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One might think that a country such as Germany, with its self-image as a »knowledge-based society«, would have enough knowledge and skills in every politically relevant issue to lead an objective public debate and make political decisions. But time and again it must be said that this knowledge base in Germany has not been as stable as one might hope, as a social scientist. The issue of children and young people on the run is one sad example of this.

The scientific community already faces difficulties in using official data to specify how many young refugees live in Germany altogether, as this is not immediately clear based on data on immigration and on the migration background. And the picture becomes even more vague when it comes to describing the living conditions of these people.

There is very little information, for example, on how institutions and providers of child and youth services work with young refugees in Germany. Do they only create care places for the growing number of unaccompanied minor refugees, as prescribed by the law – or do the services go beyond this? What standards are there in communities and in federal states for the care of these refugees?

Do the general services offered by local child and youth services also reach out to those who live in asylum-seekers’ housing? There are clearly gaps in knowledge in such institution-related issues.

The level of awareness of the circumstances of those affected is hardly any better. What access to education do they have? How are they given medical treatment, what psychological and social developmental processes can be identified in them? There is very little research into any of this. At most, individual topics such as traumatisation resulting from experiences in their countries of origin and on the run have at least been in part investigated scientifically so far.

Nevertheless, we have decided to address this topic, which is as inconvenient as it is difficult. This edition of DJI Impulse focuses on an important but scientifically underexposed field. We try to bring together findings that have been verified to some degree, wherever we have them at our disposal – and at the same time, we want to highlight the limits of the research and where there is room for development in the knowledge. In doing so, we are aware that the issue has an emotional impact: moral outrage sets in quickly when dealing with young refugees, as the suffering of those affected whilst on their way to Germany and in Germany is often so inconceivable.

This is neither a matter of provoking hasty outrage nor of suppressing it – it is much more a case of attempting to clarify which are the scientifically reliable findings and where the domain of definitive opinions begins. The hope is that this issue of DJI Impulse will be the starting point for further clarification within science and practice.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue!

Thomas Rauschenbach
Director of the German Youth Institute
Perception and Reality in the German Immigration Society

Germany has been an immigration country at least since the 1960s. But whilst social integration has succeeded better than in many neighbouring European countries, immigration and asylum policies still remain inconsistent.

By Dietrich Thränhardt
Ever since the era of »Gastarbeiter« (guest workers; see lexicon, p. 32) in the 1950s and ‘60s, there have been discrepancies in German immigration policies: On the one hand, immigrants were given the same wages, equal rights in terms of social security and, after 1972, the right to vote in workers’ council elections. Migrants quickly became part of the »core workforce« of German industry and members of the trade unions. On the other hand, the myth that they would eventually return continued – both among state authorities and among the immigrants themselves. During Helmut Kohl’s chancellorship (1982 – 1998), it was repeatedly highlighted that Germany was not an »immigration country«. At the same time, however, primarily from 1986 to 1994, there was major new immigration by ethnic Germans from Poland, Romania and the former Soviet Union, by asylum seekers from Turkey and disintegrating Yugoslavia, family unification migrants and EU citizens. In these years, the number of foreigners doubled to seven million.

Migration got negative connotations in many ways in Germany. After 1991, Helmut Kohl discredited asylum seekers, lamenting about a »state crisis« because of mounting immigration numbers. Oskar Lafontaine, the candidate of the SPD (the Social Democratic Party of Germany) for the Chancellorship in 1990, delegitimised the ethnic Germans. Some media portrayed the influx of migrants as a problem from the outset. The fact that immigrants and their children spoke better German from year to year, got involved in German associations as well as in their own groups, developed more contacts with the German population at the workplace as well as in leisure activities and that many felt more at home in the German way of life despite maintaining their own traditions, was regularly presented and confirmed in empirical studies. But the public barely took any notice of these positive developments.

Only after the change of government in 1998 did the perception of the reality of immigration change. The centre-left »social democratic-green« coalition prepared a draft law tolerating dual nationality. However, they suffered a heavy defeat in the Hesse state election in 1999, due to a CDU (the conservative party »Christian Democratic Union«) campaign against the »double passport«. To cushion their campaign, however, the CDU also spoke out for more »integration«. Since then, there has been a consensus in Germany on the necessity for integration of immigrants.

The fact that the children of foreigners who have lived in Germany for eight years gain German birthright citizenship (see lexicon, p. 32), is now generally accepted. Following the coalition agreement of 14/12/2013 between the conservative party CDU/CSU and the social democratic SPD, the option obligation has now also been largely dropped. Children therefore no longer need to choose between German or another citizenship. The »Green Card« initiative of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder (SPD) in 2000 for the recruitment of IT specialists linked immigration with economic efficiency. Finally, in 2005, the new immigration act (see lexicon, p. 32) was adopted as a compromise between the large parties, creating a new uniform legal framework, but also contributing to a reduction in immigration.

Germany is once again the most important immigration country in Europe

Since 2011, Germany is once again the most important immigration country in Europe. In 2012, 74 per cent of immigrants in the EU came from other EU countries. Most of them originated in the new member states: 69,900 from Poland, 45,812 from Romania, 26,208 from Hungary and 25,121 from Bulgaria. Italian immigrants followed with 21,716 and Spanish immigrants with 20,539 people (net immigration figures, see chart). The free European migration area – a worldwide unique accomplishment – is unfurling its internal dynamics, whilst immigration from non-EU countries remains limited.

At the same time, the emigration surplus towards Turkey increased from 1,735 to 4,147 persons between 2011 and 2012. Significantly more people have therefore migrated from Ger-

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**Germany’s migration balance in 2012 for selected countries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigration surplus</th>
<th>Emigration surplus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland + 69,900</td>
<td>Switzerland – 8,948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania + 45,812</td>
<td>Turkey – 4,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary + 26,208</td>
<td>Austria – 1,491</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bulgaria + 25,121</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy + 21,716</td>
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<td>Spain + 20,539</td>
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Migration balance for foreigners as a whole + 387,149

In the chart and in the further information in this article, net figures are given, so immigration and emigration are offset against each other.

**Source:** Federal Statistical Office
than the new applications they receive. Over the years, ever more unprocessed asylum applications have therefore been building up. It was not the high number of applications in 2012 and 2013 that created this effect – it originated even earlier than that.

The Interior Ministry tolerated this development. Only in the coalition agreement between the CDU/CSU and the SPD in December 2013 was a significant increase in staff announced. The resulting costs have so far been incurred by the states and municipalities. On top of that, there are also the costs of constructing new accommodation. This requires a great deal of energy and persuasion at a local level, which could be better invested in the ultimate integration of refugees.

Above all, the processing backlog of asylum applications is a burden for the refugees themselves. They are forced to spend seven months instead of three in crowded accommodation – uncertain of what their future perspectives will be. In addition, the quality of the examination process varies with the long waiting times. Refugees with a chance of recognition are left uncertain for even longer, for example refugees from Iran and Syria.

This gives human traffickers incentives to bring people to Germany who have no chance of asylum – such as those from Serbia or Macedonia, for example. Strangely enough, the processing backlog for asylum applications has hardly been discussed at all in public. Instead, a debate took place at the turn of the year 2013/14 about Romanian and Bulgarian »poverty immigrants«.

The social reality and perception of migration and integration are by no means congruent. Time and again, ostracising images of certain migrant groups come up in public discourse, showing their own society as especially positive in comparison. Previous immigration processes are portrayed in retrospect as a success and as unproblematic. It is thus barely conceivable any more these days that there was an abundance of ostracising jokes and stories about Italians in the 1960s. For today’s immigrants, this is problematic, as it opens up new rifts. Fortunately, many hostile images and negative stereotypes will later be forgotten and harmonised in hindsight.

### THE AUTHOR

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In the historical awareness of German child and youth welfare services, neither the experiences of children forced to emigrate from Germany before the Second World War (e.g. Fast 2011) nor the experiences of children who were forced to flee to Germany during and following the war (e.g. Weber-Newth 2012) left behind any significant traces. Pioneer studies on the psychological situation and development of refugee children back then are today largely forgotten.

With Germany’s transformation from an emigration country to an immigration country in the second half of the 20th century, an increasing interest in children and young people from so-called »Gastarbeiter« (guest worker; see lexicon, p. 32) families arose on the part of social workers. However, this was heavily focused on ensuring the children’s academic success and preventing delinquency. Other aspects that could help child and youth services to overcome their current detachment when it comes to the needs and living situations of refugee children are rarely looked into. Above all, a multidimensional understanding of acculturation, which perceives knowledge and appreciation of both the culture in Germany and the culture in the family of origin as worthy of promotion, has never really gained a foothold in German child and youth services. In line with this, more emphasis is placed on ensuring that refugee children acquire the values and lifestyles of the majority society in Germany than the alternative model, which favours a bicultural competence (for research overviews see Bornstein/Cote 2006; Coll 2012).

The field of child protection has thus far mainly approached problems in refugee families with particular attention on damaging cultural practices in some families, such as (the threat of)

Refugee Children, Children’s Services and Child Protection

German child and youth welfare services unintentionally discriminate against refugee children. Whilst scientific studies on the living situation of young refugees are still lacking, researchers have investigated in recent years how refugee children suffer as a result of the difficult situation their family is in – and which factors may have a positive impact.

By Heinz Kindler
female genital mutilation, forced marriage of young people or severe restrictions on self-determination and freedom of movement for adolescent girls. There can be no doubt that such practices cannot be tolerated and, if necessary, give rise to state intervention for the protection of children. At the same time however, comparative analyses of practical and political strategies in Europe show that these issues in Germany – attributable to weak or non-existent cooperation structures with civil society groups of migrant families – are in particular danger of becoming a means of exclusion of mainly Muslim families (for example Yurdakul/Korteweg 2013).

There is little research into how the child-protection system discriminates against refugees

The danger of institutional discrimination in the child-protection system (for example, by more frequently placing children in out-of-home care) has so far rarely been the subject of critical self-review in Germany. Admittedly, the project »migration-sensitive child protection« (Jagusch 2012) was a very important and positive first step. In proportion to how intensively some other countries (such as the United States, the Netherlands or England) are monitoring whether children of certain ethnicities or cultures are overrepresented in the child-protection system, very little attention is paid to this issue in Germany (Alan 2014). One issue in particular that has not previously been researched is whether children with different residence permits receive the same level of state protection as German children if they become victims of neglect, mistreatment or abuse.

In addition, all child-protection systems have to contend with the problem of recruiting sufficient outpatient assistance in education (see lexicon, p. 33) and enough culturally competent practitioners to communicate with migrant families following child-protection notifications. Refugee families represent a particular challenge here, because they often belong to cultural or ethnic groups that are rarely represented in Germany, and also because the countries of origin of refugee families are changing rapidly depending on political events.

On the one hand, considerable efforts still are necessary to increase the »fitness« of child and youth welfare services and especially the child-protection system for the care and protection of refugee children. But on the other hand, a great deal of information has accumulated in recent years on the stresses and needs as well as the strengths of accompanied refugee children.

One particular focus in the scientific literature is on the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder among refugee children. Psychologists Martina Ruf, Maggie Schauer and Thomas Elbert (2010) observed, for example, that almost all of the refugee children they studied had repeatedly experienced traumatic events. About one fifth of the children had responded to this by developing a post-traumatic stress disorder. Similar frequencies are also reported in samples of refugee children in other industrialised Western countries. Only a small minority of the children promptly received proper psychotherapeutic care. This is very problematic, because post-traumatic stress disorders can become chronic and then lead to long-term adverse effects for mental health. Practitioners who can build bridges to the child mental health system are therefore urgently needed.

Beyond post-traumatic stress disorders, studies on refugee accommodation in Germany show that a substantial proportion (up to 50 per cent) of accompanied children and young people living there respond at least temporarily to the stresses before, during and after their escape with mental health problems (Gavranidou et al. 2008). In addition to support services for children and young people stress or even mental illnesses
Up to 50 per cent of children in refugee accommodation responded to the stress of their escape with at least temporary mental health problems.

Refugee homes often harm children

Only few practitioners would claim so far that the officially designed living environments and procedures that refugee children go through are sufficiently geared towards the well-being of these children. However, empirical studies, for example on the effects of the asylum procedure on children, are as yet rare. One exception is the longitudinal study by Dutch social scientist Elianne Zijlstra (2012), which shows that a long-term uncertain residence permit has an especially stressful impact on children. In addition, the living environment in refugee asylums can be harmful: for example due the fact that children experience violence there, due to them living in a very confined space (density stress) or due to a lack of protection against sexual assault by other inhabitants (Helming 2012).

The legal definition of child endangerment (see lexicon, p. 32) in Germany focuses on the relationship between the state and parents. In the event of a real and substantial risk of parents significantly harming a child due to their actions or inactions, the state is entitled and obliged to intervene. However, this is bound to the principle of proportionality. Such a situation does not exist if the welfare of a child were endangered primarily by the living conditions of the child’s family, for which the state itself is responsible. Only if, for example, the parents abuse the child or refuse treatment of the child’s severe mental health problems state interference with parental rights can be seen as legitimate at least under certain conditions. Since principles of proportionality have to be respected and the basic rights of parents and children are not subject to financing reservations, even in this case state interference especially involuntary separation of children and parents can only be considered if there is no possibility of persuading the parents to accept help, or if all other options are exhausted. Information on how children cope with parenting breakdowns or abuse on the part of their parents after expulsion and escape is as yet lacking. The same applies to the prospects of success of family support and case histories after placement outside of parental care. Another question that seems to remain unanswered is that of how the legal requirement to offer counselling on child endangerment to those employed in refugee accommodation can be met competently in accordance with § 8b of the German Social Security Code (SGB VIII) (professional counselling and support for the protection of children and adolescents; see lexicon, p. 32) in the event of strong indications of danger.

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Refugee Children: A Forgotten Target Group in Child and Youth Services

There have been discussions in child and youth services on its intercultural openness since the 1990s. But it still depends on the individual case as to whether refugees and their families benefit from the help provided. More research is required to clarify how child and youth services support refugee children.

By Christian Peucker and Mike Seckinger

Refugee policy issues have moved closer into the public eye in recent months. The reasons for this are the refugee protests taking place in several cities, the tragic shipwreck off Lampedusa causing hundreds of deaths and the rising number of people applying for asylum in Germany. This article examines the question of how children, young people and families with an unsecured residence status – i.e. with toleration status or going through the asylum process – live in Germany and what child and youth services do to improve their situation.

Asylum-seeking or tolerated families (see lexicon, p. 34) usually still receive non-cash benefits such as food packages and must live in «community accommodation». The physical closeness and lack of privacy are not conducive to the upbringing of children and young people. The lack of certainty as to whether they can stay in Germany is extremely stressful and makes it difficult for them to develop future perspectives. On top of that there are the stressful and traumatic experiences that the children, young people and their parents have been through in their homeland or on the run (Weiss 2009). The leisure activities of the children and young people are usually very limited:

The lack of certainty as to whether they can stay in Germany is extremely stressful for refugees.

They hardly have any cash at their disposal and often live in accommodation that is far away from city centres or sports facilities. The social care in community accommodation usually has a focus that is not geared towards the leisure time of the children and young people. Whether young refugees can spend their leisure time doing things appropriate for their age depends largely on the civil commitment of individuals or the willingness of existing youth services institutions to become involved in working with refugee children.

Initiatives such as «Bunt kickt gut» (an intercultural street football league) or the refugee councils (independent representatives of refugee-led organisations and support groups) which exist in all of Germany’s federal states, have developed offers for children and young people with a migration background (see lexicon, p. 33). It is not known how many of these children and young people take advantage of the standard offers and services nationally. Also, little is known about whether child and youth services create offers for this target group and which concepts are used to do so, or about how it makes it easier for young people to access its services. Youth services certainly...
have ways of improving the living situations of these children and young people, perhaps by embracing its lobbying function, cooperating with stakeholders active in the field of refugee aid, developing and structuring low-threshold services and by means of a qualification for youth service planning.

There is a gap between the claims and the reality of intercultural openness

The intercultural openness of public child and youth services has been discussed and programmatically stipulated since 1990. One goal here is to classify the standard offers in such a way that all people can make use of them, whether they are from an immigrant background or not. For example, this could be implemented by having staff who are trained in interculturalism and diversity and by removing barriers to access. According to a study by the German Youth Institute (DJI), the vast majority of youth offices (92 per cent) consider a goal to be to facilitate access to the existing services for families, children and young people with a migration background. By contrast, significantly fewer youth welfare and youth service offices (youth offices; see lexicon, p. 34) consider it important to mention intercultural competencies in job postings (46 per cent) and actively seek personnel with a migration background (38 per cent; Gadow 2013).

This is an indication of the fact that intercultural openness has yet to be implemented in several areas and it is assumed that this applies in particular to refugees. Young people who have fled to Germany together with their parents have not yet really been an issue in discourse among child and youth services – and if it ever is, then it tends to relate to dealing with unaccompanied minor refugees. Taking them into custody (see lexicon, p. 34) is a duty that is rooted in the German Social Security Code VIII (see lexicon, p. 32). Municipal authorities are currently under severe pressure to create sufficient and qualified places for unaccompanied minors.

Child and youth services have the duty to contribute to the creation of positive living conditions for all young people and their families (§ 1 of the German Social Security Code VIII) and to represent their interests with respect to other authorities. This is a task they should be taking on for children and young people who have fled to Germany with their families. A framework for this is offered, for example, by round tables for refugee issues, in which the immigration office, the youth office, charities and other actors are involved (see Stadt Nürnberg 2012, for example). Apart from such panels that are not related to individual cases, cooperation with the immigration authorities, with social services in community accommodation, with dedicated private initiatives and with refugee support groups...
has moved more into the focus. However, there is still a major need for research to clarify how child and youth services support children, young people and families with a migration background. Questions which remain unanswered are, for example, how youth offices cooperate with the immigration authorities, what standards there are for taking unaccompanied minor refugees into care and how many children and young people take advantage of services such as kindergartens, youth centres and outpatient or inpatient assistance in education.

There is hardly any statistical data on the services refugee families take advantage of.

It can be assumed that the need for assistance in education (see lexicon, p. 31) amongst families with a refugee background is high, not least because of the overall very stressful living situation. If refugees take advantage of such support, they are not usually threatened with expulsion – however, it can be assumed that such fears still exist. However, an expulsion may come about if families without a regular residency status or families with tolerated status (see lexicon, p. 34) cannot pay for their child to stay in a home themselves (Kunkel 2009). But no data exist on the number of refugee families who take advantage of outpatient or inpatient assistance in education. The data available on taking unaccompanied minor refugees into care is better (Statistisches Bundesamt). Developing services for the differentiated living situations of all children and young people and their families is the duty of legally prescribed youth services planning. The DJI survey of youth offices in 2009 showed that in youth services plans, measures are also formulated for children and young people with migration backgrounds: in the field of youth work at 68 per cent, in the field of assistance in education at 40 per cent (Gadow 2013). It is not known to what extent children and young people with a refugee background are considered as a target group in youth services planning and whether the plans include the social support of charities in refugee accommodation.

With increased public awareness of refugee policy issues, the situation of children, young people and families who have fled to Germany, as well as that of child and youth welfare, as well as with employment agencies and providers of therapeutic measures could also be used.

By attending childcare centres, young refugees are given education opportunities and open spaces that would otherwise be denied to them due to the isolation and limited space offered by community accommodation and due to the low benefits of the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act (AsylbLG; see lexicon, p. 32). It is not known how many children with a refugee background attend childcare centres or youth centres nationally; even at a municipal level, there are frequently no figures on this.

By attending childcare centres, young refugees are given education opportunities that would otherwise be denied to them.

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Understanding Refugee Children Better: The »Transnational Biography Work«

Young refugees have often been through traumatic experiences. To be able to look after them appropriately, it is useful for social work staff to be sensitised to such experiences. The method of transnational biography work serves as an approach to dealing with these children and young people, but is also intended to take structural drawbacks into account.

By Caroline Schmitt and Hans Günther Homfeldt

The reasons why minor refugees flee unaccompanied from their countries of origin are diverse: Some flee from civil wars, others from sexual exploitation or because they are scared of being recruited as child soldiers. Other motives include political persecution of the parents, who have been imprisoned or killed. And the consequences of natural disasters are also often a reason for leaving one’s country of origin.

Ever more refugee children are arriving in Germany. But there are no detailed statistics on this. One indication is the number of occasions on which youth offices (see lexicon, p. 34) are taking
Transnational biography work aims to provide social workers with a better understanding of the situation of children.

people into care: In 2012, 40,227 people were taken into care, of which 4,767 were unaccompanied minor refugees (Pothmann 2013). In 2011, this figure was 3,782, and in 2010 it was 4,216. Most children and young people have fled to Germany from Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia and Iraq (Hummitzsch 2013).

The state taking unaccompanied minor refugees into short-term custody (see lexicon, p. 34) is not enough to do justice to their difficult living situations. This is why the care work known as transnational biography work is especially important. It aims to provide staff in social work and in other institutions with a better understanding of the situation of children and young people (Parusel 2009). Young refugees have often lost family members and friends, they are traumatised and are in an unfamiliar environment. This difficult living situation needs to be handled with a transnational view of the children’s biographies. At the same time, staff in social work should call attention to structural drawbacks (Homfeldt/Schmitt 2012).

Social work (with refugees) therefore also has a political goal.

Refugee children not only have particular problems, but also particular capabilities

Children and young people who have fled to Germany have been through traumatising experiences such as the loss of family members and escaping across country borders. For this reason it is especially important for them to experience stable bonds with caregivers and constant loving attention after having fled. This discrepancy of stressful experiences and the necessary stability for children’s development requires a particular sensitivity to the children’s situation from practi-
tioners in social work and in psychotherapeutic institutions, from police officers and from the men and women appointed as legal guardians.

They also need to recognise that refugee children are in no way a homogeneous group. The supervising persons and institutions should always have the personal living situation of the refugees in mind (Stauf 2011). In addition to handling their problems, these children’s capabilities and competences also need to be recognised. These need to be strengthened, but without overestimating them. To meet such a task, a method referred to as transnational biography work is required, which recognises and takes into account the stresses, hopes and aspirations of children and young people. A trauma handling adapted to the sensibilities and transnational social spaces of the adolescents is required, which provides support in making contacts in Germany and looking for relatives both nationally and internationally and also raises awareness of structural challenges in working with refugee children in politics and institutions.

Recent publications on trauma handling demonstrate a growing awareness in research of the needs of refugee children. For example, psychotherapists Heidrun Schulze, Ulrike Loch and Silke Birgitta Gahleitner (2012) outline the ecological-dialectical model of trauma handling (based on Fischer/Riedesser 2009) and work out the interaction of objective traumatic external factors by attributing subjective meaning. Due to its phase connection in which children’s and young people’s understanding of themselves should be gently promoted, the model offers a suitable framework for trauma work with unaccompanied refugee children.

In the trauma work and everyday support for refugee children as a whole, as explained by trauma therapist Dima Zito (2010), there is a necessity to incorporate the whole transnational living context of the refugees. If it is not possible for refugee children to open up verbally, the method of self-reporting can be a suitable way to get closer to the interpretations and perspectives of the children. In a self-report, the children can write freely and do not feel under any immediate pressure to talk – as may be the case in a therapy session, for example.

The search for family members is part of the biography work

Whilst transnational biography work covers the direct work and rehabilitation with the affected child, it should not stop at the gained insights. If children are suffering due to a separation from relatives, for example, one of the tasks of the supporting social services may be to address the search for family members as part of the biography work. Support in the search for family members is offered by such institutions as the German Red Cross missing persons tracing service, the International Social Service in the German Association for Public and Private Welfare, the Regional Office of the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR in Germany as well as national embassies or development organisations (Keller 2011).

Transnational biography work that focuses on unaccompanied minor refugees and their experiences, their interpretations and their life perspectives and which is structurally committed to an improvement of the living situation of refugee children requires an appreciative approach to young people. It is necessary to develop an individual perspective on the respective life course. The support for the refugee children cannot stop at national frontiers and should also include such areas as the search for family members, even in other countries than Germany.

The search for family members is part of the biography work

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The number of refugees worldwide is higher than it has been in 20 years. According to the refugee agency UNHCR, there are currently more than 45 million people on the run. Bundestag Vice President Claudia Roth (from the green party »Bündnis 90/Die Grünen«) calls for more refugees to be accommodated in Germany and an end to the European policy of turning refugees away.

»Germany Needs to Give Up on its Obstructionist Attitude«

DJI Impulse: Ms Roth, you visited Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq in January 2014. What are the living conditions like for people in the refugee camps? Claudia Roth: I visited several refugee camps and communities in the three countries in which some of the more than two million refugees from Syria live, having escaped the atrocities of war as well as the Assad regime. What we are dealing with in these countries, and especially in Syria itself, is a humanitarian catastrophe about which the international community simply cannot remain indifferent. The refugee agency of the United Nations, UNHCR, is working flat out in all countries to register as many refugees as possible, and thus to be able to organise a coordinated response.

DJI Impulse: What problems are there in caring for the refugees? Roth: At least in the institutions supervised by the UNHCR, the provision of food, tents and first aid is not a pressing issue – it is much more the issues such as healthcare, education and future perspectives of the refugees. The sad thing about the lives of these refugees is not only that they have lost everything due to their fleeing and expulsion, that their upbringing, their education, their qualifications, their homes and much more are now worth nothing. It is primarily the oppressive fear of what is going to happen next, how long these people will have to endure this uncertainty, what will become of the children and young people. And we’re talking about the destinies of millions of people here. Because of the sheer amount of people who come to them, the entire infrastructures of the neighbouring countries around Syria are on the brink of collapse. This emergency is on the verge of bringing about uncontrollable political crises in these countries.

DJI Impulse: What could Western countries or the United Nations do politically to alleviate the suffering of the refugees? Roth: The most important thing is that they should not just forget about the fate of refugees from the Syrian civil war. For one thing, it means tremendous suffering for the people who have to flee from violence and hardship, and for another, it means an enormous refugee movement in the region, but also a major challenge for the humanitarian and political situation in the destination countries such as Lebanon, Iraq or Jordan. This is why it is essential that the international community is not only on hand in these countries with additional conventional relief measures and that it improves the humanitarian situation there, but also that it takes action with new approaches to development and reconstruction measures to save the rapidly collapsing infrastructure in these countries. On the other hand, however, more countries need to be willing to take in refugees from Syria. There is a great sense of disappointment in the region that in Europe, only Germany and Sweden have been taking in Syrian civil-war refugees so far. Given the fact that there are over 2 million Syrian refugees in the neighbouring countries and 6.5 million internally displaced persons, Germany taking in 10,000 Syrian refugees is really only a symbolic gesture. I am firmly convinced that a country such as Germany can take in many more refugees. This number should be taken in relation to the over 1.3 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, which has an overall population of 4 million. This is the only way to really bring home the dramatic nature of the situation in the region and the need for a greater willingness to take in refugees in Europe.

DJI Impulse: You described the attitude of most EU nations when dealing with refugees a few years ago as »a race to dishonor«. What did you mean by that? Roth: It is a major failure on the part of European nations that they have not yet been able to agree upon a common immigration policy, on consistent asylum rules and consistently high standards when dealing with refugees. And also the fact there is not even a political realisation in Europe that the refugees seeking refuge in Europe from poor or conflict-ridden regions constitute a shared responsibility for all countries and that they are not just a »problem« for Italy, Malta, Greece or Hungary to deal with. As long as the countries in the centre of the EU deny their responsibility and obligation, it is all too easy for the countries...
The political failure of European nations has resulted in a foot race for the most unacceptable conditions for refugees. And that is simply horrendous.

with external EU borders to use »overloading« as a justification for the lack of constitutional standards in dealing with refugees. As long as these countries are left alone with the problem, they will continue with a principle of deterring and turning refugees away. This political failure has resulted in a foot race for the most unacceptable conditions for refugees. And that is simply horrendous.

DJI Impulse: It is frequently argued that Germany is already helping more refugees and asylum seekers than other countries. After all, according to the 2012 UNHCR annual report, Germany took in the third highest amount of refugees in the world after Pakistan and Iran, and approved the second highest amount of asylum applications after the USA. Why is that still not a good result?

Roth: The human rights organisation »Pro Asyl« has already made it clear that this statistic is quite misleading. In absolute terms, Germany does take in the most refugees in Europe and the third highest amount in the world; but, it is much more significant if you look at the number of asylum seekers in relation to the population. And this is where Germany’s result is just not satisfactory. According to this, the number of refugees taken in by the economically strong Germany was fewer than one refugee per 1,000 inhabitants in 2012. Germany therefore came in tenth place out of all EU countries. Right at the top of this ranking was Malta, with five asylum seekers per 1,000 inhabitants, followed by Sweden, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Belgium, Norway, Austria, Cyprus and Denmark. So there really is no reason to sit back and do nothing here in Germany when it comes to refugees and asylum seekers.

DJI Impulse: According to the »Dublin II« EU Regulation, the refugee’s respective country of entry is responsible for the asylum procedure. Third countries therefore often send refugees back to the countries where they first arrived. How could the EU achieve a more equitable distribution of refugees across all European nations?

Roth: If we make not the geographical location of the countries but the shared responsibility of everyone the decisive factor and if Germany finally gave up on its obstructionist attitude within the EU and opted for a joint solution instead. It comes down to a mixture of the refugees’ free choice of where they would like to live, and a fair balance between the individual EU nations. Of course there are criteria that need to play a role here, such as the number of inhabitants, the accommodation capacity and the economic strength of the country.

DJI Impulse: Which other resources does the German government have that it can use to work with other countries in the EU to implement a more modern refugee policy?

Roth: It could use the EU Council to create pressure to finally establish legal migration opportunities which also apply to irregular migration due to fleeing and expulsion. It would also have to campaign for an end to the policy of turning refugees away that is exercised on the EU’s external borders. The acceptance of the mass deaths in the Mediterranean constitutes nothing but a violation of the duty of protection and the humanitarian obligation of the international community. These deaths need to be stopped, just like the refusal of access to courts and humane standards for refugees. Refugees need to be allowed to live in dignity in Europe.

Interview: Benjamin Klaußner

ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEE

Claudia Roth has been Vice President of the German Federal Parliament (Bundestag) since October 2013. From 2001 to 2002, and from 2004 to 2013, she was the chairperson of the political party »Bündnis 90/ Die Grünen«, Germany’s most important green party. After giving up her studies in theatre science in Munich, the politician, who was born in Ulm in 1955, worked as a dramatic adviser in Dortmund, where she co-founded a free theatre. In the early 1980s, she was the manager of the rock band »Ton Steine Scherben«. She joined »Bündnis 90/Die Grünen« in 1985 as spokesperson for the parliamentary group. Between 1989 and 1998, she was a Member of the European Parliament, and then became co-chairman of the Green Group in the European Parliament between 1994 and 1998. Claudia Roth has been a member of the German Bundestag since 1998 (with a break between 2001 and 2002).
Language is the Key

According to the law, unaccompanied minor refugees must be suitably housed in Germany. But not all institutions for child and youth services manage to meet the needs of young people. The example of the special institution ALREJU in the eastern German state of Brandenburg demonstrates the prerequisites that are necessary for good accommodation and integration of young refugees.

By Silke Bachert
A ccording to § 42 of the Child and Youth Services Act, the youth welfare and youth service office (youth office; see lexicon, p. 34) is obliged to take charge of unaccompanied foreign children and young people and, if necessary, to house them suitably in accordance with the German Social Code VIII (see lexicon, p. 32). In more commonly affected regions such as Hesse and Bavaria (due to the international airports in Frankfurt and Munich) or Schleswig-Holstein as a transit country to Scandinavia, a «more experienced handling» in terms of housing can be noticed. In areas less heavily frequented due to their geographical location, for example in Saxony-Anhalt and Saarland, children and young people are often accommodated in local youth service facilities without any special clearing procedures. In clearing procedures, government agencies under the aegis of the youth office discern initially how old the children and young people are, what their level of education is, and whether they are healthy. In addition they also clarify whether an application for asylum should be made (for example for humanitarian reasons) and whether the young people have relatives in Germany or another country that could possibly take care of them. The selection criteria for accommodation without going through a clearing procedure are the amount of free places and whether an institution is willing to accommodate the young people. The following article will demonstrate, on the basis of two examples, whether the conditions in the youth service institutions meet the needs of young people (or if only the minimum legal requirements are implemented) and what problems and risks can occur in the accommodation of young people.

Unaccompanied minor refugees are often accommodated in unspecified living-groups, where only children and young people not coming from migration backgrounds live. This step is often justified by the assumption that this makes integration easier for the young people. However, the accommodation of minor refugees in regional, stationary child and youth welfare institutions repeatedly leads to irritation among all those involved, as local children and young people with particular living situations and problems also live there, resulting in tension. Single and double rooms are standard in almost all of these institutions today. Shared accommodation in double rooms can have a positive effect on traumatised young people. However, difficulties often arise due to cultural or religious differences: A large part of the unaccompanied minor refugees in Germany are Muslims, which has to be taken into consideration not only in terms of the offer, but also for the storage and preparation of food. The language barrier constitutes a major difficulty for young refugees. Many of them only speak their own language of origin or their dialect of origin. If there are no interpreters on site, the supervisors have to find creative ways of communication, such as using picture cards.

Example »Elisabethheim« in Havetoft:
Staff speak Persian

Another problem is compulsory education: For this, schools need to be available which can teach pupils with lacking or inadequate German language skills. Regions which take into care a larger number of refugees have migrated to more specific forms of accommodation for this very reason, as they can respond better to the particular needs of unaccompanied refugees. In the northern German state of Schleswig-Holstein for example, they have been accommodated in »Elisabethheim« in Havetoft for several years now. In order to ensure the appropriate accommodation and supervision, the protection agency for unaccompanied minor refugees there was placed under the leadership of a particularly suitable employee in 2010: After graduating from her degree in Intercultural Studies in London, she worked in Afghanistan for several years and therefore speaks Persian, the mother tongue of the majority of the young people accommodated there.

Living groups of up to ten young people under 18 live on different floors in Havetoft. This makes it possible to physically separate the arrival area (clearing area) and the area of the child and youth services. After their arrival, the young refugees can therefore first have some time to reflect on their situation and to settle down. The key to successful integration is the language skills. The refugees’ first instruction in the German language takes place right there in the youth service institution. If young people then express their desire to stay, they are promptly registered for language courses and to attend school. The sheer dominance of individual nationalities also proves to be complicated when it comes to people of other na-
nationalities settling in. However, attempts are nonetheless made to create cohesion and to convey a group feeling – for example by celebrating a common major festival at the end of the Ramadán month of fasting (Bachert 2010).

ALREJU special institution: Youth services, schools and associations work closely together

A successful example of appropriate accommodation of minor refugees is the ALREJU special institution on the outskirts of the town of Fürstenwalde in the eastern German state of Brandenburg. It was founded in 1993 as a model project under the sponsorship of the «Diakonisches Werk» (the social welfare organisation of Germany’s Protestant churches). Unaccompanied minor refugees are looked after there, regardless of their nationality, culture or religion. The institution has 63 places in eight living groups, as well as assisted living areas for young people who are of legal age, and a clearing house. In every flat there are two to three bedrooms, a bathroom, a toilet and a kitchen for shared use. There are two flats on each floor as well as a communal lounge.

The living conditions in ALREJU have improved constantly over the years: There are sport, training and meeting rooms, a large outdoor area with a football ground, a giant chess board, table tennis tables and a volleyball court (Killisch 2010b). Around 1,500 children and young people from 64 nations have been looked after in ALREJU since 1993.

After their arrival, the young people first go through a clearing phase. The clearing house promptly offers them education opportunities to learn the German language, and mainstream schooling is envisaged towards the end of the clearing phase. The supervisors speak the mother tongue of the newcomers (for example Persian or Vietnamese) and it is therefore particularly straightforward for them to give them an understanding of the German culture. At the same time, they also teach the young people everyday practical skills such as shopping, cooking, using cleaning materials and equipment, hygiene standards and laundry care. After the clearing phase, the refugees who accept fully stationary residential care as (one) youth service measure then remain in territory that is already familiar to them: Although they have to move into a different building, they still remain on the site that they already know.

The young people are allocated to a living group based on personal wishes, capacity of the groups, gender, age, nationality, religion and language. In placing the young people, attempts are always made to meet cultural and religious needs by housing them together. All of the living groups contain young people of various nationalities who are looked after by a male and a female educationalist wherever possible, just like in a family. This results in continuity early on in the accompaniment and supervision of the children and young people. The supervision is carried out in accordance with the respective religions, cultural backgrounds and traditions of the refugees – for example in terms of religious dietary and prayer rules, but also by fostering music and dance from the respective countries of origin. Emphasis is placed on character building, strengthening social and linguistic skills and the autonomy of the young people (Killisch 2010a). Great importance is attached to school education as an effective integration tool. The young people attend a school in Finsterwalde, where they are taught in three study groups based on their level of performance, before they attend the corresponding regular classes. The children are taught in the appropriate primary school until the age of twelve.

The organisation of the children’s and young people’s leisure time also plays an important role in minimising their isolation. In this respect, various options are provided at the institution as well as activities in local clubs. By pooling services such as clearing, living groups and assisted accommodation as well as the expanded network with regional partners such as administrative bodies, authorities, language professionals, doctors and therapists, clubs and educational institutions, they have managed to create a need-oriented concept in Finsterwalde. Of course, there are difficulties too, such as the physical proximity in accommodating members of different religions or ethnic groups that are sometimes hostile to each other, or the lack of suitable connection concepts. Nevertheless, ALREJU is following a successful approach that could be exemplary for other German federal states.

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When it comes to refugees, this always also includes many children who are on the run. According to estimates by the UN refugee agency UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), half of all refugees worldwide are minors. That is more over 20 million young people. Mostly, they flee with their parents or family members; but sometimes they are separated whilst on the run, and therefore become unaccompanied minor refugees. Europe only ever sees a very small fraction of all these refugees – the vast majority have to survive under very difficult conditions in neighbouring countries, as can currently be observed in the case of Syria, for example. Many of them die on the run.

The demand to allow migration comes from various political camps

During the opening ceremony of the FICE world Congress of the »International Federation of Educatve Communities« in October 2013 in Bern, a young Syrian who works in Switzerland gave a lecture, that was as impressing as it was depressing, about the situation of children in Syria, which has been torn apart by civil war since 2011. He showed pictures of completely destroyed houses and reminded how many children had previously lived in such a residential complex alone. He showed pictures of children on the run, pictures of child soldiers, of men »affectionately« introducing their children to their weapons, and finally a beheaded man with around 30 children sitting around him, all of whom had watched his public beheading. This is just one facet of the terrible experiences that refugee children bring with them to Germany, if they even make it here at all, that is. In Germany, they and their relatives encounter a regime of residence and asylum law determined by an attitude that is not characterised by »welcoming structures«.

Germany and Europe are trying to seal themselves off greatly against refugees. However, there are certainly voices – from various political directions – asking whether it might not make more sense to liberate migration from regulations, having done so for the flow of money and goods. For example, cultural anthropologist Sabine Hess made such arguments in

Residence requirements, work bans, reception centres: Young refugees and their families have a difficult time in Germany. Norbert Struck from the »Paritätische Wohlfahrtsverband« welfare organisation calls for the recognition of refugees’ human rights and the creation of a more child- and family-friendly environment.

By Norbert Struck
an interview with the newspaper »Süddeutsche Zeitung« under the headline »We are wasting our potential« (»Wir verschwenden unser Potenzial«; Süddeutsche Zeitung, 18/10/2013, p. 12). But we are still a long way off.

Instead, the European and German »deterrent law« on refugees plants itself overwhelmingly in front of the human rights of adults and children: Residence requirements (a movement restriction law for asylum seekers; see lexicon, p. 33), vouchers and useless non-cash benefits, unconstitutionally low cash payments, the Dublin Agreement, airport procedures (see lexicon, p. 32), work bans and criminalisation are all keywords which define the pillars of this resistance.

§ 47 Para. 2 of the Asylum Procedure Act (AsylVfG) states: »If the parents of a minor, unmarried child are required to live in a reception centre, the child may also live in the reception centre, even if he/she has not filed an asylum application.« What it means in concrete terms however, to »be able to« live in such a reception centre is described on the homepage of the »Bavarian Refugee Council« (»Bayrischer Flüchtlingsrat«): 118 refugee camps – Bavaria has the most rigid and by far the best developed camp system in all (German) federal states. 7,636 people live for years in shared rooms in old guesthouses, disused army barracks and rotten container accommodation. 40 to 80 people share communal kitchens, toilets and bathrooms in forced squat shares, so corridors often contain long queues for the toilet in the mornings» (www.fluechtlingsrat-bayern.de/fluechtlingslager-abschaffen.html).

According to information from the human rights organisation »Pro Asyl«, approximately 40,000 people live in reception centres. Accurate information on the number of minors in these centres is difficult to ascertain, but it would not be completely false to assume about half of the refugees: That would then be approximately 20,000 minors.

Reception centres pose a danger to refugee children

For 1,254 of the 40,227 people taken into care in Germany in 2012, »housing problems« was specified as the reason. This means that in Germany, a youth office has to step in almost four times a day because the living conditions pose a danger to the well-being of a child or a young person. This is by no means a case for children to be separated from their parents across the board. However, it is a dedicated request for youth offices to take into consideration the living conditions endangering the children’s well-being in reception centres and to search intensively for possibilities to help and support. They should embrace their intervention mandate under § 1 of the German Social Code (SGB) VIII (see lexicon, p. 32) and ensure that positive living conditions are created for young people and their families as well as creating a child- and family-friendly environment and protecting young people from dangers, for the sake of their well-being. In this respect, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the SGB VIII not only offer the opportunity to act, but also an obligation to do so.

But the stresses experienced by families due to the restrictions of residence and asylum law and the often catastrophic living conditions in the accommodation only describe two serious and basic elements of stress and danger for refugee children in Germany. Beyond this, there are also other stresses that are less visible at first glance but are still relevant even if the family has »escaped« the reception centre.

Children learn much faster than adults. This is true for language acquisition, as well as for general orientation in their new environment. Many children and young people in refugee families therefore become irreplaceable translators of both language and culture for their parents. This requires not only a great deal of time, but also a permanent confrontation with all the problems their parents are exposed to. In some respects, the generation roles are therefore reversed.

The child and youth services system only recognises one structural risk situation, for which it provides services and for which clear legal rights are granted: situations of separation and divorce (§§ 171. SGB VIII). If demands are raised now for the strengthening of »preventative« provisions of child and youth services, it would be conceivable for similar rights to be granted in other structural risk situations: for example for the children of mentally ill parents, for children who are exposed to situations of domestic violence, and for children who have experienced sexual violence. A similar structural risk situation also exists in children and young people who are housed in the above mentioned reception centres for refugees. Their rights to aid and support in changing living situations and coping with their experiences could also be condensed into a distinct individual legal claim.

With this situation in mind, I want to argue the case for the next child and youth report of the German government be dedicated to the topic of »Children, young people and families in Germany’s immigration society«. For a start, one advantage of this would be that the topic of an immigration society would be officially acknowledged; and for another thing, the topic would not be restricted to migrants, but would also take into consideration the host society with their assumptions and engagement strategies. Overall, it is desirable for the topic of refugee children in Germany to finally be given a higher priority.

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Accompanied Refugee Children in Germany: Insights into the State of Research

By Susanne Johansson

The literature available on the living situation of refugee children in Germany is unsatisfactory. Research is required primarily in the fields of material and health care, early supervision and education as well as leisure time, with the goal of offering young refugees more appropriate support.

In the following, the term »accompanied refugee children« will refer to children and young people who have fled to Germany and now live there with at least one parent or an adult sibling who has been given guardianship of the children (Angenendt 2000). In a broader sense, this also includes children of refugees who were born in Germany. The umbrella term »refugees« in a broad sense – not based on (immigration) law (see lexicon, p. 32) – therefore includes people on the run or from a family background of being on the run. Refugees with both secured and precarious residence statuses as well as persons staying illegally are included.

There is hardly any detailed information on refugee children

Statistical data often do not give sufficient information on refugees: Details on the length of stay, material and medical care, housing, education, care and upbringing, school career and transitions in the education or work of accompanied refugee children are often incomplete – or there are no data available at all. For example, the situation report of the »Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration« does contain extensive information on the legal developments and the need for action with regard to asylum seekers, refugees and people without a legal residence status (2013). The household survey of the Federal Office for Statistics, the micro-census, has contained the category »with and without migration background« (see lexicon, p. 33) since the year 2005, replacing the previous distinction between Germans and »foreigners« (ibid. 2012). However, just like in the relevant (situation) reports in migration and social reporting, refugees are not shown separately in the statistics. The yearly partial census of the working area »assistance in education« (see lexicon, p. 31) as part of official statistics on child and youth welfare (KJH statistics) takes into account the category of »migration background«. The results published in a »Assistance in education monitor« by KJH statistics show that, in reference to the foreign origin of both parents or one parent, young people with a migration background are overrepresented in requiring assistance in education in comparison to their share of the population (Fendrich/Pothmann/Tabel 2012). However, they also do not differentiate according to the reason for migration.

Other statistics relating specifically to refugees lack a differentiated breakdown by age, gender, residency status (for example »recognised/tolerated«; see lexicon p. 34) or family situation (for example »unaccompanied/accompanied«) in some areas. As a result of the asylum applications, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) has information on the age and gender of refugees as well as decisions on family asylum and family refugee protection (BAMF 2013a; 2013b). The Federal Statistical Office publishes figures on recipients of social security benefits under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act (AsylblG; see lexicon, p. 32) as well as their type of accommodation which is broken down based on age (Statistisches Bundesamt 2013a). However, by focusing the sta-
statistics on asylum seekers or on recipients of benefits under the AsylbLG, not all groups of refugees are covered (for example recognised refugees). Some figures are only based on estimates. The reasons for this are inconsistent or fragmented censuses or difficulties in gaining access to refugees, for example, illegal refugee children (Pfingsten-Widmer 2007; Alt 1999).

Even the specialist literature on young people only contains insufficient information on the living conditions of young refugees. Overarching studies on the living situations of children and families as well as studies of children with migration backgrounds, often lack information on refugee children, or else they are discussed in digressions or special chapters. A reason for this is also the lacking or insufficient statistical data or small statistical sample sizes (Otremba 2013).

In the studies with an explicit focus on refugee children, human-rights and legal-based analyses are dominant (for example Cremer 2010; Heinhold 2010; Hillemann 2011; Bundesfachverband Unbegleitete Minderjährige Flüchtlinge 2013). A major part of the studies and presentations place emphasis on the topics of »psychological stress, trauma and overcoming trauma« (for example Wirtgen/Iskenius/Eisenberg 2010; Möller 2009).

Professional publications on unaccompanied minor refugees have seen an increase in recent years, which is partly due to the fact that the data available within the scope of official statistics on child and youth welfare has improved significantly (Pothmann 2011). However, in addition to a presentation of legal frameworks, they are frequently geared towards specifics and standards in social work with unaccompanied minor refugees as well as towards institutional activity (for example Dieckhoff 2010; Urbach 2008; Stauf 2012; Separated Children in Europe/Bundesfachverband Unbegleitete Minderjährige Flüchtlinge 2012). More extensive social studies on the living conditions, upbringing and development processes, which also take into account the perception of the affected children and young people, are still lacking. This applies especially to the heterogeneous group of accompanied refugee children (with the exceptions of Balluseck 2003 and Lennartz 2011). Usually only individual aspects or individual cases are addressed, but an overview or systematic investigations are lacking.

The reasons for fleeing are diverse and complex

According to the estimates of the refugee agency of the United Nations, UNHCR, there were 45.8 million people on the run worldwide at the end of 2012. 46 per cent of all refugees were children and young people under 18 years of age. Refugee children and women usually live as internally displaced persons in refugee camps in their country of origin or a neighbouring country in their home continent. 80 per cent of all refugees worldwide live in so-called developing countries: The country with the highest intake of refugees in 2012 was Pakistan (UNHCR 2013b). Overall, only a few of the world’s refugees reach (Western) Europe or North America.

The reasons for fleeing («push and pull factors») are extremely complex in most cases: (Parts of) families flee to guarantee the survival of their family or children, they flee from natural disasters, or in order to escape the political persecution of both or one of their parents. They flee from military conflicts and/or the threat of imprisonment, to seek medical treatment and/or to receive education if this cannot be guaranteed in their homeland – just like, for example, for girls and young women at the time of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Children and young people flee or migrate alone if the local resources are only enough for one »selected« (mostly male) member of the family to escape, if the family has been broken up or if one or both of the parents as well as other central caregivers have died in (civil) war scenarios or on the run (Adam 2003; UNHCR 2013a).

There are rough categorisations of the living situations of children and young people in categorised countries of origin, such as »countries with (civil) war«, »countries with political, ethnic, racial and/or religious persecution« or »countries without war or persecution that are affected by political upheaval and severe economic conditions«. In addition, there are also brief descriptions of specific reasons of escape by children and young people as well as child and youth-related reasons (for example, military service/forced recruitment, the threat of genital mutilation, sexual abuse or forced prostitution of minors, a lack of child-oriented care, the threat of forced marriage, child labour and forced labour/slavery; Jockenhövel-Schielcke 1992; Jordan 2000; Peter 2003; Brüggemeier 2011). However, there is a lack of up-to-date studies and gender-specific differentiations as well as more detailed, country-specific social science studies on the living situations and reasons for escape by children and young people. These could also provide important insights into child and youth services in Germany and could be used for treatment concepts, for example (Möller 2009). The psychologist Birgit Möller points out that a knowledge of health and disease concepts in the country of origin could be of great importance for treatment in the host country.

There are some exceptions in the German literature, some of which are, however, no longer up-to-date: these are, for example, studies on the psychological consequences of ethnic persecution and war-like conditions on children in Kurdistan (Kizilhan 2000), on the impact of the Pinochet dictatorship on children in Chile (Bräutigam 2000), on Bosnian refugee children (Lennartz 2011), on the living conditions of Syrian refugee children in exile in Jordan and Lebanon (UNHCR 2013a) or on refugees from various selected countries of origin (Bättner 2004). While on the run, often through organised »smuggling gangs« and human traffickers (Rieger 2010), children and young people as well as women are especially at risk of violent and sexual assaults. Furthermore, threats by human traffickers
might have a different impact on children than they have on adults (Dalen/Hamm 2003; Möller 2009).

An exceptionally large number of refugee children are currently going through the asylum procedure in Germany.

Children and young people who arrive in Germany usually travel with their family group or with a parent. Only a relatively small percentage of the children and young people who arrive in Germany travel alone. If refugee children have arrived with one or both parents and are seeking asylum, the asylum procedure checks whether the prerequisites for family asylum (if it is acknowledged that one parent is entitled to asylum under Art. 16a of the German constitution), for family refugee protection (in accordance with § 60 Para. 1 of the German law on residence) or for subsidiary protection are met.

The political scientist Antonia Scholz reports that currently there is an exceptionally high number of accompanied refugee children in asylum procedures: In 2012, there were 22,300 children and young people under 18 years of age and therefore 64 per cent more than in the previous year (Scholz 2013). The main countries of origin of these parents and their children are, firstly, the crisis regions of Iraq and Afghanistan as well as Syria, and secondly, Serbia, Macedonia, Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina with refugees from the group of Roma (ibid.). In 2013, according to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, family asylum was granted in 138 cases and family refugee protection in 2,370 cases up to September (BAMF 2013b). That is a total of 4.5 per cent of all positive and family-related decisions on initial and subsequent applications during this period.

There are chances of a more long-term right of residence outside of the asylum procedure or after the asylum procedure has ended, which are offered by resettlement programmes or right-of-residence regulations (resettlement refers to a permanent resettlement of refugees in a third country outside of the asylum regulations that is prepared to take them in). Since July 2011 there has been an option of »Granting residence to well integrated young people and adolescents« under § 25a of the German law on residence. Currently only smaller groups of refugees can take advantage of these regulations due to the limited resettlement intake places and the prerequisites that are associated with specific granting of residence (Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Integration 2013). The establishment of a German resettlement programme was decided by the Conference of Ministers of the Interior (of the German states; IMK) at the end of 2011, under which 300 refugees in particular need of protection could be taken in every year over the next three years (ibid.).

According to the estimates of the Federal Professional Association for »unaccompanied minor refugees«, there are currently around 100,000 asylum-seeking, recognised or tolerated minor refugees currently living in Germany. Between 8,000 and 9,000 of these children and young people are unaccompanied (2013).

There are very few systematic studies on the living conditions of children in refugee shelters.

Most information on housing and living conditions is available on admission and community accommodation in relation to children with their asylum-seeking families (for example, the current synopsys by Möller 2013). Evaluations by the Federal Statistical Office show that on 31/12/2010 a total of 3,553 children and young people up to the age of 18 were living in a reception centre (the largest group of which were between 0 and 11 years old, with 2,287 children), 9,372 in community accommodation and 13,670 children and young people up to the age 18 locally in flats (Statistisches Bundesamt 2013a). Current systematic and cross-state studies and studies involving the perspectives of children and young people in relation to the living conditions of children in reception centres and community accommodation and on their duration of stay are largely lacking. However, there are sufficient indications of the adverse conditions – especially for families and children – in existing studies, documentation, statistics and interviews with experts (for example Butterwegge 2010; Kothen 2010; Täubig. 2009; Boos-Nünning 2000).

Community accommodation is usually in poor structural condition (some of the refugees live in shacks or containers), it is often situated in secluded locations, has extremely restricted facilities and has shared toilets and showers in the corridor. This »storage feel« also includes a lack of leisure and retreat opportunities as well as males and females travelling alone living together with families in a confined space.

Practitioners especially criticise the poor structural condition and the often inadequate hygiene conditions in community accommodation in relation to the situation of infants and toddlers. They can lead to disease susceptibility and early chronic diseases in children. In many cases, confined spaces mean that minors have to experience situations that are not suitable for children and young people, for example, conflicts, violent assaults in the family or the intimate private life of parents, whether travelling together or alone.

The same applies to the situations in the corridors and in the accommodation overall, where, due to the frequent social problems such as unemployment, marginalisation and segregation or insecure living and residency perspectives, there are frequently alcohol-fuelled conflicts as well as sexual assaults. Children and young people are not very well protected or shielded against this. Some children are afraid to move about at night in the shared accommodation (Kothen 2010). In many cases, noise and disturbances as well as police raids and deportations prevent them from sleeping, playing and doing their homework in a peaceful environment in which they feel safe. Extracurricular contact with peers who are not
housed in the accommodation is also often difficult due to the decentralised location and the feelings of shame. There is often no adequate educational care for children and young people in reception centres and community accommodation (Peter 2003). In terms of the situation of children and young people from asylum-seeking families, or other refugee groups in flats, there are hardly any studies available (Butterwegge 2010).

The high risk of poverty amongst refugees especially asylum seekers and other recipients of benefits under the previous regulations of the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act (AsylbLG) is heavily documented. There is often the risk of multiple deprivation. The causes of this are central to the regulations concerning asylum and foreigners: for example, due to the reduced social benefits under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act compared to the German Social Security Code XII, due to work bans, inferior access to the labour market, or due to the residence requirement (see lexicon, p. 33; Butterwegge 2010; Voigt 2010).

An overview from the German Federal Statistical Office shows that at the end of 2010, a total of 26,595 children and young people under 18 years of age were granted standard benefits under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act, partly in the form of non-cash benefits and vouchers (2013a). In July 2012, the German Federal Constitutional Court declared that the reduced benefits under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act, which had furthermore not been raised since 1993, were «clearly inadequate» to guarantee a humane minimum existence and were «unconstitutional» (Bundesverfassungsgericht 2012). Higher benefit rates have applied since then. Social scientists have not yet reviewed which changes and improvements this decision has made in relation to the living situations of children and young people and their families.

The possible effects of poverty and deprivation on the development opportunities of children and young people, as well as on inter-family relationships, are well documented. In this respect, scientists have developed multidimensional models in relation to influence factors such as protection and risk factors, for example (Holz/Skoluda 2003; Walper 1999).

Nevertheless, very often there is a lack of necessary differentiation in terms of refugee children or different groups of refugee children whose living situations may be extremely different depending on their residency status. There are also hardly any studies which record the perspectives of refugee children. The few available studies reveal evidence of strong feelings of shame amongst refugee children and young people living in poverty, negative effects on self-confidence, feelings of being excluded and envy of their peers who are better off, as well as pressures within the family due to material desires that cannot be fulfilled (von Balluseck 2003a/2003b). In many cases, the (forced) unemployment of the parents or of the father leads to changes of roles or to massive changes in the relations between the family members (ibid.). As one would expect, there is very little research on the living situations of illegal children and young people (Butterwegge 2010).

The more precarious the residency, the less refugees make use of medical checkups

The health situation of refugee children is largely dismissed in social, health and migration reporting (Butterwegge 2010). In research, however, there are indications that refugees and refugee children frequently suffer from the effects of limited or lacking health education and healthcare in their countries of origin (Bautz 2009) and have a poor state of vaccination (Butterwegge 2010). In addition, refugee children are exposed to additional risks and burdens due to the living conditions in Germany (for example due to housing in community accommodation and potentially due to the limited medical care; Bautz 2009). Scientists see a correlation between the residency status and the use of childhood medical checkups: the more precarious the residency, the less these checkups are used (Robert Koch-Institut 2008; Butterwegge 2010). Reasons for this are, fear, a lack of knowledge, communication difficulties or a lack of intercultural awareness of health authorities or attending doctors (Butterwegge 2010).

Areas that are comparatively well documented and qualitatively researched are psychological strains and illnesses amongst refugee children as well as the effects of these strains in children, siblings and/or one or both parents on the whole family (Lennertz 2011; Möller 2009; Wirtgen 2010; von Balluseck 2003a, 2003b; Bräutigam 2000). As a theoretical framework, most of the researchers select the concept of trauma. They refer very frequently to the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and the model developed by psychoanalyst Hans Keilson (trauma as a sequential psychosocial process), which was based on politically persecuted people and refugees and has been developed further (Becker/Weyermann 2006; Lennertz 2011; for criticism of the concept of PTSD, see Lennertz 2010).

The high level of heterogeneity of the strains initially became clear through the studies. Children and young people can suffer due to the fact that they have directly experienced psychologically difficult or traumatising situations (such as war, persecution, the death of one or both of their parents, siblings, relatives or peers, the separation of the family) in their country of origin (UNHCHR 2013a). They can also be indirectly affected when parents or other relatives are traumatised in the country of origin. They are also often directly or indirectly exposed to severe

THE GERMAN FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL COURT REFERRED TO THE PREVIOUS STATE CARE OF REFUGEES UNDER THE ASYLUM SEEKERS BENEFITS ACT AS »UNCONSTITUTIONAL«

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Due to their small numbers refugee children are not shown separately in school statistics such as the Pisa and Iglu studies, meaning there is less information about their participation in education, their school qualifications, success at school and problems at school (Butterwegge 2010). One area that is particularly incomplete is the state of research in social science on educational and professional transitions and the education or study careers of various groups of refugee children and young people as well as the educational situation of illegal refugee children (Butterwegge 2010). In principle, it is possible to study, even with a precarious residency status (such astoleration or permission to remain), however this may be associated with numerous obstacles (Flüchtlingsrat Berlin 2013).

Likewise, the area of leisure activities and friendships of the young accompanied refugees has thus far been heavily neglected in social sciences. Systematic studies on the leisure activities and friendships of young refugees which also incorporate the views and experiences of children and young people and the influences of provisions relating to asylum and immigration law (such as the residence requirement) are thus far largely lacking.

For the (heterogeneous) group of accompanied refugees in Germany, there is therefore a lack of studies which take a sufficiently differentiated look at very different groups of people and living situations depending on the «migration channel» and residency status. Likewise, there are too few studies which take into consideration the different family configurations (for example two parents, single parent, an older sibling with guardianship, one parent in a new partnership) and the heterogeneous impact of war and crises or direct or indirect refugee experiences. Stress configurations as well as protection and risk factors in the various development phases of children and young people have also been studied too little thus far. Furthermore, studies need to be carried out which incorporate the perception and perspectives of affected children and young people.

There is a specific requirement for information in terms of the health situation, the field of early childhood education, supervision and upbringing, educational and professional training, transitions and leisure opportunities or the leisure activities of various groups of refugee children. Furthermore, there is a specific, if perhaps difficult-to-implement, need for research and information in terms of the especially vulnerable group of illegal children and young people as well as their families.

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Youth Services and the Child Protection System for Minor Refugees in Germany

Accompanied and unaccompanied refugee children in Germany are the focus of this edition of DJI Impulse. The first part of the following article briefly outlines some of the institutional approaches to their situation and their problems in Germany. The second part (lexicon) explains some of the most important key terms regarding this topic.

By Heinz Kindler and Barbara Rink

Almost half of the world’s transnational refugee population are minors (White 2013). Only a very small minority of them reach Europe, due to the international policies of containment aimed primarily at containing refugees in their homeland or in neighbouring countries (UNHCR 2013). Dealings with refugee children who arrive either accompanied by family members or unaccompanied are governed there by a whole series of international or European treaties. For this reason, the situation in Germany and in other European countries has some parallels and common points of reference.

In particular, this includes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which emphasises the right to non-discrimination in Article 2, for example. In the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, Article 24 stipulates...
that in all actions relating to children, the child’s best interests must be a primary consideration. Equally important is the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its supplementary protocols, which indicate the goal of durable solutions for refugees – as well as for minor refugees. Much more concrete is the Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 («EU Reception Conditions Directive»): Article 24 Paragraph 2 prescribes an order of priority for how unaccompanied minor refugees should be placed (with family members, with a foster family, in accommodation centres with special provisions for minors, in other accommodation suitable for minors). Equally clear is the Directive 2011/95/EU of 13 December 2011 («EU Qualification Directive»), which governs legal representation (Article 31) as well as access to education and health care (Articles 27 and 31). These articles explicitly stipulate that minor refugees, to whom international protection has been awarded, must have the same access to treatments as nationals in the event of abuse or neglect. A range of national and international comparative reports have taken a critical look at the situation of minor refugees in Germany against this backdrop (for example Bundesfachverband Unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge 2013; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2010).

Support structures in Germany and key concepts for dealing with refugees

Accompanied and unaccompanied refugee children in Germany are the focus of this edition of DJI Impulse. For a better understanding of institutional approaches to their situation and their problems, it is useful to briefly go into some of the structures and key terms in Germany.

In Germany, all applications for asylum, including those by minors, are initially handled by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (FOMR). Up until their 16th birthday, children are included in the asylum proceedings of the parents wherever possible. The authority first examines whether Germany or another EU country is responsible for the asylum procedure (Dublin procedure). If the latter is the case, they may be refused residence or entry. Against this backdrop, over 1,600 minors were taken from Germany to other EU countries in 2013, for example. Ultimately, refugee children and/or their parents receive asylum in the event of recognised state persecution, whilst in the event of other types of persecution, they can be recognised as refugees in accordance with the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or receive subsidiary protection. In a relatively high number of cases, none of the requirements for any of these standards are considered to be met, but a tolerated stay (see lexicon, p. 34) is imposed, given that a deportation is seen to be inadmissible. In addition, pursuant to Article 25 of the German Residence Act, a temporary residence permit may be granted, for example for humanitarian reasons. The granting of asylum, refugee protection or subsidiary protection usually also extends to accompanying children or siblings. The same categories of protection and rights of residence exist for unaccompanied minor refugees. However, special features may consist in the specific role of child-related grounds in the proceedings, for instance an impending recruitment as a child soldier in the granting of subsidiary protection, or the lack of custodians or reception centres in the country of origin in the granting of tolerated stay.

An application for asylum is not lodged for all unaccompanied minor refugees. In some cases it is more beneficial (or sufficient) to apply for a residence permit to the community-based immigration authorities – for example if the persecution of the refugee children cannot be proven but there are clear obstacles to deportation (for example, if there is no passport). Accompanied or unaccompanied minor refugees also come into contact with the immigration authorities on other occasions: for example, during registration, in the event of intended vocational training which the immigration authorities must agree to or when applying for the right of residence under Section 25a of the German Residence Act. According to this clause, under certain circumstances, young refugees may receive a separate right of residence if they have already been in Germany for six years, attended school during this time or completed training and there is a positive prospect of integration.

The youth welfare and youth service offices (youth offices; see lexicon, p. 34) also play an important role for accompanied and unaccompanied minor refugees. Just like the immigration authorities, the youth offices in Germany are organised communally. However, how they act and what they can offer is regulated by a federal law (the German Social Security Code VIII; see lexicon, p. 32). For refugee children, the youth offices are primarily important at four points: Unaccompanied minor refugees are first taken into short-term custody (see lexicon, p. 34) by the youth offices; in other words, the youth office first assumes responsibility for organising support and accommodation, protection and legal representation for the young person. In some cases, the youth office may obtain an expert opinion on the age of the refugee, whereby, in cases of doubt, the German National Association of Child and Youth Offices (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Landesjugendämter, 2014) recommends proceeding on the assumption that the age of majority has not yet been reached. During the short-term custody, a clearing process usually takes place to better assess the support needs in terms of health and education, to determine initial perspectives concerning contact to family members and the residence, and to identify appropriate follow-up measures. If parents or other custodians cannot be contacted, a legal guardian is determined as part of a family court case during the short-term custody, who, by extension, assumes the legal representation and responsibility. In
many cases the legal guardians determined by the family court work in a special operational unit at the youth offices. They are independent in their activities and committed only to the best interests of the child. In addition, the youth office has the task of organizing parenting support and providing foster families or residential care facilities in which children (such as unaccompanied minor refugees) can grow up outside of their family of origin. Such facilities are not usually operated by the youth office itself, but are assigned and monitored from there. Refugee families are entitled to support in education, if no education appropriate for the best interests of the child can be guaranteed, and at least a tolerated stay is in place (Section 6 of the German Social Security Code VIII). Such support may include, for example, advice, outreach family support or special assistance measures in the afternoon after school. However, such services do not yet reach many entitled refugee families in practice (Berthold 2014). After all, the youth offices in Germany are also the authorities responsible for child protection. Reports of abuse, neglect or intra-familial sexual abuse are taken and reviewed by the youth office; likewise, the authority also instigates the protective measures. The principle here is that parents and children must be heard, and child protection measures should be voluntary and not drastic to the greatest extent possible. An intervention by the police is common in Germany only in the event of sexual abuse.

In Germany, school attendance is compulsory and is regulated by the federal states. Generally, compulsory education begins at the age of six and lasts at least until the age of 16. Most schools are not all-day schools, although afternoon care is increasingly being offered. For refugee children aged 6 to 16, compulsory education begins once they have resided in Germany for three months. If the children have not had the opportunity to learn German before the onset of compulsory education, attending school represents a major challenge for the children – and not all schools are prepared for such situations. It can be very difficult to meet the education wishes of refugee children older than 16, since it involves finding an appropriate offer.

**Lexicon**

**Airport proceedings:**
Under certain conditions, the asylum procedure in Germany begins immediately in the transit area at the airport where an asylum seeker arrives: This happens when the asylum seeker comes from a »safe country of origin« or has no identity papers and the airport has refugee accommodation available. A »safe country of origin« is a country where political persecution or inhuman treatment is not to be expected. Ghana and Senegal are currently considered to be safe countries of origin. In Germany, it may be decided by law which countries of origin are safe. Asylum seekers from such states must credibly establish that they are being politically persecuted contrary to this assumption. The refugees must remain at the airport until the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (FOMR) has decided on their asylum application. This must be done within two days – if it takes longer, refugees are initially housed in an initial reception centre. If the FOMR rejects the asylum application within two days, asylum-seekers may file an urgent application for provisional legal protection within five days of their arrival (which means that their rights are safeguarded until the end of the process) and may appeal against the rejection. The airport proceedings must be completed within 19 days. If the asylum application is rejected, the refugee must leave. If refugees do not have the necessary identity papers, a custodial judge will impose accommodation in closed refugee accommodation so that the federal police can obtain the appropriate papers.

**Assistance in education:**
A key task of child and youth services is to support parents in bringing up their children. To do this, the youth offices must organise a range of offers all over Germany, which range from advisory services to outpatient assistance to various forms of out-of-home care. Parents have a right to assistance in education, which they can claim in court if necessary, if they alone cannot ensure the good development and education of their child. For this to be the case, there does not need to be a threat to the child’s welfare, but rather the threshold is intentionally kept lower. However, there are also cases in which parents are required by the family court to make use of assistance in education.
Asylum Seekers Benefits Act (AsylbLG):
This law governs the amount and the form of cash benefits or payments in kind by the state for asylum seekers or tolerated foreigners (such as refugees for example) and their families. Asylum seekers are given the basic necessities of life (housing, food, clothing, medicine, hygiene products) and are also looked after in exceptional situations such as disease or pregnancy. The support often takes the form of payments in kind or vouchers or cash. Asylum-seekers often have no other source of income, as they are not permitted to work. The law is currently being revised: In 2012, the German Federal Constitutional Court declared it to be unconstitutional, since the low level of benefits could not guarantee a humane minimum standard of living. Until a new provision is made, the benefit rates have been provisionally raised.

Birthright:
Children of foreign parents born in Germany may, under certain conditions, obtain German citizenship upon birth in Germany: One of the child’s parents must have resided in Germany for eight years at the time of birth and must have a permanent residence permit (Section 4 of the Law on Citizenship; StAG). Until now, the persons concerned then had to decide between their 18th and 23rd birthday, whether they wanted to keep the German nationality or their parents’ nationality. This obligation to decide will be omitted in future for persons who have resided in Germany for at least eight years or attended a school for six years before their 21st birthday. They have dual citizenship.

Child endangerment:
In Germany, the term child endangerment describes the threshold for involuntary state intervention into parental rights due to child protection concerns. Child endangerment refers to a situation that will almost certainly lead to considerable harm to a child. In such a situation, if the parents are unwilling or unable to accept help voluntarily, a state protection intervention is justifiable, but is bound to the principle of proportionality. The youth office checks whether there is a situation of child endangerment, and may also initiate emergency measures (short-term custody). However, in cases of dispute, the family court must decide.

Gastarbeiter (guest worker):
Gastarbeiter refers to migrant workers who were recruited to work in Germany during the period between 1955 and 1973. They were only »temporary guests«, because German policy only intended the workers to stay in Germany for a few years and then return to their home country. They were then to be replaced by other migrants. This »rotation principle« was not enforceable, in part because the economy could not do without its now skilled workers. For this reason, many families followed the guest workers to move to Germany in the 1960s, and then remained permanently.

German Social Security Code VIII:
This code governs the tasks and services of the youth offices and the entirety of child and youth services, including child protection.

Hartz IV:
Hartz IV is the German colloquial term for unemployment benefit II. It differs from unemployment benefit I, which is available to persons who have been liable to pay unemployment insurance for at least 12 months in employment or for other reasons, such as maternity leave, for example. Receipt of unemployment benefit I is limited to twelve months or 24 months for older persons. Hartz IV, on the other hand, is an unlimited basic security benefit for job seekers to ensure that they do not fall below a certain minimum standard of living during their unemployment. It is extremely low, since it aims to ensure that unemployed people can provide for themselves again as soon as possible and that they can be reintegrated into the labour market. Job seekers receive Hartz IV if they cannot make a living on their income, their assets or other financial aid such as unemployment benefit for example.

Immigration Act:
The Immigration Act entered into force on 1 January 2005. It includes the Residence Act (AufenthG) and the EU Law on Freedom of Movement. It legally governs immigration and lays down measures for integration.
In-patient child and youth services:
This is a form of out-of-home care, in which several children and young people are looked after in groups outside of their family of origin. It mainly involves measures which the parents have agreed to. Sometimes children are placed here due to child endangerment (see lexicon, p. 32) or because the parents cannot be reached, as is often the case with unaccompanied minor refugees.

Migration background:
For several years, the term »person with migration background« has been used by the (professional) public. This term was first introduced as a definition in the national statistics (micro-census) in 2005. Since then, population data have been collected and evaluated not only based on citizenship status – there is also a distinction based on personal migration experience, and migrants are assigned to first, second or third generation independently of their own citizenship. If people immigrated as foreigners themselves, they are referred to as first-generation migrants. If at least one parent immigrated with foreign citizenship, but the child was born in Germany, the child is of the second generation. If there was at least one foreign grandparent who immigrated to Germany, the grandchild is assigned to the third generation. In this way, the population of Germany can be differentiated more precisely. In 2005, it became apparent for the first time that the proportion of people with a migration background in Germany was almost twice as high as the proportion of people with foreign citizenship. Every fifth inhabitant of Germany has a migration background.

Outpatient assistance in education:
This refers to home visit programmes and intensive in-home family preservation programmes, which aim to improve care and education in the family, as well as to avoid out-of-home care. It usually involves services which are voluntarily requested by parents. However, in some cases it also involves obligations by the family court to avert child endangerment (see lexicon, p. 32).

§ 8b Social Security Code VIII:
In Germany, all persons whose professions involve children (for example, practitioners in the immigration authorities) have the right to consult with an experienced practitioner from child and youth services if they suspect abuse, neglect or sexual abuse of a child. All facilities in which children are regularly present – for example, this includes initial reception centres – have the right to receive advice on how they can improve and guarantee the protection of children in the facility.

Residence requirement:
The so-called residence requirement exists in all German federal states. It states that refugees going through the asylum procedure are restricted in their freedom of movement: They may not leave a specific area (for example, the federal state or the administrative region), where the authority responsible for them is located, without a special permit – not even to visit family members in other parts of Germany. There are only exceptions if special reasons are at hand, for example »making appointments with authorised representatives, with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees« or with authorities and courts (Section 57 of the Residence Act). The residence requirement is unique in the EU and has been criticised by refugee organisations for a long time. Since 2010, it has been eased in most federal states so that, at least in their own state, refugees can move freely.
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DJI participates in research network »Play for Children with Disabilities« (LUDI)

The scientists Alexandra Langmeyer and Ursula Winklhofer from the German Youth Institute (DJI) are members of the Management Committee of the research network »Play for Children with Disabilities« (LUDI). The multi-disciplinary network is designed to run for four years (2014–2018) and consists of researchers and practitioners from 21 countries in the fields of psychopedagogical sciences, health and rehabilitation sciences, humanities, assistive technologies and robotics. It is incorporated in the »European Cooperation in Science and Technology« (COST), which is an integovernmental framework for European cooperation in science and technology, allowing the coordination of nationally-funded research on a European level. Its goal is to reduce the fragmentation in European research investments and to open the European Research Area to cooperation worldwide. LUDI aims to create an autonomous field of research and intervention on play for children with disabilities. The target is to spread awareness of the importance of giving children with disabilities the opportunity to play, while ensuring equity in their exercise of the right to play and putting play at the centre of the multidisciplinary research and intervention regarding children with disabilities. LUDI has three main objectives: firstly collecting and systematising all existing competence and skills: educational research, clinical initiatives, know-how from resource centers and users’ associations; secondly developing new knowledge related to settings, tools and methodologies associated with the play of children with disabilities; and thirdly disseminating the best practices emerging from the joint effort of researchers, practitioners and users.

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INTRODUCTION

Sandra Hubert

The Impact of Religiosity on Fertility

A Comparative Analysis of France, Hungary, Norway, and Germany

Wiesbaden: Springer VS 2014

283 pages | 49.99 EUR (Softcover) and 39.99 EUR (eBook) | ISBN 978-3658070076

The work investigates the impact of religiosity of women and men on their fertility in an international comparison considering a long-term period. Sandra Hubert aims to uncover all mechanisms through which religiosity and religious institutions can affect fertility. Hence, both the micro- and the macro-level of each country are explicitly integrated, and are dealt with theoretically as well as empirically. The selection of different countries rests upon the expectation that religiosity influences fertility decisions independently of the institutional context, social norms, state-church-relations, and the national degree of religious vitality. These factors are intensively compared with each other on a country level. On a micro-level the impact of religiosity on fertility is tested by means of regressions and based on the Generations and Gender Survey. Results depend on gender, country, the diverse religious affiliations, and more.

READING SUGGESTION

Sandra Hubert

The Impact of Religiosity on Fertility

A Comparative Analysis of France, Hungary, Norway, and Germany

Wiesbaden: Springer VS 2014

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Today, families are much more diverse than ten or twenty years ago. Family life has also changed, and is associated with growing challenges: the living situations of families and their financial and cultural resources are drifting further and further apart. Too many children and families are living in poverty. Nowadays, ever more mothers are employed, but, like fathers, are increasingly coming under pressure due to the blurred boundaries of working conditions. Children are growing up more often in families with a migration background. Infrastructures and institutions often do not suit the needs of families. In eight trends, the authors prove these changes in everyday family life using relevant data and findings and outline the consequences for children as they grow up. Their analysis reveals that family policy has not kept up with many developments. It needs to be re conceived – from the perspective of the children.

Selections from the DJI’s international activities • 2014

January 2014

> Nicole Klinkhammer, senior researcher at the International Center Early Childhood Education and Care (ICEC), located in the Children and Childcare department of the German Youth Institute (DJI), attends the meeting of the European Commission Thematic Working Group on «Early Childhood Education and Care». On the agenda is the development of a European Quality Framework for early childhood education and care.

> Valerie Heintz-Martin, head of the specialist division »Living Situations and Family Life« in the Families and Family Policies department of the DJI, gives a joint lecture with Michaela Kreynfeld (Max Planck Institute For Demographic Research) as part of the »FamiliesAndSocieties« Consortium Meeting at the University of Tallinn in Estonia on the subject of »Fertility after Separation: Second Birth in Higher Order Unions in Eastern and Western Germany«. The head of the Fam-
Selections from the DJI’s International Activities • 2014

Families and Family Policies department, Karin Jurczyk, the head of the specialist division »Living Situations and Family Life«, Valerie Heintz-Martin, and Julia Selmaier, employee in the same specialist division, give a lecture at that same event on »New gender roles and their implications for family life in Germany: Breadwinning Mothers«.

As part of the »Symposium on Family Policies from four EU Member States – Family Policies Matter! National Policies against Poverty and Social Exclusion of Families« in Brussels (Belgium), Karin Jurczyk, gives a lecture entitled »Objectives and Effects of Family Policies in Germany«.

On 29 January 2014 the National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NZFH), based in the DJI, holds an international expert workshop on »Frontiers of Risk Epidemiology in Early Childhood«. The research director at the DJI, Sabine Walper, gives a lecture on the subject of »Research on Early Risk Factors at the German Youth Institute: Past – Present – Future«. The head of the NZFH, Alexandra Sann, gives a lecture on the topic of »Prevention and Intervention in Early Childhood in Germany. Political Programmes and their Objectives, Former Research Activities«. Katrin Lang, senior researcher at the NZFH, gives a lecture on the topic of »KiD 0-3: The National Prevalence of Psychosocial Burden in Families with Infants and Toddlers«. Andreas Eickhorst and Christian Brand, who are also employees of the NZFH, speak about »KiD 0-3: The National Prevalence of Psychosocial Burden in Families with Infants and Toddlers. A Study Outline«. The workshop is chaired by Andrea Schreier (NZFH) and Andreas Eickhorst.

Bernhard Kalicki, head of the Children and Childcare department at the DJI, gives a lecture on the subject of »Child Education – Between Overload and Overprotection« as part of the ZOOM Lectures – Childhood Today series of events organised by the Children’s Museum Vienna in cooperation with the daily newspaper Der Standard.

February 2014

On 10 February 2014 a delegation from the Russian region »Khanty-Mansysk Autonomous Okrug« visits the International Center Early Childhood Education and Care (ICEC) in cooperation with the World Bank. The visitors inform themselves on the early childhood education system in Germany. Birgit Riedel, head of the specialist division »Learning Environments and Social Welfare Policies for Children« in the Families and Family Policies department of the DJI, where the ICEC is based, and the ICEC team (Antonia Scholz, Carolyn Seybel and Sophie Müller) welcome the guests at the DJI.

March 2014

The research director of the DJI, Sabine Walper, gives a lecture in the European Parliament in Brussels, as part of the »Working Group on the Quality of Childhood at the European Parliament« on »Parents’ Partnership Stability and Quality as a Context for Child Development. What are the Challenges, and what Policies and Programmes are in Place? Some Insights from Germany«.

From 9–12 March 2014, the Congress of the German Educational Research Association (GERA), »Traditions and Futures. 50 Years of GERA«, takes place in Berlin. As part of the English-speaking programme, the Director of the Families and Family Policies department, Karin Jurczyk, attends the Symposium »Families in Transitions – a Challenge for Research in Education and Educational Practice« and comments on the subject of »Doing Family as Research Perspective on Families in Transitions.« Mike Seckinger, head of the specialist division »Structures of Child And Youth Services« in the Youth and Youth Services department of the DJI, gives a lecture as part of the research forum »Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Daily Childcare Services: Reviewing the Situation in European Countries« on the subject of »Children with Disabilities in Daily Child Care Services. Results of a German Survey«.

Karin Jurczyk participates in the podium discussion on the topic of »Balancing Family and Career Amidst Demographic Change: Culture Public Policy Gender Roles and Economics. An International Comparison«, which takes place in the Economics Section of the United States Embassy in Berlin.

From 20–21 March 2014, the Franco-German symposium »Growing up in Germany and in France – Challenges and Coping strategies« takes place in Berlin. It is jointly organised and carried out by the DJI, the Franco-German Youth Office (FGYO) and the French National Institute for Youth and Community Education (INJEP). Sabine Walper, research director at the DJI, gives one of the opening speeches. Nora Gaupp, head of the specialist division »Living Situations and Lifestyles of Youth«, introduces the topic and gives a lecture on »Growing up – Conditions for Young People Growing up in Germany« at the symposium. Tilly Lex, senior researcher for the DJI research group Youth Transitions, first provides an introduction to the differences between the French and German education systems and the transition areas at the symposium and then talks about the topic of »From School into Training and Work: Transitional Paths and Support Measures for the Occupational Integration of Young People in Germany«. The international relations manager at the DJI, Barbara Rink, gives a lecture entitled »Living and Growing up in Marginalised Environments – Coping Strategies of Young Males. A Franco-German Comparison«.

Barbara Rink attends the 2nd meeting of the Child and Youth Welfare Association (AGJ) Technical Committee II – Child and Youth (Welfare) Policies in Europe in Berlin.

Regine Derr, senior researcher at the Information Centre Child Abuse and Neglect (IZK), based at the DJI, attends the Meeting of the Expert Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk (EGCC) in Helsinki (Finland), which is organised by the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in Finland. She gives a keynote speech on »Current Issues Pertaining to Children at Risk in Germany«.

April 2014

The DJI research director Sabine Walper chairs the workshop »Getting on the Right Track Early. ›FamilyTeam‹ as an Example of Parent Education in Practice«, an event organised by the Education Institute of the Interdisciplinary Forum for Promoting Development and Family Support in Vienna (Austria).

Bernhard Kalicki, head of the Children and Childcare department at the DJI, attends the Franco-German research colloquium »Future of Social Security« in Paris. This is the second seminar in a series of four planned sessions as part of the Franco-German research initiative, which was created by the French-German Economic and Financial Council (FGEFC) in May 2013. Bernhard Kalicki speaks about the topic of »Compatibility of Career and Family and Early Childhood Education as Priorities of the Protection Systems«.
**June 2014**

> Birgit Riedel, head of the specialist division »Learning Environments and Social Welfare Policies for Children« in the Children and Childcare department of the DJI, is a member of the working group »Early Childhood Education and Care« in the European Commission in Brussels (Belgium). In the final session of the working group, the European Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care is finalised.

> Martina Gille, senior researcher in the Social Monitoring and Methodology department of the DJI, gives a lecture on the subject of »Youth in Germany – Living Situations and Challenges« during a seminar by the Goethe-Institut for international German teachers in Munich.

> On 3 June 2014 the Franco-German Youth Office (FGYO), the French National Institute for Youth and Community Education (INSEP) and the DJI hold a talk in Berlin. Beatrix Angrand (general secretary of the FGYO), Markus Ingenlath (general secretary of the FGYO), Sabine Walper (research director of the DJI) and Olivier Toche (director of the INSEP) speak about the cooperation between the three institutions. They emphasise the importance of international exchange in the field of youth research and youth work – especially in light of current European developments. In addition, they elicit more cooperation opportunities.

> Michaela Schier, head of the Schumpeter Research Group »Multilocal Families« located at the Families and Family Policies department of the DJI, gives a lecture at the Institute for Geography and Regional Research at the University of Vienna (Austria) on the subject of »Multilocality of Families. A Look at Practices of ›Everyday Geography Creation‹ in Families«.

> From 3–6 June 2014, the 15th German Child and Youth Welfare Day takes place in Berlin. The theme of this is »24/7 Child and Youth Welfare: Valuable – Fair – Effective«. For the first time, there is a special programme for Europe. Mike Seckinger, head of the specialist division »Structures of Child and Youth Services« in the Youth and Youth Services department of the DJI, chairs the specialist forum »Implementing the EU Youth Strategy on Site – What do Professionals Require for Committed Participation?«. Stephanie Baumbast and Patricia Friederich, both senior researchers in the Youth and Youth Services department of the DJI, support him in summarising the results. Baumbast and Friederich also give an introductory lecture in the specialist forum »Together we can Achieve Something – the Implementation of the EU Youth Strategy Using the Example of Berlin and Brandenburg«, on how the EU Youth Strategy is implemented in Germany. Regine Derr, senior researcher in the Information Centre Child Abuse and Neglect (IZKK), based at the DJI, also gives a lecture as part of the special programme for Europe. Together with Tjine Berg-le Clercq (Netherlands Youth Institute) and Beate Galm (Hochschule Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences), she gives a lecture on the subject »Prevent and Combat Child Abuse: What Works? Lessons from 5 European Countries«.

> At the »14th World Congress of the World Association for Infant Mental Health« in Edinburgh (Great Britain), Andreas Eickhorst (National Centre for Early Childhood Education, NZFH) gives a lecture on the subject »Does Sensitive Interaction Moderate the Effectiveness of Cognitive Stimulation within Home Learning Environments? Results of a Longitudinal Project with 2.5 Year Olds«. The lecture takes place as part of the session »Different Contexts, Different Results: The Influence of Contextual Variables in Early Assessment and Intervention«. Eickhorst is also jointly responsible for a poster presentation on the topic »Prevalence of Psychosocial Risk Factors and Identification of Suitable Recruitment Procedures for High-Risk Families in a German Pilot Study«. Two additional poster presentations take place with the involvement of NZFH employees Katrin Lang and Janin Zimmermann.

> From 18–21 June 2014 the conference of the Work and Family Researchers Network (WFRN) takes place in New York City. The topic is »Changing Work and Family Relationships in a Global Economy«. The DJI is represented by Karin Jurczuk, head of the Families and Family Policies department, and Johanna Possinger, head of the specialist division »Family Policy and Family Support« in the Families and Family Policies department. Both scientists give one lecture in the symposium »Constraints and Capabilities for Reconciling Family and Work in Fathers’ Lives: Organizational Culture, Gender Constructions and Life Conduct«. Christine Entleitner, senior researcher in the Families and Family Policies department and assistant to the DJI research director, gives a lecture at the Symposium »Variations in Family Contexts« on the subject »Family Life of (Step) Families«.

> As part of the Hellenic Presidency Conference »Early Childhood Education and Care: For More and Better Quality for All« in Athens (Greece), Birgit Riedel, head of the specialist division »Learning Environments and Social Welfare Policies for Children« in the Children and Childcare department of the DJI, chairs the workshops »Key Principles for a Quality Framework for ECEC: Discussion on a Draft Proposal and on Possible Indicators« and »Translating Key Principles into National Circumstances and Corresponding Actions«.

> The research director of the DJI, Sabine Walper, gives a lectures at the University of London (Great Britain) on the topic of »Impact of the Recession on Family Dynamics«. The lecture takes place as part of the workshop promoted by the Economic and Social Research Council, »Young People and the Great Recession. Analysis of International Longitudinal Data Resources«.

> The DJI employees Judith Durand, Sabine Nunnenmacher and Michaela Hopf present two posters at the SSRE Congress 2014 »Competition and Performance in Educational Research«. One on the topic of »Videographic as a Method of Competence Development« and one on »Possibilities and Challenges of a Mixed-method Design for Knowledge Acquisition Using the Example of a Qualification Campaign for Language Education and Promotion for Children Under Three«. The congress is organised by the Swiss Society for Research in Education (SSRE) in Lucerne.

> At the Interdisciplinary and international conference »Being a parent today. Education, child-rearing and promotion of children and parenting education in western societies with increasing inequalities« in Hannover, DJI research director Sabine Walper gives a lecture on the subject of »Parenting skills classes under scrutiny: Latest empirical findings on parent education in day care facilities«. The event organised by the Faculty for Educational Science/Research Center »Individual Development and Adaptive Education of Children at Risk (IDeA)« of the Goethe University Frankfurt is promoted by the Volkswagen Foundation. Two other DJI scientists comment on specific topics: Sabina Schutter, senior researcher for the Child and Youth Policies office, on the topic of »Political and Pedagogical Models of Parenthood, Families and Parents and their Implications«, as well as...
Developing a Risk Inventory for the German K.i.d. 0-3 National Prevalence Study of World Congress of Sociology – Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for Global Solutions.

Christine Entleitner, senior researcher in the Families and Family Policies department, gives a lecture at the European Population Conference 2014 – Transitions: Opportunities and Threats as part of the session “Fertility and Happiness” on the topic of “How are the children? Children’s subjective well-being in different family types.” The conference is organised by the European Association for Population Studies (EAPS) and the Hungarian Demographic Research Institute (HDRI) in Budapest (Hungary).

July 2014

Frank König, senior researcher in the Youth and Youth Services department of the DJI, gives a lecture at the international German-speaking conference “Marginal Analyses. Empirical Approaches to Educational Science,” at the Paris Lodron University of Salzburg (Austria) on the topic of “Pedagogical (Right-Wing) Extremism – Prevention – A Road from what is Supposed to be to what Actually is?” as part of the 9th “Demarcation and Handling Practices of Professions” panel. Christine Steiner, senior researcher at the DJI, gives a lecture on “Productive Demarcation. The Relationship Between Organisation and Profession Using the Example of Multi-Professional Teams in All-Day Schools.”

Herwig Reiter, senior researcher at the Social Monitoring and Methodology department of the DJI, gives a lecture at the 6th ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) Research Methods Festival, organised by the National Centre for Research Methods at St. Catherine’s College in Oxford (Great Britain), on the subject of “What is Problem-Centred Interviewing?”

Andreas Eickhorst (NZFH) presents a poster at the XIX Biennial International Conference on Infant Studies in Berlin on the subject of “Scaffolding in Parent-Child Interaction: Analyzing the Efficiency of a Training Program and Parents’ Use of Scaffolding Strategies.” The conference is an event organised by the International Society on Infant Studies. He also discusses a paper on the subject of “Quality of the Family Triad during Infancy and Beyond: Prenatal and Postnatal Influences.”

The DJI research director Sabine Walper gives a lecture at the “26th Annual Meeting of the European Academy of Childhood Disability” in Vienna (Austria) in the session “Poverty and Its Implications on Development” on the subject of “The Risk of Poverty.” In the same month, she presents a poster at the “23rd Biennial Meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development” in Shanghai (China) on the subject of “Options for Family Research with Scientific Use Data: The German Family Panel pairfam.” At the same event, she also presents another poster on the subject of “Mothers’ and Fathers’ Experience of Competence and Autonomy in Parenting – Findings from the pairfam Panel. A Poster Presentation.”

On 8 and 9 July 2014 the symposium “Equal Start for all? Selective Participation and Inclusive Approaches to Early Childhood Education in International Perspectives” takes place at the DJI. It is organised by the International Center Early Childhood Education and Care (ICEC), which is based at the DJI. Bernhard Kalicki, head of the Children and Childcare department at the DJI, opens the conference. Christian Alt, deputy head of the Social Monitoring and Methodology department of the DJI, gives a lecture on the subject of “Between Service Expansion and Childcare Subsidy: Selective Use of Public Childcare in Germany.”

Christian Brand, Scientific employee at the NZFH, participates in the “XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology – Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for Global Sociology” in Yokohama (Japan), with a poster presentation on the subject of “Developing a Risk Inventory for the German K.I.D. 0-3 National Prevalence Study of Psychosocial Burdens in Early Childhood.” The Congress is organised by the International Sociological Association (ISA).
This book examines stepfamilies in Canada within a socio-demographic framework. A cross-sectional perspective is presented first by describing the stepfamilies examined in the survey. The main focus is on comparing stepfamilies with intact and single-parent families in order to see the extent and nature of the differences between them. The results suggest that stepfamilies do not differ as much as expected from intact families with regard to certain socioeconomic variables. Additionally, the question of how to measure stepfamilies is a major concern. The next stage involves an analysis of stepfamily instability and childbearing in a longitudinal perspective, applying the method of event history analysis. The results suggest that stepfamilies face a high risk of separation. The arrival of a common child within a stepfamily appears to be determined mainly by the age of the mother and of existing children. The most compelling finding of this research lies in the differences observed in the outcomes of male and female respondents with regard to their stepfamily dynamics.