age-appropriate classrooms. Children may be placed in an ELD program instead of an ESL program if they had limited prior schooling. The ELD program is meant to provide intensive support for language and literacy development. Five of the eight children in Canada were placed in an ESL program upon arrival. The other three were placed in an ELD program.

Various models of publicly funded elementary school programming have been developed to meet the needs of newcomer children to Germany. In Bavaria, the state in which Munich is located, children enter a two-year transitional program that focuses on German language instruction conducted in small groups. Children are automatically enrolled into mainstream classes after two years in the transitional program. It is possible, however, for children in the primary grades to be immediately integrated into mainstream German classes. These children receive additional support through school- or home-based programs. The six children in our study had attended a two-year transition class and were enrolled in mainstream classes at the time of the interview. All of them had limited schooling in Syria.

## CANADA

Performance on English standardized measures of language and literacy suggests that refugee children's English proficiency was much lower than that of the normative samples which consisted of native English-speaking children. This is expected considering that the refugee children had only been in Canada for three years. On the other hand, all the refugee children performed well in tests that did not require complex English language skills, such as processing speed and rote memorization. These findings were corroborated by teacher interviews. Teachers indicated that refugee children generally understood mathematical concepts and were able to solve numerical problems; however, they were hampered by limited English proficiency when asked to solve language-based mathematical problems or verbalize their thinking. Most of the refugee children voiced a strong interest in less academic subjects such as visual arts and physical education.

Some refugee children experienced difficulty in adapting to the routine of a school day. One mother reported that her son was not prepared for the length of the school day because he didn't attend school before arriving in Canada. The child was often exhausted after he came home from school.

[...] he hesitates because the school day is long. He says that, 'I'll go from 9 to 3 or 4, it's a long day.' He gets bored. (Mother, via an interpreter)

Similarly, another child with no prior schooling found it difficult to balance her responsibilities at home with her work at school. At home, she supported her family by doing chores and supervising her younger siblings. These tasks became burdensome when she was attending school full-time.

The teachers we interviewed found that the Syrian refugee children were quieter than their peers in mainstream English classes. However, refugee children participated more fully in small group activities in their ESL classes. ESL teachers set up small groups as a means of facilitating student communication. These peer interactions enabled refugee children to bond with their classmates, all of whom were from immigrant or refugee families. One child recalled the friendships she made by attending these small-group classes.

[...] because we always together, we have like too much class together. We have like three class together, yeah and we sit together, we share our food, everything together, we're like best friends.(Child, Age 16)

All educators understood that refugee parents, like all parents, want to see their children succeed at school. However, because of their low levels of English proficiency, refugee parents were less involved in their children's schooling than non-refugee parents. For instance, one teacher noted that refugee parents were less likely to ask about school transitions

(e.g., elementary to secondary school). Due to a lack of English proficiency, refugee parents had trouble communicating with teachers and could not extensively support the academic development of their children.

The language barrier also prevented the educators from developing a strong bond with refugee students and their parents. Although interpreters were available at school, they were not frequently used. Teachers only made use of interpreters for events such as parent-teacher interviews. As a result, they described their relationships with the refugee students as “weak”. One home-room teacher spoke about the challenges she experienced in connecting with and motivating refugee students due to the language barrier.

I’m big on that connection and that motivation so if you can’t communicate with your teacher then it’s that much harder for you to figure out how you’re going to connect and therefore, how the teacher is going to help motivate you. And know what you’re interested in and figure out what’s going to pull you in. (Homeroom Teacher)

The educators reported that they had not received sufficient training to work with refugee children. For instance, the homeroom teachers indicated they were not previously aware of the migrant status of their students. However, they also pointed out that they might not have had time to attend training if it had been made available.

## GERMANY

The results on standardized measures in Germany were similar to those in Canada. Performance on standardized measures of German language and literacy suggests that refugee children’s German proficiency was much lower than that of the normative samples which consisted of native German-speaking children. Again, this is not surprising since these children had been living in Germany for only three years. Some of the refugee children performed well in tests that did not require complex German language skills, such as processing speed and rote memorization. Like in Canada, these findings were corroborated by teacher interviews:

[...] there is a difference in subjects that can be learned by heart and those where you have to understand [...] concepts as in math. [...] There the child has more difficulties [...] than in rule learning or rote learning. (Teacher)

Teachers in Germany reported that Syrian refugee children were generally well-integrated in their classrooms. One child had even taken on a leadership role within his class. Syrian refugee children were described by their teachers as having

positive social interactions with their peers; the children themselves expressed a love of school. However, the older students in particular participated little in class and were reluctant to engage in conversations with their teachers for fear that they would not understand the teacher or because they did not feel confident speaking German. Whereas educators reported that refugee students were highly motivated to learn, some observed that a few children had difficulty sustaining attention, struggling to concentrate on a task for an extended period of time and to carry it through to completion. The educators also mentioned that the refugee students preferred oral tasks to written ones. Like their counterparts in Canada, German refugee children particularly enjoyed non-academic activities such as physical education in school.

Not surprisingly, all refugee parents expressed a desire to see their children succeed. For instance, two mothers frequently contacted teachers to monitor their children’s academic progress. However, refugee parents also mentioned it was difficult to find time to meet with educators because of conflicts with their work and childcare obligations. Parents expressed the belief that their German was not good enough to interact with teachers. Interpreters are available in schools but have to be booked weeks in advance. In addition, parents felt that they did not have the skills and knowledge to assist their children with their homework.

German educators were aware of the migrant status of their students. The German teachers all expressed concern that the standard curriculum was too difficult for their Syrian refugee students and that they would prefer that it be simplified. They also agreed that large class sizes in the mainstream German classes were an impediment to providing children with the individualized support they needed. Like their Canadian counterparts, the teachers felt they had not received adequate training to prepare them to teach these students nor did they feel they had formed strong relationships with them.

## CONCLUSION

This study allowed us to glean important information about the educational experiences of Syrian refugee children in Canada and Germany. In both countries, majority language (English/German) learning continues to present a significant challenge for families. Standardized language and literacy assessments revealed significant gaps in majority language proficiency among the children relative to native speakers. While they may have developed a level of conversational fluency that permitted them to establish peer relationships, an important factor in school adaptation, their academic language skills have yet to reach a grade-appropriate level. This is to be expected: we know that school-based language skills (precise vocabulary, grammatically complex sentence structure, etc.) are slowly acquired, generally over a period of 5-10

years in a complete immersion setting (Cummins, 2008). In the case of Syrian refugee children, the challenge of acquiring academic language may be compounded by the effect of interrupted schooling, particularly among the older children. Without a solid home language base on which to build second language skill, these children may struggle to experience success in school. Yet teachers in Canada and Germany reported that they did not receive training prior to receiving refugee children in their classrooms. Professional development to prepare teachers to meet the specific learning needs of refugee children is badly needed in both countries.

Lack of majority language proficiency is mentioned in parent and teacher interviews in both Canada and Germany as an impediment to parent involvement in their children's learning and a barrier to establishing relationships. It is important, therefore, to bridge the language divide. Based on these findings, a number of recommendations can be made. First, schools are encouraged to make more frequent use of interpreter services. However, this may not always be feasible due to resource limitations. In these situations, schools might recruit parents who are more settled in the community to act as cultural brokers for newcomer families of an ethnic and linguistic background similar to their own. Moreover, educators can utilize a number of strategies to further the academic development of refugee students at school. For instance, teachers can make use of visuals and demonstrations to promote comprehension of academic language among students (Cummins, 2018). Teachers can also support language development in refugee students by encouraging them to use both their home language and the majority language on school assignments and tasks. Students who are given permission to use both languages will feel more motivated to engage with their schoolwork (Cummins, 2018). Schools are also encouraged to provide students with opportunities to further develop language and literacy skills in their first language (Cummins, 2018). This is especially important for students who did not have extensive schooling before arriving in the host country. Furthermore, refugee children should be instructed in small groups whenever possible. This allows the children to develop stronger ties with their peers and in turn, encourages the children to participate in the larger school setting.

# SUPPORTING DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNING: A PROGRAM FOR PRESCHOOLERS FROM REFUGEE BACKGROUNDS

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In response to the recent arrival of a large number of refugee families in Québec, we developed an early intervention strategy to support the language of refugee children. Between 2016 and 2019, we implemented and fine-tuned the program with more than 100 children through community organizations and schools, and gradually extended our focus on Syrian preschoolers who had recently arrived to Canada and compared them to other groups of children. The program's focus on language and communication was especially fitting for preschoolers, given the importance of the early years in children's linguistic and psychosocial development. This paper describes the development and implementation of the program in Montréal, Canada, with a focus on the importance of integrating support of the language of both home and school.

*En réponse à l'arrivée récente d'un grand nombre de familles de réfugiés au Québec, nous avons élaboré une stratégie d'intervention précoce en ce qui a trait au soutien de la langue des enfants réfugiés. Entre 2016 et 2019, nous avons mis en œuvre et peaufiné le programme auprès de plus de 100 enfants par l'entremise d'organismes communautaires et d'écoles, et nous avons progressivement étendu notre action aux enfants d'âge préscolaire syriens récemment arrivés au Canada et les avons comparés à d'autres groupes d'enfants. L'accent mis par le programme sur le langage et la communication était particulièrement adapté aux enfants d'âge préscolaire, étant donné l'importance des premières années dans le développement linguistique et psychosocial des enfants. Cet article décrit l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre du programme à Montréal, au Canada, en mettant l'accent sur l'importance d'intégrer le soutien linguistique à la maison et à l'école*

As researchers and clinicians in the field of speech-language pathology, we sought to respond to the large number of children arriving as refugees in Canada. A response was important and timely as the Canadian government has focused on welcoming families since 2016, and thus many refugees are children and youth (Wilkinson, et al., 2017). We built on our expertise as

researchers studying young children and our background in speech-language pathology. In the preschool period, speech-language pathologists work with early childhood educators, teachers, and health care professionals to screen for communication difficulties and reduce the risk for language delays through early intervention. Based on our expertise in

early bilingual language development, we developed a two-pronged approach: a knowledge translation initiative that targeted teachers and clinicians, and a direct approach to support language development at home and at school that was informed by the refugee experience. This paper provides an overview of our direct approach.

## BACKGROUND

Among the many consequences of civil war and subsequent migration is the interruption of formal education (United Nations Security Council, 2015; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015). Following their arrival in a host country, children who are refugees can continue to face challenges: inadequate educational placements resulting in marked differences for some children between their age and grade level, and discrimination due to their refugee status, language, and beliefs (Shakya et al., 2012). In addition, the difference between the child's first language and the language spoken in preschool or school can prevent them from understanding what is taught, asking questions, or interacting socially with peers, and can thus have negative repercussions on their achievement and well-being (McBrien, 2005; Shakya et al., 2012). However, the solution is not necessarily to deliver early intervention solely in the majority language of the host society. There is evidence that support of the first language development can help children succeed at school and ease acculturation, and promote children's sense of belonging in their families and connection to their country of birth (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Children's abilities in the first language can also positively influence their development of a second language (e.g., Armand, 2005); thus, educators are encouraged to support children's first language which can children's foster metalinguistic awareness (Armand, 2005).

While we believe dual language support can contribute to the resettlement of both school-aged and preschool-aged children, we found that the services available for younger children were either less systematic or less accessible. We conducted an environmental scan of services in Montréal, which showed that while daycares, drop-in parent-child sessions, and activities at local libraries exist, they were typically offered in only in French, the official language of the province. When services were offered in other languages, these targeted somewhat more established communities of new Canadians within the city. As a result, we found that the parents we worked with were often not aware of these resources and were not clear on how these resources might benefit their child. Additional barriers accessing these resources included transportation, particularly in colder months, and their limited knowledge of French. We also observed that many families experienced a challenging transition from home to school: children often had limited proficiency in the language of schooling, the expectations of Canadian schools were often

quite different, and children often had difficulty being separated from their parents. In addition, little research had been conducted to identify best practices in supporting children and their families during this transition.

## LANGUAGE STIMULATION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE REFUGEES

Facing this gap in available services and in the literature, we developed a program that focused on language and communication in early childhood and that built on approaches shown to support the language and communication in young children. This focus on language and communication was essential given the importance of the early years in children's development, including for immigrant (Rong & Preissle, 1998) and refugee children (Sokoloff, Carlin, & Pham, 1984). While early language stimulation programs have been developed for particular groups of children (e.g., late talkers or children with developmental disorders), we have not found programmatic approaches designed specifically with multilingual children from refugee backgrounds in mind. Our program is adapted in part from a published, evidence-based, language-focused curriculum (Bunce, 2008), designed to be implemented by speech-language pathologists in collaboration with early childhood educators and teachers. This curriculum is organized around themes to provide a shared context for communication (Bunce, 2008). Our language stimulation program also incorporates the reading of stories related to the session's theme. More specifically, we employ dialogic reading. Dialogic reading shares features with other interactive or "shared book reading" approaches (Trivette & Dunst, 2007), but employs a unique set of techniques to increase the child's participation in storytelling and allow for adult scaffolding of the child's language. Results from systematic reviews of dialogic reading suggest that while there is variability in the way that it is applied, it is an effective way to support vocabulary, grammar, and narrative production in children up to at least age six years (see Mol, Bus, de Jong, & Smeets, 2008; Trivette & Dunst, 2007). Furthermore, studies of young dual language learners show that dialogic reading can benefit their language (Tsybina & Eriks-Brophy, 2010) and early literacy (Huennekens & Xu, 2016).

Our program brings together previous approaches for supporting the language abilities of young children and applies them to an underserved community of refugee children. The key innovation of our approach is to provide dual-language stimulation to refugee children by (a) supporting and enriching their first language and building on this knowledge to introduce the language of schooling, (b) providing culturally appropriate activities, and (c) collaborating with parents, community organizations, and school personnel. Our paper outlines how the program was organized, how we provided an enriched language environment, and how we incorporated children's home language.

The program consisted of eight to ten weekly sessions of 60 to 90 minutes, offered to children aged three to six years, who were either not yet attending school (in Québec, children must be five years old by September 30th to enter school) or who were in kindergarten. The weekly sessions followed a similar sequence beginning with a welcome activity, followed by storybook reading, dramatic play, snack, a group activity, and ending with a goodbye activity. By using a consistent sequence, our intent was to provide structure and predictability for the children. For some children, this was their first experience in a “preschool” environment, and thus the predictable structure improved their participation in the activities.

As in Bunce’s curriculum, our program was organized around themes, adjusted to include the recent experiences of refugee children. For example, themes included the family’s recent journey (incorporating physical travel as well as emotion words to capture the journey’s significance) as well as current experiences, such as going to the grocery store. The themes were explored through interactive storybook reading, socio-dramatic play, and group activities (e.g., jointly creating/constructing something or playing a collaborative game). As was the case for themes, materials were selected and developed to represent children’s experiences and cultural and linguistic backgrounds. These themes also provided opportunities for children to build linguistic and conceptual bridges between their lives at home, community, and school.

The enriched language environment was provided through the systematic introduction of new vocabulary and diverse linguistic forms that were aligned with the themes. These were introduced by modelling their use, expanding children’s utterances, and promoting talk between the children. Collectively referred to as “language support practices”, these systematic strategies have been shown to positively influence first language skills (Bouchard et al., 2010) and have also been recommended for dual language learners (Kelly, 2015). We also provided visual supports for new vocabulary and for the sequencing of activities. By building the weekly sessions around a theme, we were able to reinvest the vocabulary knowledge in different activities and support the child’s use of new words.

Finally, we incorporated the children’s home language in the sessions using varied strategies, such as teaching words and phrases, reading and creating dual language books on the weekly theme, engaging children in play in their home language, and using audio-recordings of books or phrases. We had the pleasure of working with student volunteers who were fluent in Arabic and who were studying in related areas (e.g., speech-language pathology, educational psychology, psychology). These multilingual student volunteers contributed to adapting material to the languages spoken by the children, developing take-home material for the child in their home language, and participating in the small group sessions to provide input in the home-language. In return, they gained

hands-on experience and received training in working with small groups of preschool-aged children. By incorporating the child’s home language, we were able to build meaningful bridges to their second language and create an environment where the home language was valued.

## LESSONS LEARNED

From the beginning, we have taken a formative approach to the program’s design and implementation. While our goal was to provide the most effective program possible, we knew that timely support of the newly arrived refugees from Syria precluded an extended piloting stage prior to launching the program. With a formative approach, we have reflected systematically on the intervention as it has been carried out and modified it as necessary to allow the goals to be met, to identify unanticipated factors that could influence effectiveness, and to identify promising new directions.

Following each offering of our program, we documented what worked and what challenges we encountered, and thoughtfully adjusted the following offering of the program. For example, when we first began the groups, we changed themes weekly as we hoped to introduce a broad range of vocabulary, and maintain children’s interest. However, we found that this time was insufficient to meet our goal of children putting the new vocabulary to use. As a result, we extended themes to three-week periods and have found that this duration was optimal for incorporating new vocabulary and generalizing its use across a number of contexts, while maintaining the children’s interest. Another example of a modification concerned the size of the groups and the number of adults. We began with groups of eight to ten children with one or two adults but later found that it was important to routinely have at least two adults and to keep the group size under 8 children. The smaller adult:child ratio provided support for all children and ensured that all children participated in the activities. A third example was the incorporation of strategies to support children’s participation, peer interactions, and focus as these groups were among the first “preschool” experiences for many children, and they were not yet familiar with expectations of this context. These techniques included having a consistent schedule of activities, developing and reviewing three “promises” for the group (e.g., we are nice to our friends, we try to speak Arabic and French, we listen), and encouraging behaviours that were on task. By consistently and clearly supporting positive behaviours, we observed clear improvement in participation in the activities. By documenting these modifications, we were able to build iteratively on what we had learned when beginning a new group.

By working closely with families, we identified several factors that influenced the effectiveness of our program. The weather was an important factor within the Canadian context. For

these families, navigating difficult winter weather could be challenging. Families would simply opt out of a weekly session. As a result, we re-worked our timetables and have since avoided programming in December, January and February, in most cases. We also observed unanticipated changes due to the resettlement process. Some families moved from their first housing situation to a second, which tended towards a greater dispersion of families and challenges in accessing public transportation. As a result, we had to review where we held our sessions and develop new community partnerships to facilitate the participation of families. We also developed partnerships with neighborhood schools to provide the program for children in kindergarten (MacLeod, Meziane & Pesco, accepted). These sessions provided additional support to children, enhanced their learning, and provided opportunities for knowledge exchange with the teachers and school-based speech-language pathologist. These adjustments improved the participation of families and the number of children we could reach.

A new direction we are developing is to enhance the role of the parent in sessions. We began with parents simply observing their child during the group sessions. More recently, we have begun to integrate parents in the group sessions, and to work with them to enhance their child's language learning. We developed goals and strategies to help parents support the language development of their children; for example, following the child's interests in play, encouraging singing, storytelling and nursery rhymes in the home language, and expanding on the child's statements. By partnering with community groups that provide language instruction to recent immigrants, we have built on parent's strengths by using their new knowledge of French and their mastery of their first language to help us translate passages from children's books. Working with the parents has also provided insight with regards to parenting and cultural practices in their community. For example, the kindergarten curriculum in Québec emphasizes learning through play – a framework for education that was unfamiliar to many Syrian families we worked with. By participating in our program, the parents were initiated to this framework and provided with an informal context for asking questions and understanding this educational framework. Parents have expressed their pleasure at being included in a learning environment with their child where they can understand and interact with few language barriers.

## CONCLUSION

Our innovative program aimed to support the resettlement of children and their families in Canada, by supporting children's early language development (MacLeod, Meziane & Pesco, accepted). With this in mind, our program built on evidence-based approaches that included a language-focused curriculum (Bunce, 2008) and dialogical reading (Trivette & Dunst,

2007). The resulting program is innovative in four key ways: we focus on dual-language stimulation, we build on first language knowledge to introduce the language of schooling, we provide culturally-appropriate activities, and we collaborate with parents, community organizations, and school personnel. In addition, our program has provided rich experiences for our student volunteers: students learned from one another, students who spoke Arabic were able to use this knowledge within the groups and in developing materials, and students learned from their experiences in welcoming new Canadian families. We have adopted an "open-source" approach, whereby we made freely available the tools we developed for working with this vulnerable community to educators, community workers, and speech-language pathologists, who have a critical role to play in supporting the language development of refugee children. We have developed a workbook (Jaber, Meziane, Pesco & MacLeod, 2019), hosted workshops, and provided coaching to speech-language pathologists who sought to implement this approach. The program has been recognized locally (i.e., by the University of Montréal) and awarded at a provincial level (i.e., Muslim Association of Canada, Forces Avenir) for its role in engaging the community and university students. In sum, we have been honored to work with more than 100 children who are refugees and their families, and to collaborate with community centers and schools in Montreal.

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## IMPACT OF FAMILY LOSS AND SEPARATION ON REFUGEE YOUTH

# IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PROGRAMS: SCOPING REVIEW

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Refugee youth separated from their families comprise a socially vulnerable population. The barriers in accessing social and healthcare services escalates their trauma. This review maps the extent, volume and attributes of the existing literature around the impacts of separation on refugee youth in terms of their mental health and wellbeing.

A systematic search strategy and PRISMA-ScR model was adopted to review 112 peer-reviewed articles from three major databases and open source journals to find 32 eligible articles. Charted data was analyzed through reflexive Thematic Analysis to answer research questions on pattern, impacts, policy supports and potential solutions for unaccompanied refugee youths.

About 92% of the research focused on separated refugee youth, whereas 8% focused on guardians. Majority of the research on this topic was conducted in EU countries, the remainder being from Canada, USA, UK, and Australia. Most of the youth participants in the research were male. Themes included prevalence of mental health issues (e.g. PTSD, Depression, and Anxiety, etc.), their predictors (e.g. stress, number of traumatic experiences, etc.) and effective interventions. Effective interventions included psychotherapy, art therapy and cognitive behavioural therapy. Without intervention, mental health issues persisted or got worse over time. Social empowerment opportunities, material resources and guardian support skills served as protective factors to youth mental health.

The review identified the extent of current research and scope for further research. The next step is to collect data from refugee youth with lived experience and their service providers (through a co-design approach) to develop a 'Service Toolkit' and advocacy materials for policy implications.

*Les jeunes réfugiés séparés de leur famille constituent une population socialement vulnérable. Les obstacles à l'accès aux services sociaux et de santé aggravent leur traumatisme. Cette étude cartographie l'étendue, le volume et les caractéristiques de la littérature existante concernant les impacts de la séparation sur les jeunes réfugiés en termes de santé mentale et de bien-être.*

*Une stratégie de recherche systématique et le modèle PRISMA-ScR ont été adoptés pour examiner 112 articles évalués par des pairs provenant de trois grandes bases de données et de revues à code source libre afin de trouver 32 articles admissibles. Les données cartographiées ont été analysées par le biais d'une analyse thématique réflexive afin de répondre aux questions de recherche sur les modèles, les impacts, les soutiens politiques et les solutions potentielles pour les jeunes réfugiés non accompagnés.*

*Environ 92% des recherches ont porté sur les jeunes réfugiés isolés, tandis que 8% ont porté sur les tuteurs. La majorité des recherches sur ce sujet ont été menées dans des pays de l'UE, le reste provenant du Canada, des États-Unis, du Royaume-Uni et de l'Australie. La plupart des jeunes participants à la recherche étaient des hommes. Les thèmes comprenaient la prévalence des problèmes de santé mentale (par exemple, le syndrome de stress post-traumatique, la dépression et l'anxiété, etc.), leurs indicateurs (par exemple, le stress, le nombre d'expériences traumatisantes, etc.) et les interventions efficaces. Les interventions efficaces comprenaient la psychothérapie, l'art-thérapie et la thérapie cognitivo-comportementale. Sans intervention, les problèmes de santé mentale persistaient ou s'aggravaient avec le temps. Les possibilités d'autonomisation sociale, les ressources matérielles et les compétences des tuteurs ont servi de facteurs de protection de la santé mentale des jeunes.*

*L'examen a permis d'identifier l'étendue des recherches actuelles et les possibilités de recherches supplémentaires. L'étape suivante consiste à recueillir des données auprès de jeunes réfugiés ayant vécu une expérience et de leurs prestataires de services (par le biais d'une approche de conception collaborative) afin d'élaborer une « boîte à outils de services » et des documents de sensibilisation aux implications politiques.*

## INTRODUCTION

Research on refugee youth who have experienced family loss and/or separation has been expanding in recent years, especially with an increase in refugee migration stemming from civil war, political conflict, gender-based violence, religious oppression, and seeking better life conditions (Ali, 2006). However, there is limited evidence on how loss, disappearance and separation from family members through war and forced migration affects their post-migration settlement and wellbeing (Denov & Bryan, 2014; Rousseau, Mekki-Berrada & Moreau, 2001; Fazel, Reed, Panter-Brick & Stein, 2012).

Globally, over half (51%) of refugees and displaced people are children under the age of 18, and approximately 35% of the refugee population are youth between the ages of 15 and 24 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2016). The statistics from UNHCR show that a significant number of refugee youth undergo hardship and painful experiences such as family separation or losing/missing a family member. A study showed that 79% of Syrian refugee families in a refugee camp in Turkey have had a death in their family since the beginning of the war (CMAS, 2015). In many cases, family members disappear, go missing, or get separated during journeys of migration.

Research on Syrian refugees demonstrates that out of those Syrian refugees who arrived in Canada between 2015-2017,

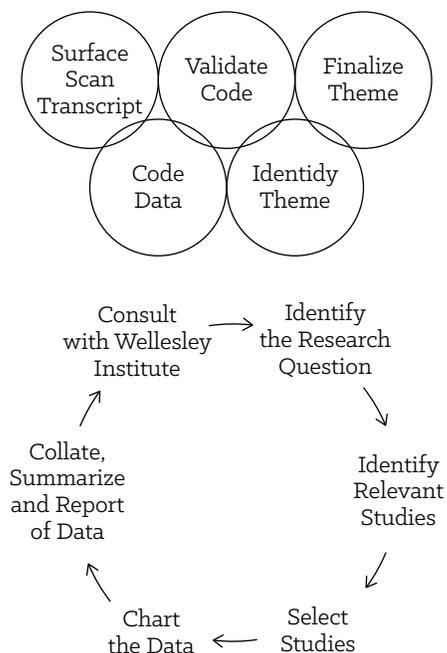
over 20,000 were under the age of 18 (Walker & Zuberi, 2019). Canada received 2011 minor refugee claimants in 2015, and 3400 in 2016, which shows a 69.1% increase in one year (Kalaichandran, 2017). There are limited clear statistics about refugee youth in Canada who have experienced some type of family loss and/or separation from family members. As such, there is a need for focussed research on refugee youth and exploration of literature to understand their needs, and factors that promote their wellbeing. The aim of this scoping review is to highlight the breadth and extent of the available evidence without critically analyzing it. This scoping review details the methodology, results and discussion.

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE SCOPING REVIEW ACTIVITIES

Arksey and O'malley's (2005) methodological framework was adopted for conducting this scoping review (Figure 1). A scoping review is a preliminary assessment of potential size and scope of available research literature and aims to identify nature and extent of research evidence (Grant & Booth, 2009). The research questions for the scoping review were formulated before co-designing the search strategy, which included the keywords as queries, databases, etc. Relevant journal articles were then searched and selected for final review, using the PRISMA-ScR model, by our immigrant insight scholar with support from the research team. Data was then charted,

which is the process of data extraction in scoping reviews. The qualitative data analysis software NVivo was used to collate, summarize, and code data by following the principles of the collaborative co-production design (Jennings, et al. 2018). After initial manifest scanning of charted data, codes were created and themes were validated through consultation with the researchers. Themes were then finalized by the collaborative meeting of the research team. Figure 1 shows the process:

FIGURE 1: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE SCOPING REVIEW



## RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR SCOPING REVIEW

1. What are the attributes (breadth, extent, nature, geography, etc.) of the research activities that were conducted on refugee youth who have experienced family loss and separation?
2. What were the methodologies used in the research conducted on the separated refugee youth?
3. What are the key themes from the research conducted on the separated refugee youth?

## SEARCH STRATEGY

The search for articles, to review, took place in March-April 2019 using three electronic databases (EBSCO, Elsevier and Springer) and open source publications adopting a snow-ball approach from the bibliographies of retrieved articles. The

initial search was conducted to identify the appropriate 'queries' for title and abstract. Subsequently, a list of keywords was indexed to search the required articles (e.g. "refugee youth", "separated refugee youth", "family loss", "refugee", "unaccompanied minors", "impact on health", "unaccompanied refugee minors", "separated minors", "asylum seekers", "minor refugees", "refugee mental health", "social services to refugee youth", "psychotherapy", and "refugee journey", etc.). Later on, the list of queries was extended, up to four phases, to include more articles for review till exhaustion of the yield and researchers' saturation (e.g. "family separation", "unaccompanied minors", "family separation and asylum", "family loss and youth", etc.). Due to a large return, the search items were confined to peer reviewed journal articles published between 2009 and 2019.

A total of 112 articles were found to be relevant to the research of interest. In order to synthesize evidence and assess the scope of literature on the selected topic, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses Scoping Review (PRISMA-ScR) model (Tricco et al., 2018) was used to screen the articles, with the following inclusion and exclusion criteria:

Inclusion of articles that focused on:

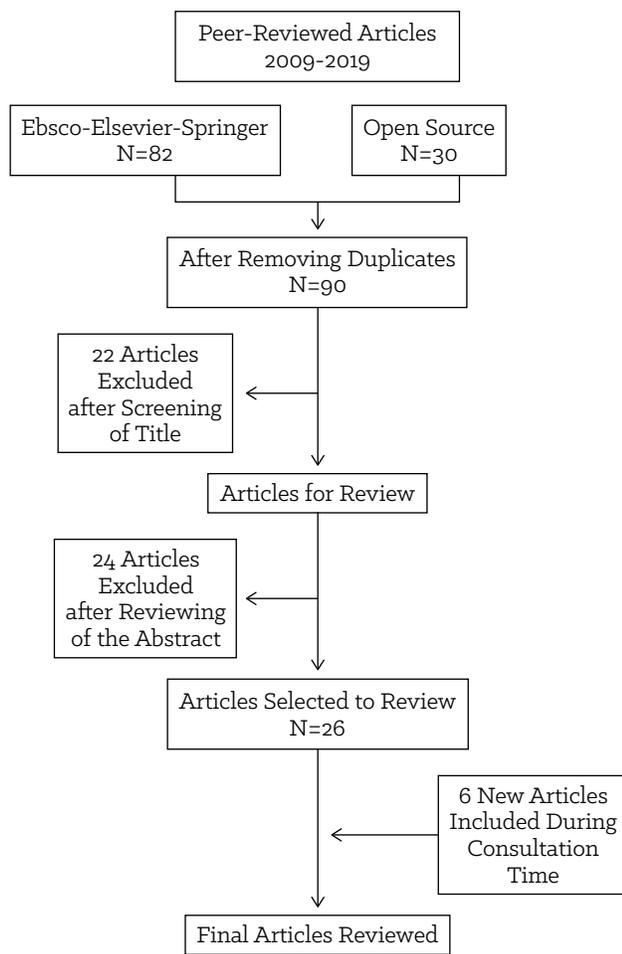
- Refugee youth between the ages of 16 and 24;
- Guardians or foster parents of refugee youth;
- Comparing refugee youth who experienced family loss or separation and youth who did not experience family loss and separation;
- Comparing unaccompanied and accompanied refugee youth who experienced family loss or separation.

Exclusion of articles that focused on:

- Service providers or professionals working with separated refugee youth;
- Refugee youth who did not experience family loss or separation;
- Medical, human rights, legal or financial issues;
- Articles that focused on forced family separation due to parent detention or separated refugee youth living in detention or camp facility.

Thirty-two articles matched all inclusion and exclusion criteria, including six articles which were added at the consultation phase with the broader researcher team of a partner agency. Figure 2 shows the flow diagram of the article search process.

FIGURE 2: PRISMA-SCR DATA FLOW FOR THE ARTICLES SCREENING AND SELECTION



## RESULTS

Articles were charted in detail based on aim or focus of the article, methodology (including sampling and data collection strategy), level of evidence, reflexivity, addressing ethical issues, data analysis process, and relevance of the results. Articles were then analyzed thematically to answer the research questions.

Regarding the first question (attributes of the research activities that were conducted on refugee youth who have experienced family loss and separation), results showed that 92% of the selected articles focused on refugees' separation or loss experience, while 8% articles focused on the guardianship of refugee youth (Figure 3).

The reviewed articles included 85.1% male (N=5,194) and 14.9% female (Fig 4), with ages ranged from 9 to 23 years. Two studies compared between refugee youth separated and non-separated from family (Suárez-Orozco, Kim, & Bang, 2011; Huemer, et al., 2013).

FIGURE 3: RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS IN THE REVIEWED ARTICLES

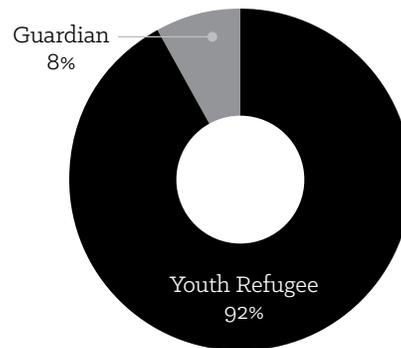


FIGURE 4: RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER IN THE REVIEWED ARTICLES

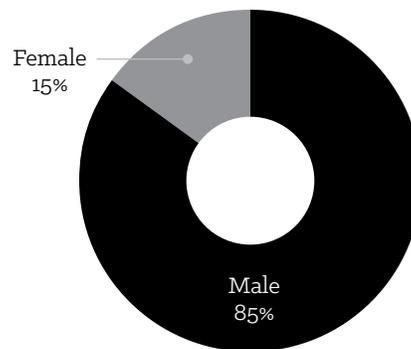
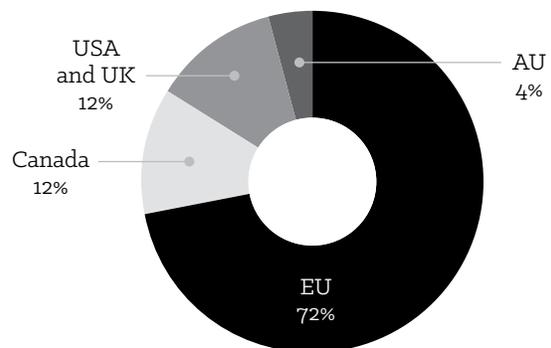


FIGURE 5: GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE RESEARCH IN THE REVIEWED ARTICLES



By geography, 71.9% (n=23) of the reviewed studies were conducted in European countries, 12.5% (n=4) in Canada, 12.5% (n=4) in the USA & UK, and 3.1% (n=1) in Australia (Figure 5).

Three items (methods type, level of evidence and data collection tools) were selected to sort research methodology in order to answer the second research question (research methodologies used). The majority (68%) of the reviewed articles used quantitative research methods; while 16%, 12%, and 4% of

TABLE 1: UNDERSTANDING THE JOURNEY OF REFUGEE YOUTH

| Reasons for Leaving Home Country | Journey Experience                              |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Escape Violence and Death        | Irregular and Highly Unpredictable              |
| Family Conflict                  | Prompted Short Lived Friendship                 |
| Financially Help Family          | Pervasive Feeling of Mistrust Towards Smugglers |
| Powerlessness                    |   |

the reviewed article used qualitative, mixed design and case study methods respectively. About 92% of the reviewed articles provided level six evidence (descriptive qualitative and quantitative design); whereas 8% of the articles provided level three evidence using quasi-experimental design.

Researchers used valid, reliable, and recognized measurement tools in the field of psychological assessment to work on the assessment of mental health and psychological variables. For instance, the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptom screening questionnaire was used in 47.6% of selected papers (Demott, Jakobsen, Wentzel-larsen, & Heir, 2017); Vervliet et al., 2014; Jakobsen, 2018; Jakobsen et al., 2017; Jensen et al., 2014; Müller et al., 2019; Seglem et al., 2011; Unterhitzberger & Rosner, 2016; Oppedal & Idsoe, 2015; Stotz et al., 2015 ). The Psycholinguistic Scale was used to assess trauma among refugee youths (Huemer et al., 2016). Other well-known psychological assessment tools were used in approximately 38% of the reviewed articles to measure anxiety and depression (Jakobsen, 2018; Jakobsen et al., 2017; Jensen et al., 2014; Vervliet, Meyer Demott, et al., 2014; Smid, Lensvelt-Mulders, Knipscheer, Gersons, & Kleber, 2011; Seglem et al., 2011). Additionally, 23.8% of selected articles focused on stress and adjustment (Huemer et al., 2011; Jakobsen, 2018; DeMott et al., 2017; Smid et al., 2011; Vervliet, Meyer Demott, et al., 2014).

A thematic reflective strategy was adopted to gather information around the third research question. After extraction, data was charted, coded and validated based on the main concepts. The results were synthesized thematically by identifying prominent or recurring themes, summarized, and organized under thematic headings (understanding the reason and experience of the journey as well as the impacts and interventions).

## THEME 1: UNDERSTANDING THE JOURNEY: REASONS AND EXPERIENCE

Nardone & Correa-Velez (2016) used semi-structured interviews and found that self-protection from violence and the desire to find a “better life” were the key reasons for youth to leave their country. Youth commented that the journey was

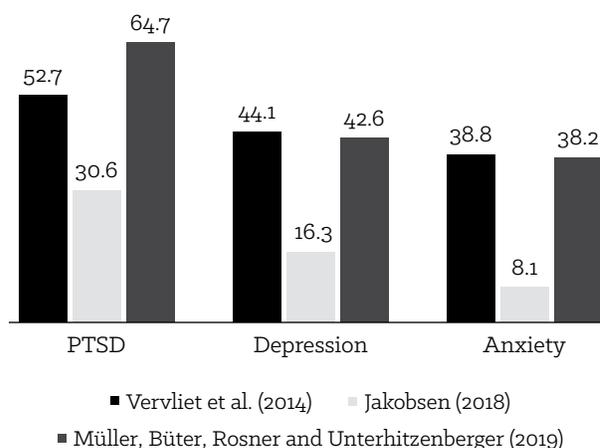
irregular and highly unpredictable. The minors were exposed to extreme levels of vulnerability that created the need to remain invisible. The journey prompted short-lived friendships with other asylum seekers, and created a pervasive feeling of mistrust towards smugglers and other people they met along the way.

## THEME 2: IMPACT ON THE REFUGEE YOUTH

### ISSUES AND PREVALENCE OF ISSUES

Studies identified the consistent prevalence of mental health issues (PTSD, depression, and anxiety) among refugee youth who experienced family loss or separation. PTSD was the most prevalent mental health concern followed by depression and anxiety (Figure 6). Vervliet et al. (2014) mentioned that the prevalence of PTSD, depression, and anxiety among unaccompanied minors was 52.7%, 44.1% and 38.3% respectively; while Jakobsen (2018) found the prevalence to be 30.6%, 16.3%, and 8.1% respectively; and Müller et al. (2019) estimated the prevalence to be 64.7%, 42.6% and 38.2% respectively.

FIGURE 6: PREVALENCE OF COMMON MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES



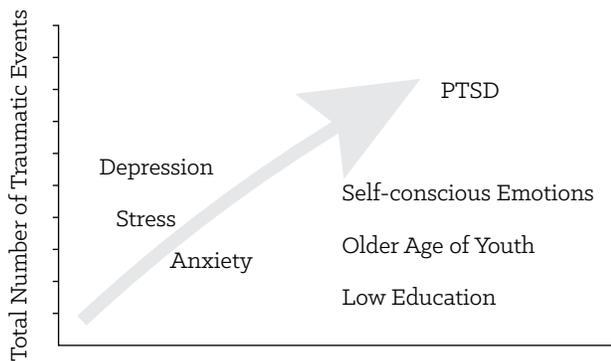
Oppedal & Idsoe (2015) found that 79% of the study participants suffered from depression after war-related trauma. Seglem et al. (2011) also confirmed that depression is high among unaccompanied refugee minors. Müller et al. (2019) found that unaccompanied refugee minors (URM) are more vulnerable than accompanied refugee minors (ARM) regarding the prevalence and severity of PTSD, depression, and anxiety. Psychological stress was identified as another mental health issue. URM's experienced higher numbers of traumatic events (Jakobsen, 2018; Müller et al., 2019; Vervliet et al., 2014) and high level of stress (Jakobsen, 2018; Huemer et al., 2013); and need higher levels of support on arrival to the host country (Vervliet et al., 2014).

## PREDICTORS OF MENTAL HEALTH

The articles explored the relationship between the mental health of refugee youth and predicting psychological variables. Articles found that the number of traumatic events experienced by the youth, the level of psychological stress, and demographic characteristics all contributed to the mental health and wellbeing of the youth (Müller, Büter et al., 2019; Stotz et al., 2015).

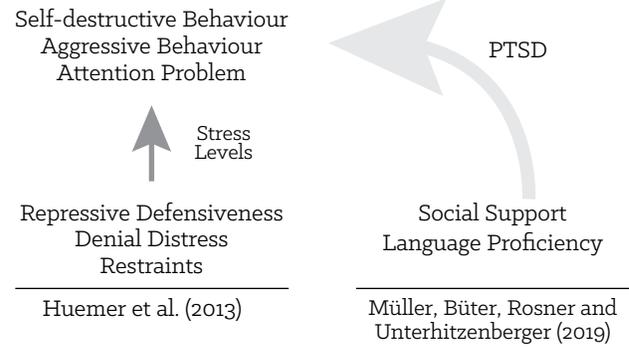
The total number of traumatic experiences as well as increased levels of daily stressors and psychological distress were found to be the most significant predictors of PTSD, depression, and anxiety (Müller et al., 2019; Smid et al., 2011) (Figure 7). Stotz, Elbert, Müller, & Schauer, (2015) concluded that feelings of guilt and shame as well as trauma symptoms were all associated with the number of traumatic events that participants had experienced. Post-traumatic guilt and shame were both correlated with PTSD symptom severity. In terms of demographics, it was found that unaccompanied female refugee minors reported higher levels of depression compared to males (Seglem, Oppedal Raeder, 2011). In a study completed (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011), youth who had undergone prolonged separation from their mothers reported the highest levels of anxiety and depression, compared to separation from the father.

FIGURE 7: IDENTIFIED PREDICTORS FOR PTSD



Several articles discussed the impact of increased stress levels on the youth. Müller et al. (2019) concluded that lower levels of individual resources, lower levels of social support in the host country, and poorer language proficiency were associated with higher levels of psychological distress (Figure 8). Placement in a low-support care facility was associated with higher levels of psychological distress. Those who were placed in a reception centre for adults had higher levels of psychological distress symptoms both after 15 months and 26 months compared with the remaining participants who were placed in reception centres for youth. Refusal of asy-

FIGURE 8: INTERACTIVE MECHANISM OF HOW PREDICTORS INFLUENCE MENTAL HEALTH



lum was highly associated with higher levels of psychological distress (Jakobsen, Ashley, Demott, & Wentzel-larsen, 2017). Huemer et al. (2013) found there was a correlation between the functional repression of negative emotions and impulses in order achieve acceptance from others with high levels of stress and decreased happiness levels among traumatized refugee youth. Increased levels of stress was manifested in problematic behaviour, self destruction and attention problems (Huemer et al., 2013).

## MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOME IN THE ABSENCE OF INTERVENTION

Mental health prognosis was analyzed in the reviewed articles. Of the twenty-six papers, 6 (23%) evaluated the mental health indicators (depression, anxiety, PTSD and stress) among separated youth refugees after they arrived in their host country. Most of the research findings confirmed that mental health remained static or got worse after spending time in the host country without intervention (Vervliet et al., 2014; Jakobsen et al., 2017; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011; Jensen et al., 2014; Smid et al. 2011). Jensen, Skårdalsmo, & Fjermestad (2014) found that there was a small and non-significant change in the PTSD symptom scales between arrival and two years after arrival. For instance, there was a significant number of minors who remained above the clinical score for PTSD after two years (59.6% in PTSD, 50% for HSCL-37A). Also, the number of stressful life events significantly increased two years after arrival. Additionally, Jakobsen, Ashley, Demott, & Wentzel-larsen (2017) concluded that young asylum seekers reported high levels of psychological distress on arrival and symptom levels stayed relatively unchanged over time. Suárez-Orozco et al. (2011) provided evidence that anxiety and depression symptoms persisted in separated refugee youth five years after arrival. These symptoms significantly decreased after five years, in situations where there was reunification with parents. Findings by Smid et al. (2011) show that 16% of refugee minors disclosed late onset PTSD symptoms correlated with traumatic events, low education and older age of minors. Severe traumatic events had a pre-

dictable effect on late onset PTSD, and were impacted by the level of anxiety and depression on the arrival time. This result showed that late PTSD onset is common amongst separated refugee youth; and both depression and anxiety could be an early prediction sign.

### **THEME 3: INTERVENTIONS FOR ALLEVIATING THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA ON THE REFUGEE YOUTH**

#### **MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOTHERAPY**

Of the reviewed articles, there are three papers focused on psychotherapy and group intervention for separated refugee youth to reduce trauma symptoms. Demott et al., (2017) found that using a manualized group intervention of expressive arts had positive effects, reducing trauma symptoms among separated refugee minor boys. Manualized trauma-focused cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) was examined by Unterhitzberger & Rosner (2016), and the results showed significant decrease in clinical PTSD symptoms. Moreover, by the end of the treatment, the results showed that the participants were considered to have recovered from PTSD. The treatment results remained successful and stable for six months after the end of the treatment. Unterhitzberger et al., (2015) provide evidence about the effectiveness of trauma-focused CBT intervention. The result showed that the moderate to high baseline levels of post-traumatic stress symptoms were significantly clinically decreased on the post-test.

A qualitative study with 15 unaccompanied refugee youth by Majumder et al., (2015) discussed perceptions of two predominant mental health modalities: talk therapy and use of medication. Many of the respondents found engaging with talk therapy to be difficult for reasons associated with cultural perceptions of mental health and linguistic limitations. The youth deemed pharmacological treatments more acceptable.

#### **PROTECTIVE FACTORS TOWARDS POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES**

Research explored the role of social support in relation to mental health symptoms. Social support can play a critical role in reducing PTSD, depression and anxiety after stressful life events (SLE). (Sierau et al., 2019; Oppedal & Idsoe, 2015). Müller et al. (2019) concluded that higher levels of individual resources, social support in the host country, and language proficiency were associated with lower levels of psychological distress. Luster et al. (2010) explored the factors that contributed to the success of URMs. Youth considered taking advantage of opportunities for education and work to be successful. In addition, dealing with past trauma, seeking out mentors,

adopting the host country culture, staying away from alcohol or 'distractions' and maintaining a good credit rating were considered by youth to be predictive of their success. Holen et al., (2019), demonstrated that quality of the guardian relationship with the youth impacted their well being, including their parenting skills, relationship with youth and supporting connection with biological family and others. Luster et al. (2010) also recognized a positive relationship with foster parents as predictive of well-being.

### **DISCUSSION**

Several themes emerged throughout the research which require more in-depth exploration and explanation. It became apparent that the research focused predominantly on male youth, with 85% of those researched being male. This gender imbalance can be explained through exploring the gender roles and cultural values of the countries of origin of the separated refugee youth. According to Nardone & Correa-Velez's qualitative research (2015), it was the role of the first-born son to leave for better opportunities and obtain employment that would financially support their families. Often a parental death motivated the departure. The youth were expected to navigate getting visas for their family members and support their immigration. The male youth, perceived to be less vulnerable, was chosen to make the often dangerous journey, with better prospects for earning a wage to support the family.

Within the research, a theme that became apparent was that the number of traumas experienced and exposure to psychological stressors compounded the impact of that trauma and the impact of the symptoms on the youth (Unterhitzberger et al., 2015; Jakobson, 2019; Stotz et al., 2015; Tello et al., 2017). Many of the youth studied experienced enduring stressors throughout their lifetime caused by ongoing civil unrest and conflict, which predicted poorer mental health outcomes (Tello et al., 2017). Furthermore, traumatic journeys of migration, loss of family and stressors of settlement cumulatively impacted the mental health of the youth. Those experiencing ongoing traumatic stress, never build resilience to the repeated exposure, each event contributes to the further deterioration of their mental health (Stotz et al., 2015).

The literature demonstrated the probable negative impact of family loss and separation on the mental health of refugee youth and that, without intervention, mental health symptoms persisted (Jensen et al., 2014). It also demonstrated the hopefulness of culturally sensitive interventions to mitigate the impact. While the research is limited to a small sample size, manualized CBT showed promising results when utilizing cultural modifications as well as engaging caregivers in the treatment process (Unterhitzberger & Rosner, 2016; Unterhitzberger et al., 2015). Expressive arts were a promising intervention with refugee male youth between the ages

of 15-18 with a sample size of 145, supporting them to cope with symptoms of trauma, strengthen their life satisfaction and develop hope for the future (Demot et al., 2017). More research is required in testing the effectiveness of these therapeutic interventions.

## CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that a plethora of research around the impact of family loss and separation on refugee youth was identified, most of the studies could not be considered for this scoping review due to the variance in focus, breadth, extent, and target group (e.g. children, unaccompanied minors or youth vs any refugee youth or their parents/caregivers or the service providers, etc.). The review identified the geography, demographic composition, and impact of the loss or separation depicted in the peer-reviewed articles. Mental health and therapeutic or social interventions were the key themes in these articles along with understanding of the reasons and experience of the journey of refugee youth. Researchers mentioned the prevalence, patterns, and predictors of mental health issues (i.e., PTSD, depression, and anxiety) among youth as well as effective social or therapeutic interventions to support. Severity of PTSD is a function of the frequency and severity of the traumatic experience and stress that was revealed in these studies. Articles also mentioned the pathways and mechanisms of action of how the defence mechanisms used by the vulnerable youth may increase stress or reduce the happiness in life, which in turn can result in attention disorders and forensic outcomes like aggressive behavior and self-destruction. Intervention, at both the personal or social level, alleviates the impacts. If trauma is not addressed substantively, PTSD can either be sustained or youth may show signs of late onset PTSD. A supportive society and experienced guardianship are also very crucial for healing the trauma. Considering this review is a scoping one, judging the quality of evidence was not attempted. Further research and critical reviews will address gaps in the current evidence.

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# SUPPORTING RESILIENCE IN REFUGEE STUDENTS DURING LESSONS: OPTIONS FOR CONCEPT-BASED STRATEGIES

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In the classroom, newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers have to deal with many stressors that challenge mental functioning and educational success. As they have a variety of potential protective factors, educational staff can take these factors into consideration in their everyday work to help foster resilience.

Because systematically transferring resilience research into practice still poses a challenge, the aim is to outline a scientific conceptual basis for resilience building in newly immigrated children, youth, and young adults that is applicable in educational environments. To illustrate the topic, the focus is on the example of Germany, but given insights are just as relevant for other receiving countries (e.g. Canada).

The paper is guided by the conceptual work of Gill Windle and derives resilience strategies for immigrated students, while findings in the context of resilience, education, and immigration are integrated.

Results show that resilience-building strategies for refugee students should focus on both stress reduction and resource enhancement. Language acts as a risk, a protector, and a mediator in the classroom.

*En salle de cours, les réfugiés et les demandeurs d'asile nouvellement arrivés doivent faire face à de nombreux facteurs de stress qui mettent à mal leur fonctionnement mental et leur réussite scolaire. Comme ils disposent de divers facteurs de protection potentiels, le personnel éducatif peut prendre ces facteurs en considération dans son travail quotidien pour favoriser la résilience.*

*Étant donné le défi posé par le déploiement systématique de la recherche sur la résilience dans la pratique, notre objectif est de définir une base conceptuelle scientifique pour le développement de la résilience chez les enfants, les jeunes et les jeunes adultes nouvellement immigrés, qui soit applicable dans les environnements éducatifs. Pour illustrer le thème, l'accent est mis sur l'exemple de l'Allemagne, mais les idées avancées sont tout aussi pertinentes pour d'autres pays d'accueil (par exemple, le Canada).*

*Le rapport s'appuie sur le travail conceptuel de Gill Windle et propose des stratégies de résilience pour les étudiants immigrés, tout en intégrant les résultats obtenus dans le contexte de la résilience, de l'éducation et de l'immigration. Les résultats montrent que les stratégies de renforcement de la résilience pour les élèves réfugiés devraient se concentrer à la fois sur la réduction du stress et sur l'amélioration des ressources. La langue joue un rôle de risque, de protecteur et de médiateur dans la classe.*

## INTRODUCTION

In 2018, the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR reported a constant increase of migration on a global level in almost all areas and published the following figures: there are currently 70.8 million forcibly displaced people worldwide, including 25.9 million refugees and 3.5 million asylum seekers. Children under the age of 18 constituted about half of the refugee population (UNHCR 2018, 2-3).

In Germany, the refugee population continued to increase, reaching 1,063,800 at the end of the year in 2018. More than half came from Syria (532,100), while other countries of origin included Iraq (136,500) and Afghanistan (126,000) (UNHCR 2018, 18). The immigration occurs not only directly, but also via resettlement. In 2016-17 Germany participated in an EU-wide resettlement program, whereby a total of 1,600 people were accepted by the Federal Republic. For the years 2018-19, the country has announced the admission of a total of 10,200 refugees as part of another EU resettlement program (UNHCR Deutschland 2019).

One of the goals of the German policy is to integrate newly immigrated children, youth, and young adults into the education system. At first, refugees and asylum seekers often attend separate preparatory classes, where they learn the language and content. Following this, they should start, step by step to take part in regular lessons. In some federal states, refugee students attend regular classes from day one and receive additional German lessons, for example in Saarland or Mecklenburg (Massumi et al. 2015, 6-7).

However, refugees and asylum seekers have to deal with many stressors – even within classroom contexts. They depict a high-risk group for mental health impairment, in particular because of prior critical life situations and the current strain caused by the integration processes (Metzner and Mogk 2016). Stress and psychic strain are not just related to mental dysfunction, but also can introduce educational problems. Educational surveys have repeatedly demonstrated that academic performance of immigrant students was lower in almost all participating countries when compared to non-immigrant students (OECD 2007, 2011). Stermac et al. (2010) show there are no differences in the basic learning ability of young people (15 years old) with very stressful and traumatic migratory experiences and others. But in the light of the number of huge challenges they are confronted with, immigrated students are also an at-risk group for educational failings (Beelmann et al. 2018, 208).

Based on these findings, implementing approaches to help refugee students realize mental resilience despite stress and integrating such approaches into educational contexts where academic performance is being promoted can be considered highly relevant. Systematically transferring resilience research into practice is still lacking (Höfler 2018), and as of

now, there has been no focus on research-based resilience promoting strategies for the classroom, particularly in regard to refugees and asylum seekers. This paper suggests a scientific conceptual basis for resilience approaches in newly arrived immigrants, which is applicable in educational environments. The concept of resilience is first outlined in the work of Windle (2011) from which strategies of resilience promotion are derived. Following that, options of classroom-based resilience approaches are illustrated.

## CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATION OF RESILIENCE AND RESILIENCE PROMOTION

In resilience research, resilience is defined as the individual's ability to cope even with massive risks and stressors so that the mental functioning and life success is not negatively affected, at least not in the long term (Fingerle 2009, 204). The field of study regarding resilience is extremely heterogeneous. If resilience is to be positioned as a concept, it requires a theoretical foundation containing basic conceptual features that are common to the various forms of operationalization. Based on 271 resilience studies, the analysis of Windle (2011) found three defining characteristics of resilience:

1. An encounter with risk (i.e. significant stressor);
2. The process of functional adaptive responses to risk, enabled by protective factors; and
3. A positive outcome.

The outcome can thus refer to both health and competence (such as school performance), depending on the specific definition of resilience (Höfler, 2016a, p. 46). However, as addressed above, these outcomes are related to each other.

The core focus of the concept of resilience is the individual's capacity to adapt. – This is on the one hand threatened by risk constellations, but on the other hand, these threats can be prevented, mitigated or offset by protective factors. As such, two key approaches exist for resilience promotion:

- Risk-centered approaches which work to prevent or to reduce threats;
- Resource-centered approaches which strengthen protective factors.

The previous comparative research on preventive pathogenic and protective salutogenic principles of action suggests that these do not typically follow the same inherent logic. Thus, in resilience research, there is a consensus that protective factors are not the opposite of risk factors per se (see discussion in Höfler 2014, 4). If, for instance, an individual avoids the risks caused by experiencing political violence, this does

not necessarily imply a protective effect on psychological processes that can mitigate existing or future risk effects. However, despite the conceptual ideal-typical distinction, both courses of action can, of course, interact, react with one another, and merge. In practice they cannot be regarded as entirely separate from each other (Altgeld and Kolip 2009, 42).

## RESILIENCE PROMOTION IN REFUGEE STUDENTS DURING LESSONS

### RISK-CENTERED STRATEGIES: STRESS REDUCTION IN THE CLASSROOM

Because of their history, most refugees and asylum seekers attend classes with an increased level of stress. In the past, they often experienced life-threatening circumstances before and during escape and migration which may carry long-lasting effects. Experiences can include war, torture, loss of or separation from parents, life-threatening escape routes, physical or mental abuse by human-traffickers, and imprisonment. Postmigration stressors may include, for example, difficult housing situations, unresolved asylum status, financial problems, and discrimination (Metzner and Mogk 2016). Because resilience is more likely at a lower risk level (Höfler 2016b, 115), approaches that reduce emotional stress in the classroom are highly relevant. Educational staff are able to create lessons that provide a degree of emotional security, controllability and stabilization, which result from constant external conditions and continuously recurring processes that are based on solid structures, well-regulated procedures, routines, and rituals. Classroom seating arrangements, welcome rituals, rhythmic clocking of the school day with concentrated lesson phases and relaxing breaks, as well as clear responsibilities and roles, for example, can reduce emotional stress and support feelings of security (MBK Saarland 2017, 8).

Along with the desire to avoid social exclusion, discrimination, and educational failure, refugee students are also under pressure to quickly learn a new language. As a lack of language competencies is interpreted as a significant acculturation stressor (Beelmann et al. 2018, 207), strategies that counteract this may depict a risk-centered resilience approach. In order to prevent language barriers in the classroom, creative techniques could be helpful. Creative performance and artistic activities, for instance in the fine arts, reveal non-linguistic possibilities of expression (MBK Saarland 2017, 9). Furthermore, when aiming at language development, a content and language integrated didactic (e.g. Leisen 2017) could reduce stress by developing language skills parenthetically and combined with content learning rather than as separate additional task, which could be overtaxing.

Basically, no matter what kind of actions are implemented, a culturally sensitive teaching practice is important (Gogolin et al. 2018) since it reduces prejudices and fears and builds

up familiarity. However, as teachers are not free from prejudices, emotional stressors and risks for educational success can also be introduced by teachers themselves. Schofield (2006) identifies the influence of negative stereotypes and expectation effects of teachers on the school performance of migrants (Beelmann et al. 2018, 208). To reduce such threats to students' resilience, the provision of adequate teacher education in addition to the implementation of school structures that provide possibilities for information exchange among colleagues and student supervision are important.

### RESOURCE-CENTERED STRATEGIES: FOSTERING PROTECTIVE FACTORS IN STUDENTS

Approaches for increasing resources of refugees and asylum seekers in the context of school (e.g. Bistritzky 2013, Siebert and Pollheimer-Pühringer 2016) such as self-efficacy, self-esteem, problem-solving skills or social support already exist. These resources can cover factors or substructures of factors that have been confirmed as resilience-enhancing in resilience research. Self-efficacy, for instance, which refers to the expectation of a person to be able to successfully perform desired actions based on their own skills, has been often validated as resilience factor in different age groups and settings (Cassidy 2015, Werner and Smith 1992, 2001). Because it can be fostered through successfully fulfilling requirements and duties, educational staff can encourage self-efficacy in students by purposefully transferring responsibility to them. Teachers may incorporate students into small tasks and services such as maintaining the attendance list, taking food orders or the floral service in the classroom, to promote the development of a healthy self-image (MBK Saarland 2017, 9). Dealing with challenging but, in principle, manageable learning tasks is also conducive. The growth of self-efficacy can cause other protective resources, for instance, increased self-esteem. In addition, resilience studies found self-efficacy may contribute to increased social support (Werner and Smith 1992, 245).

Social support is also a prominent factor in resilience research and shows resilience promoting effects in a wide range of target groups (Horton and Wallander 2001, Werner and Smith 1992, 2001). A survey of 214 adolescents (16-21 years old) in 34 welcome classes at vocational schools in Hamburg shows that nearly half of the students do not feel they have adequate social support, in particular emotional support (Metzner et al. 2018). As the feeling of belonging to a peer group is important, in school contexts social support can be directly promoted through a frequent and repeated involvement in group activities such as working groups, guided leisure activities, or school trips. Additionally, the creation of strong relationships with educational staff is necessary. Next to class teachers, trust teachers or school godparents can play a decisive role (MBK Saarland 2017, 9) because they are able to seek specific individual contact and, in this way, act as personal contact persons who provide emotional support and practical help.

Language barriers are a risk for healthy adaptation and educational success. Conversely, language skills are also a potential protective factor for resilience. Numerous studies have found a clear connection between the linguistic competences in the language of the host society and the psychological and socio-cultural acculturation quality (see discussion in Beelmann et al. 2018, 208). Besides the fact that language is a decisive tool for social participation and integration, language skills activate additional resources, – access to knowledge, for instance. Furthermore, language serves as a symbol system to express thoughts and feelings (Beelmann et al. 2018, 207), which is central in coping with stress. Long-term studies are needed to answer the question of to what extent language proficiency restricts other acculturation stressors (next to language barriers) in the sense of protective processes, allowing for normal development (Beelmann et al. 2018, 217). Even though in current practice newly immigrated students often receive language support, it is important to see this approach as a possible method to enhance resilience. That also means that access to language learning is important for mental health. The way teachers communicate in the classroom thereby acts as a mediator in students' resilience. Using a language style that is more resource-intensive rather than stress-inducing and deficit-oriented promotes positive outcomes in students.

## CONCLUSION

Participating in education has enormous importance for refugee and asylum-seeking students. School could be seen as a first link to German society that helps to restore stability and normality (Bistrizky 2013). Educational staff is able to reduce stress within the lessons, foster language competence, as well as provide psychological resources and social support. Thereby, staff can contribute to students' educational success and resilience, which is not only relevant in Germany, but in receiving countries such as Canada and many others.

Taking into account the different individual needs of students, sufficient knowledge and competence are required on the teachers' side. However, teachers often have a lack of information regarding students' residence status, countries of origin, family situation, health problems, and special educational needs. Furthermore, research shows that they often feel they are not adequately prepared to cope with the emotional stress they experience in educating refugee students (Bistrizky 2013, 50). Hence, teacher support, for example through school psychologists or school medical services, and suitable teacher training is indispensable, as are adequate structural conditions such as sufficient teacher jobs and timely information transfer. However, as school cannot replace psychotherapy, one has to pay attention to the professional limits of the educational staff (MBK Saarland 2017, 11).

Finally, there are a wide range of risks and resources that could influence the resilience of newly immigrated students and reveal starting points for risk-centered and resource-centered strategies. Such approaches also can be health-promoting for the regular student population. The challenge for resilience research is the systematic and differentiated determination of when resilience is actually promoted and when it is not. Although primary studies often confirm protective factors for peoples' resilience, protective effects may depend on age, gender, cultural background, risk situation, risk level, and resilience outcomes such as specific health or competence indicators (Höfler 2016a, 54-59). Because of this, aside from primary research studies that focus on the theme of this paper, there is an urgent need for systematic reviews that evaluate and summarize research results in reference to subgroups of newly immigrated students in various educational contexts, in preparatory courses and regular classes, for example.

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# TAKING THE PULSE: SERVICE DELIVERY FOR MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS IN NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA

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This article examines how service delivery to migrant entrepreneurs in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) can be enhanced to better meet the needs of migrant entrepreneurs.

At present, migrant entrepreneurs tend not to access government business counselling services as their first choice, but rather rely on the expertise of friends and family members, lawyers and bankers to guide their business decisions. Migrant entrepreneurs also argue that government does not provide an adequate vehicle to recognize the contribution that their business enterprises make to the State's economic performance.

A more collaborative working approach between government service providers, mainstream economic counselling organisations and the migrant community is needed to improve service delivery and to increase the visibility of migrant entrepreneurship in NRW.

*The content of this article represents the views of the author only and does not reflect the views of the Government of North Rhine-Westphalia.*

*Cet article examine comment la prestation de services aux entrepreneurs migrants dans le Land allemand de Rhénanie du Nord-Westphalie (NRW) peut être améliorée pour mieux répondre aux besoins des entrepreneurs migrants.*

*À l'heure actuelle, les entrepreneurs migrants ont tendance à ne pas avoir recours en priorité aux services de conseil aux entreprises du gouvernement, mais s'appuient plutôt sur l'expertise d'amis et de membres de leur famille, d'avocats et de banquiers pour guider leurs décisions commerciales. Les entrepreneurs migrants font également valoir que le gouvernement ne fournit pas un moyen adéquat de reconnaître la contribution de leurs entreprises commerciales aux performances économiques de l'État.*

*Une approche de travail plus collaborative entre les prestataires de services gouvernementaux, les organisations de conseil économique classiques et la communauté des migrants est nécessaire pour améliorer la prestation de services et accroître la visibilité de l'entreprenariat migrant en NRW.*

Le contenu de cet article représente uniquement les opinions de l'auteur et ne reflète pas les opinions du gouvernement de Rhénanie du Nord-Westphalie.

## INTRODUCTION

Shamsrizi (2018), a second-generation migrant entrepreneur, who manages the company Retrobrain Inc. in Hamburg, argues that the problems faced by start-ups are complex and do not neatly fall within the jurisdiction of a particular government ministry. Just as it takes *a whole village to raise a child*, effective business coaching for migrant entrepreneurs is dependent upon the cooperation between and among multiple service providers in what has been called the entrepreneurial ecosystem (RKW Kompetenzzentrum, 2019).

In North Rhine-Westphalia the entrepreneurial ecosystem is comprised of an intricate network of actors, such as the economic development agencies at the community level, the state government ministries, such as the Ministry of Economy, Innovation, Digitalization and Energy, and the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Services, the chambers of industry and commerce, the craft councils, migrant business associations and the federally funded IQ-Network on Migrant Entrepreneurship and the NRW Bank to name but a few of the players<sup>1</sup>. Within this system, migrant entrepreneurs are provided with both standardized as well as migrant-specific business advisory services.

Despite this extensive network of service offerings, migrant entrepreneurs have voiced their dissatisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of business coaching for aspiring migrant entrepreneurs and established business owners with a migration history.

This article takes the pulse of the migrant entrepreneurship community in NRW: It provides a portrait of selected issues in the current political debate on migrant entrepreneurship. It develops this picture by drawing upon the discussions at the first NRW congress on migrant entrepreneurship in 2018 entitled – Migrant entrepreneurship: Capitalizing on diversity, successful coaching (Stephan, 2019) – as well as empirical research findings by eminent scholars and practitioners in this field (e.g., García-Schmidt & Niemann 2015; Bertelsmann, 2016 and Leicht et al., 2017). After highlighting why it is important to recognize the economic contribution of migrant entrepreneurship to the State's economy, the article explores the tensions emanating from a standardized versus a customized model of service delivery to migrant entrepreneurs. It also makes the case for adopting a strategic approach to increasing the visibility of migrant entrepreneurship in the public eye. The discussion also demonstrates that it is important for government to proactively address the potential ramifications of culturally-held beliefs which may impede entrepreneurship

in Germany. Possible solutions for enhancing service delivery to migrant entrepreneurs in the State of NRW are suggested at various junctures in the article.

## WHY DOES MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP MATTER?

In NRW, with a population of 17,914,344 Million people (2018), there has been a downward trend in enterprise creation from 2008 to 2018, with 86,210 enterprises created in 2008 to 73,578 in 2012, to 60,148 in 2018 (Institut für Mittelstandsforschung, 2018).

In 2018, 44.7 percent of business start-ups in NRW (sole proprietor businesses) have been established by people who have migrated to Germany – this also represents a slight decrease of -1.8% compared to 2015 (Günterberg, Kay and Kranzusch, 2018). The largest share with 64.1% of these enterprises are in the service sector, 28.1% in commerce and 7.8% in the production sector (IHK NRW, 2019).

The hotspots of enterprise creation are the highly ethnically diverse Metropolitan Ruhr Region, Düsseldorf and the surrounding area as well as the Cologne-Bonn region. Champions of entrepreneurial activity are also the Niederrhein region (Lower Rhine Valley Region) and the Bergisches Städtedreieck comprised of the cities of Wuppertal, Remscheid and Solingen.

NRW mirrors the overall trend of migrant entrepreneurship at the federal level: In 2018, 547,000 new businesses were established in Germany which is a slightly down by 10,000 enterprises, or 2% from 2017 (Metzger, 2019a). In 2018, 43.7% of all business start-ups in Germany were created by individuals without German citizenship. This remains largely unchanged in the first quarter of 2019, with 43.6% of businesses established by migrants (Günterberg, 2019).

At present, a total of 768,000 enterprises in Germany are run by entrepreneurs with a migration background (IQ, 2018); between 2005 and 2017, 202,000 new enterprises were created, which represents an increase of 35.7% (IQ-Network, 2018).

Migrant entrepreneurship is of vital importance for the economic well-being of a region due to three key factors: It creates job opportunities for people living in Germany, as migrant entrepreneurs provide more apprenticeship opportunities than German business owners. Migrant entrepre-

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1 A good visual representation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem is provided by the RKW Kompetenzzentrum (2019) under [www.gruenderoeko-system.de](http://www.gruenderoeko-system.de). It gives a high level overview of the various players involved in the ecosystem and shows how possible emerging barriers to migrant entrepreneurship, such as difficulty in accessing capital, lack of language capabilities, bureaucratic red tape, difficulty in recruiting human resources for the start-up enterprise, may arise at the intersection between different players in the system.

neers also earn more than other migrants working in salaried employment. I briefly discuss the issues below.

Entrepreneurs with a migration background create valuable job opportunities and thus stimulate the economy. The number of jobs which were created by migrant businesses increased between 2005 to 2014 from 947,000 to 1.3 million, which represents an overall increase of 36%. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the number of jobs created by entrepreneurs with a migration background were 300,000 in 2014 up from 296,000 in 2005 (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016). According to the IQ-Network, the overall estimated number of jobs created by migrant entrepreneurship in Germany in 2017 lies between 2.2 and 2.7 Million (IQ-Network, 2018).

Migrant entrepreneurs provide more apprenticeship opportunities for young people than their German counterparts (Leicht and Langhauser, 2014; Metzger, 2016). They are also much more open to hiring people from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds. Migrant entrepreneurs thus represent a vital player in integrating immigrants into the labour force, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and can thus serve as important role models for other enterprises (IQ, 2018).

Migrant entrepreneurs earn on average 40% more after-tax income when compared to people with a migration background who work in dependent salaried jobs (e.g., with a monthly income of 2,994 Euros compared to a monthly income of 1,537 Euros in 2014) (IQ, 2018).

## MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NRW – CURRENT POLITICAL DEBATE

The current political debate in NRW about migrant entrepreneurship centres around such issues as an effective interaction between mainstream and targeted business coaching services for migrant entrepreneurs, the need for increased visibility of migrant entrepreneurship, and the need to address cultural values that may hamper migrant entrepreneurship.

### STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE: STANDARDIZED VERSUS TAILORED SUPPORT SERVICES TO MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS

The delivery of services to migrant entrepreneurs by the NRW Ministry of Economy, Innovation, Digitalization and Energy (MWIDE) is rooted in the philosophical approach of service standardization. In other words, the Ministry provides a standard set of business coaching services to all aspiring entrepreneurs in NRW, regardless of their ethnocultural background or migration history. Entrepreneurial counselling services are provided in 75 Startercenters across the State, complemented by special digital innovation centres in the cities of Aachen, Bonn, Düsseldorf, Essen, Köln and the Münsterland region.

The Startercenters NRW (MWIDE, 2019b) are intended as one-stop shops for business coaching and have been sensitized to the service needs of migrants. For example, information brochures are issued in five different languages and the website is accessible in three different languages (English, French and German). The staff at the Startercenters NRW have also received intercultural competency training in order to coach migrant entrepreneurs.

This one-size-fits-all approach is reflected in strategic business documents. For example, the NRW Ministry of Economy, Innovation, Digitalization and Energy has recently released a new strategy for promoting entrepreneurship in the State entitled *Neue Gründerzeit Nordrhein-Westfalen, Für ein wettbewerbsfähiges und lebendiges Gründungsgeschehen in Nordrhein-Westfalen (2019a)*. The strategy establishes ten priorities coupled with concrete initiatives to strengthen entrepreneurship in the State (e.g., eliminating bureaucratic hurdles in the process of establishing a business, promoting entrepreneurship in schools and institutions of higher learning, supporting entrepreneurs in the start-up phase through financial stipends, etc.) The strategy proposes to encourage entrepreneurship especially among women – this is the sole specific target group mentioned in the document. The Strategy includes neither specific mention of migrant entrepreneurs nor measures to foster migrant entrepreneurship in NRW.

Similarly, the same standardized approach is reflected in the 2019 report on business issued by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce NRW (IHK NRW, 2019). The report presents an overview of major trends in the area of entrepreneurship in NRW without separate data on migrant entrepreneurship. It merely points out different patterns in enterprise foundation between men and women.

Based on their survey of 532 entrepreneurs, Leicht and Volkert (2014) showed that migrant entrepreneurs preferred to seek advice primarily from lawyers, tax consultants as well as friends and family members. They also approached chambers of industry and commerce, jobcenters, banks, business associations and other business coaching services less frequently than did native-born entrepreneurs. Despite the one-stop service offerings by the Startercenter NRW, migrant entrepreneurs do not seek business advice from government as their first priority.

### WHAT IS MISSING IN THE STANDARDIZED PROVISION OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES?

The reluctance of migrant entrepreneurs to seek advice from such one-stop shops such as the Startercenters NRW is due to multiple factors: Language barriers do not necessarily facilitate an effective transmission of information if coaching sessions are conducted only in German as the official language. Migrant entrepreneurs may also require coaching services that can deal with issues, such as immigration and legal status in

Germany, which go beyond mere start-up coaching.

These observations are also supported by the IQ-Network on Migrant Entrepreneurship which engages on a regular basis in a dialogue with experienced practitioners to strengthen business coaching services for migrant entrepreneurs. This dialogue revealed that some of the key ingredients to successful coaching is the development of trust between coach and client which requires time to learn about the unique needs of the client. Practitioners also indicated that it is important to provide information materials written in easily understandable language and to preferably engage a native speaker as a translator at the first orientation session. The *non plus ultra* for effective business coaching is the coaches' ability to counsel migrant entrepreneurs in a holistic fashion, addressing the client's different information requests beyond the establishment of a business enterprise (Sänger and Förster, 2016).

In addition, coaching practitioners also pointed out that one of the reasons why migrant entrepreneurs are reluctant to seek advice from mainstream institutions lies in the fact that these institutions do not reflect the diversity of the population. They also argue that positions of power in mainstream business organizations are still to a large extent occupied by native-born individuals:

[...] The reason for this reluctance to seek advice from mainstream institutions, such as chambers of commerce [...] lies in the fact that these information services do not appeal to migrants [...] furthermore, mainstream organizations do not reflect the diversity of society and this diversity is not reflected in their staff complement... It is important for more migrants to assume leadership positions on the various task forces of mainstream organisations (Sänger & Förster, 2016, pp.12-13).

The MWIDE is aware that more needs to be done to ensure a more inclusive service delivery. To this end, the Ministry has established an informal consultation body which is comprised, among others, of migrant entrepreneurs and their business associations, chambers of industry and commerce, craft councils, representatives from the Integration through Qualification Network (IQ-Network), the Startercenters NRW, representatives from the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs and the Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Integration and the NRW Bank. In a dialogue with Government the group champions innovative ideas for service improvements to migrant entrepreneurs.

In 2018, the Ministry of Economy, Innovation, Digitalization and Energy in cooperation with the Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Integration organized the first congress on migrant entrepreneurship in NRW which focused on enhancing coaching services for migrant start-ups and current migrant businesses. The event proved to be an important

catalyst placing the need for effective business coaching for migrant entrepreneurs higher up on the political agenda.

## WHAT IS AN EFFECTIVE WAY FORWARD?

The challenge for the MWIDE lies in striking the right balance between a standardized and a tailored approach to service delivery targeted at the specific needs of migrant entrepreneurs.

Scholars and practitioners in the field of migrant entrepreneurship have reflected upon this almost perennial question of government service delivery: Leicht and Volkert (2014) pointed out that a standardized model of service delivery reduces complexity, both in terms of the type of counselling services provided as well as the organizational structures of service delivery. At the same time, service standardization eliminates the danger of stigmatizing migrant entrepreneurs by viewing them as a "special needs" group and viewing them through the lense of cultural stereotypes. Solano, Wolffhardt and Xhani (2019) argue that migrant entrepreneurs can effectively enlarge their network of contacts (both in terms of mentors and potential customers) by participating in mainstream business coaching services and are thus in a better position to built contacts beyond their ethnocultural support networks.

Alternatively, business coaching programs tailored to migrant entrepreneurs are often able to address the unique challenges faced by this client group and are able to overcome possible social and economic disadvantages that this group has encountered as compared to native-born entrepreneurs:

These programs represent a useful policy tool to promote equal opportunities for immigrants starting, running and expanding a business as they help offset the relative disadvantages that immigrant entrepreneurs – and the newly arrived in particular – face relative to their native-born peers (Solano, Wolffhardt and Xhani, 2019, p. 2)

A customized approach to business coaching for migrant entrepreneurs can in the long run be more effective: An up-front investment of time and energy in solid business planning may lead to a successful business enterprise and potentially prevent future business failure. In making business investment decisions it is of vital importance for migrant entrepreneurs to receive the best possible advice from qualified business coaching professionals from the outset.

Furthermore, it is important to point out that migrant entrepreneurs are a heterogeneous group – thus, a migrant from another EU-country and a recently arrived refugee from Syria who wants to start an enterprise will have different concerns that will need to be addressed as a part of business coaching. A one-size-fits-all approach to counselling will not necessarily meet the unique information needs of these two very different clients. A study by the Bertelsmann

Stiftung – *Migrantenunternehmen in Deutschland zwischen 2005 and 2014, Ausmaß, ökonomische Bedeutung, Einflussfaktoren und Förderung auf Ebene der Bundesländer* – highlights that tailor-made coaching is an essential pre-requisite for migrant entrepreneurs in establishing a successful business enterprise (Sachs et. al., 2016).

Within the entrepreneurship ecosystem of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, both standardized as well as tailored-made business coaching services for migrant entrepreneurs have a role to play and make their specific contribution to strengthening entrepreneurship in general, and migrant entrepreneurship specifically. It is not a zero-sum game which favours one option (standardization) over the other (customization).

However, improvements to business coaching for migrant entrepreneurs in NRW can still be significantly enhanced, if mainstream and migrant-specific institutions work closer together, learn from each other and improve their respective practices based on this interaction. Mainstream business coaching organizations need to ensure that their service offerings are more relevant to the needs of this target group. They would benefit from a heterogeneous staff complement which reflected the composition of migrant communities in the State and which were trained in cross-cultural business counselling (Diversity management). Similarly, the leadership cadre of these organizations also needs to reflect the ethno-cultural diversity. While some have already taken important steps to achieve these goals, there is still room for improvements.

Migrant-specific business coaching organizations in turn can further professionalize their services by being well-connected within the network of mainstream organizations, in order to ensure that they can provide their clients with up-to-date information and connect them with mentors and financiers.

The research pointed out that the linkages between migrant-specific and mainstream services, for instance those services provided by chambers of commerce, are not functioning optimally and that resources (both in terms of coaching capabilities and capital resources) for migrant entrepreneurship are not utilized to the fullest extent -García-Schmidt & Niemann, 2015.

In order for this dialogue to succeed, it is necessary for the partners within the entrepreneurial ecosystem of the State to engage in this conversation as equal partners (Discussion “*Auf Augenhöhe*”):

In most of the federal States, government and chambers of commerce are not able to meet the specific demands for services of migrant entrepreneurs [...] there is a failure to effectively link the business coaching services of the chambers, the public and the private sector [...] The state and the various players in the economic system have to work closer together to assist migrant enter-

preneurs to launch their businesses -García-Schmidt & Niemann, 2015.

Comprehensive guidelines for professional coaching of migrants coupled with an outline of core competencies for coaches have been defined by the IQ-Network in their publication – *Migrationsspezifische beschäftigungsorientierte Beratung* (Nowak, 2010). The knowledge on what it takes to provide business coaching tailored to migrant entrepreneurs is available. It is now a matter of incorporating these quality standards into migrant entrepreneurship coaching and ensuring that the financial and human resources are made available to realize this vision.

#### NEED TO INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In 2018, the MKFFI started a public campaign entitiled #Ich,Du,WirNRW (#I,You,WeNRW) which showcases how migrants from different walks of life have successfully integrated into society (Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Intergration, 2019). Migrants from teachers to journalists, from physicians to football professionals talk about their opportunities and their challenges in the integration process. Within the framework of this media campaign, individuals with a migration background are given a recognizable public face.

Migrant entrepreneurs in NRW feel that they lack exactly this type of visibility and that their contribution to the State's economy is not adequately presented in the eyes of the public. Thus, migrant entrepreneurs are not given an independent profile in the marketing campaign of the MWIDE which is based upon the preference of a “standardized” approach to service delivery. The MWIDE runs its own media campaign which portrays the stories of successful entrepreneurs and their business enterprises (MWIDE, 2019c). However, migrant entrepreneurs do not have a separate profile, but tell their respective stories as part of the larger pool of innovative business start-ups in NRW.

#### WHY IS IT ESSENTIAL FOR MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS TO BE VISIBLE?

In a recent interview, Giannakoudi (2018) who runs a successful HR consulting firm in Düsseldorf, explained the need for visibility as follows:

We need to express our appreciation, especially for the first generation migrant entrepreneurs, who carved out a living in restaurants, kiosks, döner imbisses and seamstress stores. We owe it to them to better recognize the contribution that they made to the economic well-being of this State. We have neglected at times to tell their story and need to learn from that experience. Today let us not neglect to recognize the achievements of the next generation of highly qualified migrants

who have established their business enterprises as doctors and engineers, etc.

Recognizing the contribution that migrant entrepreneurs make to the economy is one side of the coin. The other side of the coin is the fact that profiling success stories of migrant entrepreneurs can act as a motivator for young people to embark on the path of entrepreneurship.

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2018/2019 for Germany (Sternberg et.al. 2019) highlights that successful entrepreneurs can serve as role models for people in their circle of acquaintances and may in fact motivate people in their network to pursue a business venture. However, only 23% of Germans who participated in the GEM survey indicated that they personally know a successful entrepreneur in their network who founded a business within the past 12 months. In contrast, the potential of being inspired towards entrepreneurship in Austria or Poland is much higher: in Austria 39% and in Poland 40.1% of the survey participants reported to be acquainted with an entrepreneur. According to GEM (2018/2019), knowing a successful entrepreneur also leads to a much more positive evaluation of one's own entrepreneurial competencies: 62.3% of the survey respondents in Germany who knew a successful entrepreneur had a positive image of their entrepreneurial capabilities, only 30.6% of the GEM survey respondents who did not know a successful entrepreneur had such a positive image of their competencies. Bijedić and Wolter (2018) highlight that role models can only motivate others if they are recognizable and are in "close mental proximity" to people:

An important influential factor for an entrepreneurial culture are role models, who live and communicate the values of this culture. They transmit a positive predisposition to entrepreneurship across generations. However, role models must be "reachable" and potential entrepreneurs must be able to identify with them (p. 9-10).

These research findings underline the importance of giving migrant entrepreneurs a discernable image: as role models they can motivate young people from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds to enter the labour market through business creation.

It is also essential to portray the contribution of migrant entrepreneurs in the correct light – free from preconceived notions and stereotypes. Leicht (2016) points out that some journalists and theorists diminish the economic performance of migrant business enterprises relegating them to serving small niche markets with insignificant profit margins and few employees. Some people argue that migrants predominantly choose to establish a business, as they are unable to find suitable dependent employment in the labour market. Empirical studies of migrant entrepreneurship clearly contradict these stereotypical views (Leicht, 2017, Leifels and Metzger, 2019).

An effective media campaign portraying real life success stories of migrant entrepreneurs can act as a catalyst challenging these preconceived notions.

Given these parameters, the Ministry of Economy, Innovation, Digitalization and Energy will be well-advised to provide more suitable platforms to allow migrant entrepreneurs to tell their success stories.

#### THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION

Empirical research shows that migrant entrepreneurs are much more prolific in establishing a business enterprise than native-born. However, migrant businesses also have a much higher failure rate than businesses owned by native-born (Metzger, 2016 and 2017). Migrants may become stigmatized in the eyes of native-born because of such failures, and may therefore refrain from re-starting a new business venture.

According to Metzger (2019a), 75% of people in the labour force are of the opinion, that people who have launched their businesses and have failed, deserve a second chance. 40% of the respondents were willing to invest in a business enterprise which was led by an entrepreneur who failed in the past. These findings contradict a pronounced stigmatization by the general public towards failed entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, Metzger (2019a) also showed that survey respondents had not much understanding for failed business owners if they lacked entrepreneurial competencies, a solid business concept and an effective marketing approach to gain customers.

Metzger (2019b) showed that 29% of the people in the labour force are of the opinion that failed business owners were stigmatized. 41% of the entrepreneurs themselves felt that failed business owners are stigmatized in Germany. There is a need to conduct further research to investigate whether or not stigmatization occurs more often when the failed business was owned by an entrepreneur with a migration history as compared to a native-born.

However, these findings support the notion that the best insurance against possible stigmatization of entrepreneurs, and perhaps especially migrant entrepreneurs, lies in providing aspiring entrepreneurs with access to a solid business education. GEM 2018/2019 (Sternberg et.al., 2019) supports the fact that entrepreneurial education is key to eliminating the German *Angst* of failure and to encouraging experimentation:

Societal values and norms in Germany do not particularly encourage migrant entrepreneurship. In this context fear of failure and risk-aversion are often cited as barriers to enterprise foundation. The fear of failure is connected to the distress that emerges from having to bear the consequences of such failure. A further issue that strengthens this fear of failure and insecurity

ity is the perceived lack of competencies to establish a business enterprise.

Based upon this insight, the most logical step to improve the culture of entrepreneurship in Germany is to enable people to acquire entrepreneurial knowledge and entrepreneurial thinking in the elementary, secondary and higher education system (Sternberg et.al., 2019, p. 72).

In order to create an environment where start-ups can flourish, a shift in perspective is necessary: a business failure needs to be perceived as a learning opportunity that provides valuable feedback about what changes are needed for the re-start of a new venture. According to the EU-Action Plan on Entrepreneurship 2020, this shift in mindset can best be achieved through entrepreneurial education that fosters a culture of creative thinking and the willingness to experiment with new ideas.

In this context, the MWIDE has taken important measures to eliminate the potential for stigmatizing migrant entrepreneurs. It has decided to incorporate the discipline Economics as a compulsory teaching unit in the school curriculum starting in the school year 2020/2021. The fact that the recently created entrepreneurship stipend provided by the MWIDE is available for business re-starts sends an important signal. Business failure is just a step on the learning curve!

## CONCLUSION

According to predictions made by Rohleder and Moran (2012), a structural shift in public service delivery would take place from standardized to personalized service provision. This would save costs and ensure a more effective public service. At the heart of the shift lies a collaborative partnership between government and citizens, as part of this partnership citizens and government would jointly design what services are being offered:

The design of personalized public services puts the citizen in the center and radiates out from there, rather than starting from the historic structures or functions of public services (Rohleder and Moran, 2012, p.9).

According to this vision, governments would no longer function in a hierarchical fashion providing standardized services. Instead they would manage a multi-partner network of stakeholders from the private, the public and the non-profit sector in order to pursue policy outcomes and solve problems identified in partnership with citizens. Only the future will tell whether this type of democracy and public service delivery will remain a utopian vision: It would require a concerted dialogue among all stakeholders in the entrepreneurship ecosystem on what problems need to be resolved and how ser-

vice offerings can best be re-designed and delivered.

The NRW Ministry for Children, Family, Refugees and Integration has implemented the pilot project *Einwanderung gestalten* (Shaping immigration and integration) over the past 2 years which places the service needs of migrants at the center of service provision. Government services, the private sector and the non-profit sector have been asked to collaborate with each other in order to address migrants' needs in a holistic and comprehensive fashion. This approach clearly moves away from a government that knows best and defines services a priori to a government that functions as a learning system. This government adjusts service delivery around what is truly required on the front line of service delivery. In this model, government is a major player in a network of service providers and promotes active collaboration among all network partners. It would be interesting for the MWIDE to explore in the future how it can effectively re-design its services to migrant entrepreneurs based upon this shift in mindset that is the hallmark of *Einwanderung Gestalten*.

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# SOCIAL SKILLS FOR REFUGEE TRAINEES IN DUAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: A GERMAN CASE STUDY

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Labour market integration in Germany is strongly linked to a vocational qualification in a training occupation or a university degree. For the participation of young refugees, labour market integration is important, but it is often just as difficult to get access to the formalized German VET system as to pass the examinations to enter into a trade. Failing to successfully enter the labour market is mostly justified with a lack of language skills, but training companies also suggest that newcomers lack social and (inter)cultural capital. This article shows how a mediation training for instructors helps refugee trainees learn the social competencies needed to gain labour market entry in Germany. Embedded in the overall context of dual vocational training (dual VET), the article first provides an overview of its system and explains the situation of refugees opted for a training. The project is then presented with the initial results.

*L'intégration sur le marché du travail en Allemagne est fortement liée à une qualification professionnelle dans un métier à formation reconnue ou à un diplôme universitaire. Pour la participation des jeunes réfugiés, l'intégration au marché du travail est importante, mais il est souvent tout aussi difficile d'accéder au système allemand formalisé d'enseignement et de formation professionnels (EFP) que de réussir les examens d'entrée dans un métier. L'échec se justifie le plus souvent par un manque de compétences linguistiques, tandis que les entreprises de formation invoquent également le manque de capital social et (inter)culturel comme obstacle. Cet article démontre comment une formation en médiation pour les éducateurs aide les stagiaires réfugiés à acquérir les compétences sociales nécessaires pour entrer sur le marché du travail en Allemagne. S'inscrivant dans le contexte général de la double formation professionnelle (double EFP), cet article donne d'abord un aperçu de ce système et examine la situation des réfugiés ayant opté pour une telle formation. Les résultats préliminaires du projet sont ensuite présentés.*

## INTRODUCTION

For the participation of young refugees, labor market integration is highly important. Our paper presents results from the Service-Learning Project "Social Skills for trainees in dual vocational education and training and mediation training for their instructors" (SKM) from Germany. All trainees have to pass an examination before they graduate from their appren-

ticeship. Subsequently, they gain a higher salary and improve their standing. As a result of their participation in the program, the hope is that the refugees experience higher labour market participation rates and more successful integration into German society. Unfortunately, too many trainees with escape experience and migration backgrounds<sup>1</sup> fail within the vocational education system and do not successfully pass their apprenticeship examinations (Kroll & Uhly 2018). The

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1 The term migration background is used differently in surveys and official statistics in Germany. One definition is based on the programme for international study evaluation (PISA). According to this, a migration background is present if young people themselves or at least one parent was born abroad. The federal statistical office defines the term regarding to the citizenship of young people and their parents (Will 2020, German Parliament 2018). In SKM, only young people participated who had fled or emigrated themselves.

Service-Learning Project temporarily connects university students to trainees with escape experience and migration backgrounds at the University of Vechta in Germany. The goal is for the students to assist the refugees in developing their social skills in the hopes that this will encourage them to stay in the apprenticeship programs and to develop the 'soft skills' needed to obtain employment as graduates.

Embedded in the overall context of dual vocational training (dual VET), the article first provides an overview of the program and explains the situation of those refugees who have opted for the training. We end the paper by presenting preliminary results.

## DUAL VET IN GERMANY

The roots of today's dual VET in Germany can be traced back to 1869 (Trifonov, 2013, p.15). Since then, vocational training in Germany has been in constant evolution, now part of a complex system. Today, it is governed by two regulations: the Vocational Training Act (BBiG) and the Crafts Code (HWO). There are separate training regulations for each of the approximately 330 regulated training professions. The diploma that graduates receive after a successful apprenticeship usually allows graduates direct entry into a career (Seibert & Wydra-Somaggio 2017).

One of the basic requirements for successful labor market integration in Germany is the attainment of an apprenticeship diploma or degree. Refugees often find it difficult not only to access training, but also to maintain their participation in the training period until they successfully complete their diploma (Stein, 2012a; 2012b). Not surprisingly, those who do not have a formal qualification or degree have a particularly difficult time finding suitable employment. If they become gainfully employed, they have a lower income, lose their jobs more quickly, and their risk of long-term unemployment increases.

In the VET Report of 2019 (BiBB 2019, p.43), a lack of a vocational qualification is associated with "considerable negative consequences for those affected and society as a whole".

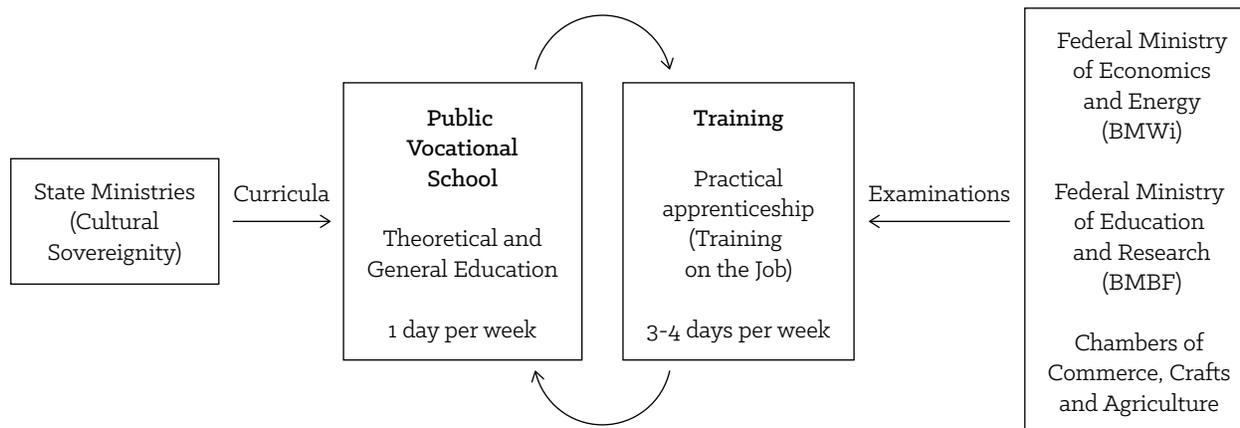
## CONSTRUCTION OF DUAL VET

The term dual VET arises from the two learning venues, the training company and the vocational school, whereby trainees learn the practical work in the company and the subject-related and general-education content in the schools (Trifonov 2013: 5). Most of the training takes place in the companies (Figure 1). State vocational schools and companies work together to provide placements for the apprentices (Arnold et al., 2020; Arnold & Müller, 1997). The aim is to provide all graduates with a general and professional basic education in vocational schools and in their training companies as well as special skills which are gained on the job. For companies, investing in training young people is a building block to meeting their need for young professionals. In 2017, 74% of graduates gained permanent employment in their training company at the conclusion of their apprenticeship (BiBB 2019, p. 12).

## SCHOOL EDUCATION

Vocational schools see themselves as part-time schools and are open to unemployed young people and those with an employment relationship without vocational training. The curriculum consists of practical (skills), occupational theory (knowledge) and general education (German, history etc.) (Gudjons, 2001). A common critique of the current system of vocational training is that it does not adequately support young people in the very high and low range of services. Both groups drop out of these programs more often (Stein & Schmidt, 2013). In fact, trainees with a migration background (Stein, 2012a; 2012b) and with refugee experience struggle with difficulties.

FIGURE 1: SYSTEM OF DUAL VET IN GERMANY (STEIN, 2004, P. 258)



## COMPANY TRAINING

The legal basis for starting an apprenticeship is the apprenticeship contract concluded according to legal regulations (BBiG or HWO), similar to an employment contract. The training company pledges to pay a training allowance and to comply with labor law conditions and the standards set out in the training regulations. A “personally and professionally suitable” trainee must be active in the company, who is responsible for the structured and practical training (§28 BBiG). Trainees are introduced to the tasks of their profession on the job and actively work in the company accompanied by trainers (GOVET 2019).

For their part, trainees commit themselves “to strive to acquire the professional ability to act that is necessary to achieve the educational goal.” (§13 BBiG). This includes the acknowledgment of the rules in the company, school attendance, following instructions, and maintenance of a report booklet, in which training content is recorded.

The training includes an intermediate and final examination prescribed by the training regulations. The exams are taken by the state-mandated institutions, the professional chambers (Section 5 of the BBiG).

## AFTER GRADUATION

After successfully completing their training, graduates have

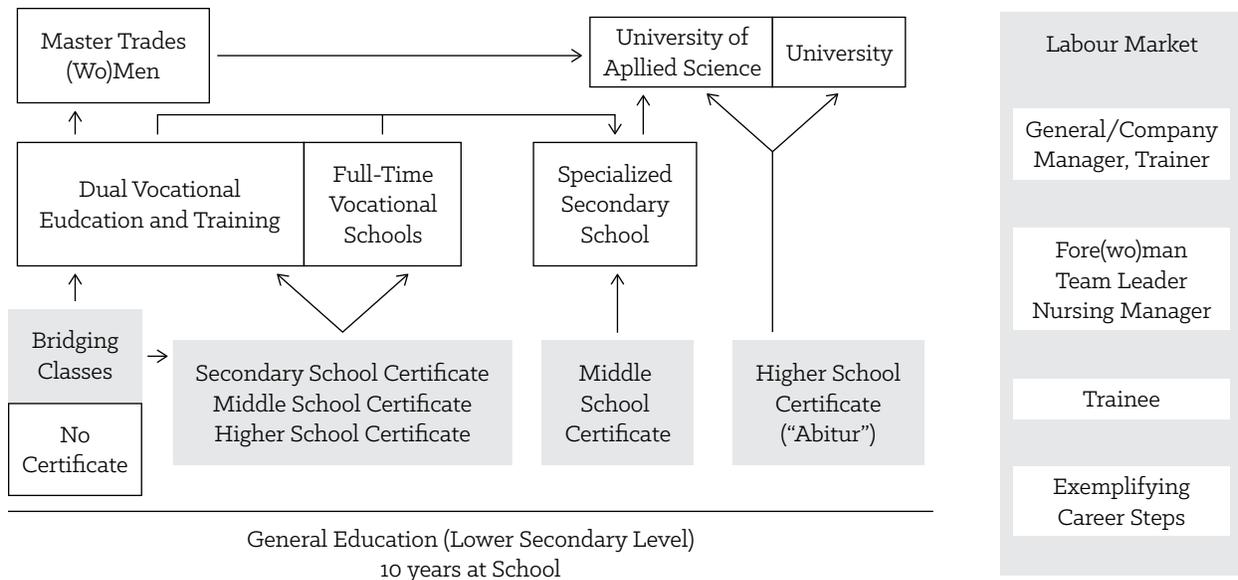
the prerequisites to apply for employment in their trade (Section 2.1). Depending on the profession, there is the possibility of advancing to middle management. To become self-employed, advanced training to become a master is required. From there or after completing a supplementary school visit, it is possible to pursue the academic path at a University of Applied Sciences. Figure 2 provides an overview of access to the labor market.

## REFUGEES IN THE DUAL VET

The formalized training system poses a challenge for some immigrants. A cohort study by the Federal Employment Service (BA 2018, p.16) shows that a majority of refugees had no formal vocational training (86%). This is not surprising in that the German training system is not known in the countries of origin. In addition, evidence of professional experience is often missing or there is no comparability or usability for the German labor market. Refugees are often placed in jobs with low qualifications (BA 2016, p. 7).<sup>2</sup> At the same time, there are various efforts to build bridges to the first job market.

In countries of origin, vocational degrees are often considered as less valuable, have lower social status, and the choice to pursue vocational training “often becomes a ‘one-way street’ that rules out enrolling in a university degree program later.” (Stöwe 2018, p. 36). Furthermore, trainees must deal with their family’s expectations for higher levels of education, or some-

FIGURE 2: ROUTES INTO MAINSTREAM EMPLOYMENT, BASED ON A LECTURE OF DONEIT / KERRI / VASKE 04/2019, VECHTA, OWN DIAGRAM



2 Another reason is that job-seeking refugees are young compared to German job-seekers. Their education process often could not be completed in the country of origin (BA 2016 p. 6).

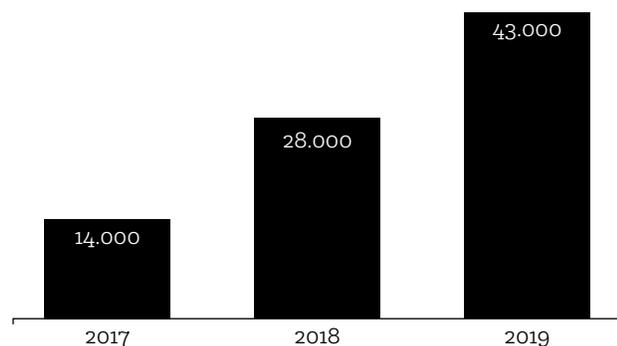
times they may have to support their families at home (Wiedner et al. 2018, p. 28, Müller 2019). Among the main reasons that refugees decide against vocational training is that pay levels for apprentices are lower than the salaries for unskilled workers.

### NUMBERS AND DATA ON THE TRAINING OF REFUGEES

With the influx of people seeking protection in 2015-2016, particularly men of younger age groups (BA 2019, p. 7), there is also an increasing demand for those needing training opportunities. This observation is reflected in the labor market statistics on dual VET: from October 2018 to August 2019, around 37,000 refugees nationwide were looking for a training place with the help of the state employment agency.<sup>3</sup> Approximately 27,000 of these young people were able to start the desired or alternative vocational training, but approximately 28 percent of these individuals had to wait and could not be placed until 1 August 2019.

As of March 2019, approximately 43,000 trainees from the major refugee-sending countries of origin worked in dual VET.

FIGURE 3: REFUGEES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (DATES: FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT AGENCY 2018 + 2019). OWN DIAGRAM



The district of Vechta in Lower Saxony, in which the SKM project is offered, is characterized by a high employment rate and a high demand for qualified workers. In April 2019, the unemployment rate was only 3.3%. In the Oldenburg region, which includes the Vechta and Oldenburg districts, 7,700 refugees were registered as looking for work. Refugees are discussed here as “potential for the job market” (Müller 2019) to reduce the shortage of skilled workers. In the 2017/2018 cohort, 796 refugees were registered as seeking training with the employment agency. Of the 409 trainees who were able to start their training in the “Oldenburger District” on 1 August 2018, 308 were still in training in April 2019. Every fourth

apprentice left the apprenticeship early without completing any exams (Müller 2019). Unfortunately, the report did not specify the reasons why approximately 25% of the refugees left within the first year of apprenticeship.

### CHALLENGES FOR REFUGEES AND THEIR TRAINERS

In Germany, job placement measures end with the start of training. The premature termination of training relationships is mostly justified on the part of the companies due to their apprentices’ lack of language skills. Studies by the KOFA (2017) and OECD (2017) also mention the lack of social and (inter-) cultural capital as particularly challenging for employers. The “German work mentality” or the “company tone” are given as examples for conflicts and misunderstandings. Problems of understanding arise when trainees lack the implicit knowledge or specific incorporated cultural capital that is acquired through family, education and interaction (Bourdieu 2015). Given that it is difficult for refugees in refugee accommodation to establish important social contacts with the host society (Wiedner et al. 2018; Rusert et al. 2019; “Bridging social capital” according to Putnam 2000), it is perhaps understandable that they would experience difficulty navigating the work world in their new home.

### UNIVERSITY PROJECT SKM

To address the cultural and social capital knowledge gaps, the project, located in a rural area at the University of Vechta and funded by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, focuses on inter-ethnic contacts between trainees with refugee experience and students. The aim is to strengthen the trainees’ social skills by having a volunteer student accompany them in tandem for one semester, with participation being voluntary for everyone involved. According to Stein (2003), social skills are defined in the project as sensitivity, ability to make contacts, sociability, team orientation and assertiveness.

### SERVICE PROCESS OF SKM

Linked to the elective module *Research Colloquium* as a Service-Learning Project, students are prepared for mentoring and work with the individually determined needs from the meetings with the participants. What is unique in comparison to other intercultural training courses is that the needs of students as members of the host society as well as

3 In order for those looking for training to be included in the placement process, they must demonstrate the language skills and basic school knowledge required for vocational training (“qualification for training”). The statistics of the employment agency therefore do not cover all job seekers.

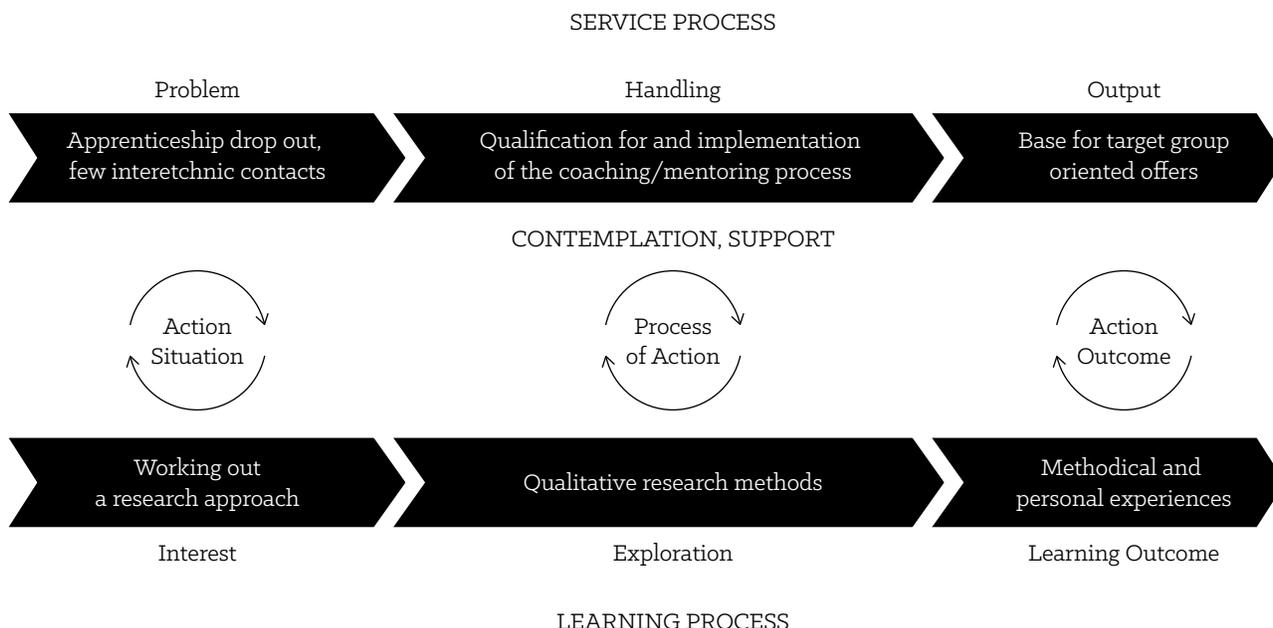
refugees are addressed, and that reciprocity enables education through encounters with one another. Students learned about intercultural understanding and diversity, while the refugee apprentices learned about German workplace culture. The interest among the refugee apprentices was so great that there were not enough accompaniments available.

In the initial phase of the project, an interview is conducted

with student volunteers and refugee apprentices. The interviews as part of the examination are evaluated in the seminar. In this way, students are introduced to their curricular learning goals in a participatory way by addressing civil society needs (Schnebel & Gerholz 2019).

The sequentially linked service and learning process in the SKM project is shown in Figure 4.

FIGURE 4: SERVICE PROCESS IN SKM (RUSERT ET AL. 2019, P. 385 SIMILAR TO SCHNEBEL & GERHOLZ 2019)



#### CONTEXT: LABOR MARKET INTEGRATION AND PARTICIPATION

Participation in the labour market provides opportunities beyond earning money; there are additional tangible benefits (Stiglitz et al. 2009, p. 15). When newcomers find gainful and meaningful employment, health and housing outcomes also improve (Söhn & Marquardsen 2017, p. 8; Figure 5).

In contrast to Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), where the integration efforts for refugees are coordinated from a single source, the support services in Germany are more fragmented. Identification and networking of those involved and those affected was essential so that the project and existing offers could interlink or connect.

The cooperation partners of the SKM project primarily support work and education, partly also habitation for newcomers. Due to the focus of the current project, health was not given much attention. Future research should consider the health and stress levels of refugees as these may influence the ability of many refugees to complete their apprenticeships.

FIGURE 5: DIMENSIONS OF PARTICIPATION OF REFUGEES' LABOR MARKET INTEGRATION, OWN DIAGRAM



The actors meet regularly at events on the topic, including the actions of the project. A more structured form of cooperation was desired by some participants but has not yet been implemented.

In mentoring,<sup>4</sup> they act as contact points for problems such as the search for a new apprenticeship position, arrange contacts with companies and trainees, provide information about local conditions and sharing their background knowledge. At the same time, they exchange information on the project results.

### INSIGHTS FROM INTERVIEWS

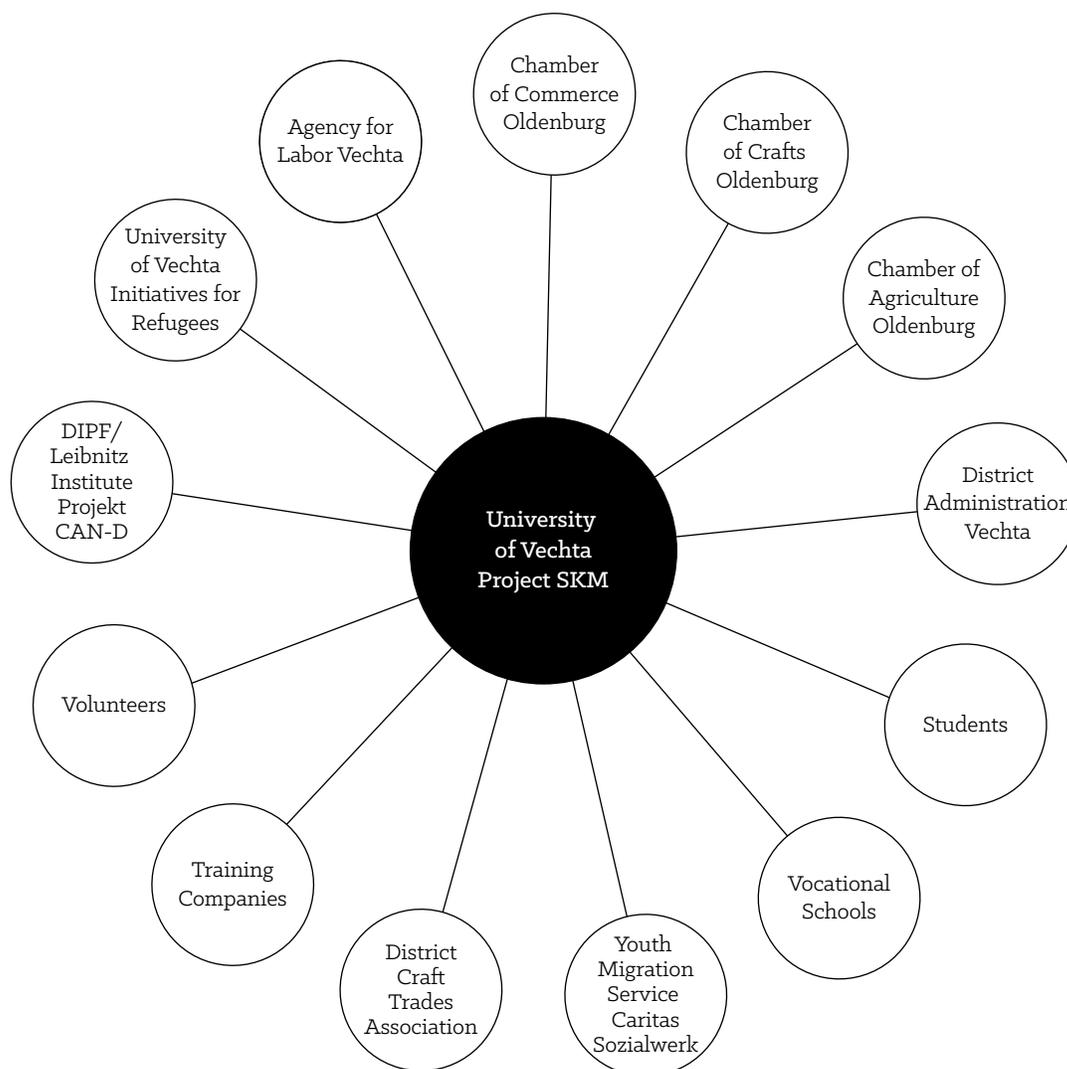
In the first half of 2019, 17 qualitative interviews were carried out with trainee-refugees. The trainees who participated in the program could clearly state their needs and use various help systems. Some of them had successfully completed general education with a university entrance qualification in their country of origin. Five trainees left school without a

qualification in their country of origin, while three of them did not attend school.

At the time of the interview, they had been in Germany for an average of three years. Most of them had completed a language course before their training or completed a school-leaving certificate. Six apprentices completed a one-year entry qualification, i.e. a preparatory internship with attendance at a German vocational school, before they started their training.

Language skills are a great challenge both in the vocational school and in the company. Following the lesson content, technical terms, the writing of class assignments, and reading comprehension were highlighted as particularly difficult for the refugee-trainees. The helpfulness of the teachers and

FIGURE 6: NETWORK TO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING IN VECHTA



<sup>4</sup> Students go through a qualification and receive weekly supervision. In addition, the teachers have guaranteed a readiness for stressful situations. More information about the training for mentoring can be found in Rusert, K., Kart, M. & Stein, M. (2019)

classmates is rated positively. Some trainees receive support through state-funded programs either individually or as a group.

Communication difficulties in customer contact occurs especially when local dialects are spoken (Low German). Here, too, the trainees surveyed appreciated the willingness of their superiors and colleagues to help. They mostly describe the relationship with the manager, trainees and work colleagues as positive. Satisfaction in the company has a positive effect on the course of training. Previous professional experience and individual resources also have a positive influence on their volition to complete the program.

Other factors that were listed as beneficial were affiliation (e.g. through a good class and working atmosphere) and through support networks such as advice centers, projects for refugees, volunteers, teachers, etc. are also named as very beneficial.

Some trainees report conflicts with superiors and work colleagues. To this end, they mainly developed avoidance strategies such as “avoiding each other”, “saying nothing” or “accepting the opinions of others”, but some were able to ask someone to mediate in particularly difficult interactions. They focus on their goal of successfully completing their training. Mentoring was used to discuss ways in which conflicts can be dealt with constructively.

The trainees also found it difficult to live in limbo. A temporary residence permit (official toleration status) protects refugees from possible deportation during their training but does not mean they are able to remain in Germany permanently. Nevertheless, they report – especially trainees from Afghanistan – enormous pressure and express great anxiety with regards to the complicated bureaucracy involved in obtaining tolerated status even during their apprenticeship. They consider their prospect of staying dependent on successfully completing their training and taking on an employment relationship.

## CONCLUSION

There is a heterogeneous group of individuals with the only common experience being the flight from their own country. SKM takes this heterogeneity into account in several ways:

There is no standardized one-to-one support, meaning that the volunteer students and their refugee-apprentice trainees must ‘work through’ and discover solutions on their own. This is a beneficial experience to both parties because each will be confronted with challenges in their future professional lives; getting involved in the world of clients, students as well as customers means acting in uncertainty. In the seminar, students receive extensive preparation and intensive support in the form of reflection and on-call service by the teachers for difficult situations in order to avoid being overwhelmed.

Trainee-refugees also learn that their personal concerns and interests are the basis for research in the project. The perceived appreciation was expressed several times in the interviews and documentation.

From this perspective, no standardized integration roadmap will emerge in the project, but rather guidelines based on personal resources that:

Are released from the tight management of a standardized placement and qualification offer for education and occupation and [...] do not conceptualize migration experiences deficiently but develop them as a biographical education and coping resource for young people [...]. (Stummbaum 2012, p. 33)

The traumatic experiences and limitations of young refugees are recognized as well as their previous experience, skills and abilities, which they may also have gained while fleeing.

In order to raise awareness of the heterogeneity and resource orientation in companies, more target group-specific training and intercultural competence training for trainers are necessary. This also includes establishing an error culture in the company that promotes open communication and makes implicit knowledge accessible.

Refugee-trainees need reliable contacts, whom they can also turn to in order to know their rights and obligations and to reflect on their own behavior and that of their colleagues and superiors. A low-threshold offer could be made available through school social work. According to information from the vocational schools, their funds have recently been greatly reduced.

The refugee-trainees often lack social contacts with locals, which is a reason for them to participate in SKM. Such encounters can be made possible through projects and low-threshold measures, but also through leisure activities as part of the training.

Understanding problems with words and formulations makes it necessary to rethink the way exams are designed. More flexibility in the types of examinations would be more inclusive and would expand possibilities for trainees who may have different restrictions and/or varying levels of ability. Regional actors in the field are well networked in rural areas, such as in the Vechta district. The training companies expressed the wish for a more structured cooperation with the Vechta administration and help organizations. The increased administrative effort to employ refugees could be lessened if the companies had a contact point to address their questions to the right place and to initiate clarification processes. As labour shortages increase and the number of refugees seeking apprenticeship training increases, investing in collaboration networks between companies and help organizations would

be beneficial in the long run. Setting up a central coordination point as a guide could at the same time coordinate training offers and motivate more companies to hire refugees. The holistic support of trainees and companies in dual VET thus makes a valuable contribution to the inclusion and participation of refugees.

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# PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT SPONSORSHIPS: OCCUPATIONAL AND EARNINGS OUTCOMES FOR VIETNAMESE, LAOTIAN AND CAMBODIAN REFUGEES<sup>1</sup>

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This paper adds to the field of refugee settlement by examining the current labour market outcomes of Canada's 'Boat People' entering as privately sponsored refugees (PSR) versus government assisted refugees (GAR). We use IRCC admission data merged with 2016 census of population records to study the entry cohort of adults arriving between 1980-1990 who were born in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Examinations of occupational location, percent in high skill occupations and 2015 earnings find no support for the argument that those entering as PSRs have more advantageous economic outcomes than those entering as GARs. We suggest that such findings reflect the mass migration characteristics associated with the Boat People and the related use of the Designated Group category. Since then, rules and regulations increasingly governed admissions of Privately Sponsored and Government Sponsored refugees; these may underlie differences between the two entry classes that are observed in contemporary scholarship.

*Cet article contribue au domaine de l'établissement des réfugiés en examinant les résultats actuels sur le marché du travail des « Boat People » du Canada qui sont entrés au pays en tant que réfugiés parrainés par le secteur privé (RPS) par rapport aux réfugiés assistés par le gouvernement (RPG). Nous utilisons les données d'admission de l'IRCC fusionnées avec les données du recensement de la population de 2016 pour étudier la cohorte des adultes arrivés entre 1980 et 1990 qui sont nés au Vietnam, au Cambodge et au Laos. L'examen de la localisation des professions, du pourcentage de personnes exerçant des professions hautement qualifiées et des revenus de 2015 ne permet pas de soutenir l'argument selon lequel les personnes arrivant en tant que RPS ont des résultats économiques plus avantageux que celles arrivant en tant que RPG. Nous proposons que ces résultats reflètent les caractéristiques de migration de masse associées aux Boat People et l'utilisation connexe de la catégorie des groupes désignés. Depuis lors, les règles et règlements ont de plus en plus régi les admissions de réfugiés parrainés par le secteur privé et par le gouvernement ; ces règles et règlements peuvent être à l'origine des différences entre les deux catégories d'entrée observées dans les études contemporaines.*

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1 The Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRRC) award to Monica Boyd funded graduate student training for this project.

## INTRODUCTION

Canada's recent and on-going resettlement of Syrian refugees directs attention to the unique sponsorship framework first used in the Indochinese admissions in the late 1970s and 1980s. Then, as now, refugees entered Canada either under federal government assistance (called government assisted refugees or GARs) or under the sponsorship of private groups consisting of citizens, church groups and other civil society groups (privately sponsored refugees or PSRs)<sup>2</sup>. Recent studies find these entry distinctions are important for subsequent refugee economic integration. Compared to government assisted refugees, privately sponsored refugees have faster English language learning, higher employment rates, and higher earnings (Kaida, Hou and Stick, 2019; Picot, Zhang and Hou 2019; Treviranus and Casasola 2003; Wilkinson and Garcia 2017). However, these conclusions derive from two distinctive approaches to research: 1) studies on specific origin groups that frequently interview limited numbers of respondents; and 2) studies that rely on data from large surveys, including Canada's censuses of population. These latter large studies cover many distinctive origin groups; a common response to such detail is to combine all refugee groups regardless of period of entry and source country. At best, distinctions often exist only by region of origin (for exceptions see Houle 2019; Picot, Zhang and Hou 2019).

This paper bridges the two main approaches to understanding refugee settlement: current labour market outcomes by type of sponsorship (private versus government assisted). We take advantage of the innovative merging of Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) entry data to 2016 census of population records to select the entry cohort of adults arriving between 1980-1990 who were born in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Our research finds no support for the argument that those entering as PSRs have more advantageous outcomes than those entering under the government assistance programs. In the conclusion, we return to possible explanations for our findings.

## THE BACKSTORY: THE INDOCHINESE CRISIS AND CANADIAN RESPONSES

Resettlement of Indochinese refugees in Canada represents the coming together of a complex history in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia fanned by events during the 19th and 20th century. There was colonial dominance by France, followed by increasing military intervention of the United States in the south of Vietnam and Russia in the north, the resulting Vietnam War with the fall of Saigon to northern commun-

ist forces in 1975, and the ongoing chaos that continued in Indochina. Long and detailed accounts of each country's history underlying refugee flight are not possible here (for an abbreviated review see Kula and Paik 2016). Canadian sources (Molloy 2015; Canadian Council on Refugees no date) list the following factors as pushing Indochinese peoples from their homes and countries by the mid to late 1970s: the Cambodian genocide; the targeting and cleansing of large Chinese minorities; singling out those who worked or were previously affiliated with the U.S. forces; oppression of "class" enemies; executions; putting people into re-education camps; forcible relocation of people to New Economic zones; forced labour; large scale violation of human rights; and violence and wars between neighboring countries, particularly Vietnam against China and Cambodia. These conditions caused large-scale movements between southeastern countries and by sea from the mid-1970s onwards. The volume of the latter "boat people" and the harsh conditions of their flight captured public attention worldwide, and especially in Canada (Molloy 2015; Molloy et. al 2017).

Refugee resettlement rules and practices that accompanied Canada's new Immigration Act 1975 (effective June 1978) also are central to subsequent Indochinese refugee admissions. Resettlement of displaced persons to Canada occurred in the aftermath of World War II; however, the Immigration Act 1976 enshrined humanitarian principles in admissibility criteria alongside those of family reunification and economic contributions. Additionally, the Immigration Act was important in two respects. First, it allowed the government to establish "Designated Classes" for persons whose collective situation might place them in a *de facto* refugee situation. Created on December 7, 1978, the Indochinese Designated Class included citizens of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam leaving after April 30, 1975. Canada's first annual refugee plan on December 20, 1978 stipulated the admission of 5,000 Indochinese. However, boat arrivals in South East Asia continued to escalate. In late June 1979 the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) governments announced they would not accept new boat arrivals, followed by the then Secretary of State for External Affairs, Flora MacDonald announcing at a June 20-21 United Nations Conference that Canada would accept up to 50,000 Indochinese refugees for resettlement. A new Minister of Immigration, Lloyd Axworthy, increased the numbers by 10,000 in April 2, 1980 (Employment and Immigration Canada no date; Malloy and Simeon 2016).

The creation of the Indochinese Designated Group permitted streamlining admissions of these refugees. Central to admissions, however, was a second feature of the Immigration Act 1976, notably the Private Sponsorship of Refugees

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2 Today the sponsorship arrangements are somewhat more complex, with the addition during the 1990s of the Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) and the Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) programs. Additionally, from time to time, municipalities also have played facilitating roles, as shown in Mayor Marion Dewar's (Ottawa) Project 4000.

(PSR) program. Informal sponsorship after World War I and II existed, but with the announcement of a plan to draft a new immigration act, religious groups lobbied for including a provision permitting individuals and groups to sponsor refugees (Labman and Pearlman 2016). As part of the evolution of Canadian refugee policy (Lanphier 1981) the Immigration Act 1976 included such provisions; thereafter individuals and families in both Convention and in Designated classes could be sponsored by groups of five or more persons who “[...] committed themselves to maintain the refugees for one year or until they were self-sufficient, whichever was first. Sponsors agreed to provide furnished lodgings and household effects, food, clothing and incidental expenses; arrange for provincial medical and hospital insurance premiums and other health care costs, and provide reception, orientation, counselling, transportation and employment help” (Employment and Immigration Canada 1982: 14). National organizations could sign “master agreements” with the federal government that enabled their constituent groups to undertake sponsorship. Religious organizations were highly prominent in the PSR program; the Mennonite Central Committee was the first to sign the master agreement (SAH) followed by 40 churches and organizations in March 1979 (Molloy and Simeon 2016).

The federal government envisioned privately sponsored refugees as supplementing the larger admission of government assisted refugees, designating 21,000 admissions for PSRs out of the 50,000 admissions announced in June 1979. But the response of approximately 7,000 sponsorship groups quickly reshaped expectations and private sponsorship became foundational for increasing Canada’s Indochinese refugee intake. In total, out of slightly more than 60,000 admissions occurring by December 1980, 54 percent were privately sponsored, 43 percent were government assisted and 3 percent were relative sponsored (calculated from Malloy and Simeon 2016). Smaller numbers continued to arrive during the 1980s, in part reflecting family reunification as well as travel and processing delays.

Contemporary research suggests that privately sponsored refugees economically exceed government assisted refugees in the labour force participation rates and in earnings. However, Molloy and Simeon (2016) ask if this indeed characterized Indochinese refugees. Noting the general neglect of this topic, they refer to anecdotal observations that sponsored refugees envied the monthly allowances provided to GARs by the government and the independence it brought compared to their own situations. Two additional reasons motivate returning to the question of whether or not privately sponsored Indochinese refugees did better economically than government assisted refugees. First, in the decades after the Indochinese resettlement in Canada, conditions articulated in the United Nations Convention on Refugees became standard criteria to be met and the federal government narrowed definitions of group membership (Batarseh 2017, Chapter 2; Labman and Pearlman 2018: 441). In contrast, the settlement of the Indochinese in the late 1970s and early 1980s occurred under the auspices

of the Indochinese designated group category. This enhanced processing but the numbers and easier processing rules created conditions of mass migration rather than admission of well-defined groups using specific criteria. Relatives quickly also became part of the flows. Lamphier (2003) states that between 1979-1980 more than half of the refugees sponsored under the master agreements were nominated either by their relatives or by the direct request of relatively already sponsored. In short, numbers were high, and the refugees selected for resettlement not only feared death and torture, and loss of economic livelihood and but also wanted to facilitate the migration of relatives (Dorais 2003). Under these circumstances, those entering as either PSRs or GARs may have been highly similar.

Additionally, the procedure used to match private sponsoring groups to Indochinese refugees is best understood as a “sponsorship of strangers” rather than a pattern prevalent today in which sponsors can opt to “name” those they wish to sponsor (Labman and Pearlman 2018: 441). Accounts of matching Indochinese refugees to sponsors suggest that matching occurred late in the process, often shortly before refugees were flown to Canada and that government generated matches were presented to sponsors for approval rather than sponsor-generated selection occurring well in advance of processing (Employment and Immigration Canada 1982; Molloy et. al 2017). At least in the early stages in 1979 and 1980, those who entered Canada as government assisted refugees often seemed to be residual (see Malloy et. al 2017), consisting of unmatched individual or families. Today’s practice of GARs selection rests on recommendations made by the United National High Commission on Refugees following definitions of persecution found in the 1951 convention on refugees.

In short, scholarship indicates significant ways in which the PSR and the GAR programs changed over the years. Recent findings of differences in economic integration between the PSRs and the GARs may not hold for earlier arrivals, particularly for the Indochinese refugees (Batarseh 2017; Labman and Pearlman 2018). We examine 2016 census data to answer the question of whether or not privately sponsored Indochinese refugees born in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos have economic advantages over their counterparts who entered Canada as government assisted refugees.

## INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN 2016

Studies in the 1980s suggest that Indochinese refugees upon arrival had trouble with economic integration. Many had not completed high school, and many had previously worked in jobs that held no correspondence to those in Canada (Lanphier 1981) Although those from Laos were more likely to know French, most Indochinese refugees were unfamiliar with English and/or French. In total, “human capital” skills of education,

job experience and English/French language proficiency that influence occupational locations and earnings were low. Many also arrived shortly before or during the 1981-1982 depression characterized by high inflation, high interest rates and rising unemployment rates. In fact, the 1982 unemployment rate of 12.8 percent was the highest rate since 1934 during the “Great Depression” (CBC 1983).

Despite these difficulties faced by Indochinese refugees, early studies of economic integration did not directly contrast economic outcomes for those entering as PSRs versus those arriving as GARs and at least one reviewer is critical of the alluded benefits of private sponsorship (Lanphier 2003). However direct comparisons now are possible given two recent developments: 1) the recent combination of IRCC immigration entry records with Canada Revenue Service tax records; and 2) the matching of IRCC immigration entry records to 2016 census of population data. Both datasets are for immigrants entering as permanent residents starting in 1980 when IRCC admission records were digitalized. We use the census data because it offers occupational information in addition to earnings and because it includes information on all Indochinese entering during 1980-1990 rather than those filing taxes from 1982 on. The Indochinese refugee flow primarily occurred in 1979-1980; we are able to pick up the second year of heavy in-migration as well as including those continuing

to arrive before 1991. Adult refugees are those who arrived at age 20 or older, and in the literature they often are described as the “first generation.” By 2016, the first generation in this analysis was aged 45-70. We distinguish between those born in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, and we compare the occupational locations and earnings of PSRs to GARs. Because of the high concentration of the Indochinese refugees in Canada’s large cities, we study only those living in cities of 100,000 or more (Census Metropolitan Areas, or CMAs) in Canada’s 10 provinces.

For Indochinese adults arriving between 1980 and 1990 and residing in Canadian CMAs in 2016, the Vietnamese-born are the most numerous at nearly 38,000 followed by Cambodians (7,120) and Laotians (3,720). Most entered in the refugee class although approximately 30 percent of the Vietnamese entering Canada between 1980-1990 also came in the economic class or were family sponsored (Table 1). Out of those entering Canada in the refugee and humanitarian class, approximately 4 out of 10 born in either Vietnam or Cambodia were privately sponsored refugees compared to seven out of ten of the Laotian born. These statistics indicate that the trends observed in 1979 and 1980 of PSRs outnumbering GARs did not characterize the Vietnamese and Laotian born arriving later in the decade (also see Jedwab 2018, Table 3).

TABLE 1: NUMBERS OF ENTRY CLASS FOR PERSONS BORN IN VIETNAM, CAMBODIA, AND LAOS, AGE 20-PLUS AT ARRIVAL, ENTERING CANADA BETWEEN 1980-1990 AND LIVING IN CMAS

|                             | Country of Birth |              |              |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
|                             | Vietnam          | Cambodia     | Laos         |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>37,740</b>    | <b>7,120</b> | <b>3,720</b> |
| Immigration Entry Category  | 100.0            | 100.0        | 100.0        |
| Economic                    | 16.3             | 5.4          | 3.2          |
| Family Sponsored            | 14.9             | 5.1          | 4.2          |
| Privately Sponsored Refugee | 28.3             | 39.3         | 64.5         |
| Government Assisted Refugee | 40.5             | 50.1         | 28.1         |

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada 2016

What about economic differences between the privately sponsored and the government assisted groups? Are privately sponsored Indochinese refugees born in each country advantaged in terms of occupational locations and earnings compared to government sponsored refugees? The answers rest on the following indicators: occupational scores associated with the 500 occupational titles in the 2016 census, the

percent in high skilled occupations and 2015 weekly earnings. The occupational scores represent the location of specific occupations in a ranking of all occupational titles found in the 2016 census. These scores indicate where, on average, the various Indochinese groups are located in this hierarchy of occupations.<sup>3</sup> We next ask if the observed differences are substantial enough to consider important by using statistical tests

3 The 2016 median education and 2015 median earnings of all workers (not just those from Indochina) for each specific occupational title are transformed into percentile distributions and combined. Average occupational scores for each of are then calculated for the possible six categories defined by three birthplace and two entry status (PSR vs GAR) groups (see Boyd 2008 for further details on the scores).

of significance. We repeat this approach with another occupational indicator, the percentage in high skilled occupations, using a classification developed for the census occupational classification (NOCSKILL=A) plus selected occupations with executive management titles. The same approach is applied to positive earnings (greater than zero) for all those working one week or more in 2015. Throughout, the strategy is to compare values for the PS and GAR refugees specific to each birthplace group (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos).

Table 2 (column 1, panel 1) shows the average occupational scores, specific for PSRs and GARs for those born in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos and entering in 1980-1990. Results correspond to early studies documenting concentration in blue

collar and manual occupations. On average, Indochinese refugees hold occupations that are not highly ranked in terms of the median education or earnings of all incumbents. For example, Cambodian refugees who were privately sponsored on average have an occupational score of 29. This means that on average Cambodian PSRs hold jobs that rank 29 percent above those of the entire Canadian labour force. Stated differently, Cambodian PSRs on average are in the bottom 30 percent of occupations ranked by education and earnings. Vietnamese refugees have higher scores as do Laotian born, but not by much. Succinctly put, in general these three Indochinese groups are in the bottom one-third of all occupations enumerated by the 2016 census.

**TABLE 2: MEAN OCCUPATIONAL SCORES, PERCENT IN HIGH-SKILLED OCCUPATIONS AND MEAN 2015 WEEKLY WAGES FOR PRIVATELY SPONSORED AND GOVERNMENT ASSISTED REFUGEES BORN IN VIETNAM, CAMBODIA AND LAOS, AGE 20-PLUS AT ARRIVAL, ENTERING CANADA BETWEEN 1980-1990, AND LIVING IN CMAS**

| Birthplace and Entry Status            | Mean Occupational Score | Percent in High-Skill Occupations | Mean 2015 Weekly Wage |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Vietnam – Private Sponsored Refugee    | 35                      | 4.8                               | 1,009                 |
| Vietnam – Government Assisted Refugee  | 37                      | 5.7                               | 1,027                 |
| Cambodia – Private Sponsored Refugee   | 29                      | 2.4                               | 888                   |
| Cambodia – Government Assisted Refugee | 32                      | 2.3                               | 1,031                 |
| Laos – Private Sponsored Refugee       | 35                      | 1.8                               | 1,139                 |
| Laos – Government Assisted Refugee     | 35                      | 3.6                               | 908                   |

**ARE DIFFERENCES STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT?**

|  |      |      |      |
|--|------|------|------|
| Vietnam – Private Sponsored Refugee    | (rg) | (rg) | (rg) |
| Vietnam – Government Assisted Refugee  | YES  | NO   | NO   |
| Cambodia – Private Sponsored Refugee   | (rg) | (rg) | (rg) |
| Cambodia – Government Assisted Refugee | YES  | NO   | NO   |
| Laos – Private Sponsored Refugee       | (rg) | (rg) | (rg) |
| Laos – Government Assisted Refugee     | NO   | NO   | NO   |

(rg) = Reference group  
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada 2016

To be sure, variations exist within birthplace groups, but how important are they? The second panel of Table 2 applies statistical tests (using OLS regressions) to determine if private sponsored refugees significantly differ from the government sponsored groups. The first indicates if the Vietnamese PSR differ substantially from the Vietnamese GARs; the second comparison indicates if the Cambodian-born PSR differ from the GARs born in Cambodia and the third compares values for the Laotian-born. The conclusion is that average occupational scores for GARs born in Vietnam and in Cambodia represent important differences from the slightly lower scores of those of the Vietnamese and Cambodian PSRs. No differences exist among Laotian refugees by entry status. Unpublished

research shows that the GARs in all three countries have higher educational attainments than the PSRs and this helps explain why the actual occupational scores are higher for the Vietnam and Cambodian born GAR groups compared to the PSRs born in the same countries.

Table 2 (panel 1, columns 2 and 3) also shows the percentages holding high skill occupations and average weekly earnings by entry status (PSRs vs GARs) for those born in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Differences in percentages and in average wages do exist, both between birthplace groups and within birthplace groups by entry status. Nevertheless, the variation that exists between the values for the PSRs and the GARs

within each birthplace group are not enough to be considered statistically significant, given the within group variations and the size of the birthplace populations.

## CONCLUDING INSIGHTS

Data from the 2016 census of Canada shows that GARs born in Vietnam and in Cambodia have higher occupational scores than privately sponsored refugees also born in these countries. However, this finding largely reflects underlying educational variations; differences in the percentages holding high skilled occupations and in average earnings are not substantial (that is, large enough to be statistically significant).

In sum, our findings (Table 2) do not support the contemporary narrative that private sponsored refugees have economic advantages over government assisted refugees. In fact, where outcomes differ, the GARs are at an advantage. For Indochinese refugees arriving in the 1980s, either government sponsored refugees have higher occupational status or differences are not large enough to be considered meaningful or accurate (i.e. statistically significant).

Why this contradiction of our findings to those from Syrian refugees or from general analyses of administrative data attached to tax files or to census data? Two explanations are offered. First, the private-government sponsorship was formally adopted in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act 1976* (effective 1978) and it was first used on a large-scale basis with the boat people flows. This refugee stream was in urgent need of attention by Employment and Immigration policy makers and field officers (see: Molloy et al. 2017). Government sponsorship was one mechanism but a second mechanism was the private sponsorship of refugees. However, both may have been used with less codification or institutional guidance than is currently the case. As private sponsorship was used more and more over time, it became institutionalized, governed by a growing body of practices and rules on how to regulate and implement private sponsorships. Sponsors today also are more involved. As such, private sponsorship now is a selective mechanism, used to facilitate the entry of some refugees. The government sponsorship program also is selective, resting on the UNHCR criteria of who is a refugee. Such selectivity may not have existed in the Indochinese boat people flows, particularly within the context of mass migration under the Designated Group category.

Second, time in a destination country matters. Analyses of the IRCC Longitudinal Immigration Database for all refugee origin groups show that the employment and earnings advantages associated with private sponsorship entry can persist for up to 15 years. Nevertheless, difference start to narrow after three years (Kaida, Hou and Stick 2019). In contrast, this paper focuses on specific birthplace groups from Vietnam,

Cambodia and Laos who arrived in 1980-1990. By 2016, most would have lived in Canada for a quarter century or more, a span that is more than sufficient to erode any entry status differences that initially might have advantaged the PSRs. Of course, it also is possible that for the Indochinese refugees arriving in the 1980s, the GARs were more likely the PSRs to hold better jobs or have higher earnings, but that researchers unduly focused on privately sponsored refugees. Our findings cannot address this possibility other than to note that for those born in Vietnam, the GARs had higher percentages with college degrees compared with the PSRs, and higher education is associated with better jobs and higher earnings.

Perhaps in the dawn of resettling the boat people, the private sponsorship program compared to government sponsorship did offer advantages, but those were linked to mass rescue and relocation rather than economic advantage relative to GARs. Two additional insights suggested by our study are: invariant titles for refugee programs do not always mean invariant immigrant selection practices or similar economic outcomes over time; and documenting what specific groups experience in the migration process and in the labour market are useful additions to general conclusions.

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# QUALITATIVE BARRIERS OF INTEGRATION AND ACCESS TO SETTLEMENT SERVICES: THE CASE OF MUSLIMS IN CANADA AND GERMANY

SAYED HAMID AKBARY and AMANDA LOUISE PALENBERG

Use of quantitative methodology has gained prominence in research on immigrant settlement and access to services. This paper, however, discusses the potential of qualitative methodology in explaining the link between settlement and gender identity construction, which has been overlooked in research on settlement due to lack of qualitative research using a gender lens. We draw on the qualitative findings of our doctoral research projects on Muslim immigrant men in Canada and Muslim immigrant women in Germany, respectively, to show that while previous quantitative research has explained the gendered nature of settlement (e.g., gender differences in terms of income, education, language acquisition, etc.), in-depth accounts of male and female immigrants in our studies reveal that settlement process is significantly limited by one's encounter with host country's gender order.

*L'utilisation d'une méthodologie quantitative a gagné en importance dans la recherche sur l'établissement des immigrants et l'accès aux services. Le présent document examine toutefois le potentiel de la méthodologie qualitative pour expliquer le lien entre l'établissement et la construction de l'identité du genre, qui a été négligé dans la recherche sur l'établissement en raison du manque de recherche qualitative utilisant une optique de genre. Nous nous appuyons sur les résultats qualitatifs de nos projets de recherche doctorale sur les hommes immigrés musulmans au Canada et les femmes immigrées musulmanes en Allemagne, respectivement, pour montrer que si des recherches quantitatives antérieures ont expliqué la caractéristique sexospécifique de l'établissement (par exemple, les différences entre les genres en ce qui concerne le revenu, l'éducation, l'acquisition de la langue, etc.), les comptes rendus approfondis des immigrés masculins et féminins dans nos études révèlent que le processus d'établissement est considérablement limité par la rencontre avec le système patriarcal du pays d'accueil.*

The quantitative-qualitative dichotomy in migration research has been an epistemological issue for the past four decades (see Castles 2012; Iosifides 2011; Iosifides and Sporton 2009; Halfacree and Boyle 1993; Cadwallader 1989; White 1980). This is because migration researchers and policy makers are mostly skeptical about the potential of qualitative methods in answering important questions (Gamlen 2012; Philip 1998). The key reason behind the quantitative-qualitative dichotomy is in epistemology. Methodology and epistemology are two interrelated concepts because the latter is a philosophy con-

cerned with the nature of relationship between researchers and research participants in pursuit of truth. Specifically, epistemology answers how researchers should go about acquiring knowledge (Young and Atkinson 2012). Quantitative researchers believe in 'positivism' epistemology, which advocates for objectivity in social research. Proponents of positivism – i.e. positivists – assert that there is a single 'truth' which can be measured using objective statistical techniques (Berg and Lune 2012). For instance, Emile Durkheim, one of the early advocates of objectivity in sociological research,

suggested that in order to improve sociology and sociological inquiry as a distinct discipline, researchers must take 'social facts' as the object of their research. By social facts, Durkheim referred to 'measurable' structural realities that are embedded in social institutions as opposed to human subjectivity and agency. The implication of Durkheim's insistence on social facts was that 'truth' in social phenomena becomes free of multiplicity only if the relationship between the researcher and research participants is based on neutrality (Castles 2012).

In contrast, qualitative researchers are highly critical of objectivity in social research. The constructionist epistemology, for instance, suggests that social phenomena are constructed through human interaction (Berger and Luckmann 1969). Hence, exploring 'truth' must constitute communicative interaction in which researchers draw on their subjectivity to engage with their research participants in the process of meaning making of the phenomenon of interest (Fontana and Frey 1994). As a result, qualitative researchers believe neither in singleness of truth nor in measurability of social phenomena in the scientific sense.

Instead, critics of objectivity uphold conceptualization of 'truth' as a relative notion that varies from one context to another. One example of relativism in migration context is the relative meaning of 'friendship'. While friendship may constitute 'more or less stable relations of reciprocity and solidarity' to native-born members of immigrant-receiving societies, 'friendship with natives' means 'superficial friendship contact' to immigrants (Iosifides and Sporton 2009, 103). Considering the concept of relativism, only in-depth qualitative exchanges between researchers and research participants help understand the cultural and contextual motivation and consequences of attaching this meaning to 'friendship with natives' among immigrants (Iosifides and Sporton 2009).

Contrary to the premises of positivism epistemology, qualitative researchers believe that the core strengths of qualitative research lie in its ability to explain micro-level subjectivity and multiplicity of truth. In a research on asylum seekers in the United States, for instance, Oxford (2012) found that female asylum seekers faced higher rate of asylum denial because American immigration officials were 'differently situated' and, hence, had different interpretations of 'gender-based persecution'. The challenges asylum seekers faced in convincing immigrant officials had more to do with how immigration officials interpreted and responded to what constituted a gender-based asylum claim as opposed to the legitimacy of their gender-based asylum claims. As argued by Oxford, quantitative data would have not been as helpful to reveal the various layers of this important immigration-related issue throughout the course of data collection and analysis.

Another widely held criticism of quantitative methodology is that statistical models cannot capture the complexity of 'all possible factors' that produce and reproduce social phe-

nomena because they are built based on a limited number of variables (Castles 2012, 12). Such models face the risk of providing a 'reductionist' picture of social reality because once the model is prepared and tested based upon a pre-existing theoretical framework and series of variables that may be incomplete or irrelevant, the researcher cannot change the theoretical framework and add or remove variables (Castles 2012). Qualitative approach, however, offers researchers the freedom to refine their conceptual framework and interview schedule through collecting and analyzing data simultaneously. This dynamic nature of qualitative methodology, for instance, helped Shih (2012) realize that their research on migrant workers in California lacked validity. As a result, Shih (2012) revised their study's theoretical framework and interview schedule, and argues that "making, recognizing, and correcting errors is at the heart of sound qualitative analysis" (571). Understanding the role of all possible factors is an empirical process, which requires simultaneous collection and analysis of data.

Despite the limitations of quantitative methodology, positivist epistemology in various literatures in general and in migration literature, in particular, is arguably still viewed as a superior paradigm. Some researchers lean towards quantitative methodology due to the availability of secondary quantitative data as well as the rapid growth of statistical software packages contributing to the efficiency and convenience of data analysis (Castles 2012) and because of the proliferation of available administrative data. While use of qualitative software packages has also grown in recent years, qualitative researchers do not enjoy the luxury of any publicly available secondary qualitative data. More importantly, qualitative researchers do not benefit from as much support from policy makers who commission academic research for wider non-academic audience. As a result, quantitative research is viewed as a 'standard' and 'acceptable' research approach in policy circles (Philip 1998, 273). For instance, Alan Gamlen (2012), a migration researcher, writes:

Policy makers had indirectly funded the project [PhD dissertation] via a scholarship, and were therefore a key intended audience of the research from the start – and they have indeed seemed more receptive to the quantitative aspects of the research (and, I infer, to the research as a whole by virtue of its including such an aspect). (323)

However, this is not to suggest that there is a lack of interest in qualitative methodology in migration scholarship and beyond. Use of various qualitative methods have disturbed this supremacy to some extent. This development has taken place in recent years, according to Iosifides (2011), as "there has been a growing interest in a series of aspects related to the migration phenomenon, which are better highlighted and investigated with qualitative methods" (1). Qualitative data has potential to supplement, or be supplemented by, quanti-

tative methodology to help researchers get at the heart of the challenges and processes of integration among immigrants.

In this short paper, we use data from our doctoral research projects on Muslim men and women in Canada and Germany, respectively, which together illuminate that integration and access to settlement services in both countries have certain empirical challenges that can be unearthed only through in-depth qualitative accounts of immigrants. We will highlight that while existing quantitative researchers have argued that Canada and Germany are significantly distinct in terms of settlement policy and programs (see, for instance, Banting et al 2006), the qualitative barriers discussed in this paper are similar in these two countries.

It must be borne in mind that the purpose of this paper is to not advocate for the sole use of qualitative methodology in migration research at the expense of ignoring quantitative methods. Our thesis parallels the widely held statement that “different types of methods can answer different types of questions” (Castles 2012, 15). We argue that understanding such complex migration-related topics as ours, among others, requires a qualitative lens to understand the qualitative barriers and consequences of settlement efforts. Hence, use of quantitative methodology must not be prioritized at the expense of neglecting micro-level qualitative research that can unearth the complexity of various migration-related aspects (Iosifides 2011).

## QUALITATIVE BARRIERS OF ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Economic mobility is a crucial aspect of immigrant settlement. Understanding the determining factors of income inequality between Muslims and non-Muslims in particular has drawn the attention of many quantitative researchers (Cadwallader 1989). In Canada, Kazemipur’s (2014) quantitative analysis shows that Muslim men are significantly behind non-Muslim men in terms of earnings. However, the surprising aspect of this inequality is that higher education is not as rewarding for Muslim immigrant men as it is for non-Muslim immigrant men. Significantly fewer Muslim immigrant men who have a bachelor’s degree or more than bachelor’s degree, earn as much as non-Muslim immigrant men with same academic degrees. In other words, most of Muslim immigrant men earn significantly lower income than non-Muslim immigrant men despite having the same level of education. The implication of these findings is that education cannot explain the reason behind income inequality among Muslim and non-Muslim immigrant men in Canada.

What can, then, explain the reason behind this inequality if not education? Some may argue that Muslim immigrants struggle to find employment in their field of expertise because education credentials from Muslim-majority countries are not recognized in Western countries.

While ‘place of education’ may be a plausible explanation as well as statistically possible to measure its association with income, the qualitative accounts of Muslim immigrant men from Akbary’s doctoral research reveal that the reason is much more complex. Muslim immigrants, at least immigrant men from Afghanistan, who migrate after having obtained academic degrees in their countries of origin, do understand this particular risk of migration. However, their post-migration solution, as one of our participants said, is to “to start over or complete certain certifications to take advantage of the high-quality education in here [Canada].” Before doing so, for example, older Afghan immigrant men who lack the necessary English language skills for this purpose enroll in English courses offered by settlement service providing agencies. However, the following excerpt from Naser (50, from Afghanistan, living in Canada since 2000), a research participant in Akbary’s doctoral project, indicates that he stopped attending the classes after some time due to an unpleasant relationship with his instructor:

Naser: Originally, I wanted to work instead of taking English courses due to financial difficulties, but it was nice that my wife started a job at that time. I started the course, but I felt discouraged day by day by my instructor’s attitude. For some reason, she treated me differently from others in class. [...] For example, she would have other students engaged in class and provide them with more feedback and have a friendly conversation with them after class... you know stuff like that... but she was cold and somehow less engaging with me. [...] Now I think she was probably a bigot because I have now spent so much time here that I can recognize attitudes like that. But, I didn’t think it was bigotry back then because I struggled with learning English, and she wasn’t openly racist and never said anything anti-Islamic. [...] Listen, I was in charge of thousands of students and supervised tens of instructors back home. I would simply fire instructors like her from my school. [...] I thought it was a good idea to rather get a job and make money to support my children, so they receive proper ta’leem wa tarbeeya [discipline and education]... I got a job as a cleaner. I mopped offices after closing hours.

This exchange reveals that while Naser has a bachelor’s degree from Kabul, Afghanistan, ‘place of education’ is not the only reason why he ended up earning little income as a cleaner. The nature of his relationship with his instructor influenced his decision to quit because not earning an income like his wife and feeling detached from the economic sphere of life coupled with an uncertainty about his future threatened his masculine identity. He planned to eventually restore his masculine status through learning English and securing a relatively high-status job in the education sector, but he did not feel comfortable in the intergroup context with his instructor. While he had a decent job and income in Afghanistan, his eco-

conomic reality did not meet his expectations in Canada until he reconciled this difference and started a job as a cleaner to fulfill his gendered responsibilities as a husband and father. While racism or Islamophobia may have been the reason behind the instructor's attitude, Naser did not interpret it as a form of discrimination initially. Therefore, we do not see how Naser's intention to eventually switch from being an English student to accepting to work as a cleaner can be measured and explained in statistical terms. This process and its link with his pre-migration status as an educator and post-migration financial difficulties and masculinity crisis was revealed because the researcher and the research participant engaged in an in-depth conversation that provided an accurate guide for inviting the researcher to invite the research participant to open up about his feelings and motivations.

A similar reality exists in the lives of Muslim immigrants in Germany. Women from Muslim-majority countries, in particular, are vulnerable to unemployment more than non-Muslim immigrant women in Germany (Worbs et al 2016). Some recent reports show that refugee women are not as well-integrated as others in all sectors (see Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2015; OECD 2017). These reports attempt to attribute this issue to low(er) level of education, insufficient work experience, or to traditional lifestyle and culture of immigrants (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2015, 19; OECD 2017, 23).

These explanations are not based on qualitative data but are attributed to certain social constructions of refugees who presumably represent the face of culturized Islam. Contrary to these reports, Palenberg's doctoral research showed that refugee women's integration, including that of Muslim women, is not associated with their academic and professional qualifications or gender relations, but that all resettled women have similar struggles in terms of access to settlement services and joining the labour market in the first three years after resettlement regardless of their academic and professional qualifications. Among the participants are resettled women with low school education to some with high academic degrees, women with 'housewife' background and no employment, and women who have employment experiences in high positions. Despite the variations in terms of academic and professional qualifications, these resettled women share the same situation of unemployment now. Hence, the existing body of quantitative research runs short of explaining why settlement services fail to help integrate refugee women in general and Muslim women in particular.

Based on the qualitative data from Palenberg's doctoral research, we argue that Muslim refugee women are less integrated in the labour market not because they necessarily lack human capital or because they are perhaps not allowed to do so by their male family members. Muslim refugee women, in the contrary, find the attitude of host members in general and service providers, in particular, unsatisfactory and problematic, pushing them to the margins of German labour

market and long-term unemployment. Specifically, Palenberg's research explores how integration is interpreted among service providers in their everyday working relationship with Muslim refugee women and how this relationship is perceived by Muslim women to impact the effectiveness of settlement services. Let us observe a situation in which Maya (40, from Syria, living in Germany since 2015) goes to see an officer at an employment center to ask for resettlement services for employment support.

Maya is visiting the "Jobcenter" today and I (Palenberg) am accompanying her. She tells the officer: "I want to work to earn money for me and my children. I am open to jobs in gastronomy or in caring jobs. I also already got the driving license. Please help me find something".

The officer answers: "Caring jobs, yes that might work. We also offer trainings for that. But are you sure that gastronomy is right for you? I see that you have children. We don't want to overwhelm you with that. I thought maybe you visit our officer who is in charge of women and equality". Maya never got the invitation to see this woman.

After the meeting she is angry: "Yes, I have children, but am I supposed to stay home? Why? In Syria I was free; I worked; and I had a life. But here, in Germany, I feel dependent on the government and controlled."

Here we can see the mechanisms leading to the fact that Maya remains unemployed. The expectations of Maya and settlement service provider are totally different, working in opposite directions. In her case, lack of education or work experience is not an issue because Maya seeks employment in the sectors in which she used to work. However, she did not receive enough support in Germany. Maya was left with the feeling that her desire to work outside home in Germany is in conflict with a Muslim woman's role as a mother and housewife.

We argue that the religious and gender identities (i.e. male/female Muslim identity) of our participants have played a significant role not only in the attitude of settlement service providers, but also in how Muslim immigrant clients respond to these processes in renegotiating their gender identities after migration. A quantitative analysis would have never captured the terms of interaction between the settlement service providers and our research participants in a way that our qualitative observations were able to do. Identifying the working of such relations and powerful hierarchies is not possible without a qualitative lens.

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# BRINGING TOGETHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH – THE “MENTORING OF REFUGEES” PROJECT

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The Project “Mentoring of Refugees” (MORE) implements a randomized controlled trial (RCT) into an existing survey on refugees in Germany. The treatment is the participation in a mentoring relationship with a local resident, which is organized by a non-profit organization. The project aims at analyzing whether mentoring programs between refugees and local residents impact refugees’ integration trajectories. This paper explains the implementation of the RCT, addresses challenges during the implementation and field phase, and provides recommendations for future research projects.

*Le projet Mentoring of Refugees (MORE) met en œuvre un essai contrôlé randomisé (ECR) dans le cadre d’une enquête déjà existante concernant les réfugiés en Allemagne. La démarche consiste à instaurer une relation de mentorat avec un résident local, qui est gérée par une organisation à but non lucratif. Le projet vise à analyser si les programmes de mentorat entre les réfugiés et les résidents locaux ont un impact sur les parcours d’intégration des réfugiés. Ce document explique la mise en œuvre de l’ECR, aborde les difficultés rencontrées pendant la phase de mise en œuvre et de terrain et fournit des recommandations pour les futurs projets de recherche.*

For the past two decades, Germany has seen increasing numbers of volunteers. In 2017, between a fourth and a third of the German population engaged in volunteering activities (Hansen et al. 2018, Burkhardt and Schupp 2019), which is close to the European average (Norway has the highest share of volunteers (39 percent) and Greece the lowest (16 percent) (Hansen et al. 2018, 662). Volunteering can thus be considered a vital part of the welfare system, as many volunteers work in welfare initiatives such as food banks or shelters. However, not only can voluntary work complement the welfare state, it also plays a vital role in providing opportunities for bridging ties between generations, classes, and between newcomers

and long-standing residents. Voluntary work, for instance, played a crucial role in providing clothing, food, and access to local networks to refugees in Germany during the wave of forced migration to Europe in 2015 and 2016. Around a third of the German population volunteered or donated during this period for this specific cause (Jacobsen, Eisnecker, and Schupp 2017), among them many for the first time in their lives (Karakayali and Kleist 2016, Hamann and Karakayali 2016).

While a number of anecdotal examples are known, scientific analyses of the ‘effects’ of voluntary work are scarce; particularly in working with refugees. This dearth of evidence stands in

sharp contrast with the importance of reliable information on migration and integration for the effective allocation of resources. Non-profit organizations that organize volunteer work receive public support through tax benefits and public funds, and refugees and other vulnerable groups need access to programs that are able to address their needs. Hence, determining which volunteer programs are effective in their objectives is an important policy question.

The research project “Mentoring of Refugees” (MORE) contributes to this area of research. The project received funding from the Leibniz-Association and is conducted by the German Socio-economic Panel (SOEP), in cooperation with the German Institute for Employment Research (IAB) and the Research Centre for the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). At the center is a randomized controlled field experiment in which refugees who express interest in a mentoring-style relationship with a German resident are randomly assigned into participant (“treatment”) and non-participant (“control”) groups (Legewie et al. 2019). The mentoring was delivered by the social start-up “Start with a Friend e.V.” (SwaF 2019), a non-profit organization that matches German residents (“locals”) and newcomers in 13 German cities in order to create ties between the two groups. To randomly select refugees for participation in SwaF’s program, we used the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees in Germany as a starting point, an annually conducted panel study of refugees living in Germany that started in 2016 (Kühne, Jacobsen, and Kroh 2019). The respondents of this survey are asked whether they would be interested in participating in SwaF’s program, and those interested are randomly assigned into treatment and control groups. The main goal of the project is to identify the effect of bridging ties on various markers of integration, such as language acquisition, employment, and health. All data collected as part of MORE will be publicly available through the research data center of the German Socio-economic Panel from 2021 onward (SOEP 2019).

## IMPLEMENTING A FIELD EXPERIMENT INTO A PANEL STUDY

Randomized controlled trials (RCT) are considered the gold standard for identifying causal effects (e.g. Sibbald and Roland 1998). Due to the random allocation into treatment and control groups, any differences in, for instance, integration levels between groups after the intervention can be attributed to participation in the mentoring program and not individual characteristics or unobserved variation. However, to date only few studies exist that explicitly observe the effect of asylum support systems and volunteering on integration trajectories in an experimental setting. Joona and Nekby (2012) evaluate a government-run counseling program in Sweden. They analyze whether intensive coaching fosters labor market access for migrants and show the positive effect of the counseling program. Lange et al. (2017) describe the implementation of a

sports intervention for refugees in Germany and observe the short term impact of the program on employability. Battisti et al. (2019) analyze a job search assistance program for refugees provided by an NGO based in Bavaria, Germany, as a tool for fostering labor market access. The authors find a significant increase of 13 percentage points in employment for the treatment group after twelve months. Weiss and Tulin (2019) observe how the subjective feeling of being mentored among Arabic speaking humanitarian migrants fosters labor market access.

While these studies show the great potential and important contributions of RCT study designs, they also reveal a major challenge. RCTs usually lack information on participants prior to participating in the experiment, such as migration and integration trajectories or pre-migration experiences in advance of the baseline interview. Such information is vital as it potentially helps modeling selection into the RCT and hence helps in identifying treatment effects.

By using the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees in Germany as an anchor study, MORE avoids such problems. The survey already started in 2016, a year prior to the baseline study, and thus provides extensive information on (potential) participants, which can be used when analyzing data from the field experiment.

### THE STARTING POINT FOR INTERVENTION: THE IAB-BAMF-SOEP SURVEY OF REFUGEES IN GERMANY

While RCTs are often created independently of other projects, MORE is linked to the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees in Germany. This survey is a random sample of people who immigrated as asylum seekers and refugees to Germany between 2013 and 2016, irrespective of their current legal status. Additionally, it is designed as a panel study and is integrated into the German Socio-economic Panel (SOEP), a panel study of German households collecting data annually since 1984 (Goebel et al. 2019, Kühne, Jacobsen, and Kroh 2019). The mode of the interview is face-to-face computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). All field material is provided in German, English, Standard Arabic, Urdu, Pashto, Farsi/Dari, and Kurmanji (text and audio).

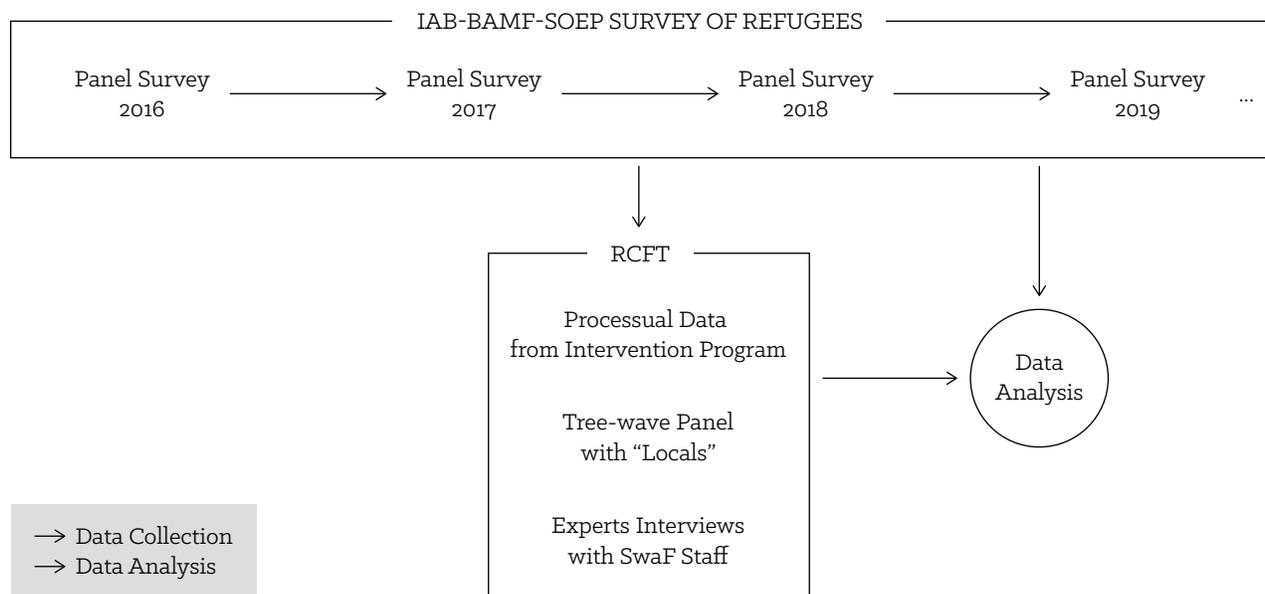
Most adult participants of the survey come from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Eritrea, are male, and are under 40 years of age. By 2020, three waves of the refugee panel will be made available to the academic public. The latest wave (2018) contains 4,376 individuals living in 3,061 distinct households. It covers a vast array of topics such as migration routes, health and well-being, economic integration, and political attitudes. Wave 2 (2017) serves as the (pre-treatment) starting point for the MORE intervention.

## THE INTERVENTION: A MENTORING PROGRAM FOR REFUGEES

The intervention itself, namely the one-on-one mentoring between a refugee and a local, is provided through the association SwaF. It is one of many initiatives that has helped refugees to connect to locals since 2015. While many refugee initiatives are geared towards support in acquiring the German language or to find adequate housing, SwaF is particularly well-suited to study effects of bridging ties because its main goal is to establish a friendship 'at eye-level'. According to SwaF, refugees and locals should meet on a weekly basis for about two to three hours over a period of six months, leaving it up to them to decide on joint activities. In addition, SwaF offers parties of the entire mentor/mentee community, cultural events, and field trips, as well as support in case of conflict in the partnership. Since 2014, the social start-up has matched more than 6,000 refugee-local pairs in more than 20 German cities, making SwaF one of the more established initiatives of its kind.

In order to identify effects of the program on various outcomes, MORE relies on five data sources. First, panel data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees provides in-depth information on all refugees and serves as the baseline for recruiting. Additionally, if consent to linkage is provided (80% of participants gave consent), this survey data can be matched to administrative data on employment trajectories, collected by the Institute for Employment Research<sup>1</sup> (IAB 2019). Second, information on the local mentors is gathered by means of a three-wave web panel.<sup>2</sup> Next, data on the matching process is provided, first, through SwaF as processual data (e.g., spell data on the matching process), and, second, through qualitative expert interviews with SwaF volunteers to get a deeper understanding of the functioning of the matching process and volunteer work. Figure 1 illustrates the research design.

FIGURE 1. MORE RESEARCH DESIGN



Source: Legewie et al. 2019

Collecting the data follows a multi-stage process and we are aware that different selection processes are taking place (see figure 2). Starting in June 2017, refugees who were residents in the 13 locations in which SwaF was active at the time were

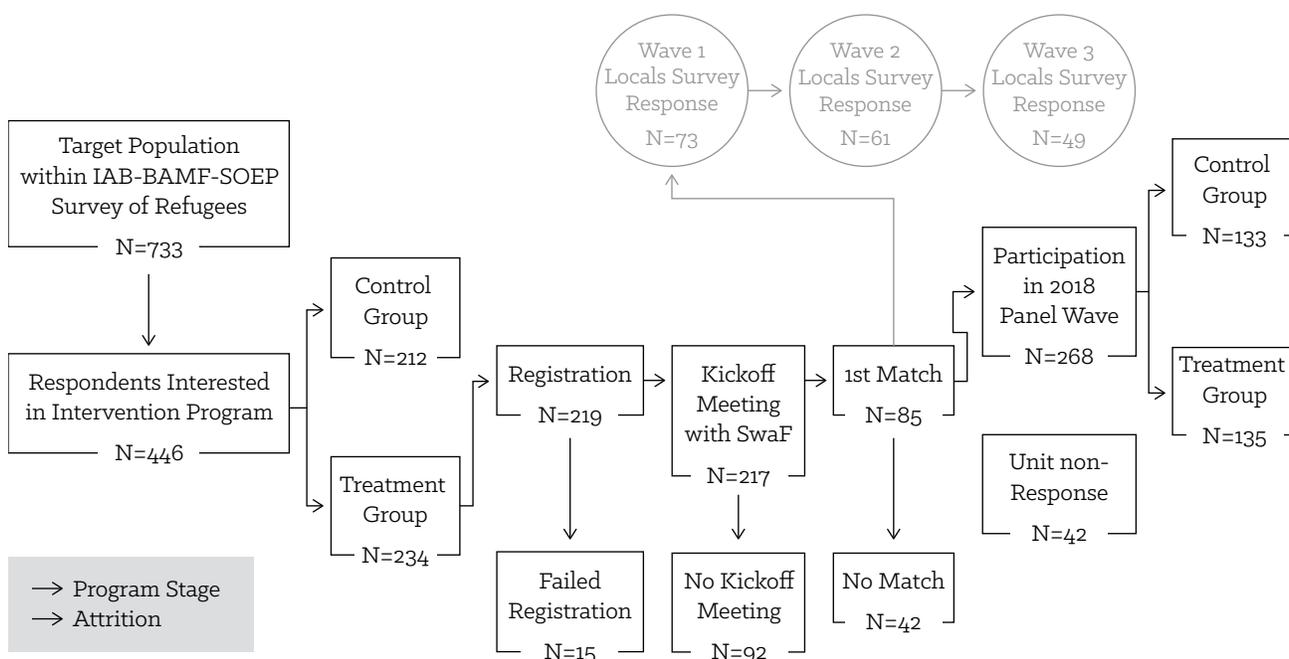
asked whether they were interested in participating in SwaF's initiative.<sup>3</sup> Those who confirmed (N=446), were randomly allocated into treatment (N=234) and control groups (N=212). Participants in the treatment group registered online with

1 The Institute for Employment Research is the research unit of the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit).  
 2 The web survey was developed at the SOEP and carried out by the Centre for Empirical Social Studies (ZeS) at the Department of Social Sciences of Humboldt-University Berlin.  
 3 Berlin, Potsdam, Dresden, Leipzig, Hamburg, Oldenburg, Cologne, Bonn, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt, Freiburg, Landau, and Mannheim.

the social start up during the face-to-face interviews. Of the 234 participants assigned to the treatment group, 219 actually registered with SwaF. Next, SwaF met personally with N=127 refugees. The remaining N=92 treatment group participants were, for instance, no longer interested in participating or their contact information changed. On the local side, participants were not randomly selected, but recruited through the SwaF's usual channels (e.g., social networks, university announcements). Eighty-five of those refugees who met with SwaF were matched to a local by March 2018. Based on SwaF's mission to initiate friendships between refugees and locals, SwaF staff tried bringing together people considered a good "fit," based on characteristics such as shared interests or similar age.

As a panel study, the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees allows tracking participants and non-participants of the field experiment over time, even after termination of the intervention. In the 2018 survey wave, the treatment and control groups were re-interviewed. Fifty-five of the 85 refugees who were matched initially were still participating in the panel survey and answered questions regarding their experiences with SwaF and the partnership. All had indeed met their mentoring partner and in N=26 of the cases, the mentoring relationship was still intact. Meanwhile, N=133 survey participants remained in the control group of interested non-participants.

FIGURE 2: MORE IMPLEMENTATION



Source: Legewie et al. 2019

### LESSONS LEARNED AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In recent years, panel studies have started focusing particularly on migrant and refugee groups, which opens up new possibilities for conducting survey and field experiments. Above all, the design presented in this paper offers an opportunity to test a social initiative which, in turn, could serve as a blueprint for government-sponsored (large scale) programs. In order to successfully implement an RCT into an existing survey, it is crucial that all participating parties (in our case refugees, mentors, volunteering agency, and researchers) work together long-term in order to reap the benefits of this specific research design. In the following, we want to discuss four key points

that, based in our experience, are crucial in order to successfully implement such an RCT: finding a volunteering agency that is willing to cooperate, ensuring interviewer engagement with the study goals, easy to handle registration for the program, and avoidance of panel attrition.

One key to success in implementing randomized controlled field trials is to partner with players already operating in the field. Due to the cooperation with SwaF, we did not have to recruit mentors ourselves. Therefore, one major aspect of this project could be delegated to an organization who had years of experience not only recruiting interested locals to participate but also communicating successfully with refugees and making

them feel welcome. Their program in the 13 cities was able to provide the “treatment” dimension of our experiment. Building such capacities from scratch would have required considerably more personnel and know-how. Moreover, in this way the study directly feeds back into an existing association that is constantly developing to provide excellent services to all volunteers and refugees involved. The combined experience between the MORE and SwaF teams in research and community organizing also enabled the project partners to address obstacles that inevitably emerge during the implementation of a complex field experimental design. First, from a research perspective it is important that the random character of the RCT is not compromised. Therefore, it was vital that every refugee interested, ideally, would be matched to a local. However, SwaF had to minimize disruption to their work outside MORE. This became especially relevant regarding their local volunteers, who may have objected to and dropped out of the program had they not been able to communicate with participating refugees at least rudimentarily in either German or English. Hence, SwaF had to exclude respondents whose German and English proficiencies were too low. This resulted in an (unavoidable) interference with the random allocation. While this can be incorporated in the analysis via the intention-to-treat framework (Montori and Guyatt 2001), it did result in a decreased size of the group of actually treated refugees.

In order to successfully implement field experiments in existing surveys, respondents’ cooperation is obviously vital. A precondition is a convincing presentation of the structure and aims of the program. Survey respondents usually do not anticipate receiving such an offer and might therefore be extra cautious. As a result, interviewers play a crucial role as intermediaries. MORE heavily relied on interviewers who had to present the program. As has been shown repeatedly (e.g. Korbmacher and Schröder 2013), interviewers differ in their ability to carry out interviews and their persuasiveness in presenting new context to the interviewees, and this dynamic has likely played an important role during MORE implementation. In fact, around 35 percent of the variance in the willingness to participate in the program can be attributed to interviewer effects (Legewie et al. 2019). Previous studies show that well-trained interviewers and those who are convinced that the survey is meaningful are most likely to produce high consent rates (e.g., to participate in the panel or to record linkage) (Sakshaug, Tutz, and Kreuter 2013). Therefore, training interviewers and convincing them of the importance of such experiments is crucial for a successful implementation.

Closely connected to the interview situation is the time lag between expressing interest in the program and actually registering for it. Therefore, it might be worthwhile to implement the registration for the program within the CAPI set-up of the Survey in which the experiment is implemented. As mentioned, 19 participants assigned to the treatment group did not register with SwaF, mainly due to technical problems during registration and following up with the potential par-

ticipants later on. Moreover, we experienced some drop out between these two steps as people got nervous when being asked to provide their information for use by third parties (i.e., SwaF). It is essential to provide extensive but accessible information, particularly for vulnerable groups like refugees. Such information should emphasize that the project serves as an honest offer to link refugees to locals to create inter-cultural friendships, with (non-profit) scientific purpose on the part of the organizers.

A last problem worth mentioning is panel attrition in the baseline study itself. Attrition regularly occurs in panel studies, even more so with a highly mobile population like refugees who are still in the process of settling in a new country and region. For field experiments incorporated into a panel study, attrition over time is especially problematic, as the effect of the treatment cannot be observed if respondents drop out before the post-intervention interview takes place. As with other panels, attrition was an issue in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees, which somewhat curtailed the statistical power of the MORE data. Therefore, future studies should consider devising additional incentives for those who stay participants throughout the field experiment.

In sum, we suggest that future projects implementing field experiments into an existing panel study should:

1. closely cooperate with a civil organization that works in the field of research;
2. train interviewers carefully to minimize interviewer effects;
3. minimize time between asking for interest and participant registration of participants; and
4. provide incentives during the experimental phase in order to decrease panel attrition.

## OUTLOOK

Implementing an RCT into an existing panel study by means of a community intervention is challenging, but such a design combines many analytic strengths and has considerable upside. RCTs are able to account for unobserved heterogeneity and thus allow causal inference. Panel studies, on the other hand, provide detailed individual-level information about participants and often track respondents over several years, thus providing in-depth information prior to and post-treatment. Moreover, working with an organization that has already established firm roots on site facilitates field access.

Besides providing scientific knowledge, such field experiments are capable of bringing community organizations

and social science research together and thereby facilitating knowledge transfer across borders of otherwise often separate groups. This goes far beyond the evaluation results made available to the community organization that provides the treatment. It makes social science research instantly available for the public and those providing support 'on the ground.' With our data, we hope to not only show which kind of self-selection into the SwaF program took place. We also aim to give feedback as to how locals and refugees experienced the time of the mentoring, and what constituted a good and a bad mentoring experience for both groups. Moreover, the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees enables the observation of several indicators that might be positively affected by the mentoring relationship: labor market access, language acquisition, social network development, and wellbeing. Additionally, the survey of locals will shed light on the question of how such a program can attract more volunteers in order to overcome a bottleneck of mentoring programs.

We hope that our project and our experiences can serve as a template for bringing together community organizations and social science research, so that the future will provide more bridges between the two communities.

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# UNDERSTANDING THE LINK BETWEEN PRE-ARRIVAL EDUCATION AND TRAUMA AND LANGUAGE LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF YAZIDI WOMEN IN CANADA

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The ability to communicate in the dominant language of the host society is essential to the short- and long-term integration of all newcomers. Research has shown that experiencing trauma may affect the speed at which a new language is learned by some newcomers. Other research shows that pre-arrival education has an influence on the language learning abilities of newcomers. Unfortunately, there is little research on the two issues and how they may combine to affect language learning among refugees. Our paper addresses the following question: How does pre-arrival education and trauma influence the ability of refugee women to learn a new language? Through narrative interviews with 35 newly arrived Yazidis in Toronto, Calgary, London and Winnipeg, we examine refugee women's experience learning English from their point of view. Our evidence supports the idea that increasing support for timely access to address trauma, more funded time in Stage One language learning, and additional educational supports may accelerate the integration process.

*La capacité à communiquer dans la langue dominante de la société d'accueil est essentielle à l'intégration à court et à long terme de tous les nouveaux arrivants. Des études ont montré que le fait de subir un traumatisme peut affecter la vitesse d'apprentissage d'une nouvelle langue par certains nouveaux arrivants. D'autres études montrent que l'enseignement préalable à l'arrivée peut influencer les capacités d'apprentissage de la langue des nouveaux arrivants. Malheureusement, il y a peu de recherches disponibles sur ces deux enjeux et sur la façon dont ces facteurs peuvent interagir pour avoir un impact sur l'apprentissage de la langue chez les réfugiés. Notre article aborde la question suivante : Comment l'enseignement préalable à l'arrivée et les traumatismes influencent-ils la capacité des femmes réfugiées à apprendre une nouvelle langue ? Par le biais d'entrevues détaillées avec 35 femmes yazidis nouvellement arrivées à Toronto, Calgary, Londres et Winnipeg, nous étudions l'expérience des femmes réfugiées qui apprennent l'anglais de leur point de vue. Nos données confirment la thèse selon laquelle un soutien accru en temps opportun visant à traiter les traumatismes, une augmentation du temps consacré au premier stade à l'apprentissage de la langue et un appui pédagogique supplémentaire peuvent accélérer le processus d'intégration.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Yazidis are different from the previous groups of refugees resettled in Canada due to their unique pre-arrival experiences. Unlike almost all other resettled refugees, the Yazidis had very little time between seeking safety and entering Canada; they were not externally displaced. Instead, they were internally displaced within Iraq and subsequently resettled in Canada within weeks. Nearly all other refugees wait on average 12 years between fleeing their country and being accepted for permanent resettlement (UNHCR, 2014). This group has also experienced multiple and prolonged trauma over generations. The attacks in 2014 in Sinjar marked the 74th recorded genocide against the Yazidi peoples (Marczak, 2018).

In 2002, the Canadian government passed a new *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. One of the significant changes involved Canada's "selection" of refugees. Prior to that time, the UNHCR criticized Canada for its 'selectivity' in choosing refugees for resettlement who had higher levels of education. This practice is in breach of the spirit of the UN Convention for Refugees which has a principle that the most vulnerable refugees and their families be resettled. Since then, the average level of education among newly arrived refugees to Canada has decreased. In this regard, the Yazidi are no exception. They have significantly lower levels of education and experience functional literacy in their first language, Kurmanji. Over 50% of the Yazidi coming to Canada have never attended school, a figure that is much higher than other refugee groups (IRCC, 2017). The lack of prior educational experience will also have an effect on their ability to learn a new language.

While they are not alone in their experience of trauma, the degree to which the Yazidi arriving in Canada experienced it is extremely high. Trauma and perceived social rejection are common among Yazidi women and girls who survived sexual enslavement and genocide. More than 80% of them have been diagnosed with a mental health problem (Ibrahim et al., 2018; Yuksel et al., 2018), and 65.3% of the Yazidi children and adolescents experience psychological problems (Hosseini et al., 2018). Porter (2018) and Vijanann (2017) have noted that Yazidis are among the most marginalized and tormented ethnic minorities on the planet, which means that this group of refugees may require additional services. Given these unique conditions, we feel this is a good case study from which to understand pre-arrival education and trauma experiences and how they may affect second language learning.

Through narrative interviews with 35 Yazidi participants in Calgary, Toronto, London and Winnipeg, it is evident that this population is different from other recent refugee groups.

Almost all of the participants described in great detail the physical, sexual and mental trauma they had personally experienced.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the number of adults without formal education or with five years or less of schooling is high. Given these unique pre-arrival characteristics and experiences different from other cohorts of refugees, their language learning experience in Canada likely will differ from others. Sadly, this group is unlikely to remain unique. Examining the world, refugee-producing situations and the growing numbers of refugees needing permanent resettlement, it is very likely that the lessons we learn from the Yazidi can be applied to refugees arriving in Canada in the future.

## HOW DOES PRE-ARRIVAL EDUCATION INFLUENCE LANGUAGE LEARNING?

Low levels of education prior to arrival, make it more challenging to learn a new language. The critical period hypothesis proposes that those who fail to acquire a language by their early teens, will have difficulty learning new languages as adults (Vanhove, 2013; Kozar and Yates, 2019). For adult learners without any formal schooling, trying to acquire a second language can be challenging (Kozar and Yates, 2019). On average, refugees with low levels or incomplete education might take more than five years to acquire the English language within Canada (Guo and Maitra, 2017).

Not only is the learning process complicated by this group's unfamiliarity with a classroom setting, but their low level of education makes progression through the language classes much slower. Those who have little or no formal schooling in their mother tongue will have difficulty learning a new language because foundations such as reading, comprehension, writing and speaking in their mother tongue are not fully developed. Evidence from several countries, (Kozar and Yates, 2019; Gordon, 2011; Steel et al., 2017; Honzel et al., 2014) including Canada, show that those who experience depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and who are functionally illiterate at arrival have lower language learning outcomes and take longer to acquire a new language compared to those with higher levels of education.

The link between prior education and the ability to learn English is evident in our interviews with the Yazidi. Two participants with different levels of education shared their experiences of learning English in Canada. Wejdan, a 30-year-old widow with no formal education, told us: "I have never been to school back home [in Iraq]. I was always at home, helping my family. The only experience I have is to run a household. My dream is to change things when I am able to work, I will

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2 Our observation is confirmed by our conversations with psychologists and social workers who are currently working with Yazidi refugees. Dr Annalee Coakley (with many others), medical director for Mosaic Refugee Health Clinic in Calgary states in a recent Globe and Mail article, "I have never seen families in acute distress like that" (Frangou, 2018, A11)

work and be something better, maybe work in a restaurant or sew clothes, who knows right now, but I am working hard on learning the language here first.” Wejdan’s perception of her language learning is much different than Khawala. Khawala, who was aged 24 and possibly widowed.<sup>3</sup> She left formal schooling after six years. She says that “(English) is a little difficult language... I studied in Iraq for six years. I have been attending ESL for three months, and I study hard at home and in class during the night as well... I am confident 100 percent that I would be able to take care of myself outside with the amount of English I know. I feel that with every passing week, I can process more and more information about the language in my classes.” The confidence Khawala expresses is much stronger than Wejdan, who has no formal education. It is a pattern we observed across all four study sites and with other participants. The only respondent who completed college and a diploma in teaching prior to his arrival to Canada was Awar, aged 26, who told us that “my English is good, and it’s improving” after just a few months.

## HOW DOES TRAUMA INFLUENCE LANGUAGE LEARNING?

Mental health struggles such as PTSD, Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD), anxiety, and depression can all cause problems with memory. This can increase with age, making language learning more difficult. Emdad et al. (2005) and Johnsen (2008) found that persons diagnosed with PTSD scored significantly lower on memory tests than those without PTSD. Because learning a new language involves memorization of new words and sounds, mastering new pronunciation and sometimes a new alphabet, memory storage and retrieval of new information are greatly hindered by the effects of PTSD. This finding is confirmed by our participants. Zheyen, a 44-year-old married mother, tells us: “Kurmanji is my native tongue. I do have problems with processing English because of all the hardships we went through back home; my memory isn’t so good. I have depression and anxiety. I saw my brother die buried under the house they were building. I am not attending school now. The agency notified my husband [that he could start school], but he hasn’t been able to go to school because of his poor health”. Although she does attend English language classes, the combination of PTSD and no previous schooling has hindered her ability to learn English.

Worrying about the health and well-being of missing family members or those left behind also affects the Yazidis’ ability to attend classes and concentrate on schoolwork. Research

shows that it is not uncommon for severely traumatized refugees to be unable to attend classes due to their mental health problems and worries about housing, future employment or separation from their family members (Gordon, 2011; Honzel, et al., 2014). Dema, a 29-year-old woman, speaks to this experience: “I have mental problems, and no, I haven’t gone to school, I don’t even know how to write my name. I haven’t taken any classes because of my depressions. I pass out. I am unable to use public transportation”.

For others, the struggle to look after sick and struggling family members in Canada also prevents regular class attendance. Bhattal, a married father who had completed high school in Germany, tells us: “I am not able to take any classes. My wife is sick, and I must take care of the children, and I am also responsible for her mother and her three kids. It’s tough for me to go to school; my wife has a mental illness and has episodes of blacking out.” The struggle to look after multiple family members means less time to attend school and likely impinges on concentration when Bhattal is in class.

Psychologists and other specialists who work with traumatized refugee populations have all observed that the level of trauma experienced by recently arrived refugees in Canada is significantly higher and more prominent than what they have seen among the older refugee population (Health Reference Centre, 2018). Given this situation, it is noted that interaction with others decreases anxiety, depression and PTSD symptoms. Therefore, attending language classes not only helps in integration but also results in better mental health outcomes.

It is well documented that there is an ongoing crisis in finding qualified English as an Additional Language (EAL) and AEAL teachers (Watlington et al., 2010; Ball and Anderson-Butcher, 2014; Hydon et al., 2015). Vacant positions for ESL teachers in Vancouver between 2019 and 2025 are projected to number 6,750, with approximately 70% of ESL teachers to retire in 10 years (Skilled Immigrant Infocentre, 2017). With increasing numbers of allophones arriving in Canada, ESL teachers will need to increase by about 30% in the next 5 to 10 years (Winer, 2007). More funding should be allocated for training new ESL workers as the estimated cost of training ESL workers is approximately \$8,000-25,000 per new teacher. With the vicarious trauma among the new arrivals, there is a need for assistance and training for teachers and settlement support workers accommodating the needs of refugees.

Another well-known structural feature of the Canadian resettlement field is the paucity of mental health resources,

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3 Part of the interview included us asking details about the family members who accompanied them to Canada. This was not an easy question to ask given that most of the Yazidi families were unintentionally separated—with some having left spouses and children behind who had been captured by Daesh. Other families did not know the status of their missing loved ones, particularly husbands, whom they had not seen in years. Some women would tell us their husband was dead, but others would tell us that they did not know where he was but hoped he was alive. In both instances, with incomplete or no knowledge of their death, we described these women as “possibly widowed”.

a problem that also exists for Canadians. As refugees are only eligible to utilize these resources for a limited period (usually ten visits over a year), there is a need for provincial increases in access to mental health support for refugee groups who have higher levels of trauma, such as the Yazidis. More hours with trained professionals should be allocated, especially to refugees experiencing higher degrees of trauma. There is also a need for more training for certified EAL and AEAL professionals. It is not only important to provide additional mental health assistance to newcomer refugees but also to provide training in Kurmanji for those who have low literacy prior to learning English. There is also a dire need to increase the eligibility period for language training to accommodate the needs of refugees with higher levels of trauma, as well as to address the related effects. Providing onsite childcare may also reduce barriers for mothers and increase participation in language learning classes that might result in long-term benefits for the refugees and raise the overall human capital index of the host country.

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# PROMOTING FAMILY WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE OF REFUGEE NEWCOMERS IN THE WATERLOO REGION: THE SANCTUARY REFUGEE HEALTH CENTRE

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Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre (Sanctuary) is an innovative health care clinic for refugee newcomers in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. This article explores three areas of inquiry related to Sanctuary's approach to meeting the health and well-being needs of refugee newcomers. First, Sanctuary's innovative care model is described. Second, the effectiveness of Sanctuary's client-centred treatment and partnership-building practices for promoting refugee family health are demonstrated. Third, lessons learned and opportunities for improvement are shared. This case study included a review of organizational documents and in-depth interviews with the founder and staff in order to provide a robust descriptive account of Sanctuary's history, model of care, and outcomes. Based on Sanctuary's notable successes, this paper shares practical knowledge and experience that may support other practitioners to overcome and/or manage challenges and barriers to promoting the health, well-being, and resilience of refugee newcomer families.

*Le Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre (Sanctuary) est une clinique de soins de santé innovante pour les nouveaux arrivants réfugiés à Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. Cet article explore trois domaines d'enquête liés à l'approche adoptée par Sanctuary pour répondre aux besoins de santé et de bien-être des nouveaux arrivants réfugiés. Tout d'abord, le modèle de soins novateur de Sanctuary est présenté. Ensuite, nous démontrons l'efficacité des pratiques de Sanctuary en matière de traitement axé sur le client et de création de partenariats pour favoriser la santé des familles de réfugiés. Troisièmement, nous partageons les leçons apprises et les possibilités d'amélioration. Cette étude de cas comprend un examen des documents organisationnels et des entretiens approfondis avec le fondateur et le personnel afin de fournir un compte-rendu descriptif solide de l'histoire, du modèle de soins et des résultats de Sanctuary. Basé sur les succès notables de Sanctuary, ce document partage des connaissances et des expériences pratiques qui peuvent aider d'autres intervenants à surmonter et/ou gérer les défis et les obstacles à la promotion de la santé, du bien-être et de la résilience des familles de nouveaux arrivants réfugiés.*

Refugee newcomers to western liberal democracies face a variety of systemic health challenges. Central among these challenges are health care systems that lack intercultural openness, practical knowledge, and expertise concerning the legal and medical needs of children, youth and families who are seeking asylum and/or resettling (Korntheuer, Pritchard

& Maehler, 2017). These barriers exacerbate and compound other pre- and post-migration risk factors for health concerns including chronic stress, experiences of trauma, racism, and family separation (Beiser, 2005). Consequently, studies find that refugee caregivers and their children are often at risk for poorer health and developmental outcomes in the years

following migration (Browne et al., 2015, 2018). Given these challenges, experts have called for models that enhance the accessibility and availability of client-centered care (Korntheuer et al., 2017). Recommendations include culturally sensitive services that consider the whole family, widespread availability of language interpreters, and frontline staff who have expertise in legal regulations and are trained in supporting refugee patients. This article showcases an innovative model of care for refugee newcomer families in the mid-sized Waterloo Region of Ontario, Canada (pop. 535,000) provided by the Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre (Sanctuary). In the article, we describe Sanctuary's innovative approach and model of care as well as share practical knowledge and experience that may support other practitioners to overcome and/or manage challenges and barriers to promoting the health, well-being, and resilience of refugee newcomer families.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to demonstrate Sanctuary's contribution to the health, resilience, and well-being of refugee newcomers in the Waterloo region, this paper uses the socio-ecological model (SEM) by McLeroy et al. (1998) as its theoretical framework. Within the SEM framework, individual decisions and behaviours are influenced by their social and physical environments. Individuals are situated in the centre of nested circles representing the multiple, mutually-influencing environments with which one interacts. McLeroy (1998) identifies five nested, hierarchical levels of the SEM: Individual (intrapersonal), interpersonal, organizational, community, and policy. This paper is interested in how Sanctuary's approach to service provision is organized according to these levels of analysis. Adapting the SEM to Sanctuary's work enables an explanation of how different multi-level interactions influence, support, or affect its refugee health care services in the Waterloo Region.

## METHODOLOGY

To collect useful data, this case study of Sanctuary included a document review and interviews.

## DOCUMENT REVIEW

We collected organizational documents that Sanctuary has developed since its inception. Documents included policy, mission and vision statements, protocols and procedure manuals, practice frameworks, as well as program-specific documents and pamphlets. Analysis of organizational documents focused on identifying themes related to service delivery, and key descriptors of Sanctuary.

## INTERVIEWS

We conducted six semi-structured interviews with the Director of Sanctuary as well as the founding Physician between September and December 2019. The interviews focused on capturing Sanctuary's history and philosophy as well as the successes, challenges, and lessons learned over the past six years of operation. Interview notes were taken by hand during interviews and subsequently expanded based on the researcher's memory of the conversation. Analysis of interviews focused on direct descriptions of Sanctuary's history and philosophy and identification of key themes related to Sanctuary's model of care.

## RESULTS

### HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF SANCTUARY REFUGEE HEALTH CENTRE

Prior to the opening of Sanctuary, focus groups of refugees in the Waterloo-Wellington region reported many instances of being denied care or given unequal levels of care, even when they had valid health coverage. Dr. Michael Stephenson is a physician whose vision is to provide evidence-based, patient-centred, and culturally sensitive health care to this population, including health education and orientation, reframing past experiences from other countries within the Canadian context, and linking clients to appropriate services. To meet this need, in March 2013, Dr. Michael Stephenson began offering physician services for refugees from a church library, twelve hours a week on two consecutive days. Starting with an initial patient roster of six, Sanctuary's reputation started to grow. Eight months later, Sanctuary moved operations to a house and offered extended hours on the same two days each week. In May 2017, Sanctuary moved to a commercial space in the heart of Downtown Kitchener and operates five days per week with a roster of 4815 patients (as of November 2019). Since opening, patients continue to tell stories of being turned away from Family Doctors, Walk-in Clinics, Specialists, and, in one case, the Emergency Room.

### SANCTUARY'S APPROACH

Sanctuary's health promotion interventions are informed by the *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion* framework (WHO, 2019a) and specifically designed for refugee newcomers. Sanctuary strives to provide services that are (1) culturally sensitive, (2) trauma-informed, and (3) appropriate for refugees. Following these three principles of its health care for refugees, Sanctuary has positioned itself as a leader in providing appropriate health care services for refugees in the Waterloo region. First, Sanctuary has demonstrated a commitment to cultural competence and responsiveness through its service provision

and staffing decisions. For example, Sanctuary's staff and volunteers speak more than 20 languages. The cultural and linguistic diversity of Sanctuary's staff and volunteers are central to Sanctuary's ability to respond appropriately to its patients; however, given that Sanctuary's patients identify 80 countries of origin and speak 53 first languages – the most common of which are Arabic, Tigrinya, Somali, Spanish, and Turkish – they also hire interpreters when necessary (and possible).

Sanctuary also strives to ensure its services are trauma-informed, given the issues arising from persecutions, trauma, migratory stress, and cultural integration. Trauma-informed care is an approach where the “[...] program, organization, or system realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization” (SAMHSA, 2014, p. 9). The awareness of the impacts of trauma caused by pre-, during-, and post-migration stress helps Sanctuary staff compassionately accommodate patients' behaviours and provide a consistent environment of safety. To provide appropriate services for refugees and promote refugee health, Sanctuary has developed a patient-centered 'Pathway' model applied with a holistic caring “wrap around” perspective.

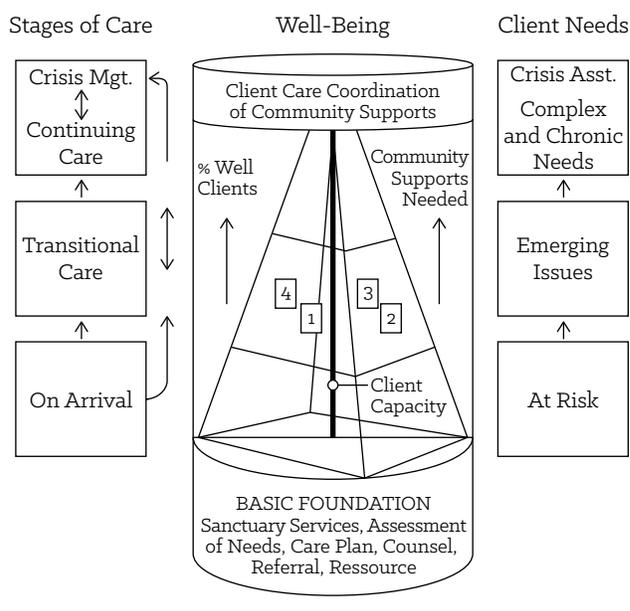
#### DESCRIPTION OF THE SANCTUARY'S MODEL OF CARE

Sanctuary provides patient-centered care tailored to the health needs of refugee newcomers. The Institute of Medicine (2001) defines Patient Centred Care as “Providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values, and ensuring that patient values guide all clinical decisions” (p. 3). In order to practically apply this principle, Sanctuary developed a functional pathway model of practice. This model is grounded on the underlying assumption that refugee newcomers are inherently resilient and that, with appropriate care and support, they can be enabled over a period of time to enjoy well-being as contributing Canadian citizens. Sanctuary's Pathway model, developed by Brockett (see graphic), is an integrated, institution-wide approach. The model proposes four pathways to well-being: (1) physical and medical stability; (2) cognitive and emotional capacity; (3) social connections and systems navigation; and (4) becoming culturally secure and aware of difference that can create conflict, particularly in relation to the law. The model also identifies four categories of patients or client needs: (1) patients who require crisis assessment; (2) patients who are considered to be at risk (the model suggests that, on arrival, all refugee newcomers are considered to be in this category due to experiences of trauma); (3) patients who are facing emerging issues as they are going through the settlement process; and (4) patients who have complex and chronic conditions that require continuing care.

The Pathway model proposes four stages of care, which progress according to the patient's specific situation:

- **Stage One:** Assessment and urgent referral for intervention to meet needs that, if unmet, will put a refugee newcomer “at risk”.
- **Stage Two:** Depending on the results of the assessment, stage two could be either crisis management or transitional care. During the time of transition, the health promotion interventions particularly focus on offering care and building relationships that uncover “emerging issues”.
- **Stage Three:** Coordination of continuing care to meet complex and chronic needs, where required, and ready access to services for those who are well.
- **Stage Four:** Stage four depends on how the patient is integrating into their new life in Canada. If the patient is facing post-immigration risk factors, s/he is considered “at risk”. When a patient is identified as “at risk,” Sanctuary provides crisis management support and coordinates with other refugee-serving organizations that provide additional assistance. In the event that the patient is successfully integrating, s/he is discharged. The graduation (discharge) process is complex and includes assessments of the patients' physical, psychological, and social functioning by a multidisciplinary team.

FIGURE 1: FOUNDATION AND PATHWAYS OF COMPREHENSIVE HEALTHCARE SERVICES



Source: Margaret Brockett, 2018

## PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF SANCTUARY'S PATHWAYS MODEL

Sanctuary's Pathway model has been applied with a comprehensive "wrap around" care perspective and in an environment that is culturally sensitive, provides language assistance as needed, and that builds relationships of trust. Responding to the question about the effectiveness of the Sanctuary model, the interviewees confirmed that applying the client-centered practice has significantly contributed to addressing the needs of their patients. Based on their clinical experience, the informants assert that the model works, and provided a number of examples to illustrate the success: increased self-management of their patients; increased use of mainstream health services by refugee newcomers in the Waterloo Region; the increasing number of patients who would like to be served by Sanctuary, regardless of the long wait-list; patient testimonies about appreciating Sanctuary's services, feeling heard, and having their health needs addressed.

One interviewee also pointed out that the Pathway model has enabled the provision of client-centred care, has made Sanctuary a very patient-oriented organization, and has guided staff to ensure they are aware of the needs, cultural differences, and expectations of patients. With regards to involving external partners and collaborators, the respondent said:

Sanctuary is becoming more and more a hub-in-the-wheel for different refugee services providers. Seen as a one stop service centre, Sanctuary provides much more than medical care. In addition to physical health care, Sanctuary welcomes the entire family and provides social and psychological support as well as education with regard to integrating into life in Canada. This is a part of our mission statement and probably makes Sanctuary a unique health centre that offers such a holistic care for refugee newcomers in Waterloo Region.

## A SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL REVIEW OF SANCTUARY'S SERVICES

The description of Sanctuary's model depicts how the centre strives to tailor services to its clients. Sanctuary's strength as a health care provider for refugees lies in working with and involving multiple stakeholders at different levels.

### INTRAPERSONAL LEVEL

At the intrapersonal level, Sanctuary is particularly concerned with positively impacting the refugee newcomers and promoting their individual holistic well-being as they integrate into Canada. From the first stage of its health care, Sanctuary considers values and capitalizes its interventions on different characteristics of patients that can influence their behaviour change such as knowledge, attitudes, behavior, historical

background (including pre-, during-, and post-migration risks and stressors), gender, age, religious identity, racial and ethnic identity, education level, health literacy, etc.

### INTERPERSONAL LEVEL

Sanctuary attends to individuals' and their families' physical health while also providing services that promote resilience, heal the wounds of their traumatic pasts, and cope with integration challenges. Additionally, many patients have built trusting friendships with Sanctuary staff and volunteers.

### ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

Explaining how the organizational level can affect access to and use of health services, McLeroy et al. (1988) assert that the settings, structures, and processes of organizations can influence individuals' health-related behaviours. Sanctuary has a reputation of being refugee-friendly and welcoming. Its efforts to provide appropriate health care for refugees involve providing medical care and socio-psychological supports services, linking patients in critical economic situations with organizations that can provide financial assistance, ensuring easy access to services and minimizing paperwork, resisting systemic discrimination (e.g., discrimination of ethnic minorities), and addressing logistic (e.g., accessibility of the services building, child-friendly environment, etcetera) and language barriers.

### COMMUNITY LEVEL

Since its establishment in 2013, Sanctuary has inspired many changes in the Waterloo community regarding refugee health services in the Waterloo Region. Before 2013, there was no specialised health services in the region and no translation services provided for refugee newcomers. Today, refugee health services in the region have remarkably improved and have become increasingly refugee friendly. Sanctuary collaborates with local government and community agencies and is committed to finding ways to provide comprehensive services to meet its patients' wide-ranging needs. Sanctuary has partnered with more than 30 organizations in the Kitchener-Waterloo community. These partner organizations, both government and non-governmental, represent the following sectors: public health; community health centres; hospitals and pharmacies; functional medicine services; community-based and private child and adult mental health services; social services; family and child welfare; cultural and religious services; immigration and settlement services. The fact that those organizations operate in tandem on providing services to refugee newcomers and work from one site, at Sanctuary, demonstrates that Sanctuary has built a "hub" that fosters collaboration and partnership.

Sanctuary also engages with universities and research centres on refugee health promotion projects. In addition to research activities, Sanctuary hosts students from partner universities and colleges for practice or co-op education opportunities. Partner academic institutions include McMaster University, University of Waterloo, Western University, Wilfrid Laurier University, and Conestoga College.

## POLICY LEVEL

At the policy level, Sanctuary has used its experience as a frontline service provider organization to advocate for change and improvement in promoting refugee health. Sanctuary advocates for change and attempts to increase public awareness through public speaking events and radio interviews. To mobilize the support of policy makers, Sanctuary organizes conversations around refugee health matters. For example, the newly elected Liberal Members of Parliament from the region were invited to visit Sanctuary on November 26, 2019 and had consultations with Sanctuary staff on issues pertaining to refugee health. Among other issues discussed during the consultations were: the health and well-being of refugee mothers and children; advocating for regional efforts to provide affordable housing; the idea of a national pharmacare program; and concerns related to promoting the mental health of refugee children and youth.

## DISCUSSION

Sanctuary has made remarkable progress since its inception and has provided a significant contribution to the health and well-being of refugees in the Waterloo region. From Sanctuary's experience we can draw the following lessons:

- Sanctuary's development trajectory and its contribution to improving refugee health in the Waterloo Region demonstrates that committed citizens can influence the whole community.
- Sanctuary's Pathway model is appropriate for working with refugees. The model allows for flexibility and the adaptation of interventions, thereby enabling frontline staff to effectively meet the patients' needs.
- Effectively serving refugee newcomers and holistically promoting refugee health requires productive partnerships and collaborations.

With this said, however, it is important to acknowledge that Sanctuary still faces challenges and has opportunities for improvement. The ongoing assessment of Sanctuary's needs and resources shows that the centre lacks the financial means to efficiently and effectively realize its mission. Opportunities

for improvement highlighted by the assessment include the following:

- **Mental health support services.** The majority of Sanctuary's patients are children and youth; however, there are no dedicated mental health services for them at Sanctuary. Thus, mental health supports need to be strengthened and extend to cover the whole family.
- **Coordination of partnerships.** There is a need to improve coordination of partners and collaborators of Sanctuary in order to maximize their effectiveness and efficiency.
- **Intake and discharge process improvement.** Due to the high demand for Sanctuary's services, the centre has a long waitlist (1000+). Streamlining of intake and discharge processes, including eligibility and decision criteria, is needed for improving efficiency.
- **Employee retention.** Due to Sanctuary's limited financial resources, providing competitive wages and salaries for staff is a challenge. This has led to a high turnover of employees.
- **Infrastructure.** Sanctuary requires more space to conveniently accommodate its services and host collaborating service providers.
- **Employee well-being.** Given the complexity of Sanctuary's patients, strategies and resources need to be developed and implemented to prevent staff and volunteer burnout.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has presented Sanctuary, with its intervention approach to serving refugee newcomers and promoting their health and well-being as they are integrating to life in Canada. The practical knowledge and experience as well as the lessons learned from Sanctuary's interventions shared in this paper may inspire other frontline service provider organizations and guide them to overcome and/or manage challenges and barriers to promoting the health, well-being, and resilience of refugee newcomer families. The paper also provides policy makers with useful information that they can consider while undertaking change initiatives for re-orienting and improving refugee health care at local, regional, provincial and national levels.

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