



VAI

**VOLUNTEERING
AMONG IMMIGRANTS**

**Germany
National Report**



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Germany



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Introduction

Civil society engagement and volunteering are a resource and an essential foundation for democratic societies. Today, the European Union recognizes the potential of volunteering among immigrants as an instrument for and indicator of integration. In order to promote the voluntary engagement of migrants and refugees, many EU member states have introduced a wide array of policy measures. The rationale behind these policies is that migrants who volunteer take over an important role in society. By doing so, migrants become role models for other migrants, and with their own knowledge and experience they bring new ideas into the volunteering organization and get an insight into the culture of the host society. Additionally, volunteering enables the acquisition and improvement of the language skills of recent immigrants and the development of a community feeling across different members of migration groups (Der Paritätische Gesamtverband, 2017).

This demonstrates that the volunteering of immigrants can have a positive impact not only on the immigrant volunteer him-/herself but also on the organization they volunteer with. As an impact on society is assumed, immigrants are expected to bring new perspectives and the possibility of an exchange between different cultures and worlds of experience to the community. Starting from these premises, the present work investigates the role of volunteering and the way in which it operates with respect to the recruitment, integration and cooperation of migrants. Specifically, the VAI project addresses the question: “How can volunteering among immigrants be better used in order to increase third country nationals’ participation in society?”

As volunteering and participation in society, we mean any formal or informal, unpaid activity in which time is given freely to the benefit of another person, group or organization (only an expense allowance may be provided). Immigrants are defined as people born in a foreign country whose parents were also foreign-born and as native-born people with at least one foreign-born parent.

In order to answer the research question with reference to Germany, this report provides an insight into immigration and volunteering in Germany.

The first part of the report (Part A) presents an overview of the different historical migration movements in Germany and analyzes the impact of these migration flows on the social and political regulations, such as governmental policies and their impact on the civic participation of migrants in Germany. Additionally, an overview of the recent research with a focus on the volunteering of migrants is provided.

The second part (Part B) is dedicated to the analysis of the research about volunteering among immigrants carried out in Germany on a local and national level. The study was conducted by the Institute of Didactics of Democracy of the Leibniz University Hanover.

The research methodology consists in an online survey which had the purpose to measure and describe the status quo of voluntary activities and organizations on a national level; as well as of focus group and individual interviews with volunteers and different stakeholders, mostly on a local level in Hanover, Germany.

The online survey aimed at collecting knowledge on different actions that are reported by organizations with the purpose to support migrants, specific activities of organizations to address immigration issues, the involvement of third nation country volunteers within these organizations as well as to get an insight into the experiences and attitudes towards the volunteering of immigrants.



Eleven individual interviews were conducted with migrant volunteers and representatives of third nation country organizations as well as Germans who are involved in voluntary activities that directly concerns immigrants. The areas of responsibility of the volunteers varied. Research data was collected from volunteers who work in religious associations and associations that are only donation-based, from volunteers who work for political parties and people who are active in associations by being an active member of the board.

Five focus groups were organized in Hanover and Berlin, involving a sample of different stakeholders in volunteering. We were able to collect research data from several organizations who have the purpose to help different kinds of immigrants, one organization who is dedicated to opening up the dialogue between different nations living in Germany, and another organization that works with school student.

All interviews aimed at investigating case studies of reception projects and volunteering initiatives addressing migrants' needs, problems or benefits connected with volunteering for migrants or volunteering by migrants on a local level.



PART A: MIGRATIONS AND VOLUNTEERING AT NATIONAL LEVEL

1. General framework on migration in Germany

1.1 Historical framework on immigration in Germany

Although the Federal Republic of Germany has long time not considered itself a country of immigration, because there have never been active political decisions for an admission of immigrants aiming at a permanent residence for foreigners, the country became the destination for many important migration movements (Dickel, 2002).

To discuss important movements in migration, to and from German, it is important to name the following phases:

1890s until 1918: Poles from Prussia for the Industry and wartime economy

In the course of a progressive industrialization in Germany since 1890, the demand for labor was growing again. Since locals did not cover that demand, the government recruited foreigners, mostly Poles from Prussia, for (armaments) industry and farming (Dickel, 2002). Together with prisoners of war, the Prussian Poles contributed to the German wartime economies. The labor on German ground was characterized by strict regulations. The German government establishes a rigid control system to monitor the migration of foreign workers, e.g. it was necessary to apply each year for a new residence permit and seasonal workers had to return to Poland during the wintertime (Friedrichs, 2018). Nevertheless, at the end of the wartime a considerable number of Poles stayed in Germany and founded families on German ground.

Interwar Period (1918-1939) and World War II: Russians and Jews from Eastern Europe

During the reign of the Tsarist Empire in Russia, over 1.5 million Russians and Eastern European Jews fled from the growing persecution and pogroms against Jews and the so-called endangers of the Russian empire. Most of them moved on to New York or to Paris, around 70.000 applied for asylum in the German Empire (Weimar Republic) until the anti-Semitic pogroms started to threaten the Jews in Germany as well (Bergmann, 2011). During the National Socialism regime from 1933 until 1945 and the strongly anti-Semitic policies that made discrimination, persecution and finally the systematic destruction of Jews legitimate, many Jews could successfully flee from Germany. Many others, however died from malnutrition, bad living conditions or in concentration camps. From the originally half a million Jews living in Germany in 1933 only 34 000 survived the Holocaust (Bade, 2010).

Displaced persons and late repatriates (1945 – Today)

In World War II, 8 million foreign war prisoners and foreigners sentenced to hard labor were under German custody. After the war the forced laborers from the Soviet Union weren't sent back because of the suspicion of collaboration, and they stayed in reception camps. That resulted in 150 000 displaced people staying in Germany after World War II (Jacobmeyer, 1985).

Germany's relation with repatriates goes back to the 18th century. Repatriates (former Germans) where settled in areas that Germany conquered during World War I and World War II. As repatriates are also considered people of German origin from the countries of the former Soviet Union. Due to



their German ethnicity, they faced persecution and serious discrimination during and still years after the end of World War II. For this reason, the German government allowed them to settle in Germany, along with their non-German family members, under a special program. The so-called “Federal Expellees Act” (BVFG) from 1953 used the principal of blood and accords citizenship based on ethnicity. If a repatriate is able to demonstrate German ancestry, he or she is automatically granted German citizenship (BAMF, 2017). Up to 1992, it was assumed that all ethnic Germans living in these areas had personally suffered discrimination because of their German ethnicity. All other applicants since that fixed date must demonstrate evidence of individual discrimination. In 1996, 3.9 million repatriates and relatives lived in Germany and since that peak in repatriate returns there have been only occasional immigration flows in the 2000s (Senders, 1996).

Guest Workers from 1955 until the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989

Due to the massive expansion of foreign trade in the postwar period, the Federal Republic of Germany needed more workers in different areas of industrial production, heavy industries and mining than those who were available (Seifert, 2012). The separation of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) from the German Democratic Republic (GDR) stopped the migration from DR to the FRG and led to a labor shortage. In 1955, the FRG signed a bilateral agreement, a labor recruitment treaty, with Italy, and in the following years also with Spain and Greece (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965) and Yugoslavia (1968). Those agreements aimed at the temporary recruitment of young, mostly male workers to fill the lack of workers in the FRG (Dickel, 2002). Originally, it was intended, that those so-called guest workers would go back to their countries of origin once they were no longer needed. Over 11 million of the originally 14 million recruited guest workers went back after a termination of the recruitment program in 1973. However, a large number of guest workers decided to stay in Germany and were joined by their families later.

Meanwhile the GDR was dealing with labor shortage too. The two main nationalities that were recruited as guest workers to the GDR were guest workers from Vietnam (59,000 thousand) and Mozambique (15,000 thousand) (ibid.).

Asylum seekers in the reunified Germany in the 1990s

Since 1980, the number of people seeking asylum in the reunified Germany has increased. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the number of asylum applicants reached the highest point: in 1992 over 438,000 people applied for asylum. Over 75 percent were from Eastern and Southern Europe. Most of the applicants were civil war refugees from Yugoslavia, Rumania and Bulgaria, but there were also refugees who were fleeing from the persecution of Kurds in Turkey and Iraq. A big nation-wide debate concerning asylum seekers gained a lot of attention. This debate was accompanied by violent riots and attacks against refugee camps and homes. In 1993, the government passed an asylum compromise, which stipulates among other paragraphs, that people do not get the right of an application for asylum in Germany when they entered the country from a member state of the European Communities where the application for asylum could be processed as well (Hailbronner, 1994). That caused a drop in the number of applications. In 2008, the number of applications reached its lowest point with 28,018 counted and registered applications (BAMF, 2018). Due to a very active and strict repatriation and deportation policy, only few refugees stayed in Germany and became permanent resident.



A further regulation that was important especially to Eastern European Jews was the contract for Jewish refugees signed in 1990. This regulation was considered a humanitarian act for Jews who had to face discrimination and persecution in their own countries. Up to today, over 200,000 Jews have been taken into Germany based on that bill. Since 2005 there has been a big decrease in the arrivals of Jewish Refugees.

Today: Unrestricted European mobility and rising refugee numbers

Since 2006, Germany has been recording an increase in the number of people migrating to Germany. Today's migration flows, however, have various causes. The decision in 2005 for unrestricted European mobility for EU-citizens means the freedom of movement for workers and gives nationals of EU member states the right to choose freely their employment within the EU. In all member states, Europeans enjoy the same access to employment as that country's citizens, which means that they and their family members have a right to reside there to engage in employment. Among the biggest immigrant groups in Germany due to the unrestricted EU-mobility are workers from Rumania, Poland, Bulgaria, Croatia, Italy and Hungary (BMBF, 2017b).

Also due to wars and unsafe living conditions in many countries all over the world, there is a big increase in the number of refugees from third nations coming to Germany. Reinforced by the terrorism and wars in the Middle East, there was a big wave of immigrants coming to Germany as asylum seekers in 2015. It is estimated that over a million (1,393,156 status quo in 2017) refugees applied for asylum in Germany over the last years (BAMF, 2018). It is important to highlight, that each year at least 25 percent (since 2017 even more than 38 per cent) of the applications were denied (BAMF, 2018). Even so, Germany is one of the ten countries in the world that took in the most refugees and is listed as one of the top-ten countries in successful migration- and integration policies by the Migrant Integration Policy Index (Proasyl, 2018; Bertelsmann, 2016). In 2016, the biggest percent age (65 percent) of asylum seekers were from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Eritrea, i.e. from countries that are suffering war and political persecution on a daily basis (ibid.). The biggest refugee group are men over 18 years, many of them traveling alone to Germany with the hope that they can manage to bring their families to Germany once they have gained refugee status. This is getting more and more a problem due to the immigration process where many refugees only gain subsidiary protection instead of the full refugee protection, which denies the right to family reunification (Proasyl, 2018). It can be assumed that this regulation is one further measure to regulate (and lower) the total number of refugees in Germany as many protests and riots against refugees took place in the last years.



1.2 Political framework of the legal basis of migration and asylum in Germany

The political regulation varies depending on the different migration groups arriving in Germany. The following overview summarizes the most important regulations for the biggest migration groups and the different phases.

1.2.1 Guest Workers, Repatriates and Jewish refugees

The labor recruitment programs were removed in 1973 due to the economic recession. It was expected and encouraged by the German government that guest workers return to their countries of origin, but many decided to stay, applied for visas for themselves and their families, and settled in Germany. Many of them ended up living in ethnic enclaves.

Since 1990, the number of applicants of immigration visa in Germany has become lower because of a series of new, strict immigration laws. To lower the numbers of repatriate applicants the German government decided that immigrants who apply for the residence permit under the Repatriates agreement have to prove that they match the terms of admission in their country of origin in advance (Seifert, 2012). Motivated by a wide public rejection of an increase of foreigners in Germany, the German government was interested in keeping the numbers of foreigners in Germany low.

Germany used the *jus sanguinis* principle in its nationality or citizenship law, stating the right to citizenship based on a person's German ancestry, and not by place of birth. These regulations had an important influence on the immigration of repatriates, as the citizenship was given to them directly after the arrival, because they were considered as formal Germans. Guest workers worked meanwhile under the status of a permanent resident. A problem that resulted from the undue recruitment regulations, caused by the big need of workers in the 1960s, was that their children, who were born in Germany, officially still counted as foreigners. Therefore, the government passed a bill in 2000 that made it easier for children of immigrants who live in Germany to gain the German citizenship by meeting only a few preconditions (e.g. they must work for their living, they should not have a criminal record) (Seifert, 2012). Additionally, they could receive the citizenship of their ancestral country automatically. Later, however, it was decided that children of immigrants from countries that are not in the European Union have to decide at a certain age which citizenship they want to keep, because multiple citizenships weren't allowed.

Simpler regulations applied to Jewish refugees. Especially many Eastern European Jews decided to migrate to Germany in the period from 1990 to 2000. A regulation signed in 1990 was the so called "quota refugee" contract for Jewish refugees. Jewish Refugees, who suffer from discrimination in their countries of origin, don't have to go through a long asylum process and no other recognition procedures, but receive immediately upon arrival a residence and work permit. As the residence and work permit is handed to them directly upon arrival, no additional regulations for a permanent residence were needed. Today, over 200,000 Jews have been taken in on basis of that bill. Since 2005 it became more complicated to migrate to Germany as Jewish refugees because it is now necessary to prove a basic knowledge of the German language and it is obligatory to secure one's own living standard. The regulations for receiving the citizenship are for Jewish refugees similar to those of the offspring generation of the guest workers.



1.2.2 Asylum Seeking Regulations

The asylum regulations are more complicated. Originally, the wording of the Asylum law in the German constitution was quite broad. After Germany had taken in a lot of refugees in the 1980s, a controversy debate broke out concerning the principals of asylum and the motives and sincerity of refugees coming to Germany. In addition, seeking the harmonization of the national legislation following the Schengen agreement in 1985, Germany was under pressure to adapt an asylum process that was similar to its neighboring countries. Therefore, the government changed the constitution in 1992. so that the previously unrestricted access of politically persecuted people to get asylum in Germany was bound to the third country regulation: if a refugee immigrates to Germany through a so-called safe third country, asylum in Germany won't be granted to him or her. A list of countries where refugees are free from persecution was created. In addition, airlines who transported passengers without valid documents were fined (Seifert, 2012; Mützel, 2016). Also, in 2003 a new system for fingerprint identification was developed (EORODAC). This system helped to recognize faster if an applicant had already applied for asylum in another safe country. Today's immigration laws haven't changed much, however some aspects of the asylum laws were tightened in 2017 after the Berlin terror attack in December 2016. These new rules concern especially asylum seekers who haven't received permission to stay in the country and don't leave Germany voluntarily. The rules enable the government to make deportations easier and family reunifications harder (Proasyl, 2018). Additionally, to this intensification of specific rules to restrict the total numbers of refugees in Germany, more and more deportations of refugees from "safe countries of origin" take place. In 2016, Germany had worldwide the fourth-highest number of deported refugees. In 2016, Germany reached the all-time high with 25,000 deportations, from this number 75 percent of the deported refugee seekers were originally from the Balkan states which were declared safe counties of origin in the last years. In addition, there has been an increase of deportations to Afghanistan and the Maghreb states where parts of the country have been declared safe countries of origin as well. In addition, the review of asylum applications of refugees who already applied in safe countries has been discontinued and greatly reduced in the last year (Leubecher, 2017).

1.2.3 From Immigration to Integration

In terms of immigration procedures, the dialogue in the public was dominated by two topics: the requirement of a "more efficient system" as well as measures against "the abuse of the system". In the media as well as in the political debate, the impression arose that the majority of asylum seekers and immigrants in Germany would "migrate into the social security system" (Kruse, 2008, p.165). Such statements as well as the phrase that Germany doesn't consider itself a country of immigration led to a lack of regulations concerning not only the immigration laws but also the integration of people who have been living in Germany already for many years and or just arrived recently. Therefore, the first Commissioner of foreigners Heinz Kühn from the German Socialdemocratic Party (SPD) requested in 1970 to recognize the factual immigration situation in Germany and to start an active policy of integration for immigrants (Hanewinkel, & Oltmer, 2017). This view provides a broader view on German regulations, namely that migrations reforms should not only refer to immigration control but also to immigrant integration (Kruse, 2008). As a result, the government recognized the development of an active immigration policy as a duty of the German State when it passed the national integration law in January 2005. In addition, the Federal Agency for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) was



established as the monitoring office for integration support measures. The most important regulation that is included in the integration law is the possibility to take part in integration classes that should provide knowledge of the German culture, laws, history and traditions in a 100-hour class and the German language in a 600-hour language class. Offices for foreign affairs that deal with the recognition of residence permits can oblige immigrants that have a lack of the German language proficiency to take part in the classes. Immigrants from EU states are excluded from that regulation. Political and public actors are still discussing sanctions in the case if immigrants do not participate in those courses (Schmidt, 2016).

The integration policy follows the basic principle of “support and challenge” (Fördern und Fordern). This means that, on the one hand, immigrants have the duty to learn German and to gain knowledge on the German values and norms. On the other hand, the German society is challenged “to guarantee equal chances and equal treatment in all areas of society, economy, and political matters to immigrants, by identify and reduce barriers for foreigners” (Bundesministerium des Inneren, 2014). Recently the request for cultural integration instead of the previous philosophy of “language skills and knowledge about German culture” moved in the foreground. Due to the rise of refugees seeking asylum in Germany, the public debate is led by the fear of reaching a breaking point of Germany’s intake capacity and the concept of a “German leading culture” is once again reinforced (Hanewinkel, & Oltmer, 2017).

In 2006, an annual integration summit was held for the first time that sets new goals on immigration and monitors the social and cultural engagement and participations of immigrants and their descendants to evaluate the progress and the deficits (ibid.). In 2009, over three million people with a foreign degree lived in Germany, but only approximately 500,000 of these degrees were recognized as an equivalent to German degrees. This led to the problem that many immigrants with permanent residence permits worked below their qualification level (Hanewinkel, & Oltmer, 2017). This was a loss for both the German economy and the immigrants whose achievements weren’t appreciated and who had to live and work under conditions that could be improved by working in a job that suits their qualifications. In April 2012, a bill was passed to make the recognition of foreign degrees easier, the so-called “recognition act” (*Anerkennungsgesetz*). That gives immigrants, independently from their residence status, the right of an examination of their foreign degrees during the first three month after the arrival. This led to an increase in the numbers of recognized foreign degrees. Sometimes the completion of compensatory measures is additionally imposed. The recognition of professions that fell into the regulations of the federal law, for example kindergarten and high school teachers, have to go through a federal law review (ibid.). Due to a lack of transparent criteria in the matters of recognitions, experts are criticizing the confusion concerning the recognition process (Sommer, 2014).

The latest amendment to the German migration framework entered into force in August 2016. The Integration Act and the Regulation on the Integration Act aim to facilitate the integration of refugees into German society. After the first challenge of the registration the accommodation of refugees, creating laws that regulate the integration of that specific group was the next challenge. This regulation is not as broad as it sounds and it mainly concerns the labor market integration of asylum seekers who have a good chance of having their application approved as well as refugees who already have an approved residence status. This bill regulates that refugees can be forced by government agencies to take part in integration and language classes. Additionally, refugees can be obliged to perform 30 hours per week of “simple work” and they are allowed to earn 80 cents per hour. The idea behind the bill is that refugees who show the potential to integrate and have a good chance of staying permanently in



Germany would be provided with an easier and faster access to integration classes and employment opportunities, while refugees who refuse to cooperate face a reduction in benefits. A permanent residence permit can be provided to accepted refugees only after five years of residence and not after three as it used to be. Only refugees with an outstanding integration track record (e.g. excellent knowledge of the German language) can get the permit after three years like before. If a refugee can't prove that he or she has an employment that also covers social security the refugees aren't allowed to move from their assigned federal state (Die Bundesregierung, 2016). The integration policies in Germany are rated positive in international measures. The Migrant Policy Index, for example, which measured countries by 167 indicators of positive participation factors for immigrants announced that Germany is considered as a country that takes one of the top-ten ratings compared to the 38 other countries that have been ranked (Hanewinkel, & Oltmer, 2017). Anyway, NGOs and experts point out that these laws are not really contributing to a good integration of refugees. For example the regulations restrict for refugees to move to another federal state as long the refugee can't show an employment that provides social security benefits (Idler, & Mantel, 2016). Also, Idler and Mandel (2016) point out that there is a lack of integration course offers and the problem of the contra-beneficial condition for integration, that refugees can be forced to work for a minimum expense allowance, they highlight that this can lead to permanent precarity of refugees.



1.3 Social Framework of Immigration in Germany

Germany's history of immigration is as diverse as the migrating groups that arrived in Germany over the last decades. The same diversity continues in terms of living and working conditions and in the social participation of different immigrant groups in Germany. Mikrozensus, an annual comprehensive study, provides data on the population's structures and on the economic and social situation of the population (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2018). The data concerning migrants is not only providing data on first-generation immigrants but also people of the second generation and people with only one migrant-parent. Based on that structure of research, the statistics offer a broader view on immigration and their living and social conditions. In 2015, 17.1 million of the 81.4 million inhabitants in Germany had a migration background (immigrants and their descendants). Of these 17.1 million people, 9.3 million were Germans (had the German citizenship) and 7.8 million were foreigners (54.6 and 45.4 percent) (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2015). The majority of the immigrants in Germany have a Turkish background (approximately¹ 1,600 thousand), followed by immigrants from Poland (app. 900 thousand), Syria (app. 600 thousand) and Italy (app. 600 thousand), Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Rumania (app. 500 thousand). Other large immigrant groups in Germany are migrants from Greece, Croatia, Bulgaria, Afghanistan and the Federation of Russia. The federal state North-Rhine Westphalia has the highest population density of immigrants and the east part of Germany (former GDR) the lowest (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2017; Bertelsmann, 2016).

Other researches show that immigrants do not have equal chances in societal participation as citizens without an immigration background, which holds true for education, the labor market, accommodations and political participation (Hanewinkel, & Oltmer, 2017). The Mikrozensus shows that more immigrants than Germans haven't reached the lowest school-leaving certificate (13, 4 percent in 2015), even if more immigrants than Germans reached the highest level of school certificate: the high school graduation (30 percent of the immigrants but only 28, 5 percent of Germans). Another finding from the research of Mikrozensus shows that there is a big difference between different migrant groups. For example, only 14.4 percent of the migrants with a Turkish background gain a high-school graduation certificate that qualifies for university attendance, in contrast to over 50 percent of immigrants with a Ukrainian background (Bertelsmann, 2016). On the other hand, people of immigrant background finish a vocational training after school more often than Germans. Another finding is that people with a migration background face more often a risk of poverty and a lower income than Germans; and the health risks are higher for people with a migration history. Also, double as many immigrants as Germans have no employment at all (ibid.).

One main finding that was discussed over the last years is that only 2-3 percent of those immigrants who would match all necessary criteria for a citizenship apply for the German citizenship (Bertelsmann, 2016). Considering the lack of the possibility of having two citizenships at a time (especially for Turkish and Russian immigrants), some immigrants, although having lived in Germany for many years, don't consider applying for the German citizenship. This doesn't apply to repatriates who received their citizenship by arrival as they are seen as ancestral Germans. This mismatch in citizenship is important in the context of political participation as it is not possible to vote in federal elections for people who do not have the German citizenship. Immigrants from European Union countries are able to vote in municipal elections. Third country nationals are excluded from those elections completely, even if they

¹ Further abbreviated as "app."



have lived in Germany for decades. Municipalities created foreigners- and integration advisory councils which give an indirect possibility to participate on the municipal level as well as the right to have representatives of the immigrants' interests.

In terms of the care-, accident-, retirement-, unemployment- and health insurance the immigrants who live in Germany have the same access as German citizens as long as they contribute to the insurance funds (Dicker, 2002). The situation is different with some services paid for by tax money, for example, social services like educational and child allowance (ibid.). Only foreigners with a permanent residence permit are entitled to benefit from these services.

Refugees are the group who face the biggest problems with social services, as they often do not have an approved residence status but only a time-limited residence permit. This leads to many different social problems. First, they often have limited claims to social benefits like health care. Also, access to health care is often connected with a long walk through the bureaucracy. Some refugee helpers and volunteering doctors are doing disease tests and free health check-ups directly in the refugee camps, but a shortage of health care for refugees who have been living in Germany for many years and those who just arrived is a problem that refugee helpers point out on a daily basis (Berres, 2016). Secondly, refugees without a permanent residence permit can be deported after any legal offence, even if they were born in Germany and do not have any connection to their country of origin anymore; a condition that creates a special legal space of pressure for refugees (Dickel, 2002). Furthermore, as another regulation states, refugees who receive temporary residence in Germany for humanitarian reasons do not have the right of family reunification because of the temporary character of their stay.

Many years of refugee protection in Germany have shown that most of the foreigners remain longer in the country than initially expected (Kruse, 2008). During the asylum determination procedure and afterwards, many refugees are completely excluded from any possibilities of a social life. Since the integration bill in 2015 refugees are allowed to work after a six month period of residence in Germany, but mostly the available work is simple work with a low qualification access that actually doesn't help them to achieve a higher qualification for a better labor market integration if they want to stay in Germany. Financial benefits for asylum seekers were removed from the Federal Social Assistance and were largely granted as in-kind benefits to ensure that they serve exclusively to meet the fulfillment of daily demands in Germany (Dickel, 2002). In terms of the asylum policy, the German government met a lot of public discussions and critic. Many public demonstrations took place all over the country and complaints about too many refugees coming to Germany in the wake of the large number of asylum-seekers in 2015 were verbalized. Some of the protests have been accompanied by vandalizing refugee homes. Right-wing demonstrations and the question of how to deal with refugees led to an enormous increase of the support and approval for the right-wing party AfD (Alternative for Germany). Finally, this leads to the result that even if the refugees reached safer living conditions than in their countries of origin where war and persecution is ongoing, they are confronted with a lot of resistance from parts of the German public, which makes feeling at home and integrating into the society even harder.



2. Volunteering in Germany

2.1 Volunteering and volunteer management in Germany

The first large associations such as aid organizations or rescue organizations as well as volunteer work in the cultural field were founded in Germany in the first half of the 20th century,. The Nazi regime brought a break to voluntarism because of a restrictive caesura, but after World War II, volunteering became more important again. Since 1990, at the very latest, volunteering is considered as a public debate and counts as a bipartisan and recognized area of politics (ibid.).

Today Germany is one of the countries with above-average voluntary commitment. The terms "volunteering" or "civic engagement" cannot be separated clearly. In Germany, volunteering is considered as activity that isn't based on profit, has the purpose of a contribution for the common good and takes place in a public space in cooperative work with others (Hollstein, 2017). Volunteering refers to traditional forms of engagement in the public sphere. In Germany, the term voluntary work, based on English volunteering, refers above all to involvement in statutory services such as the Voluntary Social Year (FSJ), the Voluntary Ecological Year (FÖJ) or the Federal Volunteer Service (BFD). In the last volunteering survey in 2014, the findings show that 44 percent of the participants older than 14 years were engaged in volunteering work, 27 percent were engaged in clubs and in similar kinds of civic engagement and 29 percent weren't active in any field at all. According to a nation-wide volunteer survey, women are a little bit less involved in volunteering than man in Germany (41.5 vs. 45.7 percent). Also, volunteering depends on the current life situation of the volunteers; women tend to do less volunteering work if their youngest child is younger than three years. Those findings confirm the results of a previous study by Helms and McKenzie (2013), who additionally found out that women are more likely to volunteer formally if they also volunteer informally, suggesting that the decisions are complementary. For men the decisions to volunteer formally and informally are not significantly related (Helms & McKenzie, 2013). Furthermore, mobility and flexibility are important factors for the engagement in volunteering work. People who can plan their time rather freely and people who have been living in an area longer than 3 years tend to be much more engaged in volunteering (ibid.; BMFSFJ,2014).

Civic engagement and volunteering encompasses a broad spectrum and there are many areas where people get involved in volunteering, such as:

- having a membership and participating in clubs or associations, trade unions;
- doing collaboration in charitable institutions;
- Participation in form of direct Democratic Citizen Participation;
- Participation in protests in the context of citizens' initiatives and social movements
- making financial contributions in the form of donations and foundations (Wegweiser Bürgergesellschaft, 2018).

Young and old people of all professional and population groups hold honorary posts. Most voluntary activities are performed in sport. Every sixth person works in a club, for example as a coach, groundskeeper or supervisor. Almost one in ten is involved in schools or kindergartens, just as many in cultural associations. 8.5 percent of citizens work in social areas and 7.6 percent in churches. Many are also active in environmental and animal welfare, emergency services or the volunteer fire department (BMFSFJ, 2014). Especially since the refugee crisis in 2015, several million people have



been active in a volunteering activity to help refugees. Volunteers have been engaging in all kinds of help like nursing, in food distribution, as doctors for health services and more (ProAsyl, 2018). This shows the important role of volunteering in Germany, and how many people are engaged in volunteering also going hand in hand with new challenges caused for example by wars or climate change disasters in other countries. In the recent years, voices have become more vocal that volunteering happens not always under fair circumstances. Lately, there has been a lot of critique that society is relying too much on unpaid work and that volunteering is in some cases used as a replacement of payed employment opportunities, which seems to be the case especially in the fields of social youth work, in nursery homes and in the field of refugee help (Betzwieser, 2018; Ludwig, 2013; Pinl, 2015).

Especially in the context of the refugee crisis, the danger of reaching one's personal limit is also an argument that cannot simply be dismissed. Anyone who wants to get involved in volunteering in social contexts should be prepared for the kind of situations they are going to face. Hence, the question if professionalism in volunteering is necessary was discussed in the public many times (Öko-Fair, 2018).

2.2 Institutional settings and legal framework of volunteering

As of now, there is no legal framework for volunteering. Everybody who works voluntarily and takes over (non-profit) voluntary activities, who is committed to civic engagement and is doing practical activities in the interest of the common good and recognized idealistic purposes is working formally on a volunteering basis. Such an activity does not constitute an employment relationship in the legal sense. Voluntary work, for example in an association, is therefore not subject to the provisions of labor law (i.e. protection against dismissal). Voluntary work is usually based on a relatively free (verbally or written) contract and is rooted in ideological motives on the side of the volunteers (WegWeiserBürgergesellschaft, 2018).

All Germans and newly arriving immigrants with a German ethnicity enjoy full political and civic participation rights. This is different in the case of foreign nationals, as according to the basic law they cannot possess full civic rights (Cyrus, 2005). Concerning volunteering, there are no differences between German citizens and migrants in the regulation for taking an active part in volunteering activities. There are no special restrictions regarding the membership in foreign or national associations and volunteering in such associations, especially the membership in a church or religions association is common among foreigners (ibid.). In addition, the representation in workers' councils and self-founded migrants associations are a possibility for civic engagement for Germans as well as migrants in Germany. A peculiarity represents the field of the political engagement of foreigners. As foreigners – except for EU citizens - do not have any voting rights in German elections, foreigners are also excluded from internal party procedures, even if foreigners are not excluded from being a member of a political party. A response of the German government to that problem is the possibility for immigrants to be represented by local foreign advisory boards. However, there is no comprehensive approach to the promotion of immigrants' participation in volunteering or politics (ibid.). The same also applies to refugees – there is no need for refugees to have a permit of the immigration office for taking part in civic engagement activities, but in terms of an employment or internship the legal framework is different and more complicated (Diekmann & Mindach, 2017).



2.3 Volunteering and the connection to immigrants

2.3.1 Different forms of volunteering in relation to immigrants

There is a wide range of non-governmental organizations (NGO) and associations and, as volunteering is considered also a form of support for immigrants' long-term integration, many of them have focused on immigration. These organizations have different focus groups.

Many organizations try to mobilize immigrants themselves to be a volunteer in any kind of civic engagement (foreign advisory councils), but also with the purpose of helping other immigrants (for example as a translator or mentor for other immigrants). Other organizations have the focus of immigrants getting in touch with Germans (for example German-immigrant tandems or mentor projects). Furthermore, other organizations focus on aid for immigrants independent of origin of the volunteer-group. As the different models are important for the question of the present work, two best practice examples of each kind of the important groups will be presented in the following to highlight the difference.

1. Volunteering of immigrant volunteers in all areas of civic engagement

- **Haus der Religionen, Hannover** (Eng. Translation: House of Religions):
The House of Religions is an Organization based in Hannover. The association is led and guided by people of different religions and backgrounds. The House has two distinct functions: The Council and the Forum for Religions. Since 2009, Hannover has had a joint representation of different faith communities with the Council of Religions. Six religions are represented here. Every community has exactly one vote. The Council of Religions represents the religious communities of Hanover towards politics and urban society. The *Forum der Religion* is a meeting place for all religious communities in Hanover. Delegates from the municipalities and the urban society come together here for interreligious dialogue. Also, the House of Religions is often the host of cultural and educational events for schools, students and other groups of society (Haus der Religionen, 2018).
- **KiGa e.V., Berlin** (Eng. Translation: Kreuzberg's initiative against anti-Semitism):
The Kreuzberg's initiative against Anti-Semitism is a Berlin-based organization where mentors from different religions lead workshops on anti-Semitism with school students. The volunteers are from multiple backgrounds and pursue the goal to reduce anti-Semitic attitudes in Berlin schools (Kiga, 2018).

2. Volunteering of immigrant volunteers for the purpose of integrating other immigrants

- **VIA Linden, Hannover:**
VIA was founded as an "association for the promotion of inclusive youth work in Linden" and is called "*ViA Linden-Verein für interkulturelle Arbeit in Linden (Club for intercultural work)*" since 2007. Migrants are engaged in different areas, such as in the open youth work, gender work, educational work, and violence prevention. One



thought behind the engagement of migrants working for VIA is that they can reach other migrants easier and can work as role models for other migrants (VIA Linden, 2018).

- **Tolstoi Hilfs- und Kulturwerk Hannover e.V., Hannover** (Eng. Translation: Tolstoi help and cultural work):
The non-profit multinational association exists in Hannover since 1994. The association sees its task in the care for the Russian culture in Hannover, the development of the German culture for the Russian-speaking migrants, the support with integration measures for migrants, and the promotion of equal opportunities for young migrants (Tolstoi Hilfs- und Kulturwerk Hannover e.V., 2018).

3. Volunteering of (mainly) Germans with the focus of integrating immigrants

- **Mentor e.V. die Leselernpaten, Hannover** (Eng. Translation: Mentor, “the reading buddy program”) :
MENTOR helps children who have difficulties in dealing with the German language through individual support. The association organizes and supervises the cooperation between mentors, children and schools (Mentor e.V. Leselernpaten, 2018).
- **Soziale Initiative Niederlausitz, Cottbus** (Eng. Translation: Social Initiative Niederlausitz):
This organization is a registered non-profit association based in Cottbus. The Berlin- and Brandenburg-based teams of different faculties are made up of people with different skills, professions, life experiences and ideas. The organization offers help to refugees in different areas: prevention, integration and support for refugees who are arriving in Germany (SIN, 2018).

4. Volunteering independent from origin of the volunteers with the focus on helping immigrants

- **German Red Cross, Region Hannover:**
The Volunteers of the German Red Cross serve and help refugees at various locations in the city and region of Hannover in the areas of integration, language classes, activities for kids and leisure time, accompanying refugees to medical appointments, official visits and others (Flüchtlingshilfe Hannover, 2018).
- **Morus 14 e.V., Berlin**
Volunteers of all backgrounds work in different areas of community work. One special project of Morus 14 e.V. is dealing with the support of migrant students in school by helping with homework and school project, in those activities people of all origins come together and tutor high school and primary school students (Morus 14 e.V.).

2.3.2 Volunteer work for Immigrants

Since Germany has formally become – even if not planned - an immigration country, an interest arose to enable refugees not just to arrive physically but also to feel welcome and to strengthen their

motivation to integrate into the new society. The Summer and autumn in 2015 in Germany were characterized by an unprecedented commitment and civic engagement by people in the volunteering sector whose collective aim was to cope with the massive number of refugees coming from countries where war was ongoing (Karakayali & Kleist, 2016). During that time, millions (the real number is not clear yet as there were big fluctuations) participated in many activities to help refugees (ProAsyl, 2018). The poll on volunteering to help refugees (EFA) is an attempt to quantify volunteering in the area of refugee aid. As it is important for the present work to give a broad overview on the topic of volunteering to help refugees, the main findings will be shortly presented in the following. The EFA has shown that in 2015 in terms of gender more female than male volunteers are active in the area of volunteer refugee aid work (more than 75 percent of the volunteers are female). In terms of the demographic structure of refugee aid workers, there was an equal distribution in Germany in the year 2015. By contrast, the proportion of migrants is slightly disproportionate in comparison to German refugee aid workers. The EFA Study by Karakayali & Kleist (2016) highlights the spontaneous and proactive character of voluntary refugee aid work and the high self-commitment of the volunteers. The most important forms of organization are initiatives or projects and self-organized groups. Self-organized work became the most common form of organization, especially in rural areas and small towns. Those individuals who committed themselves on their own became an important group with about 10 percent of refugee aid workers in total, and state or municipal institutions increased in their form of organization. The relevance of associations declined drastically. In addition, volunteers invested even more time in their engagement in 2015 thanks to new forms of organization. Nearly a quarter of respondents spent more than 10 hours a week volunteering for refugees (Karakayali & Kleist, 2016). In 2015, the most important fields of activity concerned the networking and organization of voluntary refugee work as well as practical help and donations. The most widely practiced activities were language teaching, support for other volunteers and help with administrative procedures. The reasons and motivations of volunteers differ depending on the start of the engagement. Learning new things about the world and different cultures was more important for those who started in 2014, while those who started their work in 2015 found the sense of community in volunteering much more important. Almost all respondents, 97 percent, said that they wanted to help shape society at least on a small scale, which indicates a high political consciousness. However, the volunteers questioned agree less on the political goals. Although 90 percent see their commitment as a statement against racism, even increased in older age, less than half see it as an expression against government refugee policy. Thus, despite the direct confrontation in their activities with the challenges, only a third of the respondents saw that Germany is overwhelmed by the reception of refugees in autumn 2015. After all, a quarter would find it problematic if, due to their involvement, more asylum seekers came to Germany. Regardless of a high workload, there is a high motivation in volunteering. 67 percent said they were not frustrated, almost three quarters said that they are fulfilled by their engagement, 60 percent said that they even get new motivation from their engagement (ibid.). Over a third of the respondents have a family member who has a refugee experience of his/her own. If only considering respondents of immigrant background, over 50 percent have a family member who has experienced being a refugee. The very small group of displaced persons of the first generation ($n = 32$) has also extremely high values in relation to the emotional dimension of their experience. No other subgroup comes close to 90 percent agreeing with the statement that emotional experiences played an important role in helping. Much stronger than others in the same age group, expellees have an



understanding of refugees because they can understand what it means to flee from war (80 percent) (ibid).

2.3.3 Immigrants volunteering

Considering volunteering and civic engagement as a form of integration, the latest research is focusing on the participation of immigrants themselves in volunteer work. The German Survey on Volunteering (FWS) is a representative telephone survey on volunteering in Germany funded by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (German: Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, BMFSFJ) (BMFSFJ, 2017, p.11). The latest study shows the wide range of possible fields of civic engagement, some of the fields mentioned by volunteers of immigrant origin were:

- Advertising for new members, providing support services in the library of the Polish cultural association
- Organization of an open day for the beekeepers' association
- Supervision of children at the youth center
- Activities as election worker in the municipality
- Mentoring
- Helping out with blood donation promotion campaign
- Coach in a football club
- Public relations work in the AIDS assistance program
- Lay judge in juvenile court
- Animal feeder in sanctuary
- Board member, conducting German lessons for the association for refugees.

The findings have shown that only 31.5 percent of immigrants are doing volunteer work, while 46.8 percent of people without an immigration background participate in a field of civic engagement (BMFSFJ, 2017). These results confirm the findings of a previous study by Norbert Cyrus from the University Oldenburg which also finds that immigrants tend to engage less in volunteering work than Germans without an immigration background, even if the study of the BMFSFJ presented a much higher percent age of ancestral German and immigrant volunteers (compare BMFSFJ, 2017 and Cyrus, 2005). The study of the BMFSJ takes more factors of immigration into account than the study by Cyrus and divides the results in groups as follows:

- immigrant background, born in Germany and possessing German citizenship
- immigrant background, born in Germany but no German citizenship
- immigrant background, personal experience of immigration

Divided in these groups, the results show different outcomes. People with an immigrant background born in Germany and possessing German citizenship have a rate of volunteering of 43.2 percent , which is almost as high as the percent age of people without an immigrant background. Immigrants who were born in Germany but who do not have German citizenship have a much lower volunteering percent age (31.1 per cent). The lowest level of engagement of all is the percent age of people who have a personal experience of immigration, the lowest of all is the group of people with a personal experience of immigration and without a German citizenship (15.5 percent ; compare BMFSFJ, 2017, Figure 20).



So, individual experiences with migration seem to play a considerable role in the likelihood of engagement for immigrants (BMFSFJ, 2017). After an evaluation of the motives of the survey, the results show that the biggest motive of all people, with and without immigrant background, is fun and the possibility of getting together with other people. Another interesting finding is that immigrants are more likely than people without an immigrant background to mention getting qualifications, gaining esteem or influence, and their intention to advance professionally through their volunteering (ibid.).

The research of Cyrus (2005) gives additionally an insight into the different fields of engagement where immigrants contribute to society. He states out that immigrants are engaged, in German- as well as- in immigrant associations. However, immigrants are underrepresented in German sport clubs, in trade unions, and welfare organizations. The most important areas of civic engagement of immigrants are immigrant associations in the cultural and social field (Cyrus, 2005). As mentioned above the most important source of political engagement for third country immigrants without a citizenship and other immigrants without a citizenship are foreigner's advisory boards. Cyrus states that especially the young immigrants of the second or third generation tend to be more active in civic engagement as compared to the older immigrant groups, and they are even overrepresented in trade unions compared to Germans without an immigrant background. The most important group of active civic participation are immigrants from Turkey who are overrepresented in the local foreigner's advisory boards (ibid.). Also, there are Turkish leftwing-oriented immigrants who formed political groups with the aim of a reformation of the Turkish society as well as an improvement of the situation of immigrants in Germany.

2.4 Summary

Germany has become a country of immigration. As such, it has to find a balance between the population's immigration resentments and fear of additional labor market competition and the country's labor shortage, demographic changes and humanitarian and legal need of protecting asylum seekers. This is a situation in which one can't only request to deal with immigrants but one has to set the focus on the integration of immigrants living in Germany – even if already for many years. The difficulty of this task is as diverse as the groups of immigrants living in Germany. While repatriates who arrived in Germany after many years of isolation in Soviet Russia are treated formally as Germans because of their ancestry and have completely the same rights as Germans, other groups are treated differently on many levels. Jewish immigrants who came as refugees following the “quota refugee” act, the contract for Jewish refugees, as well as many guest workers and their families have a permanent residence permit, which gives them the same access to different benefits of social security and health services as Germans. Those groups as well as immigrants from EU countries who live in Germany are formally not allowed to participate in federal elections but have representatives on different municipal levels. In contrast, refugees are the group with the lowest access to the social benefits distributed by the government and they suffer the biggest stigma in public, as they are not allowed to work (at least for six months) and their stay in Germany is always accompanied by very restrictive conditions.

However, latest research shows that there are still big differences even between foreigners who have lived in Germany with a residence permit for many years (or generations) and Germans. There are unequal distributions concerning the chances of access to education and the labor market, and the risks of poverty and bad health conditions are higher. Germany is considered by the Migrant Integration



Policy Index (Proasyl, 2018; Bertelsmann, 2016) as one of the top- ten immigration countries because the strong labor market help integrating immigrants, but the biggest weaknesses are the lack of a policy of equalization and equal opportunities in education. This difference continues with regard to the civic and political participation of immigrants. The legal and institutional framework for the participation of immigrants is characterized by several aspects. The federal participation regime distinguishes between different categories of immigrants regarding nationality (ethnic Germans, EU-citizens, third-country nationals) and residence status (residence and settlement permit and refugees'/ asylum seekers). In Germany, only naturalization, i.e. the possession of the citizenship, opens access to full political participation. Social participation is generally open for legally and permanently residing immigrants. Those facts give an answer to the question in some recent research papers why immigrants aren't engaged as volunteers as much as Germans are. However, the report of the BMFSFJ (2017) has shown that there is still a significant percent age of people with an immigrant background who are engaged in civil society activities, social clubs, organizations and advisory boards. This is where the present work begins, as it is very important to gain knowledge that is more specific concerning:

- 1) different immigrant groups who are engaged in volunteering work;
- 2) motivations behind their engagement;
- 3) possible incentives that would lead to a rise in the percent age of immigrants volunteering and;
- 4) possible obstacles that haven't been taken into account by policy makers and social and civil society organizations.



PART B: NATIONAL AND LOCAL RESEARCH

Part B is dedicated to presenting the findings of the study that was carried out by the Institute of Didactics of Democracy at Leibniz University Hanover. The research that is presented in the following has a quantitative and a qualitative part. The emphasis of the quantitative research is to report structural and organizational facts about the work of organizations in the field of migration. The qualitative research part highlights specifically the motives and experiences of different stakeholders in volunteering.

3. Volunteering among immigrants: national online survey

In the following, an overview of the most important findings in the national online survey is provided.

3.1 Methodology

The online survey aimed at gaining knowledge on the different activities reported by organizations who support migrants, on specific activities of organizations to address immigration issues, on the involvement of third nation country volunteers within these organizations as well as to get an insight into the experiences and attitudes towards the volunteering of immigrants. The data was collected by an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was created by the University of Calabria in cooperation with other partners that are involved in the VAI-Project. In the beginning of May 2018, the questionnaire was forwarded to 350 organizations. The original questionnaire was in English. In Germany, the questionnaire was translated and distributed in German. The final questionnaire contained three answer sections; the first section consisted of ten questions on the general structures of the organization, the second section had also ten different problem areas that serve to collect data on volunteers and migrant volunteers within the organizations. The final section contained eight questions focused on the characteristics and outcomes of volunteering and possible improvements in order to increase the participation of migrants volunteering.

All organizations that were contacted by our institute were found by research and the minimum criterion for participation was that the organizations should have a connection to migrants. This criterion was very broad as no restrictions were given as to the field where immigrants should be involved or the kind of work that concerns migrants. So there was a big sample of migrant organizations, organizations that work on empowering migrants or on changing the conditions of migrants and refugees for the better. Also, organizations that work generally towards the benefit of the public were contacted.

Because the set sample was not reached after the first research period, additional 200 organizations were found and contacted. At the end of the research period, 50 organizations had participated by answering the questionnaire.

3.2 Description of the sample

This chapter gives a detailed overview of the sample that was measured in the online survey.

In the present report, only the most important data of the survey are reported. This is to ensure that the relevant information of all question sections is available in order to answer the research question.



Section 1. General Information about the Organization

The final sample contains 50 organizations that participated in the online survey. The organization in the sample that has the longest history is the organization for international cooperation of the youth that was founded in 1878. The three most recently founded organizations were established in 2017. One noticeable development that stood out in the research sample is that in 2015 seven new organizations were founded and three other organizations in 2016. Thus, 2015 shows the biggest increase in organizations founded in this sample. This coincides with the fact that it is the year that saw the biggest increase in the number of refugees coming to Germany. A closer look highlights that the most recent organizations are all dedicated to cultural and refugee aid work.

It can be reported that all parts of Germany were successfully reached by the questionnaire. Data from organizations in 13 out of 16 different federal states was collected. Most answers were from organizations that have their operational office in Berlin (N=14), followed by Hannover (N= 5) and Munich (N=4).

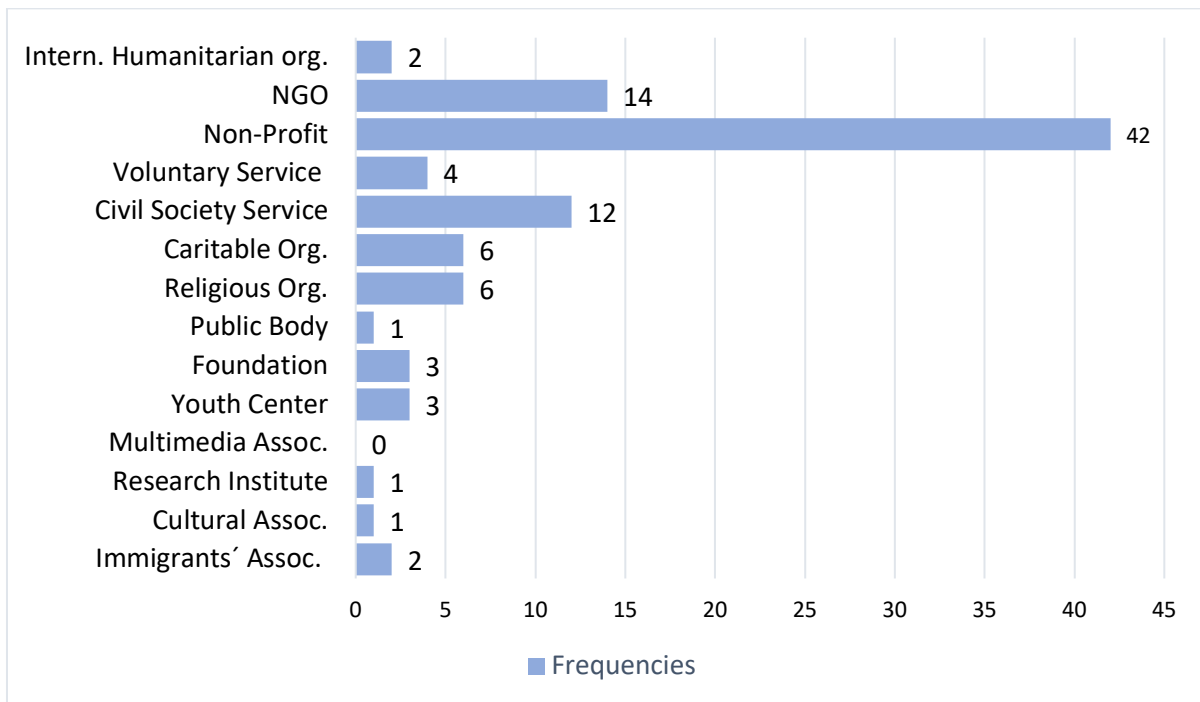
Most of the people who answered the survey stated that they are the directors (N= 25), leaders (N= 7) or founders (N =6) of their respective organizations; also, some questionnaires were answered by program coordinators (N =7) and deputy directors (N =4). An exception were three cases were a volunteer, an unidentified member of an organization, and a PR and Communication director filled in the questionnaire. Ninety-four percent of the organizations in the sample were formally registered while only three stated otherwise.

Table 1 provides an overview of the types of organization in the sample. As multiple answers were possible, many organizations indicated to be an organization that fits various categories.



Table 1

Types of Organizations in the Sample

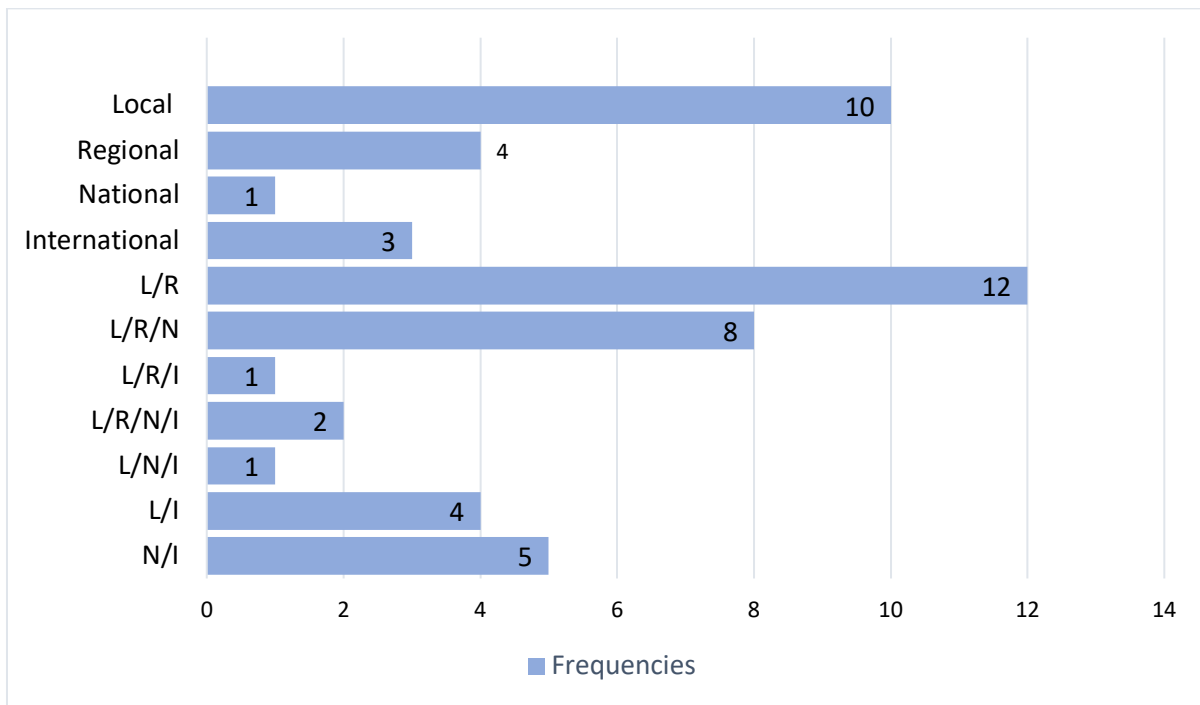


The most frequent type of organization that was mentioned was Non-Profit (N= 42), followed by NGO (N= 14) and civil society organization (N= 12). Fourteen organizations identified to be an NGO and a Non-Profit simultaneously; this is the strongest correlation in the present sample. The present sample does not include any multimedia association. Also, the categories of protestant church led projects (N= 1) and projects for the empowerment of women and the promotion of women rights (N= 1) were added to the selection by comment.

Question 1.6b probed into the nationalities of members of the organizations. The most frequent countries of origin of members reported are Germany (N= 31), followed by Syria (N= 17) and Afghanistan (N= 13). Turkey (N= 8), Iran (N=6) and Somalia (N=3) were also mentioned as well as Iraq, Eritrea, Russia and Guinea (all N= 2). Many other nations of origin were mentioned once; they are Sudan, Montenegro, Italy, Sweden, Egypt, Algeria, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Belgium, Cameroon, Kenya, England, Greece, Spain, Kurdistan, Armenia, Tajikistan, Morocco, Kosovo, Ethiopia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Congo.

Table 2

Level of Intervention



The most frequent field of action listed was local and regional (N= 12), followed by the local field of action (N = 10) and the combination of a concurrent local, regional and national (N= 8) intervention level (for further information see table 2). Considering exclusively the ratios, the organizations in the sample mostly operate locally (76 per cent; N= 38), followed by regional actions (54 per cent; N= 27), then nationally (34 per cent; N= 17) and internationally (32 per cent; N= 16).

The most frequent areas of the organizations' work were the work with migrants (N= 34), the work with minors and adult education (both N= 22), the work on cultural topics (N= 21) and social health assistance (N= 21), followed by child and school student education (N= 17). Other frequent areas of work include the work on civil rights protection, the work with the elderly (both N=14) as well as the protection of the environment (N=10). All other fields were named at least six times with the exception of the protection and enhancement of the historical heritage which was named only four times, and civil protection which wasn't named at all. Two areas that were added by comment were the fields of university politics and aid for the homeless.

The question 1.9 asked to mention the number of members of staff that are employed in the organization. The disparity in this question is very large. Seven organizations stated that they do not have any members of staff. 6.3 percent of the organizations said that eleven members of staff are currently working for their organization (N= 3). Ten organizations had 20 or more members of staff while three organizations said that more than 235 people are employed in their organization. The largest organization had 550 members of staff.

In terms of the representation of women working in the surveyed organizations, eight organizations stated that they do not have any female on their team. The largest number of female members of staff was put at 370 in one organization that has an overall number of 450 members of staff; thus, the majority of the organization's staff are women.

Regarding staff members of immigrant origin, 13 out of 50 organizations stated that migrants do not work for their organization (29,5 percent in the sample). Eight organizations (18,2 percent) said that one migrant is represented among their staff while another three organizations had exactly or more than 100 migrant staff members (6,9 percent). One organization that works in the field of integration of migrants had more migrant staff (N= 200) than German staff (N= 35) working for the organization. In the same organization, more than half of the organization's staff were female. Asked for the number of female migrants among their staff, most of the organizations reported no female migrant staff (N= 21; 48 percent of the sample). Four organizations indicated having over 35 female employees with an immigrant background and one other organization counted 120.

Regarding volunteers as staff members, most organizations reported larger numbers. While only one organization did not have any volunteers, 22 out of the 50 organizations in the sample reported having fewer than 20 volunteers. Another 17 organizations stated that they have fewer than 100 but more than 20 volunteers who work for their organization. Ten organizations have more than 150 volunteers and one other with 500 active volunteers, but one organization stated that approximately 5,000 volunteers participate in their work. Statistical outliers are two organizations who stated to have 11,000 and 60,000 volunteers. An interesting finding of the research is that the organization that stated to have 11.000 volunteers is currently employing only four full-time employees and the organization with 60.000 volunteers also has a very small number of 30 staff members. When asked about female volunteers, only one organization stated to have zero female volunteers. More than 50 percent of the organizations have more than 10 female volunteers. In nine organizations more than 100 female volunteers are involved, from which 8 state that the majority of the volunteers are female.

The range of volunteers with immigrant background ranges from zero to 500 migrant volunteers. 23,4 percent of the organizations stated that migrants are not involved (N= 11). Five organizations stated to have more than 100 migrant volunteers, out of which four organizations stated that most of their volunteers have an immigrant background. The biggest number of migrant volunteers was provided by a Turkish organization that stated that all of their 500 volunteers are also migrants. The majority of the organizations stated that female volunteers of immigrant origin are not involved in their work (N= 12). Only three organizations stated that more than 100 female migrants volunteer in their association. 24 organizations provided a number of female migrant volunteers between one and ten.

When asked for the age of a) the German volunteers and b) the migrant volunteers, it can be summed up that German and migrant volunteers cover all age groups in all organizations. One difference is only that among the German group of volunteers, the biggest age group are those between 41 and 65 years which was chosen 32 times (71,1 percent). On the other hand, the same age group was present only 19 times among migrant volunteers (50 percent of the sample), the biggest group in this sample are the 26- to 40-year-old, which was stated 28 times, what represents 73,7 percent of the sample. This leads to the assumption that migrant volunteers tend to be active in volunteering at a younger age and German volunteers start earlier but stay in volunteering longer. Another supporting finding is that 25



organizations placed their German volunteers in the group of over-65 year old whereas only twelve organizations placed their migrant volunteers in this group.

3.3 Volunteering of Immigrants

Section 2. The presence of immigrant volunteers in the organization

In section two, the possibility to leave a comment was provided. 17 organizations wrote a comment. The following two statements were chosen to highlight the importance of the issue of volunteering amongst migrants, which underlines again the importance of the present work:

- 1) We would like to have more migrants volunteering, this would immensely enrich our work.
- 2) More language skills are needed that can be covered by the German staff. But we have trouble to get in touch with migrants and to bring them into our organization.

The next question dealt with the origin of the migrant volunteers. All origins that were named match with the nationalities that are present as provided in the first question section (see 3.2). The most frequently named countries of origin of the volunteers were Syria (N= 21) and Afghanistan (N= 16), followed by Turkey (N= 14) and Iran (N= 7) and Iraq (N=5).

Figures 1 and 2 show the different economic and educational backgrounds of the volunteers that were stated by the organizations.

Figure 1

Economic background of migrant volunteers in the organizations of the sample

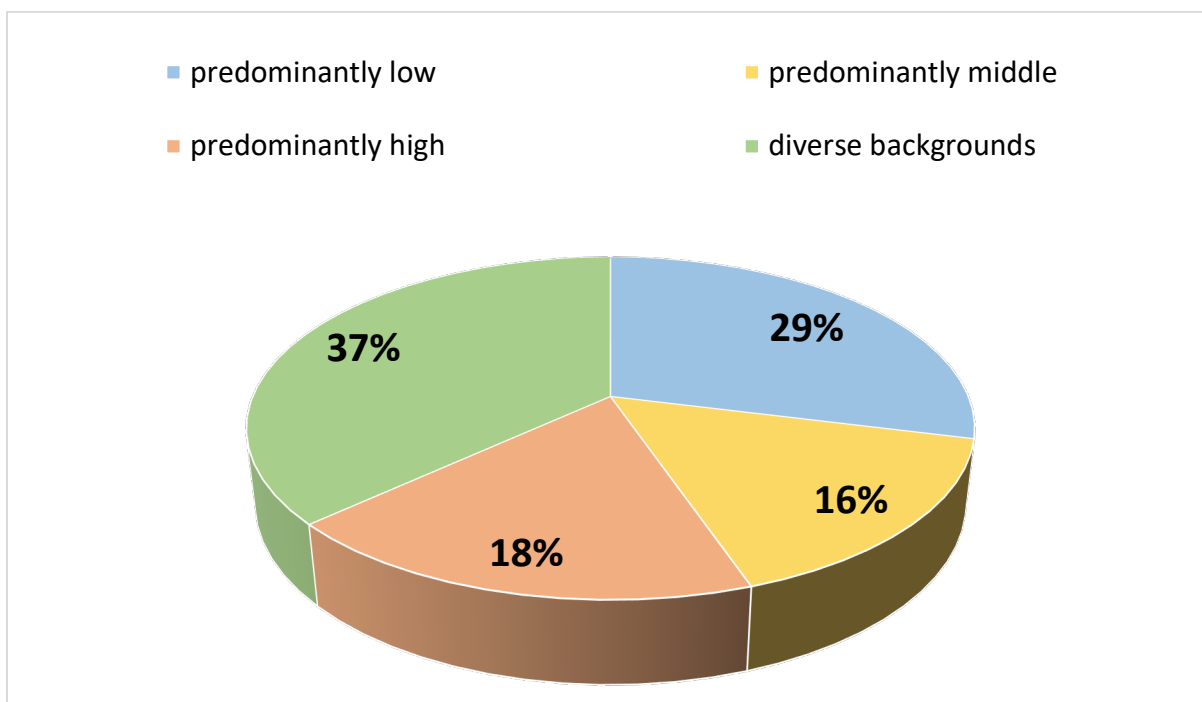
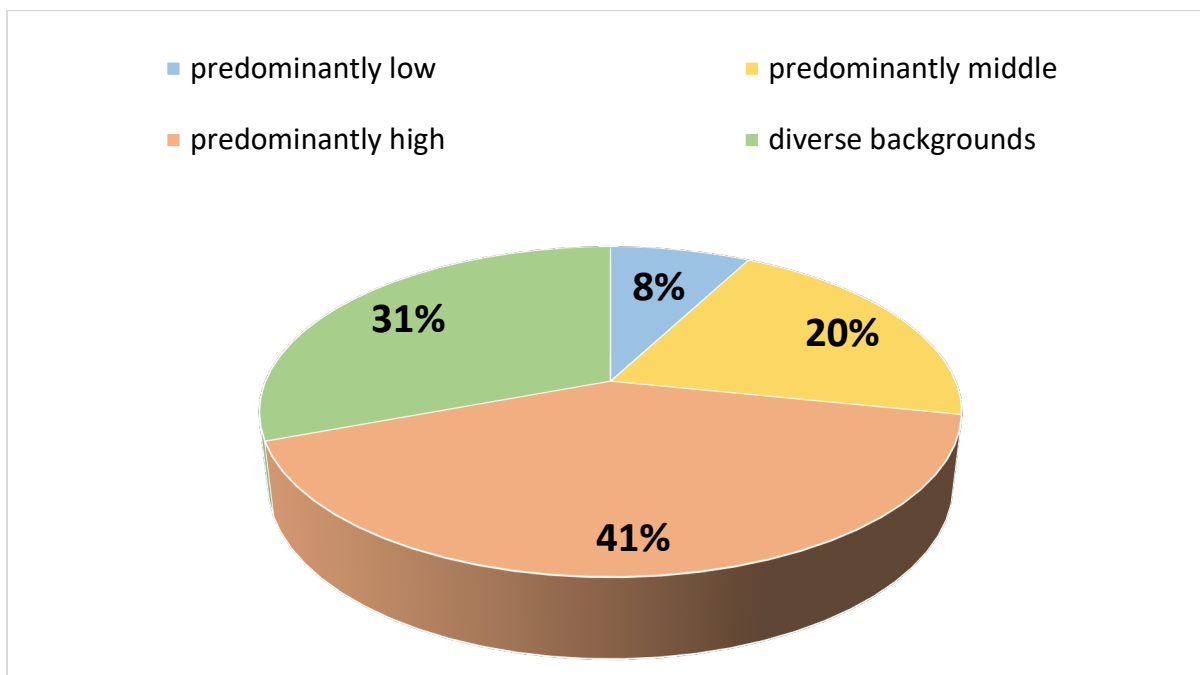


Figure 2

Educational background of migrant volunteers in the organizations of the sample



Both the educational and the economical background of migrant volunteers that are involved in the organizations seem to have a wide range because in both cases around 30 percent of the organizations said that the backgrounds of the migrants are diverse. One interesting finding is that 29 percent of the organizations stated that the economic background of the migrants is predominantly low, but only eight percent of the organizations stated that the migrants have a low educational background. Another 41 percent stated that the educational background of the migrants is predominantly high. This leads to the assumption that many migrant volunteers have a higher education but a low income level, or no employment and do not reach a high income level.

As motives for immigrants to volunteer, 61,5 percent of the organizations saw the increase of their social role within the community as main motivation (N=24), followed by the possibility to provide support to their community of origin (N=21; 53,8 percent), the involvement in activities of the promoter organization (N= 20; 51, 3 per cent) and the direct contact to the conditions of people in need (N= 17; 43,6 per cent). None of the organizations reported that the volunteers have obligations by institutional constraints.

The majority of the organizations stated that the most common form of recruitment of volunteers was by direct contact (N=30) or by informal word of mouth (N= 27). Eight organizations stated that their volunteers have to apply by CV submission and three stated that they receive volunteers by formal state authority agreements. Some organizations added that they were contacted by e-mail or that they were found by internet research.

Concerning the areas of engagement of the volunteers, 26 organizations stated that the main field of the migrant volunteers is community work (65 percent). Also, communication (N= 19) and tutoring/ mentoring (N=17) were high ranking fields. In addition, consultation (N=16) and translation services and guidance (N=15) were mentioned by many organizations. The field chosen the least was secretarial service (N= 4). Additionally, translation work, the offer of language classes for other migrants and council work were added.

Question 2.7 asked for the benefits of migrant volunteering on their path towards better integration. Table 3 shows an overview of all categories that gained the highest agreement in the questionnaire (represented by the levels 4 and 5 on the questionnaire scale):

Table 3

Benefits that migrants acquire from volunteering (number of organizations that agreed either completely or mostly with that statement)

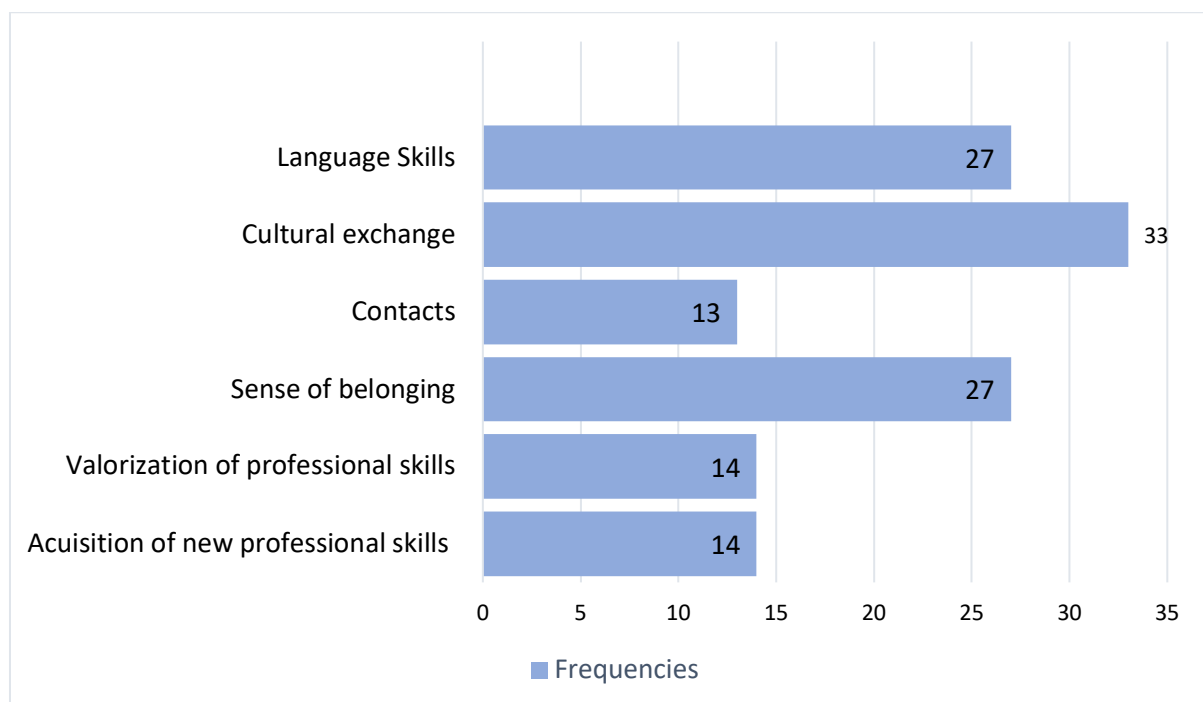


Table 3 shows that the organizations consider cultural exchange of different volunteers (N=33), the acquisition of a sense of belonging (N= 27) and the improvement of language skills (N=27) as the most important areas immigrant volunteers profit from in their work.

As benefits of migrants volunteering for the host organization, all three benefits that were provided in the questionnaire were chosen many times. The most frequent item chosen was the benefit to be able to approach the recipient’s needs that was chosen by 46,1 percent in the sample (N=18), followed by the benefit of improving the level of competence and professionalism of the organization (N=14; 35,9 percent).

As structural factors that hinder the voluntary participation of volunteers, restrictive migration policies were ranked highest and 53,9 percent of the organizations (N= 21) agreed either completely or mostly with that statement. Also, the mistrust against institutions was ranked high (ten organizations chose the level 4 or 5 on the scale).

Concerning intrinsic obstacles that hinder migrants' voluntary activity, most organizations either agreed completely or mostly with the statement that family life is an obstacle to migrants' voluntary activity (56, 4 per cent; N = 22) and that the language barriers hinder migrants' voluntary activity (52,5 percent; N= 21) too. The lack of time was likewise seen as a big obstacle (eighteen organizations either agreed completely or mostly with that statement).

When asked for operational obstacles such as the lack of resources (nineteen organizations either agreed completely or mostly with that statement (47,5 percent)) and the temporary nature of the stay of the migrant received the highest consent (eleven organizations chose the level 4 or 5 on the scale).

When asked for factors that can facilitate the removal of the aforementioned obstacles, most organizations stated that the training of migrant volunteers would help to facilitate the removal of obstacles (32 organizations either agree completely or mostly with that statement), followed by the pledge for an increased involvement of migrants in decision-making processes (31 organizations either agree completely or mostly with that statement). Furthermore, information and awareness-raising actions addressed at all citizens are the most important (30 organizations either agree completely or mostly with that statement) as well as the establishment of financial aid for voluntary work (28 organizations either agree completely or mostly with that statement).

The least consent was given to the suggestion to make voluntary work of asylum seekers mandatory until the definition of their legal status (26 organizations chose the level 1 or 2 on the scale, which means a strong disagreement). Worth mentioning is, that even so, five organizations would rather or completely agree with the statement that it would make sense to make voluntary work of asylum seekers mandatory until the definition of their legal status.

3.4 Characteristics of the volunteers

Section 3. Characteristics and outcomes of volunteering in order to improve the participation of migrants volunteering

The first question in this section asked to indicate voluntary activities implemented by the organization in the last two years for the benefit of immigrants, and to specify how often they took place. The questionnaire provided 18 different categories; however, as the detailed representation of each category would go beyond the scope this report only some categories which received the highest responses are presented.

41 of 50 organizations stated to never have organized any activities that concern the management of reception facilities; only two organizations stated to have organized such activities often, and another two organizations sometimes. Furthermore, 32 stated to never have undertaken actions concerning the management of family home for immigrant minors while 16 organizations have done that at least once a year. Moreover, 30 organizations have never been involved in activities related to religious practices while one organization is doing so on a regular basis at least every two weeks.



The activity most often chosen by the organizations to happen often was helping with the handling of documents and accompanying services (N= 22), followed by literacy and language classes (N= 16) and the offer of assistance and orientation to self-employment and/ or subordinate employment (N= 16). Concerning literacy and language courses, 23 organizations have never offered these activities.

In addition, 15 organizations stated that they provide assistance and protection to vulnerable groups (minors, people at risk of trafficking, refugees and asylum seekers) at least two times a week, three organizations at least 3-4 times each month, and eleven organizations at least once a year. 13 organizations said they have never undertaken any activities that provide assistance and protection for vulnerable groups. 27 of the 50 organizations in the sample have never carried out political or trade union activities, but seven organizations in the sample do this at least every two weeks.

In order to promote voluntary activities, only seven of 50 organizations in the sample have never collaborated with other organizations while 86 percent of the sample have collaborated with other organizations (N=43). The most frequent organizations were local authorities (N= 35) and local civil society organizations (N= 28), followed by NGOs (N= 22) and immigrants' (N=19) and religious associations (N= 18). Additionally, two organizations added ministries as cooperation partners and one organization stated to cooperate with schools.

Question 3.3 asked for the predominant profile of the immigrant recipients of the association's voluntary activities. The answers of the organizations showed that men tend to be more often the target group than women, because eight organizations mentioned men as their focus group and only two named women as focus group. Eleven organizations named minors as their focus group. The majority of 27 organizations and 56,3 percent of the research sample said that men and women are equally involved in their activities.



Figure 3

Most frequent legal status of the recipients of the organizations' voluntary activities

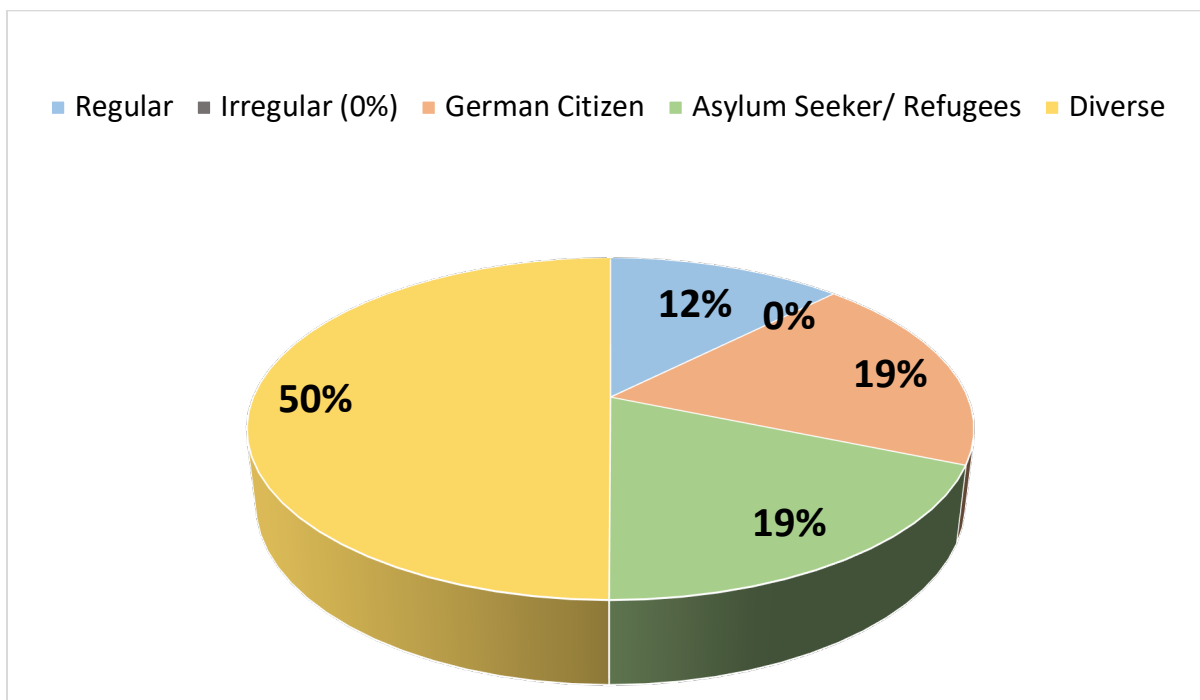


Figure 3 shows the answers of the organizations to the question of the most frequent legal status of the recipients of the organizations voluntary activities. 50 percent of the organizations stated that several of the statuses apply to their work. There was no organization that mentioned explicitly the presence of migrants with an irregular status in the group of the recipients. 19 percent of the organizations reported that either asylum seekers or German citizens are their focus group (N=9).

Furthermore, question 3.5 asked to evaluate the benefits of voluntary actions for/ with immigrants. The following categories were ranked the highest; which means most organizations either agree completely or mostly with the statement that these measures are beneficial for immigrants who are active as volunteers: greater autonomy (N=31), knowledge of the language (N=33), reduction of isolation (N=39), access to social services (N=34) and the sense of belonging (N=36). The enhancement of previous professional skills and the acquisition of new skills were also chosen by approximately 30 percent of the organizations. Fewer organizations agreed that being an active volunteer has a positive influence on the individual well-being (N=14). 19 organizations stated that they would neither attest to an impact on the occupation level (14 organization see a high impact, and 19 see a low impact), nor on the health conditions (N= 13 see a high impact, N= 16 see a low impact) or housing conditions (N= 10 see a high impact, N= 26 see a low impact).

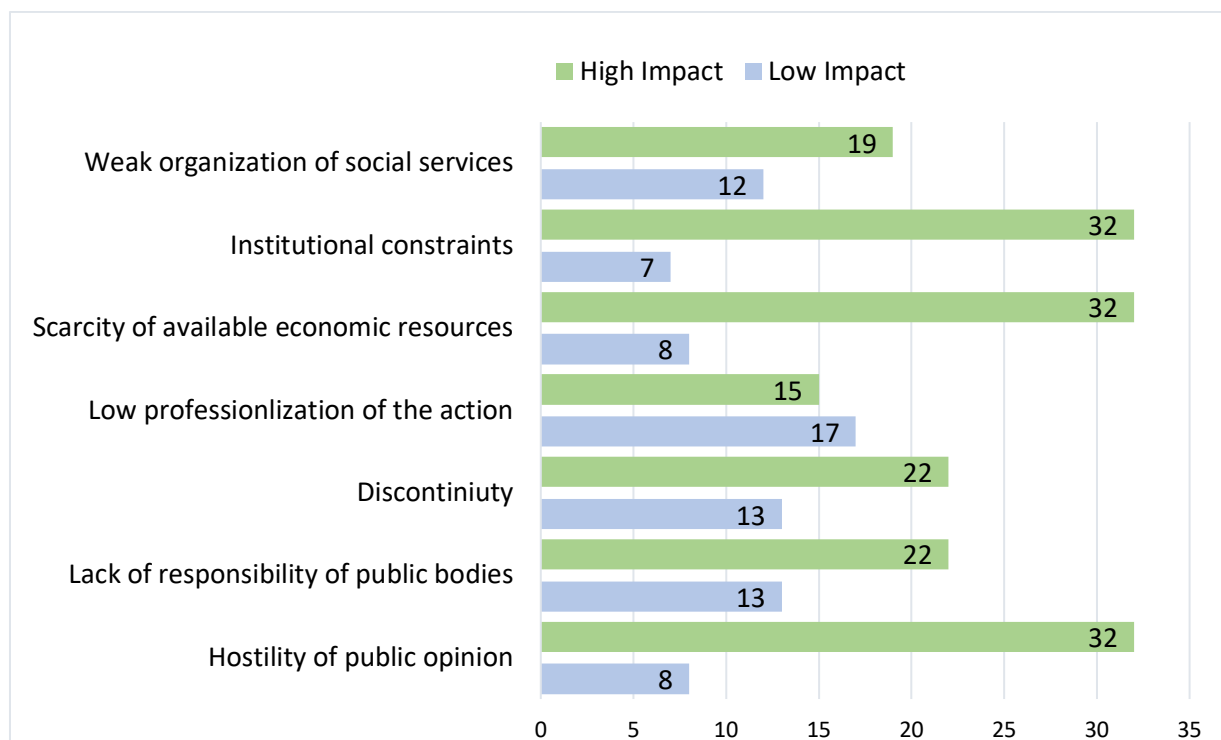
The next question asked for the evaluation of the impact of voluntary actions for/with immigrants in the local context of intervention. 27 organizations identify a high/very high impact of voluntary actions for/with immigrants on the improvement of social community services. Only eight organizations would

rather not agree that voluntary action of migrant have a big influence on the improvement of social community services. A contradictory picture is shown for the next criteria. 28 organizations do not consider the influence of migrants volunteering as big on the saving of resources (12 organizations decided to choose answer possibly 1, which equals not at all, and 16 level 2, which equals no big impact). 30 out of 50 organizations either agree completely or mostly to the statement that there is a big impact of migrant volunteers on the greater openness to migrants by institutions. On the other hand, 35 organizations see a big impact of migrant volunteers on the openness to migrants by the receiving community.

Table 4 provides an overview of the factors most limiting to the effectiveness of voluntary actions. As all factors were measured by their impact on a scale of 1 to 5, whereby 1 stands for the lowest impact and 5 for the biggest impact, the total numbers of the highest consent (level 4 and 5) and the lowest consent (level 1 and 2) are presented.

Table 4

Factors that limit the effectiveness of voluntary action for/with immigrants



As shown in table 4, the three factors that the organizations attribute the biggest influence on the effectiveness of voluntary actions for/with immigrants are the scarcity of available economic resources (N=32), the hostility of public opinion (N=32) and the institutional constraints (all N= 32). The lowest impact was assigned to a low professionalization of the actions (N= 17) even though 15 organizations out of 50 assigned rather a high than a low impact to it.

A mixed picture is visible with regard to the statements of discontinuity and lack of responsibilities of public bodies because 22 organizations attributed a high impact, while 13 organizations would rather attribute a low impact of these factors on the effectiveness of voluntary actions.



4. Volunteering among immigrants: qualitative research at the local level

In order to identify voluntary work and volunteer management in Germany, it is important to collect qualitative data from various actors of volunteering. In the present research, interviews with various leaders and volunteers from organizations and associations are conducted in focus group interviews. In addition, individual interviews are conducted in order to gain a deeper understanding of the motives and drive of the individual volunteers.

4.1 Case studies by interviews

In the following, an overview of volunteers who are migrants themselves or work on improving of the situation of immigrants is given. First, information on the access to the field is provided, followed by an overview of the sample and the characteristics of the persons interviewed. Finally, the findings of the research based on the individual questions are presented and discussed.

4.1.1 Access to the field

One purpose of the project is to highlight the motives of different stakeholders of voluntarism to be engaged in voluntary activities as well as to get an insight into the benefits of their work, their experiences and the individual difficulties that volunteers experience during their work. In order to span a big variety of different individual backgrounds, volunteering activities and organizational structures, a variety of volunteers and organizations were contacted by our institute with the proposal to make an individual interview. For this purpose, the individuals should have worked at least for one program/organization/non-profit that serves the purpose of helping refugees or immigrants. All interviews were conducted in the period of May 22, 2018 to July 31, 2018, in four German cities Hanover (Lower Saxony), Berlin (Berlin), Weil am Rhein (Baden-Württemberg) and in Jena (Thuringia).

4.1.2 Sample Individual Interviews

The final sample contains 21 people who are currently or were active as volunteers in at least one organization or association (five people were active in more than one volunteer activity in the past years).

Table 1 provides an overview of the final research sample. In the present research, an individual code was created for each interviewed volunteer (the same system was used for the focus groups in the following chapter). On the one hand, this serves to safeguard the anonymity, as assured in the interview to each interviewed person, while on the other hand this makes it easier to assign the statements to the individual person. The code is composed of the first two initial (in some cases three, to prevent duplications in the codes) letters of the name of the interviewed volunteer, the first letter of the original country of heritage of the person and the M or F for “male” or “female” as a reference to the gender of the interviewed person. The areas of responsibility of the volunteers vary. We have been able to conduct research data from volunteers who work in religious associations, for associations that are only donation based, but also volunteers who work for parties and people who are active in associations by being an active member of the board on a voluntary basis (for more



information see Table 1). Four volunteers of the final sample do not have the German citizenship and made the experience of migrating to Germany themselves. Furthermore, four other interviewed volunteers made also the experience of migrating to Germany themselves, but have already gained the German citizenship and thus count as Germans. Three of the interviewed volunteers were born in Germany but do have migrant parents. The remaining ten respondents have no migration background but are, at least partially, engaged in work with the purpose to help migrants and refugees.

Table 5

Research Sample Individual Interviews

No.	Personal Code	Place of residence	Background/ Characteristics	Field of engagement in volunteering
1	LiP_F	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German, parents migrated from the Philippines.	Social work with school students.
2	BeC_M	Hanover, Lower Saxony	Colombian, lives in Germany since 2016.	Voluntary social year; social work with School students.
3	MoS_M	Berlin, Berlin	Syrian, migrated to Germany as a refugee in 2015.	Voluntary social year; help for school students from Turkish/Arabic backgrounds.
4	LiR_F	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German, migrated to Germany in 2001 from Russia in the course of the Jewish Refugee contract.	Tutoring of school students from Turkish/Arabic backgrounds.
5	ShI_F	Berlin, Berlin	German, migrated to Germany in 1986 as a refugee from Iran.	Youth party of the German Socialist Party.
6	OliR_F	Weil am Rhein, Baden-Württemberg	Russian, migrated to Germany in 2000 in the course of the repatriates contract.	Help for Physically and mentally handicapped people.
7	HaT_M	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German, parents migrated from Turkey (Kurds).	Board Member of some sport associations; violence prevention with adolescences; political education for migrant school students.
8	MiG_M	Berlin, Berlin	German	Care of foreign volunteers in Germany.
9	MaG_M	Berlin, Berlin	German	Rising awareness on the political and educational topics of the global south.



10	RiG_M	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German	Chair and speaker of the German Green – Party on local level
11	OIR_F	Jena, Thuringia	German, migrated to Germany in 2005 from Russia in the course of the Jewish Refugee contract.	Refugee aid work
12	LiG_F	Göttingen, Lower Saxony	German	Group leader and trainer for new group leader for the German Scouts
13	MarG_M	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German	Youth work and the organization of Camps and leisure activities for children and adolescents
14	DiR_M	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German, migrated from Russia in the course of the repatriates contract.	Youth work and the organization of Camps and leisure activities for children and adolescents
15	SiG_F	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German	Youth work; trainer for sport activities for children and adults; experiential education
16	MaGT_M	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German / Turkish	Camps and leisure activities for children and adolescents; leading of confirmation classes
17	MacG_M	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German	Camps and leisure activities for children and adolescents
18	JeG_F	Walsrode, Lower Saxony	German	German Scouts and “Lebenshilfe” (counselling center and emotional support); work with children and adolescents with physical and mental disabilities
19	SvG_M	Walsrode, Lower Saxony	German	Group leader at the German Scouts
20	ZuT_M	Berlin, Berlin	Togolese	Voluntary social year; volunteering in a kindergarten within the framework of an exchange program for migrant volunteers.
21	FrG_F	Hanover, Lower Saxony	German	Refugee aid work, founder of an encounter project with refugees.

4.1.3 Findings

In order to shed light on the individual statements of the interviewees, the answers will be presented by outlining the most interesting answers on each question section. Also, the statements that are particularly important regarding the research question are given as quotations (translated from German to English). Additionally, important categories that are mentioned by the interview partners in each question section will be highlighted in italics.

Section 1. Volunteering activities and Organization

Areas of involvement

All volunteers have been involved in different kinds of volunteer work and have held different positions. The main areas that were mentioned are:

Tutoring/ mentoring of children and school students

Five interviewed volunteers had either a direct or an indirect contact to school students in their work. Two volunteers were involved in mentoring projects with school students (LiP_F, LiR_F), such as teaching or doing workshops with school students. Two other volunteers reported that they were involved on the administrative level in an organization that also works with school students and can also report that they were as well involved in activities in direct contact with school students on an irregular basis (MoS_M, BeC_M). One respondent reported to be a board member in a sports club on a voluntary basis as well as doing projects in the field of violence prevention and political education with school students and adolescents (HaT_M). ZuT_M did do a voluntary social year in a kindergarten and was providing support to the kindergarten teachers in all fields of their daily duties.

Youth work/ Area of leisure activities for children and adolescents

Three volunteers stated to work on a voluntary basis for the German Scouts. Different kinds of sponsorships were named, such as the church or private donations of foundations. All three volunteers engaged in volunteering at the Scouts are currently working or have worked with groups of children or adolescents that are members of the Scouts and offered leisure activities for this children (LiG_F, JeG_F, SvG_M). LiG_F additionally mentioned to be a trainer for other adolescents and adults who want to become new group leader themselves; furthermore, she also mentioned to be involved in activities with the refugee housings close to her own place of residence; that activities were organized in cooperation with the Scouts as well. Another area of involvement that was named by MarG_M, DiR_M, SiG_F, MaGT_M and MacG_M who all have been engaged in a Christian association, is the provision of a wide offer on leisure time activities for children and adolescents such as experimental pedagogic activities, camps and -as the organization has a Christian focus- confirmation preparation classes.

Adult education / Working with adults

Four volunteers reported that the purpose of their work as a volunteer was helping adults. One volunteer is the president of an association that plans and executes activities with disabled people on a local level (OIR_F). Another volunteer is engaged in a buddy program for foreign volunteers who do



a voluntary social year in Germany. As contact person for these volunteers, he was helping foreign volunteers with their arrival in Germany and was supporting the volunteers by offering help with the necessary paperwork and the search for accommodations (also by offering his own flat-sharing community as a place to stay) (MiG_M). Volunteer MaG_M was a board member of an association that organized various events focused on topics of the Global South to raise awareness on different topics and policies that concern the people there, and to promote a global understanding and knowledge in that field. One volunteer is active as refugee aid worker and is helping refugees from Eastern European countries with translation work, paperwork, dealing with the authorities as well as accompanying them on visits to a doctor (OIR_F). Additionally, volunteer MoS_M reported that one of his daily tasks was the communication with the parents of the students in Arabic. He is a native speaker of that language and the parents often only have a very basic knowledge of the German language. FrG_F is the founder of a refugee encounter project in Hannover that is involved in different kinds of activities with mostly adult refugees.

Political engagement in political parties

Two volunteers reported that their volunteering took the form of political engagement in political parties. One volunteer was active in the Social Democratic Youth wing of the Social Democratic Party on a local level (ShI_F). She reported that her duties were to write statement papers, resolutions, and being active in the forum for discussion on academic policy with the goal of improving the conditions for students. Also, she was involved on a local and national level in actions to improve the conditions of refugees in the western part of Germany, with the goal to improve the accommodation, legal perspectives and the reception conditions. Volunteer RiG_M is the speaker and a board member of the local Green Party with the focus on urban policies. By accompanying political processes in his district, he is and was involved in many topics that concern the local community in Hanover.

A connection to migrants was reported in almost all interviews. All volunteers who work with school students reported that either all or the majority of the school students that they work with are of immigrant origin. It was reported that the majority of the school students have a Turkish or Arabic background. Both volunteers, JeG_F and SvG_M mentioned that several of the children and adolescents in their scouts groups had an immigrant background. JeG_F specified that several children had a Russian, Turkish, Afghan and Arabic background. LiG_F mentioned that additional to the work with scouts groups, her association reached out to a refugee housing nearby, and actions with the refugee children and adolescents, like different leisure time activities or camps were carried out in cooperation with that refugee housing. Volunteer MiG_M was working with foreign volunteers as recipients. The main focus of OIR_F and FrG_F work was based on the work with refugees, so their actions involved migrants as recipients of their work. The two volunteers who were engaged in political parties (ShI_F, RiG_M) as well as the volunteer MaG_M, who works on topics that are relevant for the global south, reported that they did not have a direct connection on an everyday basis with migrants, but that some of their topics were connected to migration and that there was cooperation with migrants. An exception is the interview of OIR_F who is a Russian migrant herself, but her work with disabled people focusses in particular on non-immigrant Germans. ZuT_M, who is a migrant from Togo



himself, was a volunteer in a German kindergarten. He reported that the backgrounds of the children were diverse.

Work Environment

When asked about the work environment, many of the volunteers reported that their activities are organized in cooperation with other volunteers and some full- or part-time employed associates. Volunteer ShI_F identified, explicitly, university students as contact partners and contributors of her work.

Beneficiaries of the work of the volunteers

When asked about the beneficiaries of the voluntary work the following categories were named by the volunteers:

Children, (school) students, adolescents and parents

All volunteers who are involved in a work with children, students and adolescents reported that the primary beneficiaries of their work are the children, students and adolescents themselves². The majority of the children and students are in kindergarten, primary or high schools and have an immigrant background; also, most of the children and adolescents live in Germany under a legal and regular status.

Civil Society

One other category that was named was the civil society. Both volunteers of the political parties (ShI_F, RiG_M), the volunteers of the organization with focus on the global south and on foreign volunteers, (MaG_M, MiG_M) as well as the volunteer who works with disabled people (OIR_F) and the volunteer that works with refugees (OIR_F) locate the influence of their work in this field. This is because they do something for the common good. Additionally, MaG_M names the interested general public of Berlin as the target group of his work.

The volunteer organization itself

Both, MoS_M and BeC_M who were both active in their volunteer organization in the form of a voluntary social year and thus involved in the organization's administrative processes identify additionally to the school students also the organization itself as a beneficiary of their work.

Refugees

OIR_F mentioned refugees as the main benefiting group of her work because her work is based on the improvement of their condition. Furthermore, LiG_F also mentioned that the organization she was volunteering for carried out many activities for refugee children and adolescents. In the case of FrG_F, encounter projects in cooperation with refugees and the non-migrant public of Hanover were carried out with the purpose of bringing different groups together and to empower refugees to tell their

² That was the case in the interview of: LiP_F, BeC_M, MoS_M, LiR_F, HaT_M, LiG_F, MarG_M, DiR_M, SiG_F, MaGT_M, MacG_M, JeG_F, SvG_M and ZuT_M.

individual stories, to carry out projects that raise awareness on their individual interests and to connect with other citizens of the city of Hannover.

Financing and Compensation

Most of the volunteers did not report any compensation of their work. An exception was the volunteer LiP_F who received a compensation of 10 Euro per hour and JeG_F and SiG_F who both also reported to get a non-specified small allowance for their work. Both volunteers who did the voluntary social year also reported a monthly compensation (MoS_M: 200 Euro/month and BeC_M: 490€/month) for a full-time involvement as volunteers in their organizations.

Except for the Christian organization of LiP_F and BeC_M which are financed partly by the church and political parties, where party funds support the organizations' activities, most of the organizations reported that the financial support is coming from state funds from different German ministries, or donations from the municipal government or foundations. Additionally, membership fees that are paid by (mostly the parents of the) association's members, were identified as a source of funding by many volunteers. LiG_F and JeG_F also pointed out that in the case where the parents of the children are not able to pay the membership fee, the organization provides mechanisms like the use of charitable funds to pay up the membership fee for disadvantaged children or refugees. This way, the association is preventing that the economic background of the children and adolescents from being a determining factor for the participation of the young people in the measures and leisure activities.

Section 2. Subjective Motives and Experience

Personal motives

Discussing the different personal motives and histories of engagement, two groups of different backgrounds of the volunteers must be named: volunteers who have been living in Germany for long time with a regular status, and the migrant volunteers in the voluntary social year program who came to Germany just recently.

All three volunteers who are migrants themselves and were doing the voluntary social years (BeC_M, MoS_M, ZuT_M) reported that they came to Germany only a couple of years ago. MoS_M is a Syrian refugee and came to Germany to flee from the still prevalent difficult conditions of Syria. He said that he had already studied in Syria and was motivated to find a work in Germany; therefore the German *language* was needed. This was the main motivation, besides his wish to get in touch with Germans and get new contacts, which led to his decision to do a voluntary year. The same motivation was given by the Colombian volunteer BeC_M. BeC_M added that he wanted to get to know many different cultures because of the heterogeneity of Germany and decided that the engagement in volunteering is the best way to do so. That was also highlighted as a main motivation by the Togolese volunteer ZuT_M. ZuT_M also added that he was also hoping not only to successfully finish the voluntary social year but also to get the possibility to stay in Germany afterwards and to start a vocational training. Therefore he wanted to understand the German structures, ways of working and work processes.



Most of the other volunteers reported that they felt an *intrinsic motivation* to do something for the common good of the society. Hereby, the first contact to the organizations happened in various ways. For example, LiP_F told that:

“(...) a fellow student of mine was doing advertising for our organization. And I thought okay, why not? I was not very busy in my studies so I decided to join”. (LiP_F)

LiP_F added that she was joining the work of the organization also when she studied at university

“I had a lot of theoretical knowledge gained from the university, but I had the feeling that I would like to gain some *practical experience* with school students and (this organization) offered me the best way to do so. Additionally, I got in touch with Arabic and Turkish students that I never been in real contact before, that was so interesting to get new knowledge about those cultures and also to speak about different religions”. (LiP_F)

The motive of *getting in touch with others* and to do some meaningful work that directly helps others was also alluded to by the volunteer HaT_M and the refugee aid helper OIR_F. OIR_F added that she was recruited by a teacher of her school when she was still a school student. He founded the association and asked her directly to join their work.

Also the motivation of getting to know different *structures* that stand behind the associations work and to change and *contribute to the organizations growth and development* were mentioned few times (RiG_M, FrG_F).

Also, the interviewees' *biography* was pointed out as a source of civil engagement. For example, ShI_F said that her whole family was very politically engaged. This led to an intrinsic obligation to be active in a political party as well. RiG_M also said that his engagement was rooted in the fact that he feels a deep connection to his district, which is why he decided to join the political party to contribute his own ideas and visions to the district's development. The volunteers MiG_M and MaG_M attributed their engagement in volunteering to the fact that they had been volunteers in a foreign country themselves and they wanted

“(...) to stay connected to that topics and that world, this was realized by the engagement in the organization (...).”(MiG_M).

Volunteering was also pointed out many times as a *natural process* of growing into a society. LiG_F, MarG_M, DiR_M, SiG_F, MaGT_M, MacG_M, JeG_F and SvG_M all pointed out that it was rather a subconscious process to become a volunteer than a conscious decision to become active as a volunteer. Some volunteers stated that they have been members, and recipients of the work at some point, as children in the same associations that they are volunteering for today. In that case all volunteers stated that it was considered as a natural process to take over specific role at one point. For example, in all interviews with members of the scouts it was mentioned that it is a natural process to become a group leader once the participants reach a certain age (SvG_M, JeG_F and LiG_F). Furthermore, it was mentioned by the volunteers who were once recipients of the organizations work,

that they considered the volunteers as role models and that they also wanted to take over a role were they had the possibility to become role models themselves:

“I always respected the volunteer group leader and considered them as role models. I wanted to become a role model myself.” (LiG_F)

Additionally, the interview of FrG_F and MacG_M shed more light on the fact that refugees and migrants are often associated with a “victimhood” both of them wanted to contribute with their work to a change of that perception of the public:

“by letting them tell their own story (...)” (FrG_F).

Self-Awareness

All volunteers reported to be completely satisfied with their work or the work that they did as a volunteer. Almost all volunteers stated that they are convinced of the work that they are doing and see the need of their social engagement in that field. Most of the volunteers also reported that with respect to their original motives they would say that they are happy with the work that they have done so far and agree that volunteering is a huge part of their private life. RiG_M said that when he started to work for the party he did not have any specific motives to get a specific position in the party, he was just interested in verbalizing his own interests and getting an insight into the political work. The only changes in the perceptions of volunteering that were named by the volunteers can be highlighted by the following statements:

ShI_F, who worked for the youth movement of the Social Democratic Party argued that she was very confident:

“(...) that I can change something in the party. I really wanted to rebuild some sectors of the party. But I never intended to be a representative for all female migrants. As an Iranian woman this was exactly the position that everyone wanted to push me in, even if this was not my area of interest. That was very frustrating, as I had good ideas, but not for that area. I felt very wrongly instrumentalized.”

Also, MaG_M said that when he started his work he thought that would be able to professionalize the area to realize some change through his work. He summed it up that today he is not sure if that was exactly what happened; even if he has evaluated his whole experience with volunteering mainly positively.

Both statements highlight an insight that was given to the volunteers that partially led to a re-evaluation of the possibilities of change in specific areas and limits that are given to them.

Personal Benefits of volunteering

The following areas were named regarding the question which benefits the volunteer him-/herself had from the engagement in volunteering:

Language was named by all three voluntary social year volunteers. They both stated that they improved their language skills immensely by their involvement in volunteer work and the interaction with other volunteers and school students (MoS_M, BeC_M, ZuT_M).



Knowledge of Culture. Three of the interviewed volunteers said that through their involvement in intercultural projects in their organizations, they noticed an immense increase of cultural knowledge, cultural sensitivity and in the understanding of other religions (LiP_F, LiR_F, MiG_M). FrG_F added that the work of volunteering in an intercultural field is also having an immense influence on their own *perspectives*. She stated that while working, in her case, with refugees she took over new perspectives, gained knowledge and developed a personal interest in the countries of origins of the refugees that she met with; that not only had an influence on her perception of refugees but also on the areas of her private life.

Appreciation and Self-value and the *self-development* were named by several volunteers. OIR_F highlighted that she reevaluated her own abilities and gained a more positive picture of herself by doing voluntary work and gaining a lot of positive feedback and encouragement from her colleagues and the outside world. LiG_F, MarG_M, SvG_M and JeG_F pointed out that they consider volunteering as a big influence factor on their self-development as volunteers take over important activities in the society and need to reach a higher level of independency, self-esteem and professional skills to fulfill their tasks.

Contacts and new networks were also mentioned. The volunteers said that they not only found new friends but also some new business contacts by doing volunteering work (MoS_M, BeC_M, LiP_F, LiR_F, MiD_M, ZuT_M, DiR_M, FrG_F). One particular outstanding example is the case of MoS_M:

“It helped me a lot to be part of the network. Our director has a big network. When my time of the voluntary year came to its end, he recommended me – as he knew that I have the education in mechanical engineering - to some companies that he stays in contact with. And one company invited me, and gave me a contract – I think a Syrian refugee can’t get better opportunities without having any contacts.” (MoS_M)

Possibility of forming the society was also named by both volunteers who are engaged in political parties and the volunteer MaG_M. All of them stated that by being active as a volunteer they had the feeling of being involved in a process and to have an impact on the society. OIR_F added that she had the feeling of changing the society on the micro-level by helping people who arrive in a new country to feel comfortable and welcomed.

Application Advantages were also mentioned by SHI_F and MaG_M as they think that an involvement in volunteering can result in a more positive evaluation of someone’s application for an employment, especially in the social sector. Also the influence on the career choice was named by volunteer JeG_F, as she decided to do a vocational training in the social field after many years of social engagement in her organization.

Fun was named by LiP_F, MiG_M, SvG_M, FrG_F and JeG_F as a main benefit of being a volunteer. All interviewed pupils said that they consider volunteering as something that they need for their personal happiness and life quality.

Reaching a higher *Autonomy level and self-empowerment* were also named as benefits that came hand in hand with taking over important tasks in the organizations processes (LiG-F).



Section 3. Impact of the activities volunteers are involved in

Outcomes, Effectiveness and Impact

All volunteers consider their involvement in volunteering as an important part of their life and as an important influence on society that cannot be covered only by state authorities. The goals that all volunteers set for themselves in the beginning were as varying as the interviewed individuals themselves.

Some wanted to work on their *knowledge and abilities*, like LiP_F (wanted the improvement of her personal pedagogical skills), or to get some new *contacts* and new *language skills* as in the cases of MoS_M, ZuT_M and BeC_M. Also, the *change of the status quo* was a big motivational factor for many volunteers. LiR_F for example was motivated to work with her students to improve their marks in school to enable them to pass exams and have a successful learning biography, while LiP_F wanted to help immigrant students to improve their knowledge. LiG_F and FrG_F both stated that they wanted to enrich the organization with new ideas and perspectives. HaT_M wanted to protect students from becoming involved in crime or a member of an extremist organization and OIR_F wanted to support the integration of those people who had newly arrived in Germany to ensure the best start for them. Some volunteers who worked with children or young people also wanted to have a *positive impact on* that focus group, to be a role model for them, to build relations and trust as well as to convey learning and fun to a new generation through the activities of the organization (JeG_F, MarG_M, MaGT_M, SiG_F, DiG_M). Many others (ShI_F, OIR_F, MiG_M, MaG_M, RiG_M, LiG_F) wanted to *rebuild and change* something (the local conditions, policies, awareness on topics, integrate the first generation of foreign volunteers in Germany).

Some volunteers stated that when they started their work, they did not have any specific goals when they took up their responsibilities in the organizations (SvG_M, JeG_F).

Most of the volunteers would agree that they reached their goals or that they at least have the feeling that they made a *meaningful contribution* or are on the path of an improvement of the situation. Nevertheless, it is important to highlight the following statements where the evaluation was less positive than the assessment of the fully-convinced volunteers:

One volunteer that works with school students argued:

“I do not know if I would consider my work as a real improvement of the situation. I think it is right that there must be an opportunity to get free private tutoring for students, so my work is important, but not all students improved their school performance. Always some drop out at the end. This is frustrating.” (LiP_F)

The volunteer of the Social Democratic Youth stated:

“No, I did not reach my goals. I would describe my time in the party as something that definitely shaped me but was also really frustrating and disillusioning because at the end nothing really changed a lot – we have still the same problems as 10 years ago, and things got even work in the last years (...)” (ShI_F).



Another statement of the volunteer who worked for many years in the sector of violence prevention with adolescences highlights additionally the limits of volunteer work in the field of violence prevention:

“Of course I had an influence on many children and adolescents. But in the end there are still many examples that got off the right path. I heard of some of my former students who radicalized themselves or are now members of “backyard mosques”, you can be sure they got off the democratic path and won’t become democratic player anymore.” (HaT_M).

The *influence on the society* was named by MaG_M as providing knowledge and promoting topics that people in Berlin did not get in touch with before

“(…) for example we had a lecture on post-colonialism. Many people who were in the audience had never heard of it before – this is how you can promote cultural knowledge.” (MaG_M).

OIR_F mentioned that she considers her influence on the refugees as direct and on the society as indirect because her hope is that by contributing to the successful integration of the refugees this can have a positive influence on the society as this refugee is becoming a member of the German society.

Another influence on migrants and the community that was reported by the volunteers is their influence on students as *role-models* (HaT_M, MoS_M, LiR_F, MaG_M). The following statement highlights the important role of migrant volunteers in organizations where the recipients of the volunteer work are migrants themselves:

“I was the first Muslim those children got to know who actually studied at a university. They were confused with me – I was Arabic but punctual (laughs), I was not violent, I did not have any stereotypes about Jews or women, I even got along very well with the leader of our organization who was actually Jewish himself. I think that had definitely an influence on those kids.” (MoS_M).

Benefits to Migrant Volunteers

As one factor of volunteering that has a positive influence on migrants as well as on the organizations themselves, *experience* was named by almost all interview partners. This means the experience of culture (MoS_M, OIR_F, DiR_M, FrG_F), interaction with others (BeC_M, MarG_M), language (Mos_M, ZuT_M, MarG_M), and different kinds of perspectives (RiG_M) that can be taken from the interaction with other colleagues, volunteers and the recipients of the work. Also, the organizations benefit from the experience of having volunteers of immigrant origin. In particular, this concerns the areas of language skills, personal experiences and the multi-perspective way of assessing cultures and values (OIR_F, Shi_F, RiG_M, SvG_M, JeG_F).

“We had some meetings where we explicitly invited migrants of first and second generation to discuss topics (and political actions) that do concern immigrants on a



regional level. We do not have many party members who do have a migrant background. With that lack of representation it is always harder to discuss topics that concern migrants who live in the area where our political actions have an impact.” (RiG_M).

Another example conserving the language skills that were seen as an important contribution to the associations work was stated by JeG_F:

“Especially when we work with migrant children, we have the concern that we cannot be really be sure that the children do understand and interpret everything we say in the right way. Someone who is able to speak the language of the child would make the communication easier for us and a complete new level of support could be provided to the young recipients of our work [...].”

Additionally, the *integration* of migrants by volunteering was named. The volunteers consider that integration is happening

“(...) in the background of each voluntary activity that involves a group of different people from various backgrounds.” (BeC_M).

Also, integration is considered as happening by developing a feeling of a community and being involved in a community that pursues the same goals (LiR_F, MacG_M, DiR_M). Furthermore, migrants who were not born in Germany and are not fluent in German have the chance to practice the German language by having interactions with the group of recipients and other colleagues (BeC_M, Shi_F). Moreover, the chance to get into new networks was named by Shi_F. Additionally, she added the thought that:

“I think this is not only the case for political engagement but for all areas of volunteering: Often this organization attracts many well-educated people who feel the need to be active in the civil society. This is a huge benefit for all people from another background, or volunteers who have, for example, migrant parents who talk only in their language of origin with them. The volunteer is not only improving his or her language but is also in contact with people from educated backgrounds, this has not only an impact on the level of the language that they are going to acquire, but also on their educational aspirations” (Shi_F).

The *reduction of stereotypes* on both sides and the build of trust and relations - on the side of the migrant volunteer as well as on the side of the organization - was also named. This means that the interaction with each other reduces the potential fear of contact (MoS_M, HaT_M, SiG_F).

Additionally, the *assumption of responsibilities* was stated out as a positive side-effect of being involved in voluntary work. LiG_F highlighted that this specific skill is very important to be involved in any work processes, volunteering is considered as a possibility to acquire, improve and to experience with that skill.

Again, *role-modeling* was named by HaT_M and MoS_Mas as a big benefit for organizations that work with people who have an immigrant background themselves.



“Migrant volunteers with a successful biography can inspire and shape other migrants. It is much easier to consider someone who started with the same conditions as you did as an inspiring person than someone who was raised in a completely different world.” (HaT_M).

Barriers to migrant volunteering

When asked what they consider as main factors that limit the effectiveness of voluntary actions, the volunteers named the *lack of time and security* (LiP_F, ShI_F, OIR_F). As volunteering is often linked to many hours of work and a need for flexibility, the volunteers highlighted that this is not easy to realize for university students (LiP_F) or people with a family (HaT_M). Additionally, a basic security in terms of living conditions must be given.

“Someone who is a single mom and is doing her vocational training won’t have any additional time to work for free, it needs that kind of security to do some additional work and for doing that work well” (OIR_F)

Also, it was pointed out that the area of the *voluntary work and the interests of the volunteer must match*. Two interview partners argued that this must be the basic criteria for the quality management of voluntary work (MoS_M, RiG_M). Some kind of voluntary work needs a fit of formal requirements of the volunteer. An example given by RiG_M was the political engagement.

“You need to be able to write letters that are grammatically and formally completely perfect and can be handed in without proof-reading, this is already excluding a big group of people who would like to get involved but do not meet the so-called “standards” (RiG_M).

Additionally, the *discontinuity* of actions was named as a limiting factor of voluntary actions. Furthermore, discontinuity (LiR_F) as well as the *lack of trust* between different groups who are involved in volunteering (recipient- volunteer and volunteer-organization) were highlighted as limiting factors (OIR_F).

In addition, the *financing* of activities was also highlighted as a limiting factor as all voluntary activities depend on the long-term funding of the volunteer organization (MiG_M).

Prevalent migrants’ needs that should be addressed by volunteering

Needs of migrants that should be addressed by civic engagement that were identified by the volunteers were the offer of *language improvement possibilities* (through classes, tutoring, personal exchange and *contacts* with native speakers as well as with other migrants (LiP_F, LiR_F, FrG_F)) including the possibility to have a *voice in the society* (LiP_F, ShI_F). One example to realize these needs was to work with school students in small groups to exchange experiences and to speak about their situation (LiP_F).

Safety was also mentioned as a need of migrants (ShI_F; OIR_F).



“Insecure status of residence and the lack of personal, financial and time resources are the reality of many migrants, there must be actions to help, for example by helping to deal with local authorities or paper work” (ShI_F).

The need of *help with paperwork* was also mentioned by some volunteers (MaG_M, OIR_F). The additional question if migrants with irregular legal status should be included as recipients of civic engagement programs was affirmed by most of the volunteers. Some also mentioned that such programs already exist in Germany. Regarding the question if this group should be actively recruited as volunteers, many volunteers agreed that voluntary work shouldn't be part of compulsory programs (LiP_F, HaT_M) and that a certain *standard of living* is necessary for voluntary work:

“volunteering the problem of an affluent society, the first needs of all of us are money, safety and health. Only if those three criteria are given you can start thinking about volunteering” (ShI_F).

What's more, some volunteers stated out that concerning measures to help refugees, they consider that it is important to speak about possibilities that the receiving country can create in order to *empower* people who arrived just recently in Germany and to *create a sense of belonging* for those people. Hereby it was stated out, that the society needs to work on a new perspective on refugees (LiG_F) to help refugees to

“(...) escape from that victimhood that the society is trying to assign to them.” (Sig_F)

Therefore, measures to raise awareness on their personal stories are needed as well as a high level of acceptance; the will to exchange experience and a welcome culture (MaGT_M, JeG_F, MacG_M).

Section 4. General opinion and Policies

Prevalent obstacles for the participation of migrants in voluntary activities

The factors of *financial and time resources* were identified as prevalent obstacles to the participation of migrants in voluntary activities. Additionally, *personal fears* of getting in touch with the host society and the *lack of a welcome-culture* were named (ShI_F, MaG_M, MaG_M, RiG_M). Furthermore, some volunteers listed the *lack of a compensation* of the work as one obstacle (LiP_F, LiF_F). The volunteer MoS_M added, by referring to his own experience of being a refugee in Germany, that

“some migrants do have a lack of motivation. Especially refugees. Many guys that I lived with in refugee housing simply do not want to start being a volunteer. The explanation for this is simple. Many of them do not believe that they will be allowed to stay in Germany. So they try to find work that is paid to send money to their families or they do not even want to start working as their deportation could be tomorrow or in one week.” (MoS_M).

Most interviewees couldn't offer solutions to remove these obstacles on the spot. However, the majority agreed that the financing of (long-term) programs and full- or part-time employees who offer support and help for the other volunteers, as well as the financing of advertisement that have the purpose to advertise in public places, communities and in refugee homes (MoS_M, MaG_M, RiG_M,



LiR_F, MacG_M, JeG_F, FrG_F) are useful measures. But almost every interview partner also argued that the engagement in voluntary work needs to be intrinsically motivated and that they consider the influence of a specific recruitment program for migrants as very limited (MoS_M, MaG_M, RiG_M, LiR_F, Shi_F).

German policies that concern volunteering of migrants

Only one volunteer could name a specific program that targets the volunteering of migrants. MaG_M named the program “social year for refugees” as one program that was established by the ministry of migration. He also added that this program is to be terminated this year as the demand for the program has dropped since the asylum regulations became stricter and produced a significant decrease in the numbers of refugees coming to Germany.



4.2 Focus Group analyses

In the following an overview of stakeholders in the field of civic engagement and volunteering work is provided. The interviews have the goal to give an overview of the different experiences of different stakeholders of volunteering action, by highlighting the given structural and organizational mechanisms in the organization. Also, the interviews pursue the goal to discuss the difference that volunteering of immigrants makes for society.

4.2.1 Access to the field

One purpose of the project is to highlight the experiences and perceptions of different stakeholders in voluntarism as well as to get an insight into the benefits of voluntary work that concern, specifically, people who are immigrants themselves. In order to include a large variety of different civil society organizations with different focuses we contacted local authorities with the proposal to hold focus group interviews with different employees or volunteers of the organization. In doing so, we tried to reach at least two people from one organization, with the determining factor that those persons should have at least two years of work experience in the organization. Since, we wanted to ensure a deep insight into the organization we set also the criteria that the interviewees should be well informed about all levels of the organization (structures, different kinds of projects and financial terms). All interviews were carried out in the period between May 22, 2018 and July 31, 2018 in the two German cities of Hanover (Lower Saxony) and Berlin (Berlin).

4.1.2 Sample of the Focus Interviews

The final sample contains 15 interviewees in five focus groups. The two smallest groups contained two people and the biggest group discussion took place with five people participating. The persons interviewed look back at different lengths of involvement in the organization; however, even the shortest involvement was more than three years.

Table 2 provides an overview of the final research sample. In the present research, an individual code was created for each focus group. The personal code is composed of the first initial letter of the name of each interviewee, the first letter of the name of the organization and the M or F for “male” or “female” as a reference to the gender of each interviewee.

The work areas of the organizations vary. We have been able to collect research data from organizations who have the purpose to help different kinds of immigrants. One organization is dedicated to opening the dialogue between different nations living in Germany, and another organization is working with school students (for more information see Table 2).



Table 6

Research Sample Focus Group Interviews

No.	Personal Code	Number of participants	Place of residence	Position of the interviewees	Description of the association
1	HAAA_MMF	3	Hanover, Lower Saxony	Managing Director, Assistant, Coworker	Migrant organization with the purpose of the representation of minorities on an local level
2	RDH_MF	2	Hanover, Lower Saxony	Managing Director, Project-coordinator	Association for an intercultural and interreligious dialog
3	STEM_MMM	3	Hanover, Lower Saxony	Founder, two Assistants	Association with the purpose of working with school students to promote writing and reading skills
4	LAV_FF	2	Hanover, Lower Saxony	Director of the pedagogical department, Assistant	Association with the purpose of integrative social work with school students
5	MARMEI_MMMMF	5	Berlin, Berlin	Board Member, Associates	Non-profit organization that takes care of foreign volunteers in Germany.

4.2.3 Findings

In order to shed light on the individual statements of the interviewees, the answers are presented by outlining the most interesting answers to each question that was asked in the interview. Also, the statements that are particularly important regarding the research question are given as quotations (translated from German to English).

1) Involvement in volunteering and the issue of immigration

The first question asked in the focus group was the extent of the interviewees' involvement in volunteering and their connection to the issue of immigration. All focus groups were composed of people from different positions within the organizations. Each group was accompanied either by the director/founder of the association or a board member and by one to four associates/assistants of the organization. All interviewed partners are full- or part-time employees of the associations, with the exception of focus group 5 in which all interviewed partners work on a voluntary basis without any compensation. All organizations reported that the majority of the organization members consists of volunteers who work in different areas. In focus group 1-4 all interviewed persons reported that their work centers on the coordination of projects (where volunteers are involved) and pedagogical work in the association, as well as the support and guidance of the volunteers.

All interviewed partners reported the involvement of migrants. For example, the representatives of the migrant organization in focus group 1 whose purpose is the representation of different migrant groups on a local and regional level reported that almost everyone – including the directorate of the association - is a first- or second-generation immigrant. The representatives of focus group 2 who are all involved in the coordination of intercultural dialogue programs do not have any immigration history. As coordinators their work consists of organizing and promoting events where different religious groups can realize an exchange of experience to work together on interreligious and intercultural topics with the purpose of reducing prejudices and strengthening the relation between different religious groups. As the interviewed group stated:

“(…) Different groups of immigrants are recruited to bring as many nations to one table as possible. (...) It would not be possible to realize our work without the involvement of immigrants.” (RDH_MF)

A completely different condition was present in focus group 3 in which the three interviewed people highlighted the problem that although the main recipient of their work (promotion of reading and writing for school students) are students of immigrant origin, only 5 percent of the approximately 1,700 volunteers in the associations have an immigration background themselves.

Focus group 4 reported that:

“(…) a majority of the volunteers and even one of the speakers of the association have an immigration background, or even experienced migration or came as refugees themselves.” (LAV_FF)



All members of the organization design workshops for school students on the topics of tolerance, acceptance of others, democracy and equal treatment of all people. One project that is providing a mentor-relation for school students of immigrant origin is completely managed by immigrants. The interviewed partners mentioned another project managed by refugees which they have been working on since the big migration flow started in 2015. This project deals with the integration of refugees. The interviewed partners from focus group 5 are all involved in the buddy-program of their organization. All interviewed volunteers were German, but all of them have been volunteers in the global South. This way, all of them had the experience to be a foreigner in another country. The program centers on the support of foreigners from the global south who decide to do a voluntary social year in Germany. The volunteers provide help by supporting the foreigners with the organization of their stay, and support with bureaucratic affairs and by providing rooms for living in their own shared flats (whereby the organizations covers the living costs for the foreign volunteers).

2) Role of volunteering in the process of integration

With regard to the introductory question of the role of volunteering for the process of integration of immigrants, several interviewed partners agreed with the statement that the role of volunteering is crucial for integration. Some specific categories of benefits of volunteering for migrants as well as restrictions that need to be kept in mind while talking about volunteering were named.

Role of instruction

Although the role of instruction and support should not be underestimated, the interviewed partners of focus group 1, 2 and 4 agreed that:

“(…) the role of an instructor and supporter cannot be simply taken by other volunteers. To ensure quality of the volunteer actions, professional instruction is needed. Therefore, it needs people who are employed on a full- or part-time basis and can provide professional experience and help (...). (HAAA_MMF)”, also “(…) it needs people who are not only motivated but also professionally educated. We need to provide knowledge to volunteers to make sure that we do the work not only on a regular basis but with a high quality.” (LAV_FF)

Pursue same goals

It was also mentioned by focus group 2 and 3 that volunteering leads to an increase of understanding of different people and different groups. By creating a community of common values through getting together in interreligious and intercultural dialogues, the different immigrant groups start to understand each other and start to cooperate. Consequently, values like tolerance and common understanding can be ensured:



“(…) these values lead not only to integration but also to a multi-dimensional perspective and multi-dimensional understanding of the definition of a society.” (RDH_MF)

“That feeling of fighting in the same battle leads directly to the feeling of community and equal principals (…) as well as to the feeling that each volunteer belongs to something bigger, a big community (...). That offers the chance to understand each other and this is what I consider as a functioning integration (...)” (STEM_MMM)

Additionally, the benefit of being a role model was highlighted by focus group 2. By taking part in civic engagements, migrants take up the roles of mentors for other immigrants and can provide experience-based help to other immigrants who are still in the process of integration. This way, one generation can also provide knowledge and support to a new generation of migrants. The argument of being a role model was named by focus group 5 too, who provided the following example:

“After the first generation of foreign volunteers successfully finished their first year of volunteering they can become members of the buddy-program and help other volunteers to integrate by providing and sharing their personal experience. This could be even more efficient than having a German trying to transfer his or her knowledge to a migrant volunteer.” (MARMEI_MMMMMF)

Fit of the volunteering activity to the volunteer

The director of focus group 4 emphasized the importance of being involved not just in volunteering work, but in voluntary action that matches the individual interests of the person. As an example, the Catholic Church was mentioned:

“(…) of course there are perfect opportunities to be involved and to make some great work there, but why should a Muslim work for a catholic church? I need to feel comfortable in an organization to get the feeling that I want to change things for good (...). Another good example is the allotment gardens in Germany, which is a typical German thing. Will someone who never worked in an allotment going to feel welcomed and comfortable there? I doubt it. Of course each involvement of someone is going to result in integration, but the field of volunteering must be a perfect fit to the person, otherwise frustration will happen sooner or later.” (LAV_FF)

Excessive demands have a contra- beneficial influence on integration

As a critic of volunteering in Germany, one associate in focus group 1 pointed out that he has the personal feeling that volunteering in Germany is being used as a cost-effective measure to replace staff members in the social system. This results in more and more areas where volunteers need to fill gaps and volunteers start to get pushed too hard by their work and drop out. This effect does not have benefits for the integration of immigrants but leads to frustration. He points out that the support of volunteers should have the same importance as the support the volunteers are providing to their target group.

3. First involvement with volunteering of immigrants and the motives behind it

Except for focus group 3, all focus groups reported that the connection to immigrants was already set in the associations' founding charter. Focus group 1, 2 and 4 report that their organizations build on the ideas of the involvement of immigrants in both volunteering and the activities that are provided by the volunteers. As a migrant organization, the organization of focus group 1 depends on migrants. According to the interviewed partners, the motivation behind the founding of the association was to create a mechanism for the representation of the interests of minorities, therefore it was important to recruit as many migrants as possible to give – in this case primarily the Turkish and Arab community - a voice in the society on a local and regional level. The same applies to the organization in focus group 2. The motivation is rooted in the historical migration processes in Germany:

“There were many guest workers who brought their families, this resulted in many communities who didn't know each other and had no possibility to get in touch. We wanted to realize a dialogue between these different groups. Out of this thought, our organization emerged. (...)”(RDH_MF)

Another happening that contributed significantly to the decision for the organization in focus group 2 to reach out to migrants and bring different representatives to one table, were the racist riots in Rostock-Lichtenhagen, Germany, in 1992 where massive racist attacks against asylum seekers took place. This highlighted the need to create a network for immigrants where an exchange of fears but also the mutual strengthening and support of each other can take place.

Focus group 4 named also the historical migration process in Germany and its weaknesses as a main motivation to support people with an immigrant history as organization. Additionally, the director mentioned from her point of view that:

“(...) options for communication, exchange and interaction must be provided to people who want to become part of a community. The main motivation behind the development of this association was to provide those opportunities.” (LAV_FF)

Focus group 5 pointed out that the idea behind the organization was to realize the global exchange of foreigners of the global South and to ensure good living and working conditions for them. After some people of the first generation of participants decided not to go back to their countries and to stay in Germany to make a vocational training or study at university, it happened automatically that these people stayed in contact with the organization and became engaged as volunteers for other foreign volunteers.

An exception in the sample is focus group 3 which did not make any particular effort at the beginning of their existence to either recruit migrant volunteers or migrant school students as a target-group of their activities. The cooperation with some migrants came naturally without any specific recruitment attempts.



4. Further course of cooperation with migrant volunteers and the organization

The focus groups 1, 2, and 4 report an increase of professionalism, financial aid, cooperation activities with other organizations and in membership numbers over the last years in their organization. Focus group 1 reported also an increase in their involvement in local and regional politics. Over the last years, they have been able to participate in more parliamentary hearings. Also, they were able to get more financial aid and with that money could support more activities, full-time staff and other member-associations.

“For example we have been able to provide great help to organizations for and of refugees in their founding stage (...).” (HAAA_MMF)

Focus group 2 explicitly put the emphasis on the trust development within the organization:

“An incredible basis of trust has grown. You can talk to each other about everything. When a world politics event happens, you can talk to everyone about it and nobody gets hurt. One can have disagreements, but that does not change the communication and the basic trust.” (RDH_MF)

The managing director also pointed out that the terror attacks in 2015 led to a fundamental rethinking of the organizations work. She argues that after the terror attacks in France, Spain and Germany, the following rise of the German right-wing party AfD, and the racist Pegida-movement, the initial condition working without much obligation was lost. The organization had to rethink their definition and position on immigrant issues. After the first wave of refugees arrived in Hanover in 2015, an additional topic became present to the organization. Now, it was important not only to figure out how the organization can help to integrate refugees, but they had to find a method to speak about topics that became highly relevant such as anti-Semitism, relations between Jews and Muslims, terrorism, tolerance and democracy.

“There was a huge turning point in the work of the association and a need for knowledge that we needed to acquire” (RDH_MF)

The same changes were also named by focus group 4 which underwent many structural changes in the recent years because of different political movements, such as the increase in approval of right wing policies in society and the arrival of refugees.

“So, we added topics that, from our point of view, needed more attention, like diversity, anti-racism, gender and the equal treatment of all kind of groups.” (LAV_FF)

Focus group 5 mentioned that they trace back the turning point of their work to 2015 when the first generation of foreign volunteers successfully finished their voluntary year and many of those volunteers decided to stay in Germany and become mentors for other foreign volunteers themselves.

One important finding is that none of the focus groups reported any problems or a need to rethink their work concerning the cooperation with migrants. Each cooperation of each organization with immigrants was highlighted as a big enrichment by all focus groups.



5. Direct Involvement of immigrants in the organization's activities.

All focus groups reported the involvement of immigrants in the organization's activities. Focus group 1 reported that they never made any specific recruitment efforts or advertising. It was a natural process that migrants found their way to the organization as all of them had the wish to have a voice in the society. Sometimes the organization is involved in local activities (e.g. workshops or special religious celebrations) which gives immigrants an opportunity to get to know the organization.

Focus group 2 reported that when the organization started its work in 2003 the biggest participating communities were Turkish associations who joined the work of the organization. Each year, the organization was able to get more members; now, there are over 40 different religious associations from different backgrounds (Jewish, Buddhist, humanitarian associations and others) who have

“(…) found a way to sit together on one table, discuss different topics that have a specific meaning and plan together activities for schools and the communities.” (RDH_MF)

Focus group 4 also reported that the work with immigrants was already set as the biggest goal during the foundation of the organization. Migrants in this organization are involved in the work with students in the field of political education. The cooperation started with a small group of mentors of immigrant origin in 1990. As the headquarters of the organization is in a very diverse neighborhood, the interest in the involvement of the activities of the associations has grown fast. This way, more migrant volunteers joined the work of the organization. Now, the volunteers have more projects because more and more schools have joined the association during the last years. Today, the mixture of migrant and non-migrant volunteers is almost balanced.

Focus group 5 highlighted that their first cooperation with migrant volunteers started in 2014, but those volunteers were the foreign volunteers who worked for other organizations, and the only volunteers who worked in the German organization to support the foreign volunteers do not have an immigrant background. This changed in 2015 when the first generation of foreign volunteers finished their volunteering year and started to be supporters for the new generation of incoming volunteers.

The recruitment of migrant volunteers for the organization of focus group 3 was more difficult.

“There have been many attempts to cooperate with the Turkish family association in Hannover, this worked quite well. Further migrant associations did not join our work. Once we had been invited to Anne Will (German TV-Talk Show), this was a great promotion for our organization. Many volunteers – also migrant volunteers - started to call us and expressed the wish to work for us. But we still have fewer migrant volunteers than German volunteers.” (STEM_MMM)



A problem that was also named by focus group 3 concerning the recruitment of migrant volunteers was that they made many efforts to publish calls for volunteering in the regional newspapers, but those newspapers do not have many migrant readers.

One interesting observation named by focus groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 was that during the refugee crisis in 2015, much movement in the organizations was happening. First, as mentioned by focus Groups 2, 3 and 4, more non-migrant and migrant volunteers were motivated to offer their help and volunteered with the purpose of helping refugees and other migrants in need. Secondly, as highlighted by focus groups 1 and 4, more refugees and migrants who migrated recently themselves decided to be involved in volunteering. Focus group 1 mentions that:

“(…) refugees called us and asked for help. How do we create an association? How can we be heard by the public? We want our voice to be heard!” (HAAA_MMF)

6. Opportunities and benefits of volunteering for/with immigrants

As one of the biggest benefits of the involvement of immigrants in volunteering, focus Group 1 agreed on the statement that:

“(…) each group wants to be heard, we do not need representatives who give us a voice, by being active in this association we can be an active part of the society and realize that our personal voice can be heard. At the same time, we became representatives ourselves to get people heard that do not have an own voice right now; for example, for refugees – we stay in contact with them, and we have the language and will to understand them and to give them a voice.”. (HAAA_MMF).

On the other side, the involvement of migrant volunteers in the organization opens also possibilities for the exchange of experience, knowledge and the reality of lives of migrants. This knowledge serves the quality control of the work of the organization as pointed out by focus group 1.

Focus group 2 highlighted that in an immigrant country, which Germany has become over the years (even if not formally stated), it is important to function as a society independently from individual heritage. To realize that, dialogue is needed. This dialogue enables people who never interacted before to get in touch and exchange their points of view without borders. This dialogue needs to be as heterogeneous as possible; therefore, migrants as volunteers are needed for the work of the association. The assistant in focus group 2 stressed that he thinks that the definition of integration is to be able to interact and speak together and to live in peace as each group respects the other groups. He also points out that this kind of interaction might be even more powerful for integration than the official integrations classes where migrants learn about Germany and other cultures without interacting with the group they learn about. At the same time a benefit for the immigrants themselves is that they are involved in an activity where different kinds of cultures and languages are present. This gives them the opportunity to gain new insights and acquire new knowledge that is important for the further interaction within the diverse German society. Also, because the main communication of the



organization happens in German, the migrants can gain new language experience and practice. The director in focus group 2 also mentions that:

“By being a part of a heterogeneous group, topics that are sometimes not really present to different cultures gain importance; for example, we often also try to speak about the role of a woman to realize an exchange on that topic, this is sometimes hard for some groups, but we need to show that in Germany we see women as equal to men and we do not tolerate any discussions on that subject” (RDH_MF)

Orientation and the adoption of values and attitudes were also named as benefits for migrant volunteers in focus group 2.

Focus group 2 argues in the same direction when the director states that integration is also happening through the reduction of stereotypes among Germans.

Focus group 3 is calling the involvement of migrants in the activities of the association a

“win-win situation on both sides” (STEM_MMM).

Focus group 4 agrees with that statement and highlights that the work of the association would not be possible without migrants. Moreover, the director pointed out that the society in Germany is already quite heterogeneous and that this heterogeneity is also a must for associations, because their work cannot be effective without the knowledge and experience of migrants.

Focus group 5 also mentioned the language and the exchange of experience as the biggest benefits of the involvement of immigrants in an organization. In addition, the possibility to set their own issues on the agenda was mentioned; for example, by organizing workshops about their country of origin.

7. Problems produced by voluntary activities of immigrants

None of the focus groups was able to identify any negative influences/ constraints or problems that could be raised by the volunteering of immigrants.

8. Influence of migrant volunteers on community life

Focus group 1 highlighted that it needs to be taken into account that today, over 20 percent of the people in Germany have an immigrant background. The ideal condition for integration would be reached if this percentage were equal to the migrants’ influence in politics and society. The director of the organization points out that this is not the case right now in Germany:

“As the government is always trying its best to show to our society that Germany is by definition not a country of migration, this has an influence on the immigrant community”.
(HAAA_MMF).

Furthermore, he states that if more migrants participated in volunteering, this state could be changed, and the influence could be increased by hearing more and more diverse voices.



The influence on the community that is happening through the volunteering of immigrants plays also an important role in living peacefully as a community, as pointed out by focus group 2. The interviewed partners specify this statement by arguing that the diverse groups who are involved in the activities of their organization come from different countries where the communication with other religious and cultural groups was not given or is even restricted by law (e.g. some Arabic countries have restrictions on communication with the Jewish state Israel). By volunteering in the same organizations different groups start to communicate with each other for the first time in their lives and start to realize that

“(…) there are much more similarities than differences that connect each group”
(RDH_MF).

Focus group 4 recognized the change of traditions to be due to the personal influence of the volunteers as a field of influence. Also, the reduction of fear of contact, communication with other cultures and the opening of the society were named as areas that change by involving migrant volunteers in the organization’s structures. Furthermore, the increase in knowledge and the transfer of knowledge were named by focus group 5 that argued that migrants have an influence on the whole structure of an associations by highlighting their personal experience. Also, a new expertise that is brought into the society by migrants was mentioned, highlighted by the following example:

“Some volunteers from Togo started to design workshops on different topics that concern Togo, this led to a transfer of knowledge to other volunteers from other countries, but also reached different other stakeholders from other associations. That way a wide audience was reached, and lot of money was collected. That would not have been possible without experts who came directly from those countries and had been able to open that new world for us”. (MARMEI_MMMMMF)

9. Policies to strengthen the role of volunteering

Each focus group was able to name specific areas that need to be improved on in order to strengthen the role of volunteering. These areas will be highlighted in the following:

Personal resources

Focus groups 1, 2, 4 and 5 named the lack of personal resources (money, time, and social security) as one major point that reduces the numbers of volunteers participating. Also, focus group 5 argued that they doubt that the lower number of immigrant volunteers can be explained by the factor “background”. The group argued that a lack of basic security always leads to a reduction in civic engagement of a group. The problem is that many migrants belong to the group that is less socially protected than the German group. This argument is especially important in the discussion of volunteering among refugees as most refugees live in difficult living conditions with little security in basic living conditions.

Continuity and Financing of activities

It was highlighted by almost all focus groups (except for focus group 5) that the continuity of programs that are provided by organizations must be ensured. This cannot be ensured without appropriate



financing opportunities. Without the financial support from local and regional authorities, a continuity of programs cannot be ensured which leads to a lack of funding and the premature termination of projects. In turn, this leads to frustration and to drop-outs of volunteers (focus group 2, 4, 5).

Professionalism

The call for professionalism of volunteering was mentioned again in this section of the questionnaire. Many focus groups complained that it is crucial to have full- and part-time employed associates who have a professional education and get paid for the work to realize the efficient instruction and support of volunteers (focus group 1, 2, 4).

Providing Information and Campaigning

Focus group 3 named the lack of accessible information as one major reason why people who would maybe be a potential group of volunteers are not getting involved in volunteering. It needs some purposeful campaigning and information to reach a broad majority of the public and to highlight the importance of volunteering for society.

Cooperation of associations and politics

All focus groups pointed out the need of a better cooperation between the associations and the political bodies. Volunteering is already managing many areas of the public life; therefore, the need for the exchange of experience was named. The criticism was verbalized by focus group 3 that local authorities sometimes release funds without the subsequent control of quality and management. Also the money is sometimes released without taking other important factors like the planned length of the project period or the strict control of the work of different associations into account.

10. Most important question that was asked

As the most important question of the interview, focus group 2 named the question of the benefits that can be provided for volunteers and organizations by migrants volunteering. Focus group 3 agreed and added that the question of the best way to integrate immigrants in volunteering is a question that society should think more about. This was complemented by focus group 4 who added that Germany is facing a big change right now and society needs to start thinking about the question of the integration of different kinds of groups into the society and also into associations. Focus group 5 pointed out that the most important question is the question of funding - as this is the main factor that influences the continuity of the activities of their association.

11. The difference that volunteering makes to people

Concerning the question of the difference that volunteering makes to people and the society, focus group 1 was critical about the function of volunteering in the last years. It was pointed out that Germany reached the point where the government cuts back resources because volunteering fills in the gaps in the social system:



“(…) that is a really comfortable state we reached, but this cannot be the function of volunteering, you cannot expect volunteers to close gaps where professional support is needed” (HAAA_MMF).

This point of view was shared by the interview partners of all other focus groups. Focus groups 2 and 5 pointed out that the standing of voluntary work in society is really good and the civil society would not work like it is right now without it. Also, the importance of volunteering is often highlighted by politicians in many different ways, but there is also the problem that the state relies too much on the work of volunteers.

It was also criticized that there are still many people who are not involved in any kind of volunteering because volunteering does not have a mandatory character. To highlight the important role of volunteering for society, the managing director of focus group 1 referred to the Netherlands where the involvement in volunteering is almost a mandatory criterion for any application at university or for a job. This leads to the result that school students get used to volunteering at a very early stage in their career and volunteering takes a much bigger role in their lives as for example in Germany. Also, by using contracts between volunteers and the organizations in the Netherlands, the voluntary work is more reliable for both sides and it reaches higher levels of professionalism. This argument points out that in his point of view Germany could apply more pressure to get people involved in volunteering to integrate into society independent of the personal background,

“not only for the purpose of integration but also for the purpose of getting a feeling of being a nation that shares the same values and cares about each other”. (HAAA_MMF).

12./13. Further amendments of the partners

Except for the comment by focus group 2 that the activities of the organization are currently spreading within the national context, because more stakeholders have gotten involved in the topic of interreligious dialogue become over the last years, no further amendments were made by the partners.



5. Conclusion

The present research provides clues to the answer of the research question how volunteering among immigrants can be better used in order to increase third country nationals' participation in society. Various organizations and volunteers were successfully reached and participated in the online survey, the focus groups and the individual interviews. All volunteers and organizations that participated provided valuable perspectives and insights into many fields of volunteering.

An interesting development that became clear in this study was that many organizations were only recently founded as a reaction to the rising numbers of refugees coming to Germany in 2015. This shows that society reacted immediately to the political and social developments in Germany. This observation is confirmed by the focus group interviews when two of the five groups interviewed reported that their organizations were founded as a reaction to historical events in Germany; even though both organizations were founded before 2015 and were reactions to historical events previous to the refugee surge in 2015. But some organizations reported in the focus group interviews that the refugee crisis had an impact on their work, such as new fields of activities and thematic focus on the voluntary activities as well as an increase in new volunteers who wanted to help migrants and refugees. This shows that the German society is willing to help if help is needed – even though it was reported in some interviews that this help sometimes does not continue in the long term.

In the present research sample, two different kinds of organizations were mentioned several times: German organizations whose staff and volunteers are German and who work on topics of immigration, and organizations who are run almost exclusively by migrants. This is an interesting finding that raises the question how the German society can establish meaningful cooperation between these organizations and bring these organizations together for an exchange of experiences, cultures and knowledge. One interview also highlighted the problem that not all the migrant organizations work towards democratic goals and should be more controlled by state authorities.

Additionally the quantitative data indicates the problem, that less female volunteers are involved in voluntary activities than males. This result was also replicated by the qualitative data. This finding leads to the assumption that more programs that empower female volunteers are needed and that campaigning that is addressed especially to female participants should be carried out as soon as possible.

The sample analyzed in the quantitative research section highlights that many immigrant volunteers have a high educational background but a low economic background. Consequently, this leads to the assumption that many migrants work in low income sectors or are unemployed. This finding can be explained by the theoretical framework which highlights the difficulty of the recognition of work experiences and educational degrees. This is a political field that needs to be discussed in future research and be dealt with in the form of adequate policies.

In the qualitative research section, some volunteers and focus groups complain that volunteering is considered by society as a money-saving means to fill in service gaps in the social services. This criticism becomes even clearer when considering the findings of the online survey. Many organizations have only fewer than ten staff members, but numbers of volunteers that go into the thousands. An example



is one organization that reports to have only two full-time employees but 1,500 volunteers. This finding underlines the dependency of the social services on volunteers, but also the problem that many organizations build their organizational basis on volunteers. This could lead to the problem that a professionalization of voluntary activities cannot be ensured. Professionalization was one of the most important fields that were mentioned in the qualitative and quantitative research section and to realize it, a different relation of full-time staff to volunteers is necessary. Therefore, more funding is needed.

All participants stressed that volunteer work of migrants has many benefits for the organizations and the migrants. In the online survey, respondents judged the improvement of the level of the organizations' competences and professionalism as main benefits for the organization. This correlates with the opinions of many participants in the case study and the focus groups. As benefits for migrants, cultural exchange and a sense of belonging were mentioned most often; not only in the online survey but also by the volunteers in the interviews and focus groups. Another benefit mentioned frequently was language acquisition and improvement through volunteering. However, this does not match with the statements of the volunteers. Many volunteers who participated in the interviews have already been living in Germany for many years and have a high level of education; the majority even has an university degree. The language factor was only mentioned three times. Each time by the foreign volunteers who were involved in the voluntary social year program and had come to Germany only recently. This finding is interesting because it raises the question if the perceptions of volunteers and organizational leaders differ in the sense that organizational leaders perceive migrant volunteers as less integrated than they are. Concerning the perception of migrants and refugees, it was pointed out in the qualitative research that it is important that this marginalized groups have the opportunity to raise their voice in the public sphere, as this groups as still less of not at all represented in the political and public sphere in Germany. Therefore possibilities of representation and integration in the public decision-making process need to be created as offered on a local level by several organizations in the qualitative research sample.

As factors that hinder the participation of migrants in volunteering, the quantitative and qualitative data reveal the lack of time and resources as especially important. Both seem to be the most influencing factors to migrants' contribution and civic engagement. The lack of resources of migrants was also highlighted in the theoretical framework as it was shown that migrants often suffer more financial problems and can rely on less social security. To implement a strategy to change that condition, political actions are needed such as more programs to facilitate working opportunities or to acquire a school certificate by promoting programs for adult education and programs that allow an easier access to universities disregarding the usual entrance qualifications.

Also, it is important to highlight that this report mentions on multiple occasions that the term "migrant" is very difficult to handle, as Germany looks back on a long history of migration with different groups of migrants involved. Different groups of migrants have different histories and prerequisites, which also has an influence on their possibility of civic and social participation today. Furthermore, migrants in Germany hail from a wide range of educational and economic backgrounds. These are additional factors that have an impact on the process of integration as well as on the participation in civic engagement. Therefore, more research is needed for deeper insights into the circumstances of



different groups living in Germany, specifically the conditions they live in as well as their actual participation in any form of formal or informal voluntary activities.

Finally, intrinsic motivation was named by all individuals who participated in the present research as factor that has a big impact on the will to participate in volunteering. It is hard to say how the intrinsic motivation of individuals can be influenced; however, one focus group suggested introducing students to volunteering at a young age. In this context, the Netherlands could be taken as example because having participated in volunteering activities is a mandatory criterion for the university application. As mentioned before, further research is needed to determine the impact of such an approach towards volunteering in society and of immigrants in particular as well as for the field of volunteering among immigrants on the whole.



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