

Potential of Asylum Applicants: Analysis of "Social Component" Data relating to Applicants' Social Structure; Annual Report 2018

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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Tätigkeitsbericht, Jahresbericht / annual report

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Heß, B. (2019). *Potential of Asylum Applicants: Analysis of "Social Component" Data relating to Applicants' Social Structure; Annual Report 2018*. (Reports on Migration and Integration, Series 3). Nürnberg: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF) Forschungszentrum Migration, Integration und Asyl (FZ). <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-67463-1>

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Federal Office
for Migration
and Refugees

REPORTS ON MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION – SERIES 3

Potential of Asylum Applicants: Analysis of “Social Component” Data relating to Applicants’ Social Structure

Annual Report 2018

Barbara Heß

Forschung



Research Centre
Migration, Integration and Asylum

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At a Glance

The so-called “social component” data are collected by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) in the course of first-time asylum applications on the basis of information provided by applicants. The data offer an initial overview of the qualification structure and the previous occupations of those seeking protection. This report looks at the year 2018.



In 2018 some 83,600 persons of legal age submitted a first-time asylum application in Germany. Around 65,500 (approx. 78%) provided information on characteristics relating to their social structure, education and their most recently pursued occupation.



Syrians made up the largest group, comprising over 14,500 persons, followed by persons from Iran (around 8,300) and Iraq (around 7,400). These three main countries of origin account for more than two thirds (around 36%) of all first-time asylum applicants of legal age.



Around half of the first-time asylum applicants of legal age were under 30 years of age, slightly over half were married (mar) and around 60% were men (m). The female share has risen as a whole in recent years.



The increase in the share of women among Syrian asylum applicants has been particularly pronounced in recent years: At 58.1%, female first-time asylum applicants (f) from Syria now clearly outweigh their male counterparts (m). Back in 2015, the share of women from Syria stood at only 21.2%.



22.9% of those providing information cited a higher education institution (HE), 20.3% a high school (HS), 29.4% an intermediate school (IS) and 17.3% a primary school (PS) as the highest educational institution they had attended. 10.2% stated that they had received no formal schooling (N).



Of the ten main countries of origin, asylum applicants from Iran were the best educated: some 87% had attended high school at least. Turkey also shows a high share here, at around 74% (average across all countries: 43%).



Just under one third of all first-time asylum applicants were not in paid employment prior to coming to Germany (“Housework, pension, school, studies” or “Out of work” = wW). Of those who pursued an occupation prior to coming to Germany, most were employed in manual trades.



The highest level of education was to be found among asylum applicants in the category “Teaching professions”, while those in the fields of “Agriculture, forestry and fishing” and “Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work” showed the lowest levels of education.

1. Introduction

Information relating to applicants' "social component" is collected in the course of first-time asylum applications. This 2018 Annual Report - "Potential of asylum applicants: Analysis of "social component" data relating to applicants' social structure" - builds on the reports on "social component" data published in previous Brief Analyses which presented similar analyses of first-time asylum applicants from 2015-2017 and the first half of 2018 (see overview at the end of this publication). Official asylum statistics provide a further source of data in this publication.

As of this edition, the analyses are to appear in the new series of publications entitled "Reports on Migration and Integration", which is published by the Research Centre at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and spans the data reports which appear at regular intervals. In addition to this publication, the series further includes Migration Monitoring and Freedom of Movement Monitoring (series 1 and 2 respectively).

As previously, the analysis of "social component" data provides an overview of the social structure of first-time asylum applicants of legal age, the highest educational institution they have attended and their most recently pursued occupations, in this case for 2018 as a whole. A special "Focal topic" chapter (Chapter 6) additionally considers trends relating to the cited highest attended educational institution since 2015. Further special chapters, each focusing on a specific aspect as appropriate to the report concerned, are planned irregularly for the following reports.

For the purposes of this Brief Analysis, the term "first-time asylum applicants" refers solely to persons of legal age who submitted a first-time asylum application to BAMF in the course of 2018. The restriction to persons of legal age throughout this Brief Analysis has been undertaken in view of the fact that minors are not generally asked separately about their qualifications in the presence of their parents at the time of filing asylum applications. In addition, the educational or vocational qualification process is often still in progress for minors. Information on marital status is similarly irrelevant with regard to minors.

2. Database

The BAMF official asylum statistics for the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018 and an analysis of “social component” data relating to persons submitting first-time asylum applications in 2018 provide the source of data for this report. The “social component” data are collected in the course of interviewing first-time asylum applicants. As such, they do not originate from a scientific survey but form part of a collection of administrative statistics.

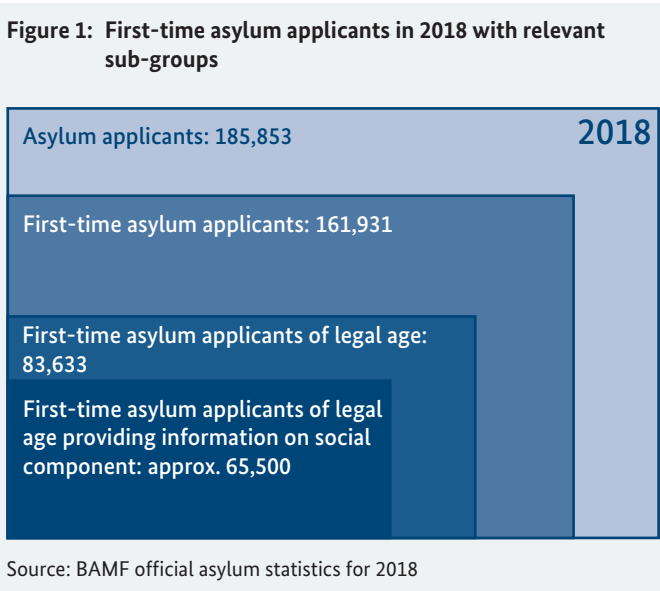
The answers base on information provided voluntarily by the interviewees. No proof, e.g. of the stated qualifications, is required. This gives rise to the possibility of a strategic approach to answering questions: As the information is collected in the course of the asylum process, it cannot be ruled out that individual asylum applicants might “upgrade” their academic and vocational qualifications in the erroneous belief that this will improve their standing in the asylum process. In addition, the school systems and the qualitative requirements pertaining to the acquisition of training qualifications and the pursuit of occupations and professions vary greatly between the different countries of origin. This gives rise to difficulties regarding the comparability of collected information and the classification and comparability of schooling and vocational qualifications - particularly when the categories which are customary in

Germany are applied as standard criteria. It is thus expedient for an interpreter to be present at the interview, so as to avoid any language problems or problems of understanding. In addition, interpreters are generally familiar with the educational and vocational systems of both countries and are thus able to assist in assessing the highest educational institution attended or the pursued occupation in the appropriate context. Notwithstanding certain limitations, the “social component” data thus provide a good basis for making reliable assessments of the educational structure and previous employment, monitoring developments and identifying trends.

The coverage of the “social component” questions is very high, with a substantial majority of asylum applicants having provided information on their education and/or prior occupation in their initial interviews. In the analyses conducted to date, the percentage coverage of “social component” answers ranged between 70% and 80% throughout. The lack of 100% coverage is unproblematic to the extent that it is not attributable to any systematic reasons - the structure of the interviewees with regard to age, gender and country of origin does not diverge systematically from the total population of first-time asylum applicants as per the official asylum statistics (see chapter 3.2.4).

3. Countries of Origin and Social Structure

This chapter presents analyses relating to the total number of asylum applicants and the respective sub-groups (first-time applications, applicants of legal age) and outlines the gender breakdown, marital statuses and the age breakdown. In addition, the ten most common countries of origin are identified for more detailed examination in the following chapters. Both data from the official asylum statistics and the “social component” data serve as sources here. To enable conclusions to be drawn about the representativeness of the “social component” data, the age structure data from the official asylum statistics are compared with the corresponding “social component” data.



In all, the Federal Office registered a total of 185,853 persons filing an asylum application in the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018 (Figure 1). This figure included 161,931 first-time applicants, 83,633 (51.6%) of whom were of legal age¹. Around 78% of these persons provided answers to the “social component” questions. This results in a population of some 65,500 first-time asylum applicants of legal age for the purpose of “social component” analyses. The numbers of answers may vary slightly from one question to another, as not all persons answered all questions.

¹ 32,303 (19.9%) of the first-time asylum applicants in 2018 were children under one year of age who had been born in Germany (see “Das Bundesamt in Zahlen 2018”, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nuremberg, p. 19).

3.1 Main Countries of Origin

As in the preceding years, the largest share of first-time asylum applicants of legal age came from Syria (Table 1; 14,576 first-time asylum applications). These make up a 17.4% share of the overall total in 2018, which represents a slight increase compared to the first half of 2018 (16.8%) and 2017 as a whole (17.0%).

Table 1: First-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin and the ten main countries of origin in 2018

Countries of origin	Anzahl	Anteil
Syria	14,576	17.4%
Iran	8,317	9.9%
Iraq	7,350	8.8%
Turkey	6,951	8.3%
Nigeria	6,377	7.6%
Afghanistan	4,101	4.9%
Eritrea	2,646	3.2%
Somalia	2,413	2.9%
Georgia	2,567	3.1%
Guinea	1,992	2.4%
Total of the ten main countries of origin	57,290	68.5%
Other countries	26,343	31.5%
Total	83,633	100.0%

Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for 2018

Iran ranked second for 2018 as a whole, with 8,317 first-time asylum applications and a share of almost 10%. Iraq ranked third, with 7,350 in the year as a whole (8.8% of all first-time applications). These countries are followed by Turkey, with 6,951 applications (8.3%) and Nigeria, which occupied second place in the first half of 2018, with 6,577 (7.6%). The following countries - Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia, Georgia and Guinea - accounted for share of under 5%.

The share of Syrian first-time applicants changed only negligibly compared to 2017 as a whole, while the share and the absolute number of persons from Iran increased (2017: 6,370, 5.8%; 2018: 8,317, 9.9%). First-time applications from persons originating from Iraq show a drop of approx. 30% compared to 2017. Turkey ranked sixth in 2017, and showed an increase in applications of some 25% in 2018. While around 850 more people from Nigeria filed a first-time asylum application in 2018 compared to 2017, applications

from Somalians were down by some 1,400, representing a drop of almost 40%.

The main countries of origin considered in closer detail below - Syria, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia, Georgia and Guinea - accounted for over two thirds (68.5%) of all first-time asylum applicants of legal age registered in 2018. In all, first-time asylum applicants of legal age came from more than 130 different countries of origin.

3.2 Social Structure: Gender, Marital Status and Age

The following sections present overviews of the fundamental characteristics pertaining to the gender, marital status and age of first-time asylum applicants together with comparisons between the official asylum statistics and the “social component” database.

3.2.1 Gender

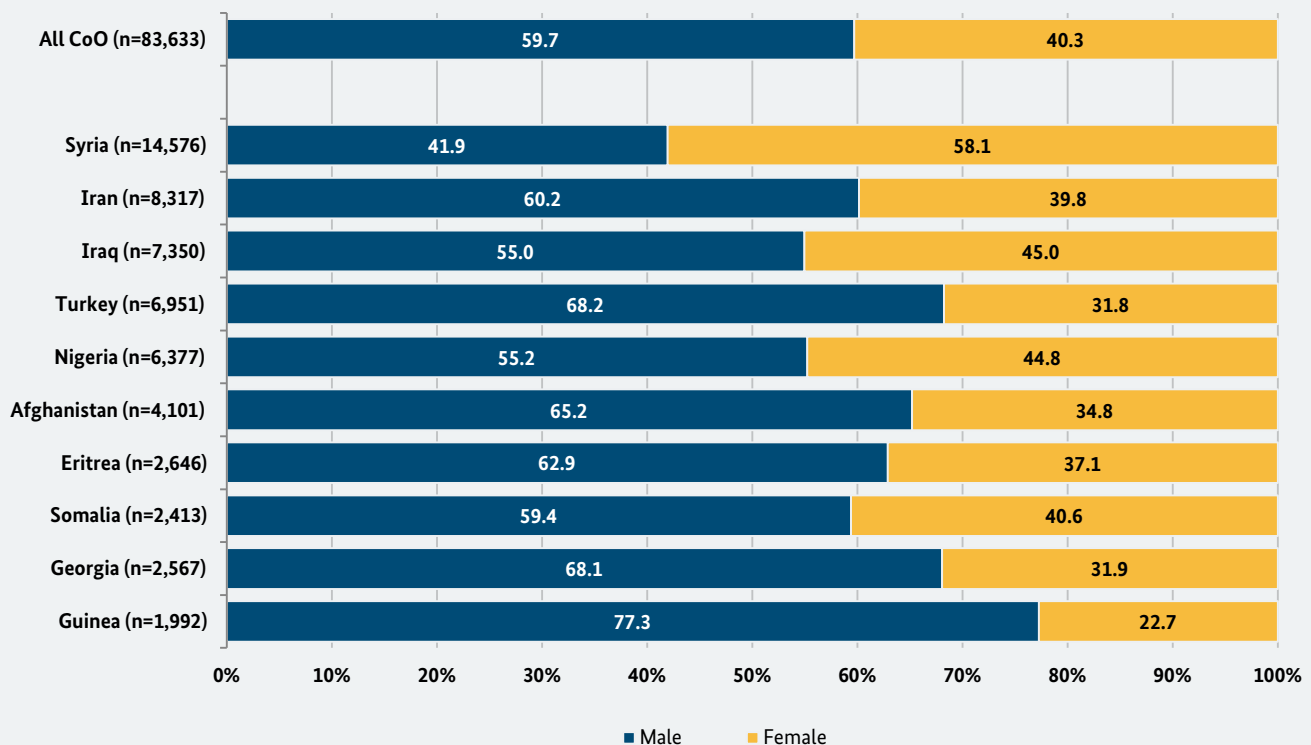
With regard to the gender of first-time asylum applicants of legal age, the analyses of the official asylum statistics show that, as in the preceding years - the majority of asylum applicants were male. The share of women has risen, however,

with the male share falling from 64.3% in 2017 to 59.7% in 2018. The share of women thus increased from 35.7% by 4.6 percentage points to 40.3% (Figure 2).

Markedly more female than male applicants came from Syria in 2018: In 2017, 48.3% were male, while in the first half of 2018 this share dropped to 42.2% and for 2018 as a whole the figure stands at only 41.9%. This trend is striking in view of the fact that in 2016 67.3% of Syrian first-time applicants were male, and the male share in 2015 was as high as 78.8%.

The male share is predominant for the other nine leading countries of origin. There is no significant change to this share compared to 2017 for the second- to fourth-ranking countries: the respective percentage values remain very similar for Iran (2018: 60.2%, 2017: 59.5%), Iraq (2018: 55.0%, 2017: 54.0%) and Turkey (2018: 68.2%, 2017: 70.3%). While more men than women also came from Nigeria, Afghanistan, Eritrea and Somalia, the percentage share of women rose clearly by around four to five percentage points compared to 2017, and by almost ten percentage points in the case of Eritrea. With a 22.7% share, substantially more women came from Guinea than in 2017 (9.5%), although this country still has the highest share of male first-time asylum applicants among the ten leading countries of origin.

Figure 2: Gender of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin and the ten main countries of origin in 2018 (in per cent)



Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for 2018

3.2.2 Marital Status

A look at the first-time asylum applicants of legal age in the “social component” database shows that more than half were married at the time of filing their applications (51.5%, Figure 3). 42.2% stated that they were single and 6.3% stated another marital status².

This represents a marked increase in the share of married persons compared to 2017 (45.2%) and the first half of 2018 (45.5%). A correspondingly lower share was single.

With regard to the countries of origin, a particularly high share of married persons is noticeable among persons from Syria (67.0%). More than two thirds were thus married, marking an increase over 2017 (64.7%). The share of married persons from Turkey (59.9%) has also risen compared to 2017 (55.2%). The corresponding shares for Iran and Iraq are on a similar level to in 2017. The other countries also show only minor differences to 2017. Georgia, which was not among the ten main countries of origin in 2017, shows a slightly above-average share of married persons, at 56.2%. A notable aspect is the small share of married persons from the African countries of origin Guinea (11.3%), Nigeria (17.8%) and Eritrea (35.0%). This is attributable in part to the

² This includes persons who are separated, widowed, living in a civil partnership or whose life partner has died.

low age of first-time asylum applicants from these countries (see Figure 4).

In this connection it should be pointed out that these statistics do not provide any indication as to whether the spouses of the married asylum applicants are resident in Germany or whether the applications were filed for individuals or as a family.

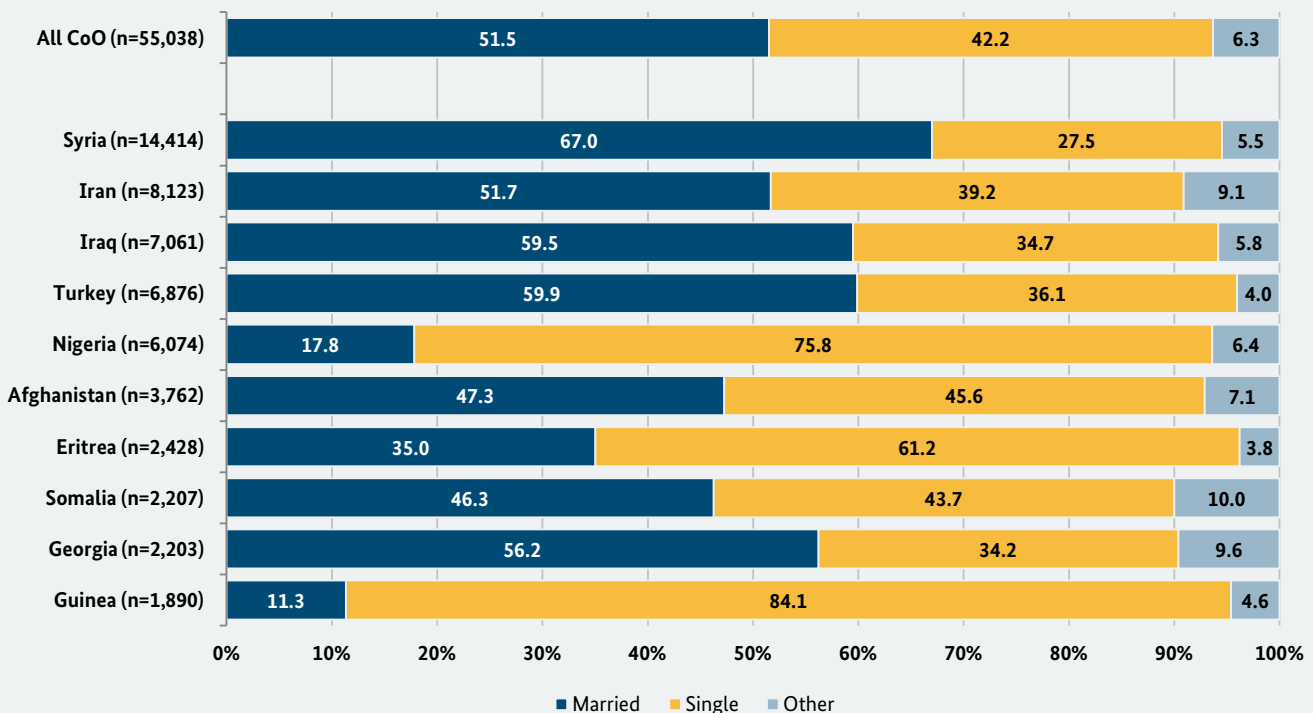
3.2.3 Age

As in the previous years, the age structure³ of the first-time asylum applicants of legal age is dominated by young people: According to the official asylum statistics, around half (49.8%) were under 30 years of age (Figure 4). The share of persons aged 18 or 19 stands at 9.7%, while the age group between 20 and 24 represents a share of 19.8%. A similarly high share (20.3%) was aged between 25 and 29. The next-oldest age group between 30 and 39 made up a 29.0% share, while persons aged 40 and over accounted for only a good fifth, at 21.2%.

Marked differences between the respective countries of origin emerge here, too. Syria shows a particularly high

³ It must be noted here that only persons aged over 18 are included in the analyses. Their share of all first-time asylum applicants has fallen continually in recent years, from 68.9% in 2015 to 51.6% in 2018 (cf. Figure 1). This trend indicates the rising number of children and juveniles in the asylum process, some of whom were born in Germany.

Figure 3: Marital status of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin and the ten main countries of origin in 2018 (in per cent)



Source: “Social component” database (13.03.2019)

percentage of persons aged over 40 (31.7%), for example, as does Iraq (29.6%). In contrast, the 30 to 39 age group is prominent among persons from Iran: With 45.1% belonging to this age group and a further 22.8% aged over 40, this country has the highest share of persons aged over 30 among the ten main countries of origin. Less than one third of Iranian first-time asylum applicants are younger than 30. An age structure which is slightly “younger” than for these countries but with a similarly “older” bias overall applies to persons from Georgia and Turkey, from where 62.6% and 59.8% respectively of first-time asylum applicants are aged over 30 years.

In contrast, first-time applicants from the African countries are very young. Guinea is particularly noticeable here, with a share of 45.2% aged 18 or 19. Together with 30% in the age group between 20 and 24, this means that three quarters of first-time asylum applicants from Guinea are under 25 years of age. Around three quarters of asylum applicants from Somalia and Eritrea are aged under 30; the share of persons aged under 25 years here stands at around 50%. Almost 60% of Afghan first-time asylum applicants are under 30 years old. Around two thirds of first-time asylum applicants from Nigeria are aged under 30, whereby a markedly higher share of 25 to 29 year-olds is involved here. In comparison to the

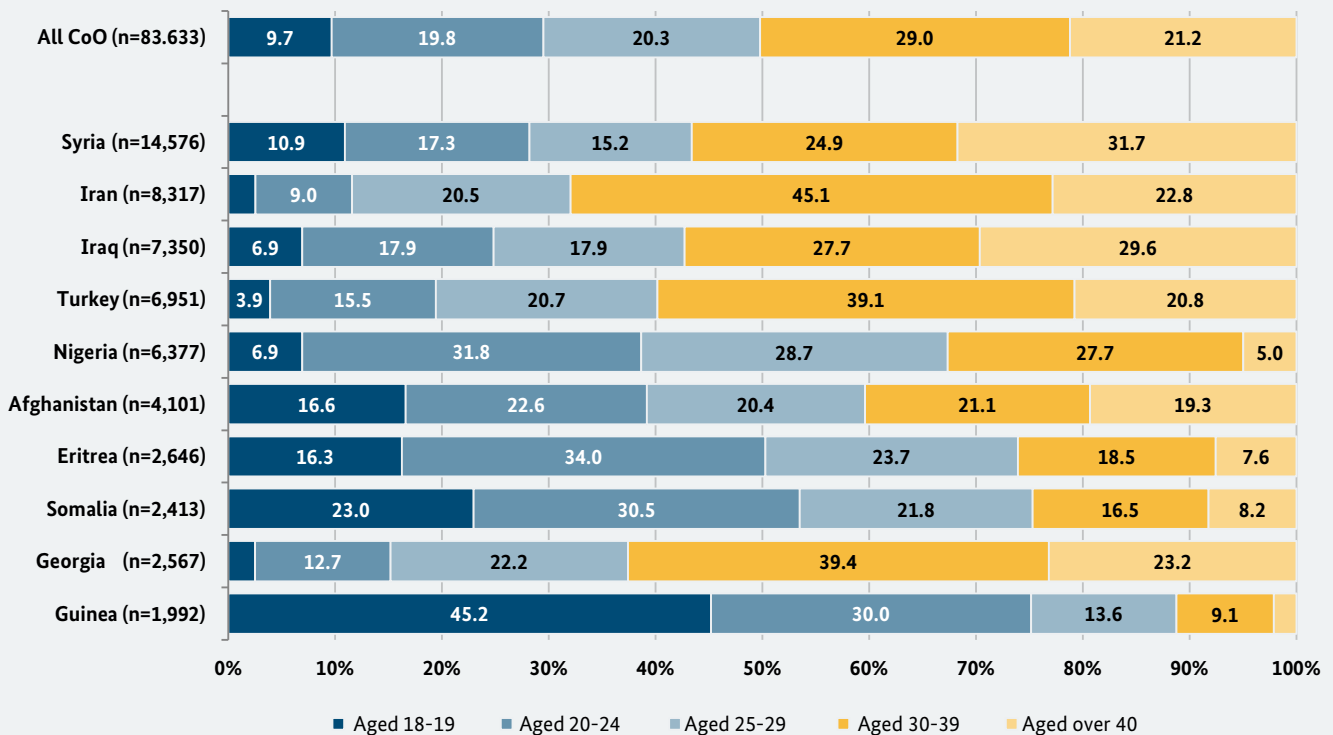
other African countries, fewer persons are aged between 18 and 19 (6.9%).

The share of younger persons has fallen compared to 2017: In 2017, 11.9% of first-time asylum applicants were aged 18 or 19 and 22.5% were between 20 and 24 years old. Together with 20.6% in the age group between 25 and 30, the share of persons aged under 30 thus stood at 55%. This trend towards slightly older asylum applicants is not peculiar to any individual countries of origin, but applies to all of the main countries of origin.

3.2.4 Comparison of Official Asylum Statistics and “Social Component” Data with regard to the Characteristic “Age”

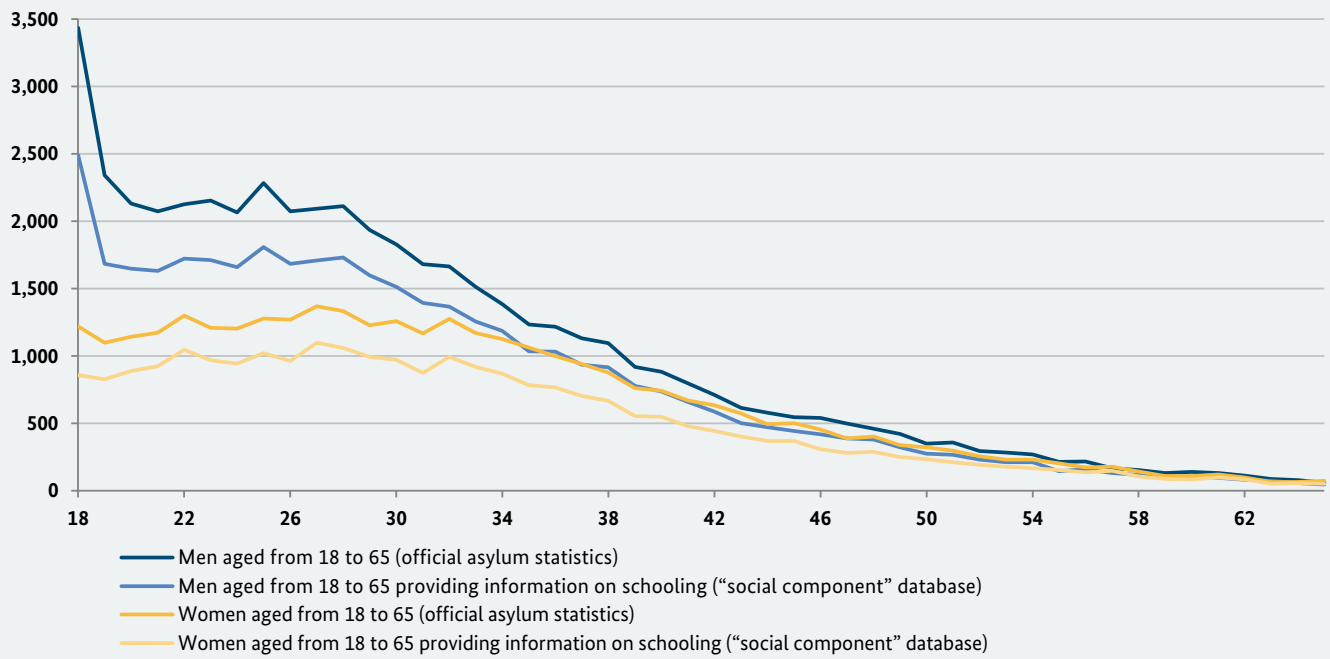
As “social component” data are not available for all first-time asylum applicants, it is conceivable that these data might deviate systemically from the overall data if only certain groups (proportionately more women than men/younger rather than older interviewees/...) were to provide information on the “social component”, for example. For the purposes of comparison, Figure 5 thus shows the age structure (from age 18 to 65) of male and female first-time asylum applicants in 2018. It is also indicated how many of

Figure 4: Age breakdown of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin and the ten main countries of origin in 2018 (in per cent)



Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for 2018
Shares under 3% are not shown.

Figure 5: Age breakdown and gender of 18 to 65 year-old first-time asylum applicants in 2018 (official asylum statistics and “social component” data)



Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for 2018 and “social component” database (13.03.2019)

these persons have provided information on their schooling which is available in the “social component” database. The information on schooling has been chosen here by way of example - similar patterns apply for other “social component” characteristics.

The age structure curves for the persons on whom details of schooling are on record show a virtually parallel course to the curves for all first-time asylum applicants as per the official asylum statistics. This indicates that the data on schooling do not contain any conspicuous systematic distortions and thus provide an accurate representation of

the population, despite a lack of information in some areas (coverage: 78.6%).

It is additionally discernible that the high share of particularly young asylum applicants, particularly in the 18-19 and 20-24 age groups (cf. Figure 4), is primarily attributable to very young, male applicants. While no pronounced differences are observable among older persons, a marked difference between male and female shares is particularly evident among the very young applicants, in both absolute and relative terms.

4. Qualifications and Occupational Background

The question as to the education acquired in the country of origin is of relevance to many areas of integration in Germany. Good qualifications can be conducive to finding employment more quickly, for example. With regard to the educational measures on offer (in particular integration courses), it is also important whether the applicants include any persons who have had little or no schooling to date and/or are illiterate. For the purposes of integration into the labour market, it is also of significance what work experience the asylum applicants have, as if they are granted protection they may remain for a prolonged period in Germany and take up employment. With regard to the analysis of both these aspects, however, assessment of the “social component” information is problematic as it is difficult to compare the different school and occupational systems, in view of which this information can only serve to provide general indications.

4.1 Education in the Country of Origin

Assessing education in the country of origin on the basis of “social component” information provides an approximate indication of the level of qualification. In contrast to sociological surveys, information on the level of education is collected in abridged form only, as although the interviewees are asked about the highest educational institution they have attended, they are not asked whether they completed their education there or whether they hold a leaving certificate. It also remains unknown how long the relevant institutions were attended. As such, it is not possible to draw any conclusions about the potential recognition of qualifications in Germany.

The five categories considered below comprise:

- Higher education institution: university, technical college
- High school: eleven or more years' secondary schooling
- Intermediate school: vocational school, intermediate school
- Primary school: up to four years' schooling, including special needs school
- No formal schooling: not literate, applicant has not attended a formal school

It is frequently difficult to assess the submitted information accurately, as the education systems in the country of origin are often structured differently to in Germany. Assessment is carried out in the presence of an interpreter, however, who can be of assistance in this regard (cf. Chapter 2). In interpreting the data, it must be noted that only persons aged 18 and over are considered here. In most countries, this age threshold is below the university entrance age. This means that there may be many people among the young interviewees in particular who have not yet completed their education and would presumably have acquired further educational qualifications in their country of origin, if their education had not been prevented or interrupted by their fleeing the country.

Of the 65,762 first-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2018 who provided information on their schooling, 22.9% stated that they had attended a higher education institution (Figure 6). 20.3% stated that they had attended high school as their highest educational institution. An intermediate school was cited most frequently, at 29.4%. 17.3% stated that they had only attended primary school, while 10.2% had come to Germany without any formal schooling.

The level of education has improved in comparison to the standard of schooling among first-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2017. The shares of persons who have attended a higher education institution or high school have risen from 17.2% and 19.2% respectively in 2017 to 22.9% and 20.3% respectively in 2018. While the increase in high school attendance stood at only 1.1 percentage points, higher education has risen substantially, by 5.7 percentage points. The shares of persons who have attended intermediate or primary school and those without any schooling stood at 33.1%, 18.9% and 11.6% respectively in 2017. These shares are slightly lower in 2018, in correlation with the increase in higher qualifications.

As in the preceding years, first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Turkey and Iran had an above-average level of education. In 2018, 59.3% of applicants from Turkey had attended a higher education institution. Together with 14.5% who had attended high school, this means that 73.8%, or almost three quarters of all Turkish first-time asylum applicants had attended high school at least. In addition, the share of persons from Turkey without any schooling whatsoever was negligible, at 2.2%. Compared to

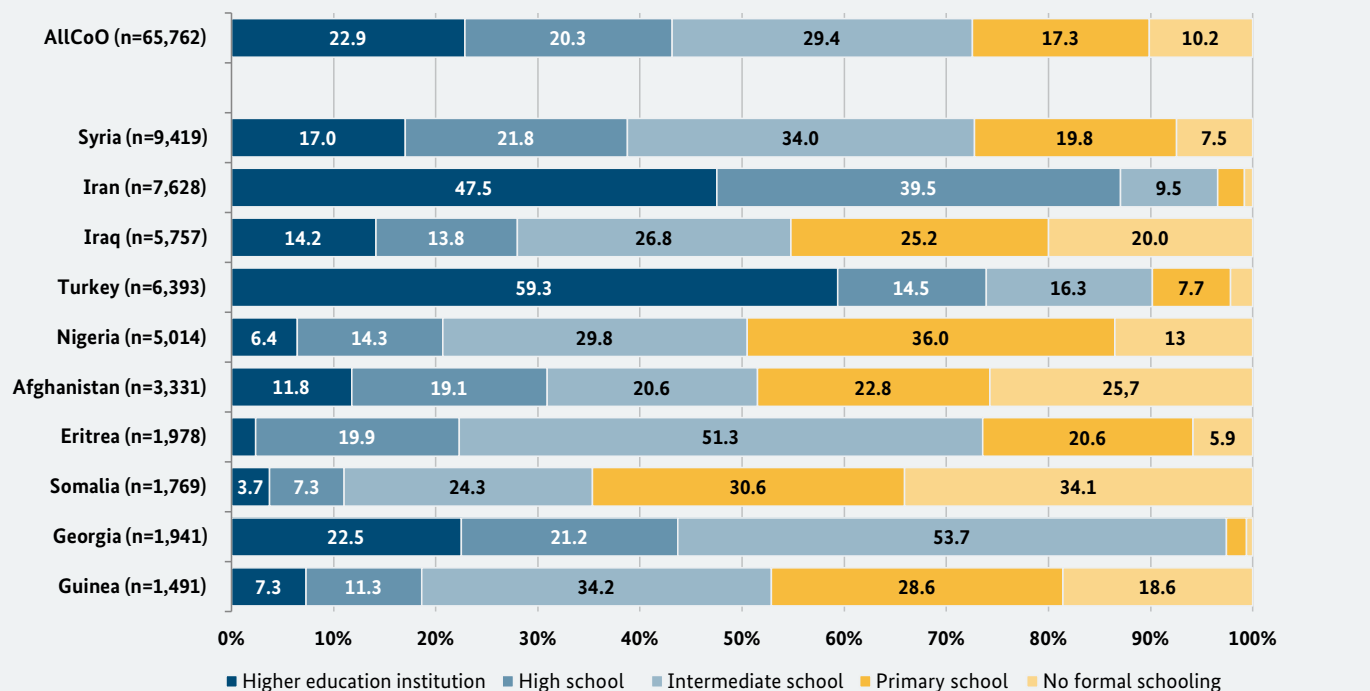
2017, this above all indicates a marked increase in the share of persons who have attended a higher education institution among Turkish asylum applicants: in 2017 46.0% stated that they had attended a higher education institution. In the 1st half of 2018 this figure had risen to 49.5%, and attained a level of 59.3% for 2018 as a whole.

The share of persons who have attended a higher education institution has also risen among persons from Iran: While 42.6% had attended higher education in 2017, this figure rose to almost half of all Iranian first-time asylum applicants in 2018, at 47.5%. An additional 39.5% had attended high school, meaning that only 13.0% cited attendance of an educational institution below high school level. As such, the share of persons who have attended high school at least is highest among persons from Iran, at 87.0%. At 0.8%, the share of persons without any schooling is also very low compared to the other countries of origin, with a lower instance only to be found among first-time applicants from Georgia (0.6%). Persons from this country of origin are also comparatively well educated, to a standard above the overall average. Notable aspects here are the above-mentioned low shares of persons without schooling (0.6%) and with primary schooling (2.0%). As such, Georgia shows the highest share among all the main countries of origin of people who have attended intermediate school at least. More than half (53.7%) of all first-time asylum applicants from Georgia stated that they had attended an intermediate school as their highest educational institution. The largest

group, comprising persons from Syria, also shows a good educational structure as a whole. At 17.0%, the number of persons who had attended a higher education institution was below the overall average (22.9%), however, while the figures for high school (21.8%) and intermediate school (34.0%) education were slightly above the overall average (20.3% and 29.4% respectively).

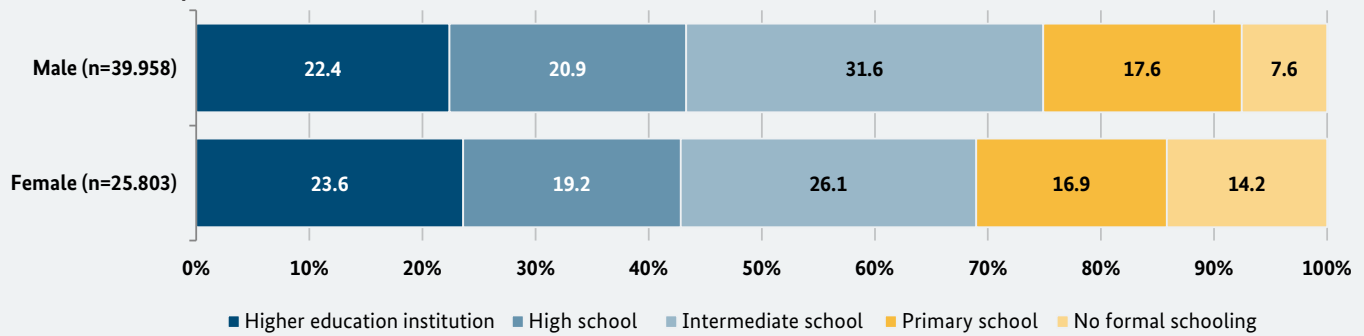
The other countries of origin lie at the other end of the educational spectrum (Figure 6). 28.0% of applicants from Iraq have attended a higher education institution or a high school (overall average: 43.2%). Almost half (over 45%) of the first-time asylum applicants from this country came to Germany without any schooling or after having attended primary school at most. On average, first-time asylum applicants from Nigeria, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia and Guinea also showed a much lower level of education. The majority of persons from these countries came to Germany without having attended higher education or high school, and over two thirds had attended intermediate school at most. Somalia stands apart, with only 3.7% stating that they had attended a higher education institution and 7.3% a high school as their highest educational institution, while 30.6% have only attended a primary school and 34.1% have had no schooling whatsoever - the largest share among the countries examined here. Persons from Eritrea have the lowest share of higher education (2.4%) but show an average share of almost 20% in the high school category and a very high

Figure 6: Highest educational institution attended by first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin and from the ten main countries of origin in 2018 (in per cent)



Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2019)
 Shares under 3% are not shown.

Figure 7: Highest educational institution attended by first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin by gender in 2018 (in per cent)



Source: “Social component” database (13.03.2019)

share with regard to intermediate schools, with over half of asylum applicants (51.3%) having attended such schools.

The share of persons with a good level of education has risen on the whole in comparison to 2017, but not across all countries of origin. Overall, the shares of applicants from Syria, Iraq, Eritrea and Guinea are lower than in the previous year (see Chapter 6 for more detailed analyses).

A breakdown of the highest educational institution attended by gender (Figure 7) reveals differences above all in the lower levels of education. It is to be observed that the share of persons who have attended a higher education institution is slightly lower among men (22.4%) than among women (23.6%), while the male share is slightly higher in the high school category (20.9% as compared to 19.2% for women). These differences are very minimal, however, and thus of little relevance. The overall share for the higher education and high school categories together is roughly equal, at around 43% (men: 42.8%, women: 43.3%). More pronounced differences apply to the other types of educational establishments: While 31.6% of men have attended an intermediate school, the corresponding figure for women stands at only 26.1%. While the share of persons with primary schooling is almost identical, 14.2% of women have had no schooling, as compared to only 7.6% of men. The percentage differences between men and women were of a similar order in 2017. As considerably more men than women of legal age filed a first-time asylum application in 2018, the higher share of persons who have attended intermediate school has a correspondingly greater impact on the overall average.

4.2 Most recent Occupation

The most recently pursued occupation must not necessarily relate to the country of origin, as persons who have fled their home country may have lived for some time in a transit country and pursued their most recent occupation

there. For this characteristic, the “social component” data specifies 33 occupational categories, plus “Out of work” and “Housework, pension, school or studies”. In the interests of clarity, a number of categories have been grouped together for analysis purposes. As mentioned above, assigning applicants to the occupational groups in the course of collecting the appurtenant data is problematic, as the systems in the countries of origin vary considerably, making it difficult to classify occupations on the basis of the standard German categories. In addition, certain groups (spanning entire sectors, for example) may overlap. Similarly, it is not possible to draw any conclusions as to the position held or the qualifications required for the pursued occupation, nor as to how much time has elapsed since the most recently pursued occupation. It is, however, possible to draw up initial synopses showing which areas particularly large numbers of first-time asylum applicants fall into. In addition, the pursued occupations can subsequently be linked to the academic qualifications (Chapter 4.3).

Of all the 65,423 first-time asylum applicants of legal age who answered the question as to their most recently pursued occupation, the largest share (7.1%) were employed in a manual trade (Table 2). Manual trades were also the most commonly cited occupation in 2017 (see also Schmidt 2018). In 2017, the category “Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work” ranked second. 2018 sees this category swap places with “Services” and slip down to third place (6.1%). The second-ranking category “Services” accounts for a share of 6.8% in 2018. “Agriculture, forestry and fishing” remains in fourth place, though with a lower share of 4.9% as compared to 5.6% in 2017. The group “Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions” now ranks fifth with a 4.7% share, as compared to 2017, when it held seventh position with a 3.8% share. These are followed by “Teaching professions” on 4.5%, which were cited in 3.4% of cases in 2017. As in 2017, the smallest share goes to persons in the category “Executive position, science, corporate management” (1.0%).

The category “Housework, pension, school or studies” accounted for the largest number of persons. Its share of 18.9% is down on 2017, however (21.5%). A total of 8,868 persons (11.4%) were most recently “out of work” - a similar share to in 2017 (11.1%).

Marked differences apply here between the sexes: Among women, the largest shares in the area of paid work were in the fields of “Services” (6.9%), “Teaching professions” (6.8%) and “Office work, banking, insurance” (5.2%). Among men, the category of “Manual trades” ranks first among all first-time asylum applicants, as in the previous year, accounting for a 9.2% share. Second and third places go to “Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work” (7.6%) and “Construction” (7.0%). The category “Housework, pension, school or studies” catches the eye, with a female share of 38.4%, while men account for only 6.3%. According to the information submitted by the interviewees, 10.3% of men were out of work and 13.1% of women.

As would be expected on account of the divergent educational structures, the breakdown of occupational groups differs among the ten main countries of origin (Table 3). The

table shows which shares of first-time asylum applicants from the respective countries of origin were employed in which occupational categories. The colouring indicates which percentage values are particularly low (light colouring) or particularly high (dark colouring).

It is noticeable that persons from almost all countries of origin account for very high shares in the fields of “Housework, pension, school or studies”. The highest shares apply here among asylum applicants from Syria (38.5%) and Iraq (32.7%). A large number of persons citing this field of occupation also come from Afghanistan (25.0%). From the other main countries of origin – with the exclusion of Nigeria – between 12.2% and 17.4% of first-time asylum applicants cite this field of occupation. Nigeria shows a very low share, at 5.9%. Persons who were out of work prior to coming to Germany make up a further large group from this country of origin. Nigeria shows a very high share here, at 18.8%. Eritrea has a similarly high share (18.7%), followed by Georgia with 14.5%. Somalia (22.1%) and Guinea (28.0%) have even higher shares of previously out-of-work persons than Nigeria, whereby particularly young persons have fled to Germany from these countries. In the remaining main

Table 2: Most recently pursued occupations of first-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2018

Occupational fields / most recent occupation	number of persons	share	share males	share females
Manual trades	4,650	7.1	9.2	3.8
Services	4,450	6.8	6.7	6.9
Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work	3,999	6.1	7.6	3.8
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	3,198	4.9	6.9	1.8
Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions	3,046	4.7	6.7	1.5
Teaching professions	2,929	4.5	3.0	6.8
Office work, banking, insurance	2,845	4.3	3.8	5.2
Construction	2,840	4.3	7.0	0.2
Wholesale and retail	2,743	4.2	5.1	2.7
Automotive	1,905	2.9	4.7	0.1
Street trading, petty trading	1,699	2.6	3.3	1.5
Artistic profession, fashion	1,680	2.6	2.3	3.0
Hotel and catering trade	1,589	2.4	3.0	1.5
Public service, church, public safety and security	1,470	2.2	2.9	1.2
Transport and tourism	1,353	2.1	3.2	0.3
Medical, chemical professions, laboratory work	1,353	2.1	1.6	2.9
Soldier	1,003	1.5	2.3	0.3
Executive position, science, corporate management	666	1.0	1.2	0.8
other	2,209	3.4	2.9	4.2
Housework, pension, school or studies	12,356	18.9	6.3	38.4
Out of work	7,440	11.4	10.3	13.1
Total	65,423	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: “Social component” database (13.03.2019)

Table 3: First-time asylum applicants of legal age from the 10 main countries of origin and their most recently pursued occupations, 2018

Occupational fields / most recent occupation	Syria (n=9,279)	Iran (n=7,523)	Iraq (n=5,727)	Turkey (n=6,342)	Nigeria (n=4,912)	Afghanistan (n=3,344)	Eritrea (n=1,961)	Somalia (n=1,968)	Georgia (n=1,917)	Guinea (n=1,499)
Manual trades	7.8	6.4	5.7	3.6	14.5	9.4	5.4	3.9	6.4	8.1
Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work	4.0	3.2	7.4	3.2	6.5	5.5	6.2	11.9	6.4	7.9
Services	5.1	9.1	5.4	4.2	11.6	5.4	4.8	7.8	6.5	7.8
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	2.7	1.2	5.2	3.3	4.6	7.2	18.9	6.6	4.1	3.6
Construction	3.5	3.0	4.3	4.1	5.1	5.3	2.2	0.9	9.5	3.0
Wholesale and retail	2.6	6.8	3.0	2.8	3.8	3.9	1.4	5.5	4.7	6.0
Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions	3.2	12.3	2.8	5.9	3.3	2.7	1.3	1.0	3.0	1.1
Teaching professions	4.7	4.2	2.8	19.6	0.8	3.1	0.9	1.5	2.3	0.4
Office work, banking, insurance	2.4	9.3	2.7	8.4	1.1	3.1	1.4	1.1	3.8	1.1
Automotive	2.3	2.6	2.8	0.9	5.3	2.4	2.6	3.7	3.8	3.9
Street trading, petty trading	1.2	3.6	1.9	1.2	3.3	2.6	0.9	5.0	1.7	6.1
Hotel and catering trade	1.9	2.0	2.1	3.5	1.6	0.9	2.1	3.3	2.2	0.9
Artistic profession, fashion	2.4	4.8	1.7	1.4	6.9	2.6	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.8
Transport and tourism	1.5	2.3	2.0	1.4	2.4	1.6	1.1	2.1	3.2	4.3
Public service, church, public safety and security	1.3	2.1	3.0	5.9	0.7	3.1	1.3	0.7	4.2	0.2
Soldier	0.7	1.1	1.8	2.6	0.8	1.7	11.7	0.8	2.9	1.3
Medical, chemical professions, laboratory work	2.3	3.3	1.1	3.6	0.6	1.8	0.8	0.8	2.6	0.5
Executive position, science, corporate management	0.4	2.7	0.5	2.0	0.2	0.8	0.2	0.2	1.0	0.4
other	2.8	4.6	3.0	5.4	1.9	3.2	1.0	2.6	3.4	1.1
Housework, pension, school or studies	38.5	12.4	32.7	12.2	5.9	25.0	16.1	17.4	12.5	12.5
Out of work	8.8	3.0	8.4	4.9	18.8	8.7	18.7	22.1	14.5	28.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Percentage share: 0-2.4% 2.5-4.9% 5-9.9% 10-19.9% 20% or more

Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2019)

countries of origin the share ranges between 3.0% (Iran) and 8.8% (Syria).

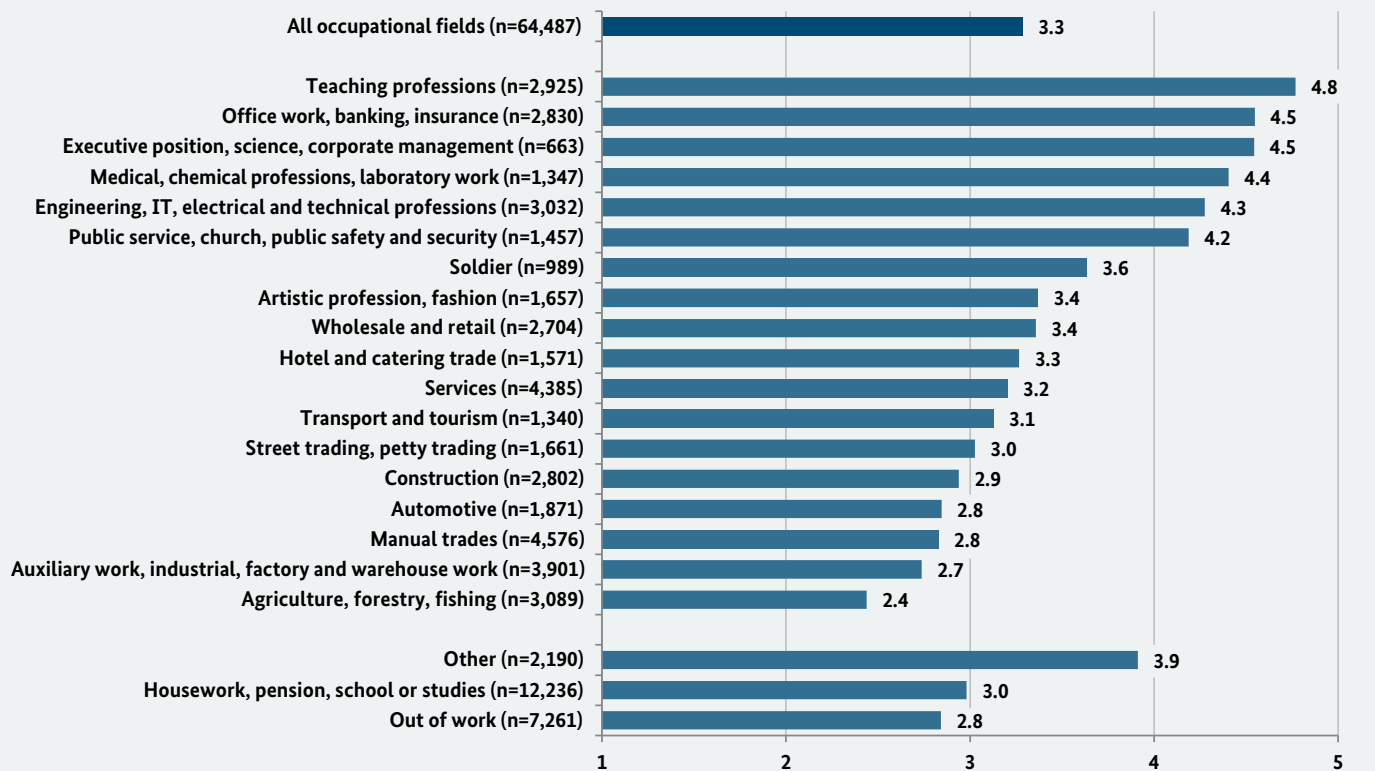
The share of persons employed in manual trades is relatively high in all of the main countries of origin, apart from Somalia and Turkey. Nigeria is particularly noticeable once again here, with a share of 14.5%; the same goes for the service sector (11.6%). First-time asylum applicants from Turkey account for a relatively small share here, at 4.2%, while persons from Somalia make up a mid-range share and the share from Eritrea is below average, at 4.8%. First-time asylum applicants from Iran make up an above-average share in the occupational area of “Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions”, at 12.3%. The share in the occupational area of “Office work, banking, insurance” is also in the upper range, at 9.3%. The “teaching professions” are prominent among persons from Turkey, accounting for almost one fifth of all first-time asylum applicants (19.6%). As in the previous years, a particularly high share of asylum applicants from Eritrea had previously been soldiers (11.7%).

4.3 Links between Occupation and Education

With regard to the information on occupations, in addition to assigning the interviewees to the respective occupational fields it is also of interest which qualification requirements pertained to the occupations concerned. While the available data do not permit a detailed assessment here, the submitted information on the highest educational institution attended does allow the appurtenant qualifications to be inferred. It is not possible to determine whether attendance of the cited educational institution was also a precondition for pursuing the stated most recently pursued occupation, however.

Figure 8 shows so-called educational mean values by occupational fields. This provides an indication of the areas in which persons with a predominantly higher level of education and those with a lower level of education were most recently employed. The educational mean values are obtained by applying values to the schooling categories (1 = no formal schooling, to 5 = higher education). The educational mean value for each occupational field can be obtained by multiplying these values by the share of correspondingly educated persons per occupational group. This method can only provide a rough assessment, as education

Figure 8: Educational mean values of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin in 2018 by occupational fields



Source: “Social component” database (13.03.2019) n = 64,487 (all persons submitting information both on the highest educational institution attended and their most recently pursued occupation)

does not constitute a numerical variable and classification is subject to the above-stated reservations.

Calculation of the educational mean values results in an overall average across all occupational fields of 3.3. The highest average value applies to the area of “Teaching professions”, at 4.8, followed by “Office work, banking, insurance” and “Executive position, science, corporate management”, each at 4.5. Above-average educational mean values also apply to the group of persons who are at least partially assignable to the overarching category of “Mathematics, informatics, science or technology” in the fields of “Medical, chemical professions, laboratory work” (4.4) and “Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions” (4.3), and to the area of “Public service, church, public safety and security” (4.2).

Low educational mean values apply to first-time asylum applicants who were previously employed in the areas of “Agriculture, forestry, fishing” (2.4) and “Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work” (2.7). The mean value values are also below average in the fields of “Manual trades” “Automotive” and “Construction”, at 2.8 and 2.9 respectively. Persons who were out of work prior to coming to Germany also show a low educational mean value, at 2.8. Overall, the educational mean values have risen minimally, but all remain in a similar range to in the previous year.

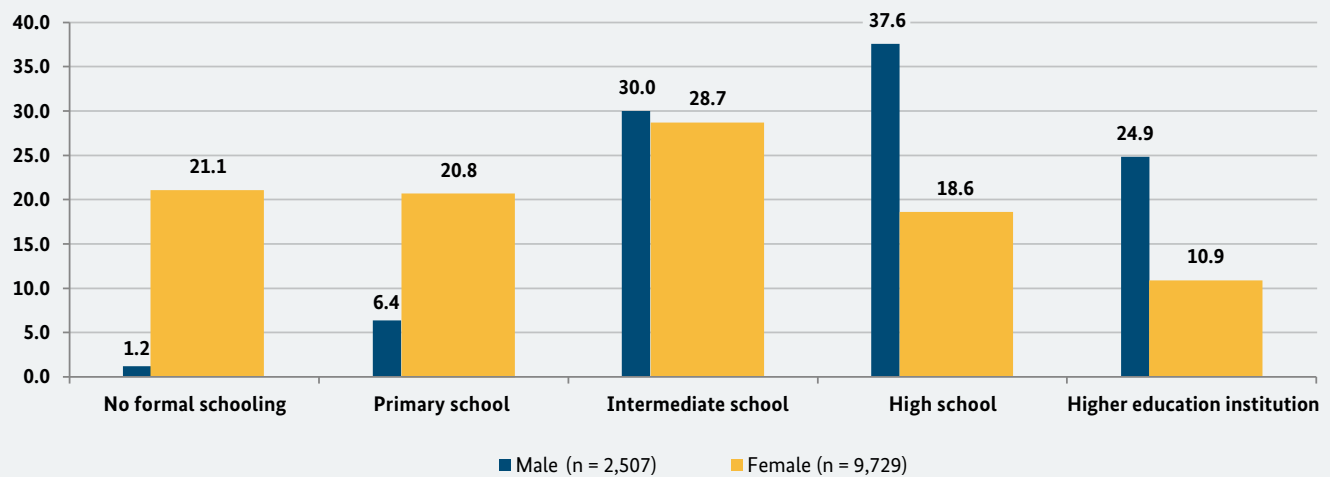
A special area with regard to occupational fields concerns persons in the category “Housework, pension, school, studies” (educational mean value 3.0), who were neither primarily active on the labour market, nor assignable to the “social component” category “out of work”. This category, grouping together persons living in highly diverse situations without any income of their own, is considered in a separate analysis

(Figure 9). As this group contains around four times more female than male asylum applicants, the thickness of the bars additionally represents the ratios between the sexes.

92.5% of the adult men assigned to the category “Housework, pension, school or studies” stated that they had attended an intermediate school, high school or higher education institution, while the corresponding figure for women stood at only 58.2%. The figure clearly shows that the shares of persons with no formal schooling or who whose highest educational establishment was a primary school are markedly lower among men, at 1.2% and 6.4% respectively, compared to women, at 21.1% and 20.8% respectively. The percentage differences are low with regard to attendance of intermediate school, but become substantial again with regard to the higher-ranking educational institutions: 37.6% and 24.9% respectively of men from the occupational field “Housework, pension, school or studies” had attended a high school or higher educational institution. The corresponding share for women stood at only 18.6% and 10.9% respectively.

The high number of women in the groups with no or little schooling suggests that many of these women have never taken up an occupation outside the home. However, as Figure 7 shows that the share of (former) students is higher as a whole among women than among men, the high share of women may be attributable to the fact that men with low levels of education who were not in employment prior to coming to Germany tend to refer to themselves as having been “out of work” rather than assigning themselves to the “housework” category.

Figure 9: Schooling of first-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2018 in the occupational field “Housework, pension, school or studies” by gender (in per cent)



Source: “Social component” database (13.03.2019)

5. Summary: Characteristics of First-Time Asylum Applicants from the Main Countries of Origin in 2018

In order to provide a synoptic overview, the key characteristics pertaining to the respective main countries of origin in 2018 are presented here in tabular form and – where possible – the trend in comparison to the previous year is indicated in graphic form by means of arrows. This is intended solely to provide a concise overview – details are to be found in the corresponding chapters. With regard to the trend in comparison to the previous year, the number of

arrows indicates the percentage⁴ change, while the direction of the arrows shows whether the trend concerned is upward, downward or virtually constant.

⁴ A change from 20% in 2017 to 30% in 2018 represents an increase of 50%, for example (at an absolute increase of 10 percentage points).

Table 4: Summary of main countries of origin and comparison with 2017

First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2018		
Characteristics in 2018		Comp. to previous year
Syria		
Share of total	Remains the largest group, comprising 14,576 persons, share of 17.4%	➡
Female share	Sustained increase over several years, more women than men now, at 58.1%	⬆
Share of married persons	At 67%, some 2/3 of asylum applicants were married	➡
Share of under 30 year-olds	First-time asylum applicants of legal age and under 30 accounted for 43.4%	⬇
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Over 1/3 (38.8%) have attended a higher-level educational institution	⬇
Occupational fields	High share of persons assignable to category “Housework, pension, school or studies” (38.5%)	
Iran		
Share of total	Now second-largest group, comprising 8,317 persons, share of 9.9%	⬆⬆⬆
Female share	Less women than men, at 39.8%	➡
Share of married persons	Slightly over half (51.7%) were married	➡
Share of under 30 year-olds	Around one third (32.0%) were aged under 30	➡
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Very high share of applicants have attended high school or higher education, at 87.0%	➡
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories “Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions (12.3%), “Services” (9.1%)	
Iraq		
Share of total	Now third-largest group, comprising 7,350 persons, share of 8.8%	⬇
Female share	Almost half were women (45.0%)	➡
Share of married persons	Almost 60% were married (59.5%)	➡
Share of under 30 year-olds	The share of under 30 year-olds has fallen to 42.7%	⬇
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	28.0% have attended high school or a higher education institution	➡
Occupational fields	High share of persons assignable to category “Housework, pension, school or studies” (32.7%)	

First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2018		
Characteristics in 2018		Comp. to previous year
Turkey		
Share of total	Now fourth-largest group, comprising 6,951 persons, share of 8.3%	↑↑↑
Female share	Around 1/3 (31.8%) were women	↑
Share of married persons	Almost 60% were married (59.9%)	↑
Share of under 30 year-olds	40.2% of Turkish first-time asylum applicants were under 30 years of age	→
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Very high share of applicants have attended high school or higher education, at 73.9%	↑↑
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories "Teaching professions" (19.6%), "Office work, banking, insurance" (8.4%)	
Nigeria		
Share of total	Now fifth-largest group, comprising 6,377 persons, share of 7.6%	↑↑↑
Female share	Rising female share, accounting for almost half of applicants, at 44.8%	↑
Share of married persons	Only 17.8% were married	↓
Share of under 30 year-olds	Small number of married persons, but applicants were also young: 67.3% were under 30 years of age	→
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Around one fifth (20.7%) have attended high school or a higher education institution	→
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories "Manual trades" (14.5%), "Services" (11.6%) and "Out of work" (18.8%)	
Afghanistan		
Share of total	Now only sixth-largest group, comprising 4,101 persons, share of 4.9%	↓↓
Female share	Share has risen substantially, to over 1/3 (34.8%)	↑↑
Share of married persons	Almost half were married (47.3%)	→
Share of under 30 year-olds	Just under 60% were under 30 years of age (59.6%)	↓
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Almost 1/3 of applicants (30.9%) have attended a higher-level educational institution	↑
Occupational fields	High share of persons assignable to categories "Housework, pension, school or studies" (25.0%) and "Manual trades" (9.4%)	
Eritrea		
Share of total	Now only seventh-largest group, comprising 2,646 persons, share of 3.2%	↓↓↓
Female share	Share has risen to 37.1 %.	↑↑
Share of married persons	Just over 1/3 were married (35.0%)	→
Share of under 30 year-olds	Almost 3/4 (73.9%) were under 30 years of age	→
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Almost one quarter (22.3%) have attended high school or a higher education institution	↓
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories "Agriculture, forestry, fishing" (18.9%), "Soldier" (11.7%), "Out of work" (18.7%)	
Somalia		
Share of total	Remains the eighth-largest group, comprising 2,413 persons, share of 2.9%	↓↓
Female share	Share has risen to 40.6 %.	↑
Share of married persons	Almost half were married (46.3%)	→
Share of under 30 year-olds	Over 3/4 (75.3%) were under 30 years of age	→
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Low level of education: Only 11.0% have attended high school or a higher education institution	↑↑
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories "Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" (11.9%) and "Out of work" (22.1%)	



First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2018		
Characteristics in 2018		Comp. to previous year
Georgia		
Share of total	New addition to ten main countries of origin, with 2,567 persons making up a share of 3.1%	Was not among the ten main countries of origin in 2017
Female share	Women account for around 1/3 of asylum applicants (31.9%)	
Share of married persons	Over half were married (56.2%)	
Share of under 30 year-olds	37.4% of Georgian first-time asylum applicants were under 30 years of age	
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	43.7% have attended high school or a higher education institution	
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories “Construction” (9.5%), and previously “Out of work” (14.5%)	
Guinea		
Share of total	Remains the tenth-largest group, comprising 1,992 persons, share of 2.4%	↓
Female share	Low female share in recent years (2017: 9.5%), increase to 22.7% in 2018	↑↑↑
Share of married persons	Only 11.3% were married	→
Share of under 30 year-olds	Small number of married persons, but applicants were also young: 88.8% were under 30 years of age	→
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Around one fifth (18.6%) have attended high school or a higher education institution	↓↓
Occupational fields	High share in the category “Manual trades”, very high share previously “Out of work” (28.0%)	

- ↑↑↑ very strong increase (over 35%)
- ↑↑ marked increase (over 15% to 35%)
- ↑ slight increase (over 5% to 15%)
- roughly the same (-5% drop to +5% rise)
- ↓ slight decrease (under -5% to -15%)
- ↓↓ marked drop (under -15% to -35%)
- ↓↓↓ very strong decrease (under -35%)

Source: “Social component” database (13.03.2019)

6. Focal Topic: Educational Background of First-Time Asylum Applicants, 2015-2018

Bi-annual analysis of “social component” data have appeared over recent years, in each case containing comparisons with the previous years’ figures. As this 2018 annual report marks the fourth such annual review, it is appropriate to trace the development of certain characteristics over the course of time. This report thus includes an additional chapter on educational backgrounds which traces the development of the annual figures from 2015 to 2018.

The countries Syria, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea, which have constantly been among the ten main countries of origin over the past four years, are considered below. Syria was the most strongly presented country of origin throughout all these years. Iran, which was the second-strongest country of origin in 2018 and 2017, ranked fourth in 2016 and tenth in 2015. The rankings of the other countries varied between second and seventh in the years concerned.

The number of first-time asylum applicants of age fluctuated substantially in the four years under review, as Figure 10 shows.

There was a particularly high number of first-time applicants in Germany from all the countries in 2016.⁵ The figures were substantially lower in 2017, and a further drop ensued for most of the countries in 2018. The decline after 2016 was relatively small for Iran, however, as a result of which this country ranked second among the main countries of origin in the last two years. The different quantities naturally play a major role with regard to the overall average educational level - in 2016, Syria had a very strong influence on this characteristic, for example.

5 Some of these persons entered Germany in 2015, but were unable to file an asylum application directly after entry. In this connection, a summary of the Federal Government’s corresponding Migration Report 2016/2017 is available in English at <http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2016-2017.html> (11.06.2019).

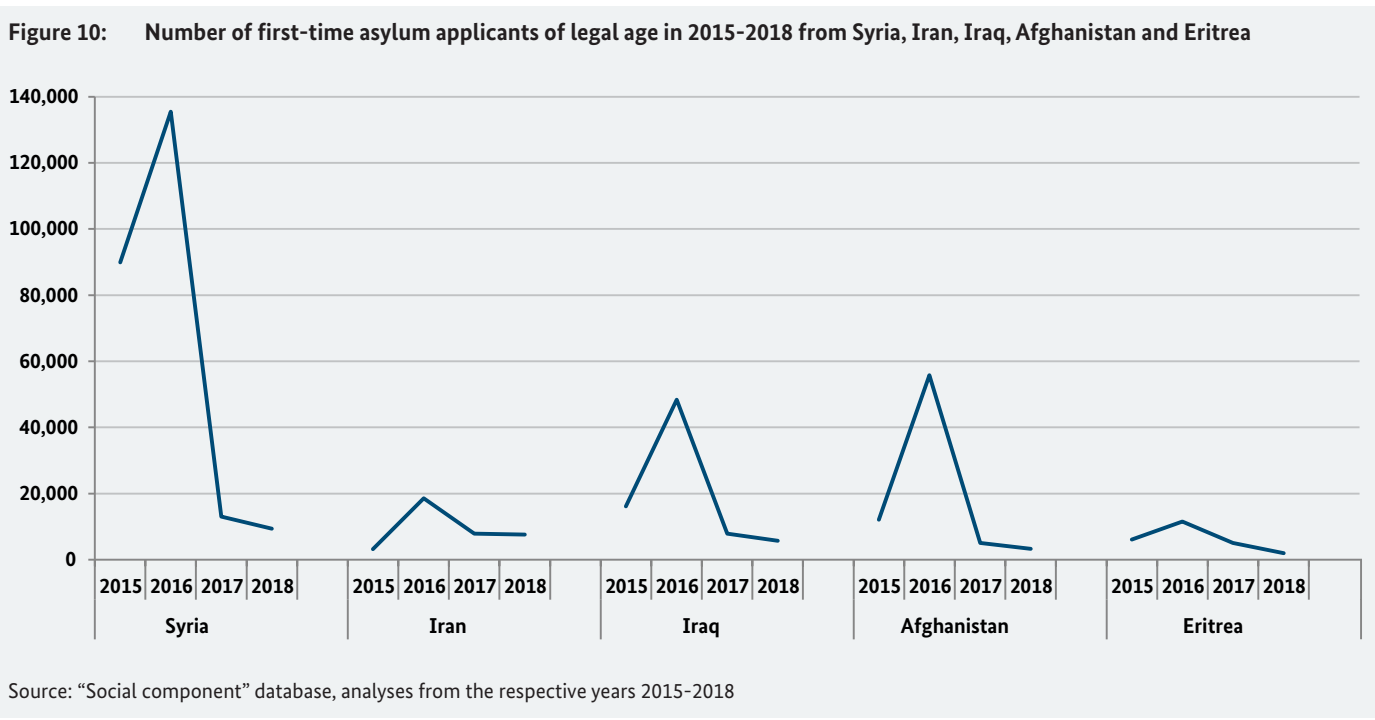
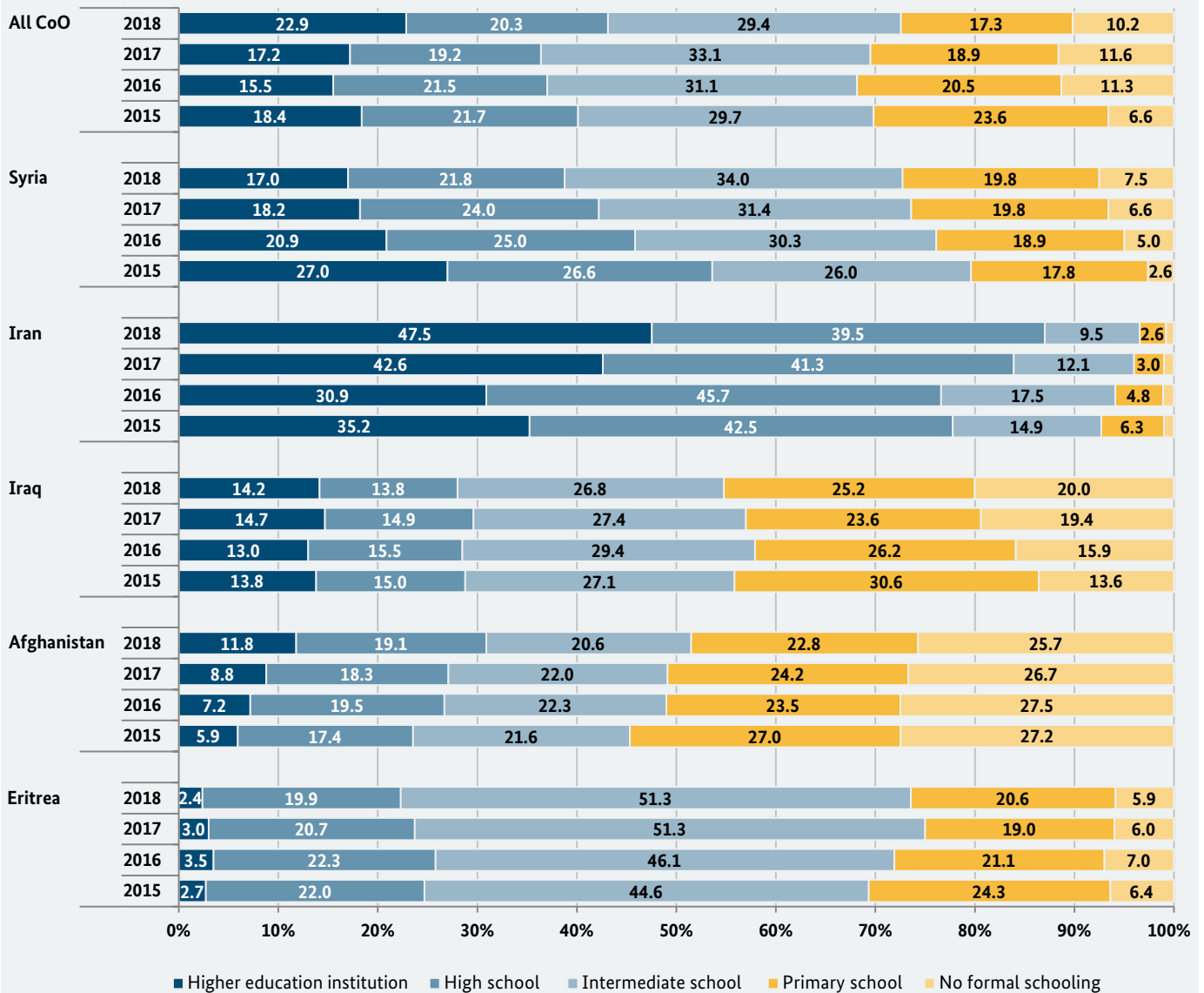


Figure 11: First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2015-2018 from Syria, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea: Highest educational institution attended (in per cent)



Source: “Social component” database, analyses from the respective years 2015-2018
 Shares under 2% are not shown.

Figure 11 shows the percentage shares of the highest educational institutions attended in the respective years. It can be seen that the share of persons who have attended a higher education institution fell from 18.4% in 2015 to 15.5% in 2016, before rising again to 17.2% in 2017 and 22.9% in 2018. The lowest share thus applied in 2016. However, as the number of persons for whom information enabling classification of their education is available was the highest in this year, at 371,299, a large number of persons who had attended higher education were nevertheless present among the asylum applicants.

A similar trend is to be observed among the first-time asylum applicants who had attended high school prior to coming to Germany. In this case, however, the share also fell slightly between 2016 and 2017; in 2018, at 20.3% it was still below the share reported in 2015 (21.7%). The share of persons who had attended intermediate school is virtually identical in 2015 (29.7%) and 2018 (29.4%), but was slightly higher in the years in between (31.1% and 33.1% respectively). In contrast, the number of persons who had only attended primary school fell continually from 23.6% in 2015 to 17.3% in 2018. However, while only 6.6% of first-time asylum applicants were without any formal schooling in 2015, this share rose to 11.3% in 2016 and 11.6% in 2017. 2018 shows a slight drop to 10.2%.

Iran:

As the previously presented analyses have shown, there are countries of origin from which asylum applicants with a particularly high level of education come and others with a higher prevalence of asylum applicants who have only a low level of education. Iran is particularly notable among the five countries presented here. The share of persons from this country of origin with high school education at least stood at more than three quarters throughout all the years under review. The share of persons who had attended higher education fell slightly in 2016 but then rose again substantially in the following years, such that in 2018 almost half of all first-time asylum applicants from Iran had attended higher education (47.5%). Together with those who had attended high school, the share of applicants who had attended high school at least attained a record level of 87.0%. In addition, 9.5% had attended an intermediate school. The share of Iranian first-time asylum applicants without any schooling or with only primary schooling is thus vanishingly small.

Syria:

While first-time asylum applicants from Syria also show a comparatively good level of education, in contrast to Iran the share of better educated persons has declined in recent years. While 27.0% had attended higher education and 26.6% had attended high school in 2015, both of these shares declined in the following years. In 2018, the number of asylum applicants from Syria who had previously attended higher education dropped below average for the first time, at 17.0%. The share of persons who had attended high school fell to 21.8%, which is slightly above the overall average. At the same time, the share of persons who had attended intermediate or primary school and those without any formal schooling has risen over the last four years.

Eritrea:

The number of persons who have attended higher education is particularly low among asylum applicants from Eritrea. With a maximum share of 3.5%, this category is markedly below the overall average. Following a slight rise in persons with higher education in 2016, this share subsequently dropped below the level for 2015. The share of first-time asylum applicants who have attended high school is in the average range for all countries of origin, however. In the case of intermediate schools, the share is actually above average: Almost half or over half of all Eritrean first-time asylum applicants had attended an intermediate school in all the years under review. This share rose up to 2018, while the share of persons with primary schooling fell slightly. In comparison to Afghanistan and Iraq, the share of persons from Eritrea without any formal schooling is also very low, and was below average in all the years, ranging between 5.9% and 7.0%.

Afghanistan:

The number of persons coming from Afghanistan who have previously attended higher education is also below average. The share rose from 5.9% in 2015 to 11.8% in 2018, however. Together with those whose highest attended educational institution was a high school, in 2018 over 30% had attended a higher-ranking educational institution. In 2015, this share was below 25%. The share assignable to the category "intermediate school" initially rose in 2016 but subsequently declined again, and stood at one fifth in 2018 (20.6%). The shares of persons with primary schooling or without any schooling declined for the most part over the years under review, but are nevertheless well above the overall average, at around one quarter of all Afghan first-time asylum applicants.

Iraq:

A similar picture applies to persons from Iraq. Here too, the share of first-time asylum applicants who have attended higher education is below the overall average and shows virtually no change over the past years. Within the four years under review, it varied between 13.0% and 14.7%. A similar picture applies to the share of persons who have attended high school (between 13.8% and 15.5%). The share of persons who had attended intermediate school initially rose slightly in 2016 (29.4%), but by 2018 it had fallen again to 26.8%, correspondingly roughly to the 2015 level (27.1%). Asylum applicants from Iraq also show a very high share of persons for whom primary school was the highest level of educational institution. While this share has fallen over the last four years from 30.6% to 25.2%, at a level of one quarter it is still markedly higher than the overall average of 17.3%. At the same time, the share of persons without any formal schooling has risen substantially in recent years: While the number of persons without schooling was already above average in 2015 (13.6%), this share continued to rise over the years and stood at one fifth in 2018.

Very different trends thus apply to the presented countries of origin: While the share of better educated persons (higher education or high school) from Syria has fallen, the corresponding figure for persons from Iran shows a marked further increase from an already high initial level. There has also been an improvement (albeit minimal) in the level of education of persons from Afghanistan. For persons from Eritrea, the intermediate school level continues to predominate. First-time asylum applicants from Iraq show little changes in the area of higher-ranking education, but a marked increase in persons without any formal schooling.

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IMPRINT

Publisher:

Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge
Forschungszentrum Migration, Integration und Asyl
90461 Nürnberg

Date:

07/2019

Layout:

Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF)

Download:

<https://www.bamf.de/DE/Themen/Forschung/Veroeffentlichungen/veroeffentlichungen-node.html>

Suggested citation

Heß, Barbara (2019): Potential of Asylum Applicants: Analysis of “Social Component” Data relating to Applicants’ Social Structure. Annual Report 2018. Reports on Migration and Integration. Series 3. Nuremberg: Research Centre for Migration, Integration and Asylum at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

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