

Comment on the Current European Asylum Crisis

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Preliminary Note

- Is the term „refugee crisis“ adequate?
 - „event that is, or is expected to lead to, an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, community, or whole society“ (Wikipedia)
 - Dramatic humanitarian occurrences
 - Political helplessness; no coherent plan to manage the situation
 - → instability of the established political power relation (shift towards right wing parties)

Preliminary Note

- Four rhetorical questions to exemplify the crisis:
 - What is unsettling?
 - Integration of refugees: burden or potential?
 - Which political interventions are given?
 - Which advice can be given?

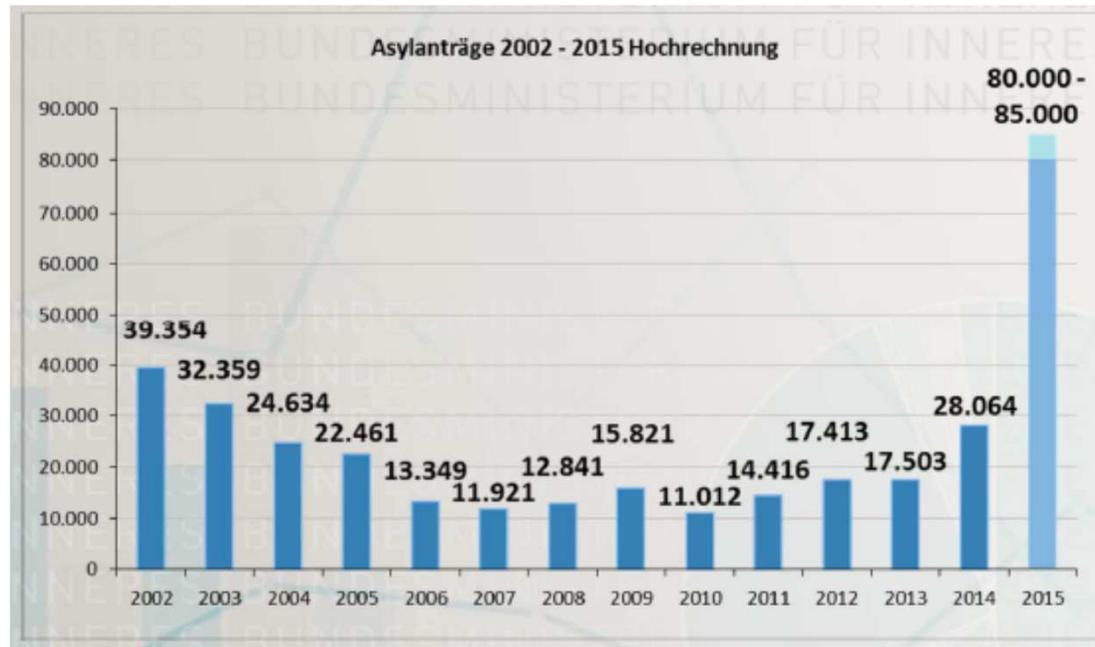
What is unsettling? The figures?

- Austria
 - 1-9/2015: 56.356 applications without resettlement; in comparison to 1-9/2014 (17.010) more than tripled
 - In 9/2015 alone: 10.216 asylum applications (= one third of 2014!)
 - in calendar week **45** (2.-8.11.) 3.456; new applications per day: 493



What is unsettling? The figures?

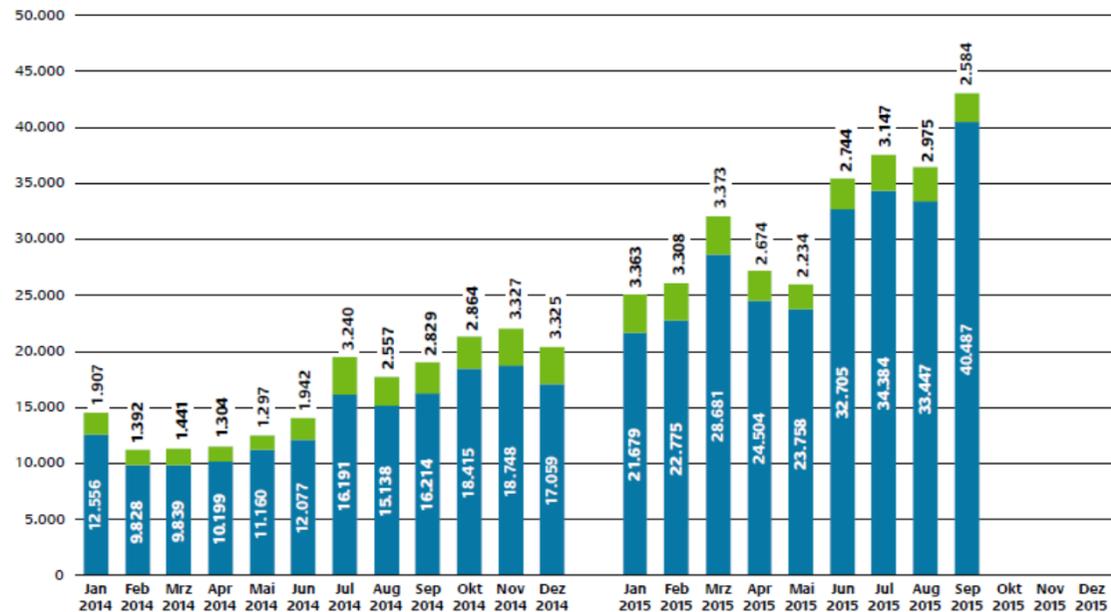
- Austria
 - Realistic prospects for 2015: 80-85.000 applications at least
 - A number like this is historically exceptional high but not unique
 - 1991/92 around 80.000 de facto refugees (TPS) from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in addition to the 20.000 application p.a. in 1989-1992



What is unsettling? The figures?

- Germany
 - 01-10/2015: 331.226 asylum applications, in comparison to 2014 more than doubled; ca. one third of all asylum applications in the EU28
 - One third from Syria, the second third from Albania and Kosovo
 - The BAMF* estimates more than twice as high figures of refugees being not yet registered; estimated value for 2015 in total: 800.000

Entwicklung der monatlichen Asylantragszahlen seit Januar 2014

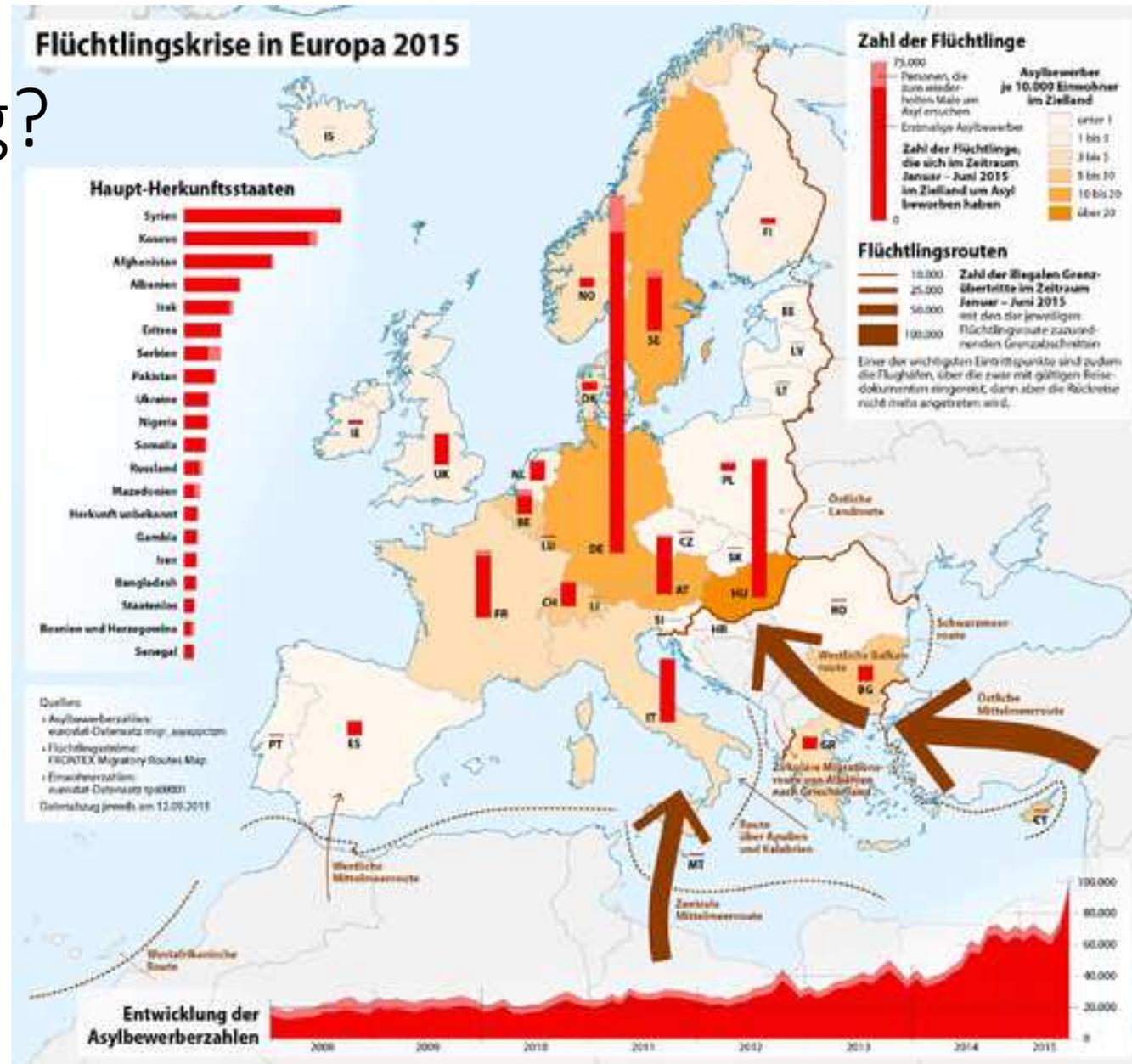


*BAMF: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge – Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

What is unsettling? The figures?

• EU-Europe

- 01-09/2015: 895.000 new applications (Eurostat in BAMF *Asylgeschäftsstatistik* 09/15)
- 2015 (estimated): 1,4 Mio.
- High concentration on three countries of destination (DE, SE, AT) and also concentration on four countries of origin (Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Albania)



What is unsettling? The images?

- Yes,
 - Figures are abstract; what does 80-85.000 asylum seekers in 2015 mean in Austria?
 - Images as transmitted via media are much more unsettling: uncontrolled and non-controlled „mass migration“
 - → state: loss of control



What is unsettling? Legal fragility?

- Yes,
 - **Schengen-Acquis** and **CEAS** (Common European Asylum System) are currently neglected (also by AT)
 - Excursus: **What is CEAS?**
 - Geneva Convention on the Protection of Refugees advocates a very narrow definition of refugees (*a person „owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country“ UNHCR.org*)
 - Furthermore: no recognition of war refugees, of economic refugees, climate refugees, no recognition of persecution by non-governmental parties, no recognition of sexual violence etc.

What is unsettling? Legal fragility?

- Since 1999 (**Tampere process**) stepwise establishment of CEAS;

Core elements:

- **Qualification Directive:** extends the accepted causes of flight (violence inflicted by non-governmental parties, sexual violence)
- **Reception Conditions Directive:** regulates the conditions of admission (accommodation, catering, healthcare provision and occupation)
- **Asylum Procedures Directive:** regulates the examination of applications (fast track procedures, border procedures, possibilities of appeal)
- **Dublin Regulation:** regulates the responsibilities of asylum procedures (for preventing an „Asylum à la Carte“)
- **EURODAC Regulation:** defines everything related to finger prints
- **Mass Influx Directive:** grants temporary protection and temporary suspension of decision in case of mass influx

COMMON EUROPEAN ASYLUM SYSTEM

ASYLUM is granted to people fleeing persecution or serious harm.

The process for applying for asylum is now similar throughout the EU (Asylum Procedures Directive).

Each applicant's fingerprints are taken and sent to a database called Eurodac (Eurodac Regulation). These data are used to help identify the country responsible for the asylum application (Dublin Regulation).

Asylum applicants receive material reception conditions, such as housing and food (Reception Conditions Directive).

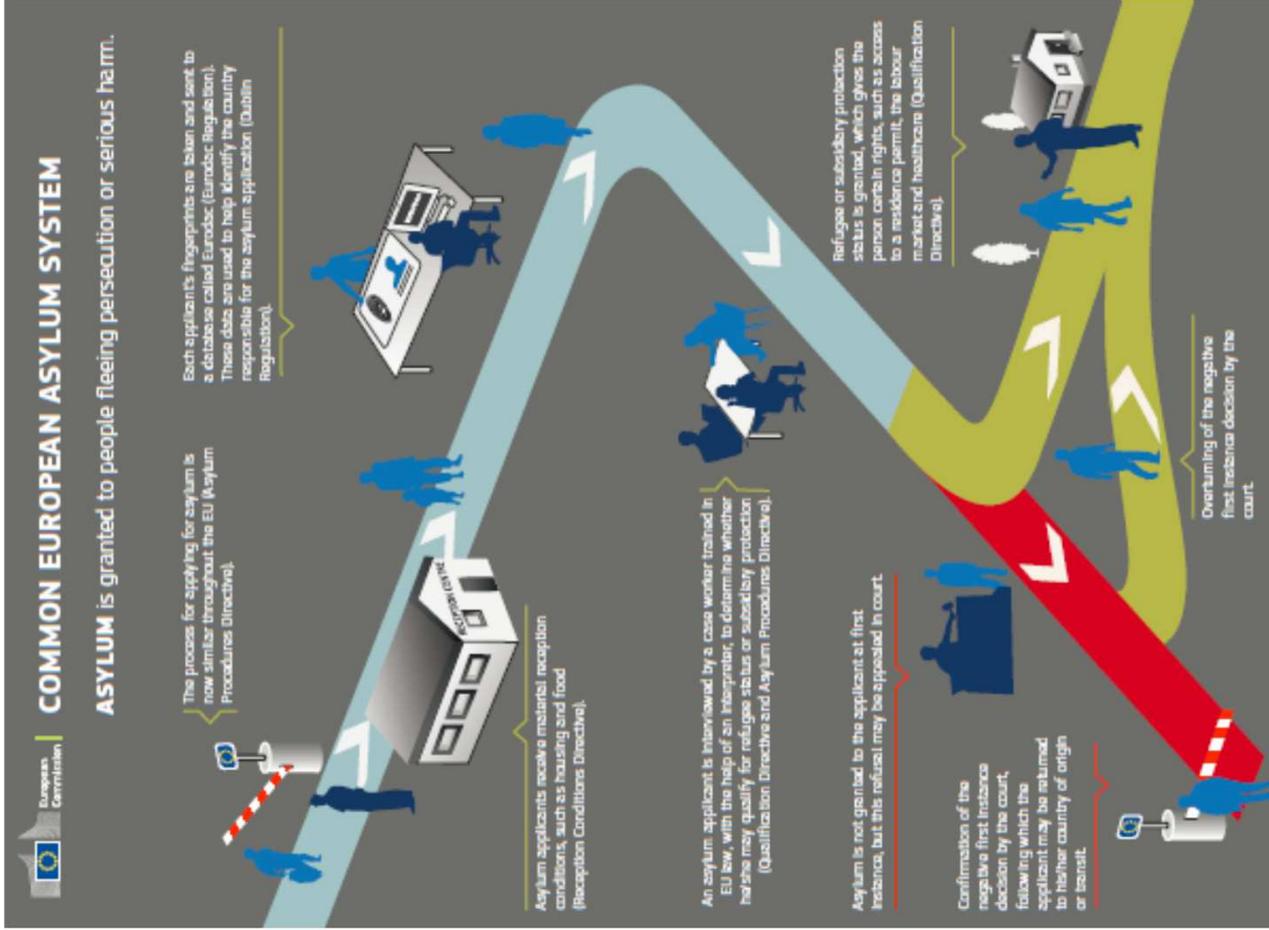
An asylum applicant is interviewed by a case worker trained in EU law, with the help of an interpreter, to determine whether he/she may qualify for refugee status or subsidiary protection (Qualification Directive and Asylum Procedures Directive).

Asylum is not granted to the applicant at first instance, but this refusal may be appealed in court.

Confirmation of the negative first instance decision by the court, following which the applicant may be returned to his/her country of origin or transit.

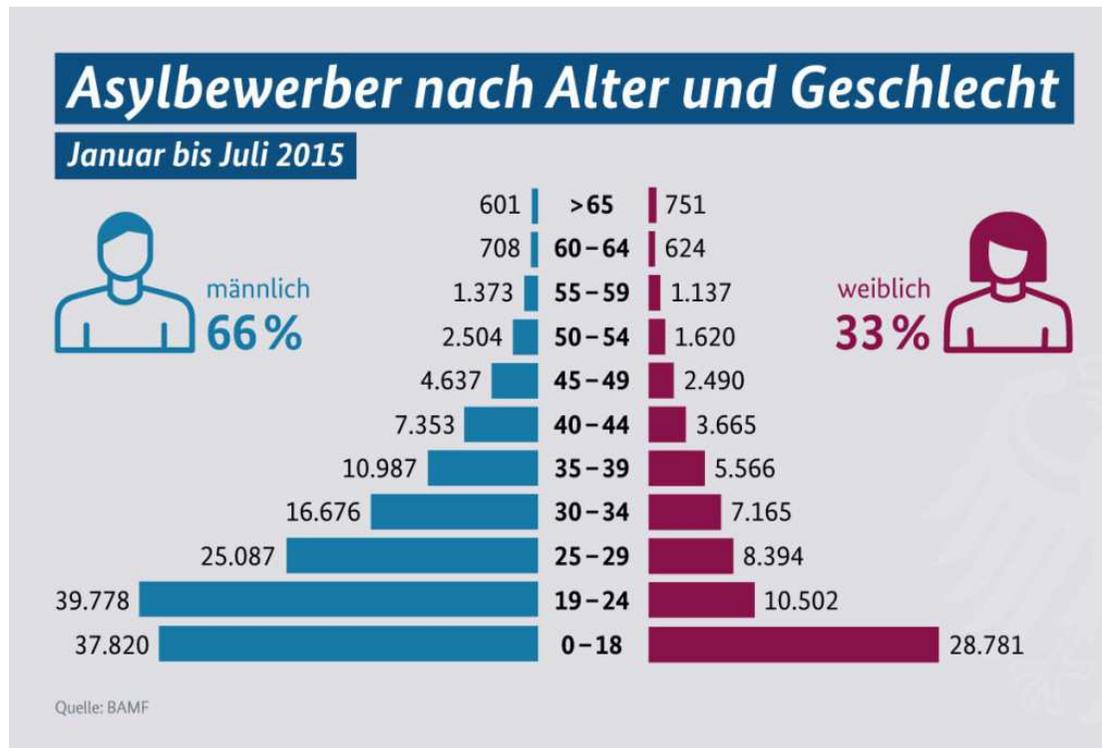
Refugee or subsidiary protection status is granted, which gives the person certain rights, such as access to a residence permit, the labour market and healthcare (Qualification Directive).

Overturning of the negative first instance decision by the court.



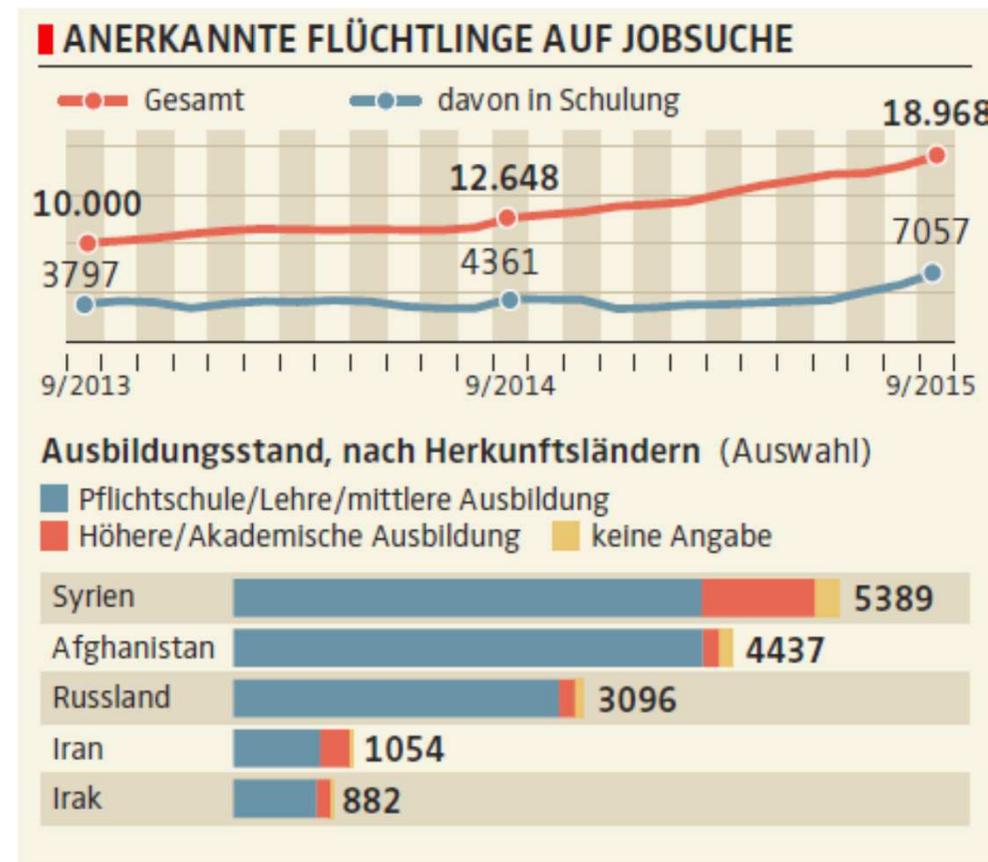
Integration: Burden or potential?

- both
 - **Potential due to demographic structure**
 - 31% of asylum applicants 01-09/2015 in Germany are below 18 years old, 49% are between 19 and 34 years old (source for both: BAMF)
 - Ca. two thirds are male
 - Compensation of declining labour force, when the „baby boomers“ are entering into retirement (although a little too early)



Integration: Burden or potential?

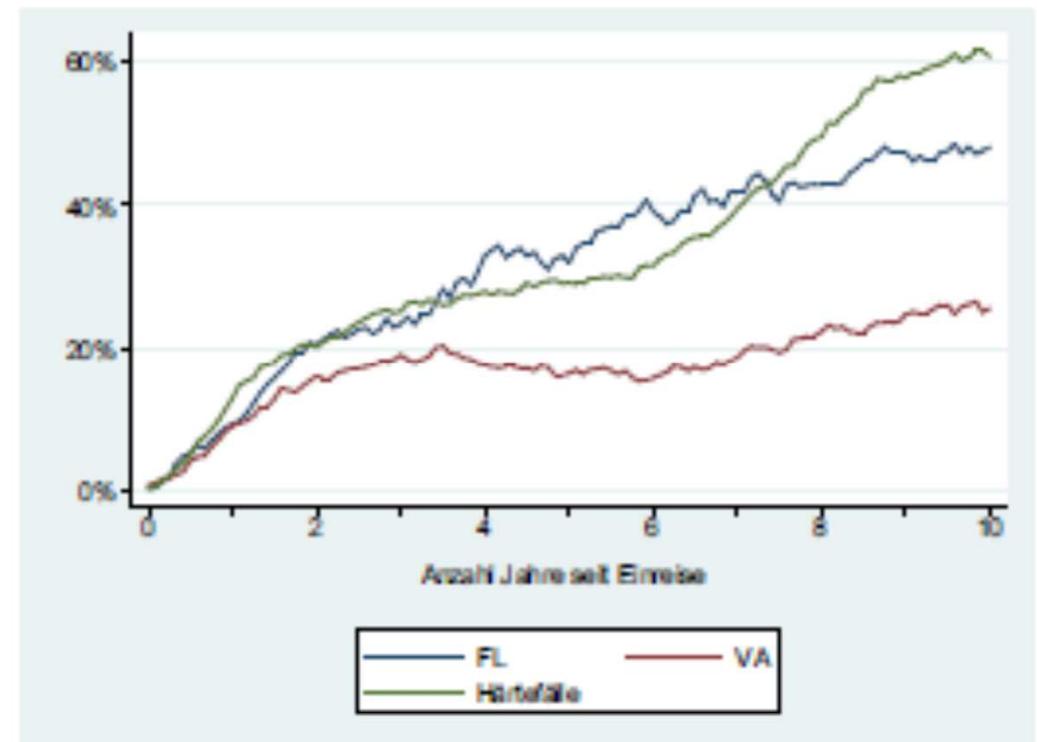
- Both
 - burden due to the qualification
 - Kompetenzcheck (pilot study in Vienna – AMS):
 - qualifications of recognised refugees in 2015:
 - Syrians: ca 65% only primary school, ca. 7% tertiary education;
 - Afghans: ca. 90% primary school, tertiary education unknown



Integration: Burden or potential?

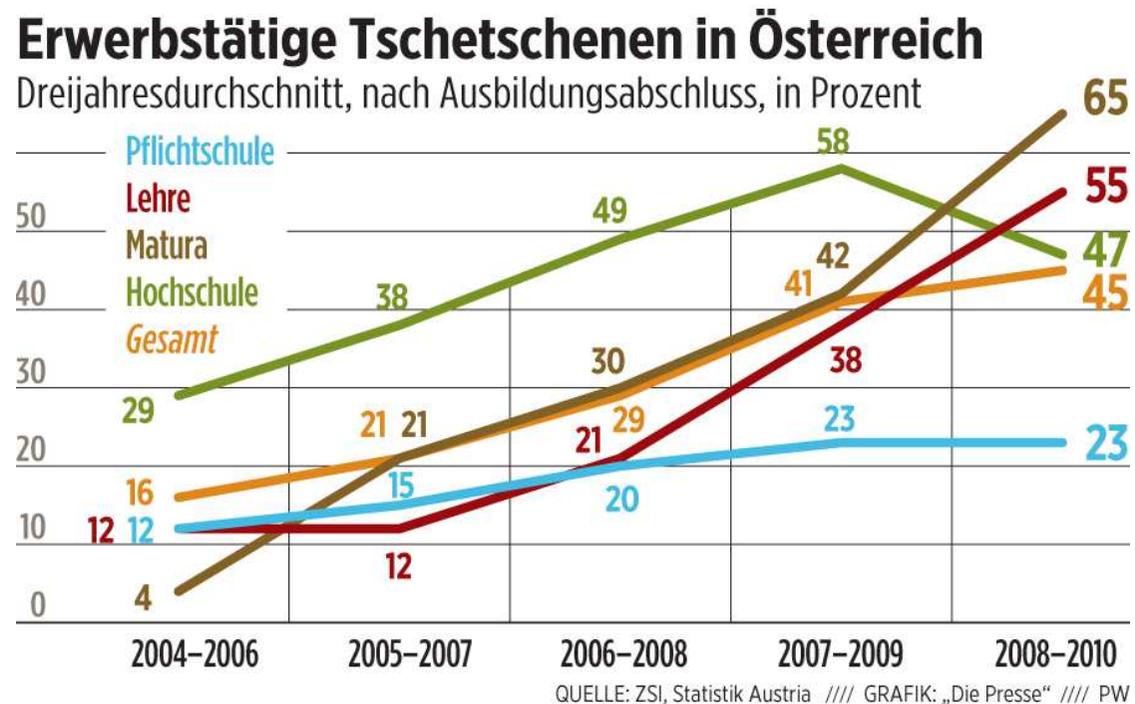
- burden due to a low labour participation rate
- Study: Erwerbsbeteiligung von anerkannten Flüchtlingen (FL) und vorläufig Aufgenommenen (VA) auf dem Schweizer Arbeitsmarkt (www.bfm.admin.ch)
 - Cohort: refugees entering Swiss between 1997 and 2000 for the first time; age when arriving Swiss: 25 – 50; resident in Swiss for at least 10 years
 - www.sem.admin.ch/dam/data/sem/integration/berichte/va-flue/studie-erwerbsbet-va-flue-d.pdf

Graphik 1: Erwerbstätigenquote in den ersten zehn Jahren nach Ankunft



Integration: Burden or potential?

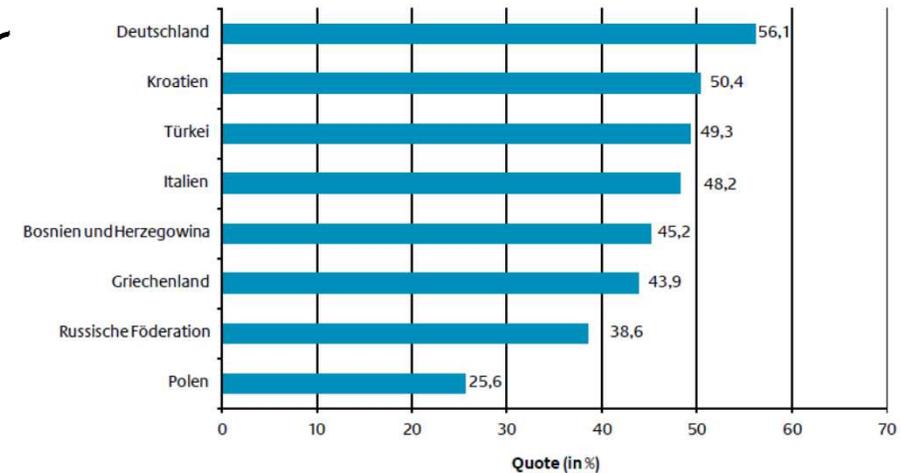
- burden due to a low labour force participation rate
- Study: Gächter (ZSI): in Russia born population arriving Austria 2002-2005 (most of them are from Chechnya)
- After 5 years: labour force participation of those with primary school doubled from 12% to 23%, but remained very low!
- Note: the curve „Gesamt“ is the unweighted (!) average
- <http://diepresse.com/home/wirtschaft/economist/4830120/Arbeit-als-Schlüssel-zur-Integration>



Integration: Burden or poter

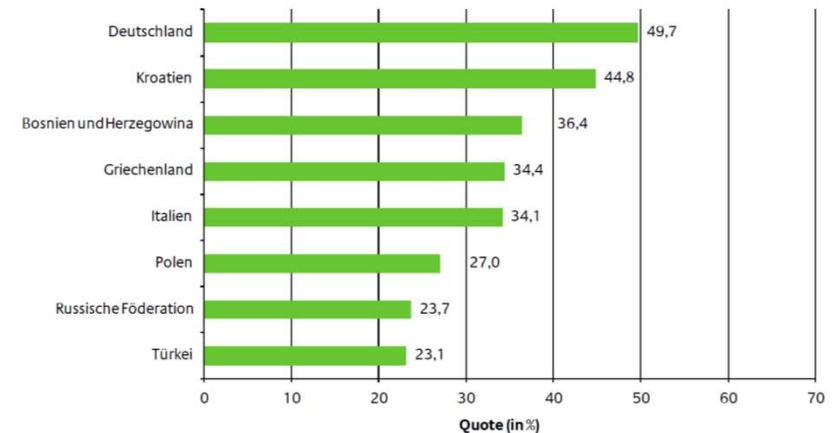
- burden due to a low labource participation rate
 - Study: BAMF Migranten am Arbeitsmarkt in Deutschland WP36
 - Same result: low employment rate of Russian emigrants (refugees included);
 - Especially the female employment rate of Russian emigrants is only half of the Germans
 - www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/WorkingPapers/wp36-migranten-am-arbeitsmarkt-in-deutschland.pdf?__blob=publicationFile

Abbildung 9: Beschäftigtenquoten der 15- bis unter 65-jährigen Männer nach Staatsangehörigkeit, 2009



Quelle: Bundesagentur für Arbeit (2010a), Statistisches Bundesamt (2010a, 2010d).
Eigene Berechnung und Darstellung, vorläufige Zahlen.

Abbildung 10: Beschäftigtenquoten der 15- bis unter 65-jährigen Frauen nach Staatsangehörigkeit, 2009



Quelle: Bundesagentur für Arbeit (2010a), Statistisches Bundesamt (2010a, 2010d).
Eigene Berechnung und Darstellung, vorläufige Zahlen.

Integration: Burden or potential?

- Public financial burden
 - Financial burden: asylum seekers (recognised and granted subsidiary protection) are entitled to receive minimum income (BMS)
 - That means: additional 10.000 recipients could result in 100 Mio. EUR per year (maximum), 50.000 additional recognized asylum seekers in 500 Mio.



Integration: Burden or potential?

- Burden (?) : muslim asylum seekers a a risk for Europe (V. Orban)?
 - This question is difficult to answer, because of lacking empirical value studies on currently emigrating people
 - Both is possible:
 - Incorporation of European fundamental values (liberality, democracy, constitutionality etc.), but also
 - Persistence, as a result of self-imposed or socially induced exclusion



Integration: Burden or potential?

- Potential due to the demographic structure
 - Majority of the refugees is young and willing (assumption) to increase their living standard;
 - Increase of a flexible and cheap labour supply
 - Factors increasing participation (cp: bfm: Flüchtlinge auf dem Schweizer Arbeitsmarkt)
 - Age
 - Qualification
 - German language competence



Which political intentions are given?

- „Outsourcing“ of control
 - Establishment of so called „Hot Spots“ (supported by EASO*)
 - Registration of asylum seekers
 - Decision on entitlement for requesting asylum
 - Distribution across Europe
 - Repatriation
 - Improved border control: Turkey and African countries („Model Gaddafi“?)

Hotspots an EU-Außengrenzen

Registrierung, Erstaufnahme und Rückweisung von Flüchtlingen

■ bereits vorhanden □ geplant



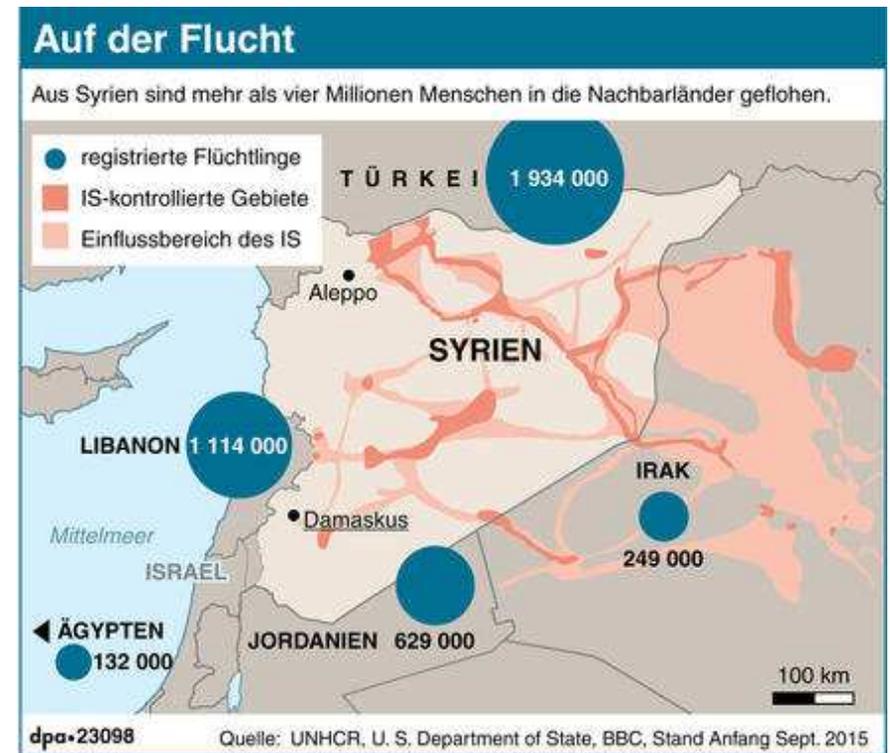
Grafik © APA, Quelle: APA



*EASO: European Asylum Support Office

Which political intentions are given?

- Combating causes of flight (root causes approach)
 - Living conditions in existing refugee camps
 - Also in potential countries of origin (in a long-term perspective)
 - Diplomatic initiatives for resolving conflicts (very difficult);
 - Common EU foreign policy is required



What about (national) political intentions?

- „competition of unfriendliness“
- Failed model of „free choice“ for asylum seekers; countries are tightening the eligibility criteria, for avoiding unduly absorption of asylum seekers
 - Temporary asylum
 - Non-cash benefits instead of allowances
 - Fast repatriation of asylum seekers from „safe“ countries of origin
 - Limitation of family reunification



Which advice can be given?

- Generally and for Europe
 - Recognize humanitarian tasks and re-implement Schengen and CEAS; the return to a regulated execution of asylum procedures is necessary both in political and societal terms
 - Collective admission procedures (resettlement, activation of the Mass Influx Directive) are more appropriate than individualized asylum procedures
- For Austria
 - Fast decisions on applications
 - Intensive qualification measures for asylum seekers with high probability of becoming recognized
 - Fast take up of work – males and females – for stimulating successful integration
 - And: more fundamental research, for avoiding political „blind flight“!