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Children and Adolescents after the Flight: Living situations among refugee families in Germany

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5 | 2019

Children and Adolescents after the Flight

Living situations among refugee families in Germany

By Cristina de Paiva Lareiro

At a glance

- The lives and everyday pursuits of refugee children and adolescents were studied on the basis of the second ware of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey from 2017.
- A large majority were accompanied by at least one parent when they entered the country; only 13% of refugee minors entered the Federal Republic with acquaintances or other relatives, or alone.
- Three-quarters of refugee families lived in private accommodations in 2017. The families' children lived together with an average of one or two siblings and at least one parent.
- The spatial equipment of the children's and young people's living environment lagged behind that of their peers without a refugee background. This illustrates the limited financial resources of many families after their flight, regardless of their current benefit status.
- Over 85% of refugee minors felt their competence in German was good or very good. Over two-thirds did not attend programmes to improve their language skills.
- Three-quarters of the children and adolescents spent their free time with Germans at least weekly. But differences by gender and age group were apparent here. Both girls and older adolescents (ages 16 to 17) of both genders indicated more frequently that they never had contact with Germans in their free time.
- Over 85% of the minors felt very welcome or extremely welcome in the Federal Republic. However, almost one-third of the girls felt less welcome than they had at the time when they first arrived in Germany, while this was the case for only 13% of the boys.
- Although about two-thirds of the surveyed children and adolescents indicated that they missed people from their country of origin often or very often, 95% of them could imagine staying in Germany permanently.

Introduction

The refugees who arrived in Germany between 2013 and 2016[1] also included numerous families and children. Nevertheless, there are few scientific studies focussing this group. Aside from publications on caring for refugee children and small children (Gambaro et al. 2018; Will et al. 2019) and on participation in education (de Paiva Lareiro 2019; Will et al. 2019), until now there has been a particular lack of information about the life of refugee families and their children after their flight to Germany. Qualitative studies like the one by Lechner and Huber (2017) have made it clear that it is not always easy for refugee minors in families or partial families to manage everyday life in a new country. The surveyed adolescents, for example, indicated that they suffered acutely from the loss of their group of friends or the limited space in their accommodations.

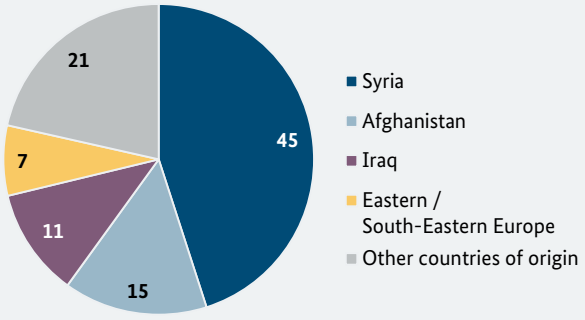
It therefore seems worthwhile to take a look at how refugee families and their children view their own lives and everyday pursuits. The present brief analysis considers various aspects of everyday life and participation on the basis of the data from the 2017 IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey. With whom do refugee children and their families live in Germany? How did these young people arrive in Germany? What is their home environment like? How well have they mastered the German language? How do they spend their free time, and with whom? Do they feel welcome in Germany?

Refugee families in Germany

The following analyses use the data from the second round of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey, conducted in 2017 (Kroh et al. 2018), which was the first to include a survey of children and adolescents in various age groups about certain topics. Data were analysed from 2,063 households of persons who entered Germany between 2013 and 2016, filed an application for asylum (Brücker et al. 2017) and had minor children living with them at the time of the survey, together with responses from 337 children and adolescents from these households.[2]

The largest group was families from Syria, at 45%, followed by families from Afghanistan (15%) and Iraq (11%) (Fig. 1).[3] 7% of the households with minor children came from Eastern or South-Eastern Europe, while the remaining 21% were families from other countries.

Fig. 1: Refugee families by country and region of origin
(in per cent)



Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, weighted, number of observations = 2,063.

How do refugee families live, and with whom?

On average, the households of refugee families comprised between four and five persons, although the range of household sizes was comparatively wide. Consequently, the data set contains both small families with only two members in the household – as a rule, the minor child and one parent or some other adult caregiver – and large households with up to 13 members. The situation was analogous for the number of children living in the household. On average, the families had two or three children, but the data set also includes households with one child and large families with up to nine minor children. More than half of the refugee families included at least one child below the age of three, some of whom had been born in Germany.

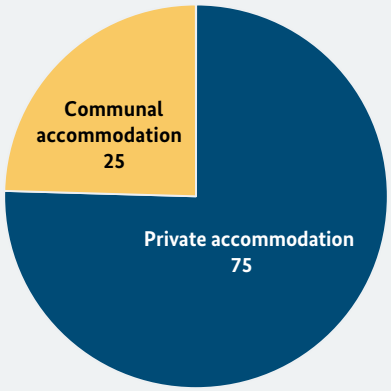
Three-quarters of the studied families were living in private accommodations at the time of the survey; only 25% lived together with their children in a communal accommodation in 2017 (Fig. 2).

1 The term "refugee" is used here not in the legal sense, but as a general term for children, adolescents and their families who have filed an application for asylum in Germany, irrespective of whether a decision was reached on that application, or what the decision was. For a fundamental description of the studied population addressed here, see Kroh et al. 2018.

2 In some analyses the data for adolescents of the same age (with and without a migration background) from the Socio-Economic Panel Study (Wagner et al. 2007) are compared as a reference; these are indicated in each case.

3 The countries of origin were determined on the basis of the nationality of the head of the household.

Fig. 2: Refugee families by type of accommodation (in per cent)



Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, number of observations = 2,063.

In almost all the studied families, the minor children lived in the same household with one or both parents (97%) (Fig. 3a). In just under three-quarters of the families, the children and adolescents lived in a household that also included minor or adult siblings, while the household also included relatives in 9% of the cases, and non-related persons in 2%.[4]

4 Household composition can be described from the data set on the basis of relationship to the head of the household (anchor person of the survey). In addition, a separate parent and child questionnaire to be filled out by a parent or legal guardian allows to identify the minors' mother and father, if they participated in the survey, together with a more detailed description of the child's relationship to the anchor person. However, the parent and child questionnaires are not available for each child, and therefore there may be gaps in the information here.

To find out whether the data set includes families in which minors lived without their parents – for example, with adult siblings or other relatives – one must consider the exact composition of the household (Fig. 3b). More than 90% of the children and adolescents lived in households with their nuclear family (one or both parents, with or without siblings). In 5% of the cases, additional relatives lived with the minors, along with the nuclear family. Only 3% of the minors lived without their parents, sharing a household with siblings or other relatives.

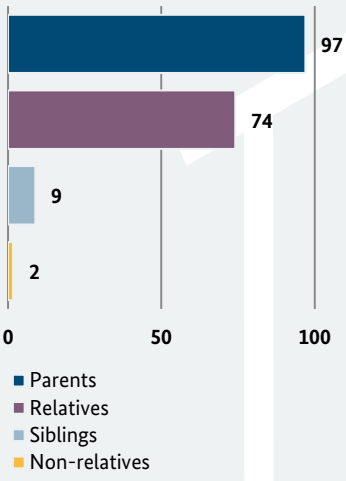
Life and everyday pursuits as seen by the children and adolescents

Starting with its second round in 2017, the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey has also included data from surveys of children and adolescents about their daily lives in Germany. The survey covered boys and girls born in 2005 (11-12 years of age at the time of the survey), 2003 (13-14 years of age) and 2000 (16-17 years of age). The last group was the largest, at 49% (Fig. 4b). The group of 337 participants included slightly more boys than girls (Fig. 4a), although there were no significant differences in gender distribution within the various age groups.[5]

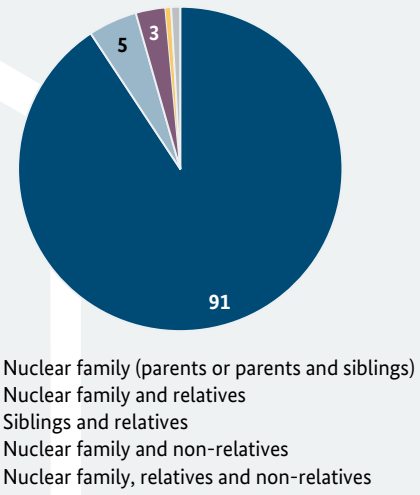
5 The size of the sample may affect the significance of the results. Because of the relatively small number of interviews with children and adolescents, it must therefore be assumed that although significant results may be attributable to significant correlations within the base population, statistically insignificant effects may also be significant for the base population (von Auer 2011).

Fig. 3: Refugee families by household composition (in per cent)

a) Children live in same household with



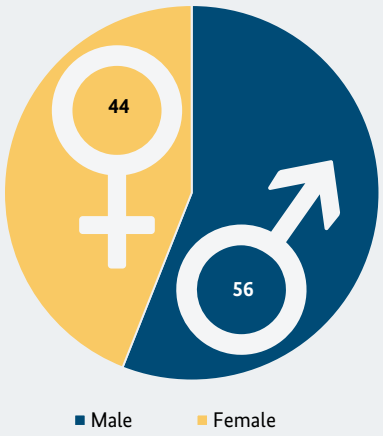
b) Household composition



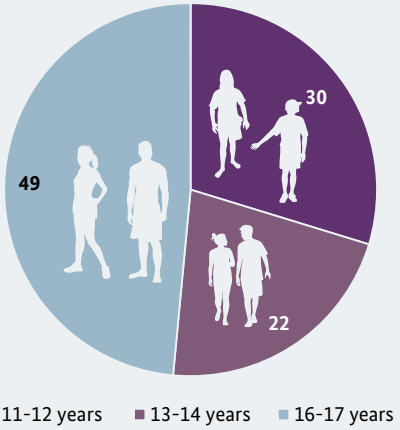
Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, number of observations = 2,063. Values below 2% not shown.

Fig. 4: Refugee children and adolescents in the sample, by selected characteristics (in per cent)

a) By gender



b) By age group



Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, number of observations = 337.

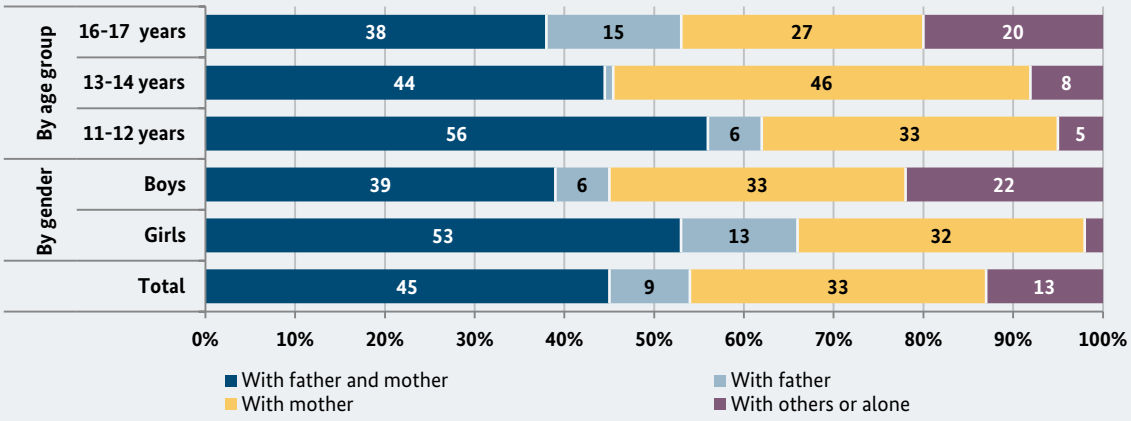
How did the refugee children and adolescents arrive in Germany?

The large majority of the children and adolescents in the sample who entered the Federal Republic between 2013 and 2016 came to Germany with at least one parent; only 13% were accompanied by someone else, or were unaccompanied (Fig. 5).[6] The percentage of arrivals without parents was highest among the male respondents, at 22%, and increased with the adolescents' age. As parents are likely to feel that older or male adolescents can travel alone more safely than younger or female children, this is to be expected (Tangermann/Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik 2018).

However, most of the children and adolescents under consideration came to Germany with both parents. This was the case for more than half of the children between the ages of 11 and 12 and for girls in general. If minors arrived accompanied by only one parent, in all age groups this parent was usually the mother. Children who entered with their father were most often girls (13%). The differences between genders and age groups are statistically significant.

6 The survey data do not make it possible to differentiate as to whether the children and adolescents were unaccompanied when they entered the country (unaccompanied entry), because this question was not asked separately. At the time of the survey, the children and adolescents were living with all or part of their families, and therefore were not considered unaccompanied minors.

Fig. 5: Arrival in Germany by gender and age group (in per cent)



Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, number of observations = 335. Values below 2% not shown.

What does the home environment of refugee children and adolescents look like?

Flight from their country of origin compels families to abandon a large portion of their material belongings. Only the most essential items can be brought along – if any can be brought at all. After arriving in their destination country, therefore, refugee families must build up a new home with scarce financial resources. This also affects the children and adolescents living in the families. As has already been explained, the majority of the children and adolescents were already living in private accommodations in 2017. Yet these households can be distinguished in terms of the options they offer for private space and the resources they have available. It must be taken into account that space and home accoutrements, as a segment of benefits in kind, are closely linked with drawing benefits for asylum applicants. These benefits are essentially equivalent to Germany's basic security benefits, so that there is no apparent adverse positioning relative to other recipients of transfer benefits.[7]

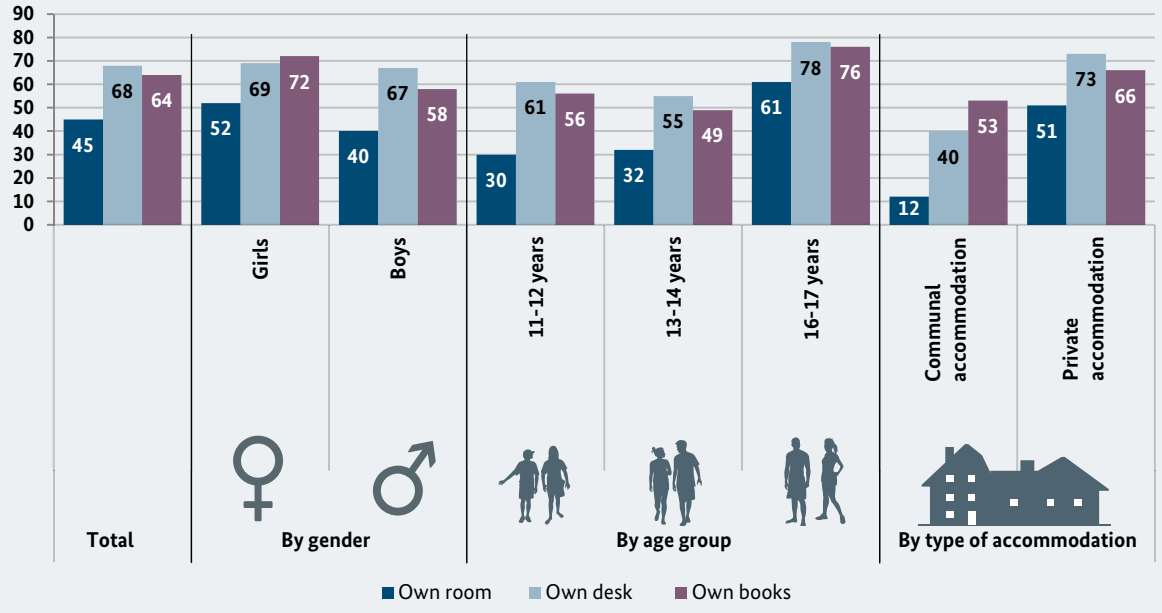
In the year of the survey, less than half of the surveyed minors had their own room (Fig. 6). There is a significant correlation with the respondent's age here. Only 30% of the children aged 11 and 12 could withdraw to their own room, while more than twice as many adolescents aged 16 and 17 could do so. According to the responses, 12 percentage points more girls than boys had their own room, but this difference was not significant. There is a significant correlation between type of accommodation and minors' having their own room. While only 12% of the respondents in communal accommodations had a private room to go to, more than half the children and adolescents in private accommodations had one (51%).

Among the refugee minors in the sample, 68% had their own desk. Differences between genders here were minimal and insignificant. Analogously to having one's own room, one also finds a significant correlation with age in regard to having one's own desk: older adolescents ages 16 and 17 indicated most frequently, at 78%, that they had their own desk. Living in a private accommodation also favoured having one's own desk: 33 percentage points more minors in private accommodations (73%) indicated that they had their own desk than did children and adolescents in communal accommodations (40%).

64% of the refugee children and adolescents had their own books available. In this case there are significant differences by gender in addition to the differences by age described above: 72% of the girls said they had their own books, while only 58% of the boys said so. This is consistent with the status of research on gender-specific differences in young people's reading behaviour, which indicates that girls and boys differ in motivation to read, quantity of reading and frequency of reading (Philipp 2008). Differences between refugee

7 For more information about the Act on Benefits for Asylum Applicants (Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz), see EMN/BAMF (2018).

Fig. 6: Agree that specific resources are present in household (in per cent)



Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, number of observations = Total / by gender / by age group: own room (336), own books (336), own desk (312); by type of accommodation: own room (300), own books (300), own desk (277).

minors in communal housing and private accommodations are not significant.

If we compare the material resources available to refugee children and adolescents in the sample with those of young people from the Socio-Economic Panel Study who are of the same age with no refugee background, the limited financial resources of families after flight become evident. For the large majority of children and adolescents in Germany, having books, one's own desk and one's own room are basic parts of the household environment. Almost all (96%) children and adolescents with no refugee background indicated in the same survey year that they had their own books; almost 90% could study or do homework at their own desk; and 87% had a way to withdraw to a room of their own within the household.[8]

How well do refugee children and adolescents master the German language?

A good knowledge of the host country's language is highly relevant to migrants' and refugees' participation in virtually every sphere of society. A knowledge of German enables children and adolescents to cope with daily life, and for example to visit a physician or shop in a supermarket effectively; it also makes it possible to make friends with German peers. Learning the German language is also a necessary condition for acquiring knowledge in a school context: only an adequate knowledge of the language enables children and adolescents to follow lessons and grasp the content being taught. For that reason, language competence is an important aspect of immigrants' cultural integration (Esser 2006).

Most of the surveyed children and adolescents (86%) assessed their German competence as very good or good (Fig. 7a); only 3% indicated that they had a rather poor mastery of German.[9] There were insignificant differences between girls and boys in the upper categories: 43% of the girls assessed their German skills as "very good", while only 27% of the boys did so. On the other hand, boys indicated 11 percentage points more often that they had a "good" knowledge of German skills than did girls of the same age.

Similar differences also appear in a comparison of age groups. Young refugees aged 11 and 12 still gave their German competence the lowest assessment; only 21% indicated that they had a "very good" mastery of German, while almost twice as many gave this response in the two higher age groups (39% and 40%). The positive assessment of language competence tended to rise with age. Thus, the highest age group – ages 16 and 17 – included no adolescents who assessed their language competence as "rather poor" or "poor", while 91% indicated they had "good" or "very good" German skills.

The refugee minors were also asked to assess their general German competence at the time they began attending school in Germany. Fig. 7b) shows the change in self-assessed German competence from the beginning of school attendance to the survey date. 82% of the refugee children and adolescents indicated that their knowledge of German had improved over time; 13% assessed their competence as roughly equal at the survey date and school entry date; only 5% felt their current German competence was less than when they began school. The differences by gender and age group here vary at a low level and are not significant. However, in considering the distribution, it must be taken into account that this is a retrospective assessment by the respondents. At the time of the survey, they were estimating their competence both at the time when they began school in Germany, and at the present date. Moreover, the amount of time between school entry and the survey varied among these minors, and could also be very short in some cases.

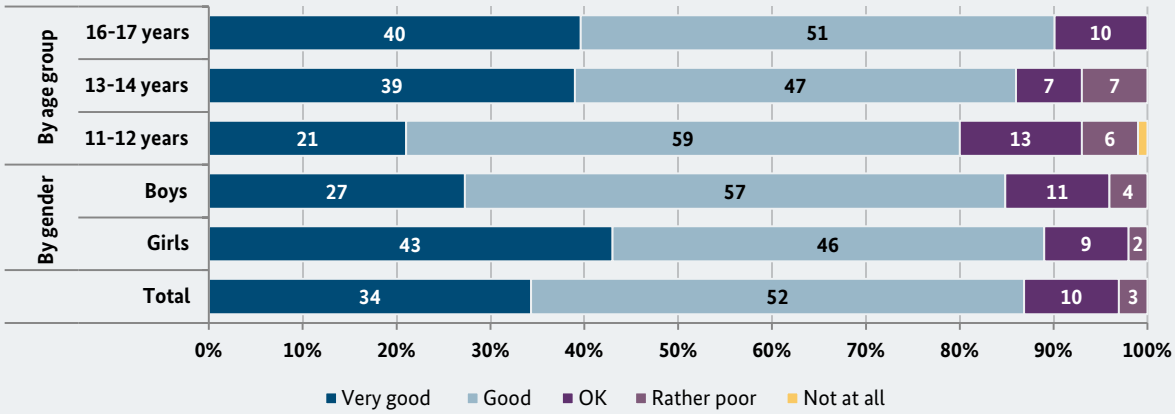
Finally, Fig. 7c) illustrates children's and adolescents' participation in measures to support knowledge of German. Slightly fewer than 30% of the refugees indicated that they were participating in services to improve their language competence; 23% did so regularly, and 6% irregularly. However, more than two-thirds of the adolescents (71%) indicated that they did not participate in any language acquisition programme. Here the questionnaire directed to the children and adolescents does not permit a more precise differentiation between the various forms of language support programmes.

8 The Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) from 2017 was consulted for these comparative analyses of young people of the same age with no refugee background.

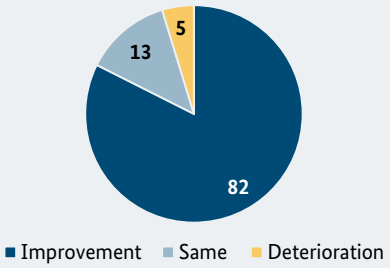
9 The IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey has no objective test data about language level among refugees; as is the customary and well-established practice in quantitative surveys, the respondents' subjective self-assessment was used instead.

Fig. 7: German competence[1] and German language learning assistance (in per cent)

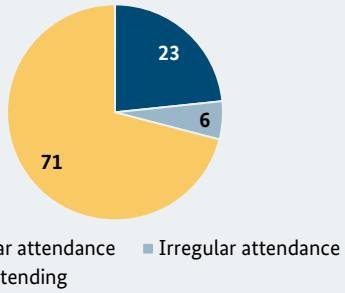
a) Assessment of competence in German (speaking, writing, reading)



b) Change in German language competence since attending school in Germany



c) Participation in remedial German language programmes



1 The German competences shown here are based on an average of the respondents' self-assessments of their competences in speaking, reading and writing the German language.

Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, number of observations = assessment of German competence (324); change since entering school (303); participation in German language improvement programmes (332). Values below 2% not shown.

With whom do refugee children and adolescents spend free time?

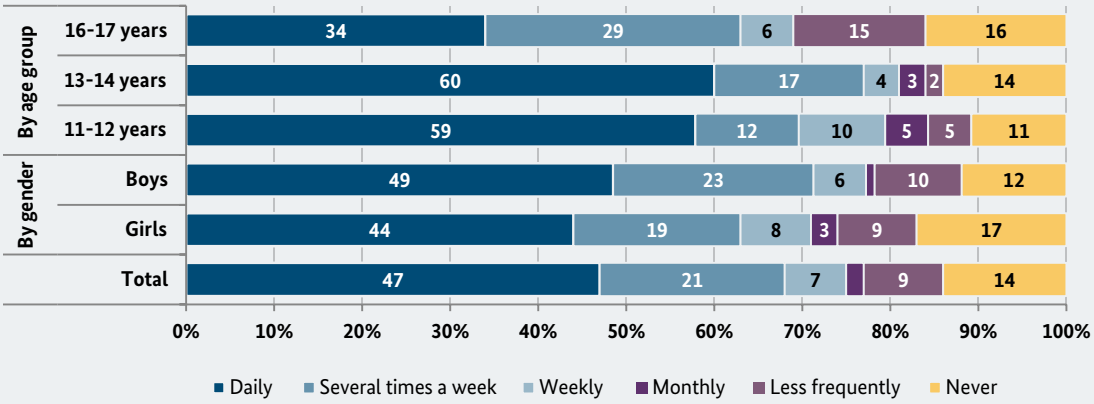
It is sufficiently well known from the research on the social development of children and adolescents that with increasing age they increasingly orient themselves towards the so-called peer group (Naudascher 1978). The peer group affords orientation in establishing values, support in the process of separating from parents, and a space for trying out social behaviour; it also plays a central role in identity formation at puberty (Pugh/Hart 1999). In the special case of young refugees, contacts with peers in the host country offer additional advantages. Social contacts provide opportunities for further language practice, and thus make it easier to acquire the German language. They also offer a low-threshold connection point for making contact with the host country's culture and values. Consequently, regular contact with German peers can have a positive effect on refugee children's and adolescents' integration.

75% of the surveyed children and adolescents spent their free time[10] with Germans[11] at least once a week (Fig. 8). About one-quarter had free-time contact with people from Germany only once a month or less, or not at all. There were slight differences here by gender: girls had daily or weekly leisure-time contact with persons from Germany somewhat less frequently; the percentage of those who indicated they never spent free time with Germans was highest here, at 17%. However, these differences prove to be statistically insignificant.

10 The children and adolescents were asked about contacts in free time to allow a distinction between contacts with peers in the host society that automatically occur in a school context and contacts that take place privately. The concept of free time was not defined further for the respondents.

11 The survey data do not permit to distinguish whether these are children and adolescents of the same age in the peer group, or also older members of the host society, such as social workers or parents' friends.

Fig. 8: Frequency of spending free time with Germans (in per cent)



Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, number of observations = 327. Values below 2% not shown.

Statistically significant differences do appear in regard to the different age groups. Refugee children and adolescents between the ages of 11 and 14 had the largest contingent (81%) that spent free time daily or weekly with Germans. Older adolescents age 16 and 17 lagged 12 percentage points behind this group. They also had the highest percentage of respondents who had almost no leisure contact with people from Germany: 15% indicated that they spent free time with Germans less than once a month; 16% said they never did so.

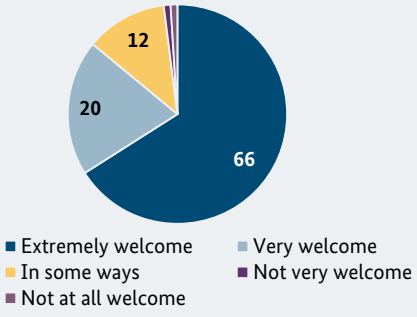
However, older refugee adolescents' tendency to network less than younger refugees with people from the host country during their free time is mitigated somewhat when one considers responses about friendships with Germans. Here the adolescents age 16 and 17 indicated they had an average of two German friends (1.93). Although this value was less than that for the youngest respondents, who indicated on average that they had about four friendships with Germans (4.10), it was above the figure for the middle age group, ages 13 and 14, who had an average of one to two German friends (1.64). It would therefore also be conceivable that older adolescents' time is more involved with school and vocational training, and also with assisting parents, and therefore they have less time available for leisure activities (Rössel-Čunović 2008). However, more precise information should be gathered from more extensive analyses.

Do refugee children and adolescents feel welcome in Germany?

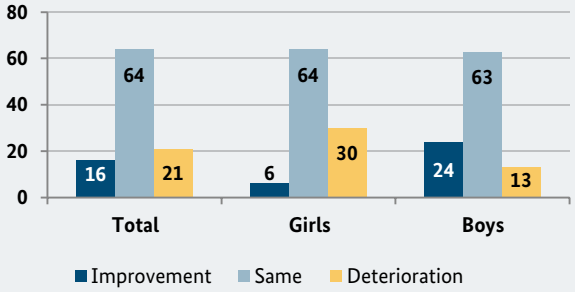
It is not always easy to settle in a new country after leaving home and sometimes also friends and family members. The society in the host country and its attitude towards the immigrants thus also plays an important role. If the society conveys a sense of welcome and of being open to the refugees, this can make it easier for them accomodate in a foreign land.

Fig. 9: Feeling of being welcome (in per cent)

a) Feeling of being welcome today



b) Change in feeling of being welcome



Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, age groups: 13-14 and 16-17 years, number of observations = 212. Values below 2% not shown.

The IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey also surveyed the children and adolescents in the two older age groups about the degree to which they felt welcome in Germany at the time of the survey and at the time when they arrived (Fig. 9a). This is therefore a subjective assessment of the sense of being welcome. 86% of the children and adolescents felt very or extremely welcome in the Federal Republic at the time of the survey. Only 12% felt welcomed by the society here only in some regards, and only 2% felt rather or entirely unwelcome.

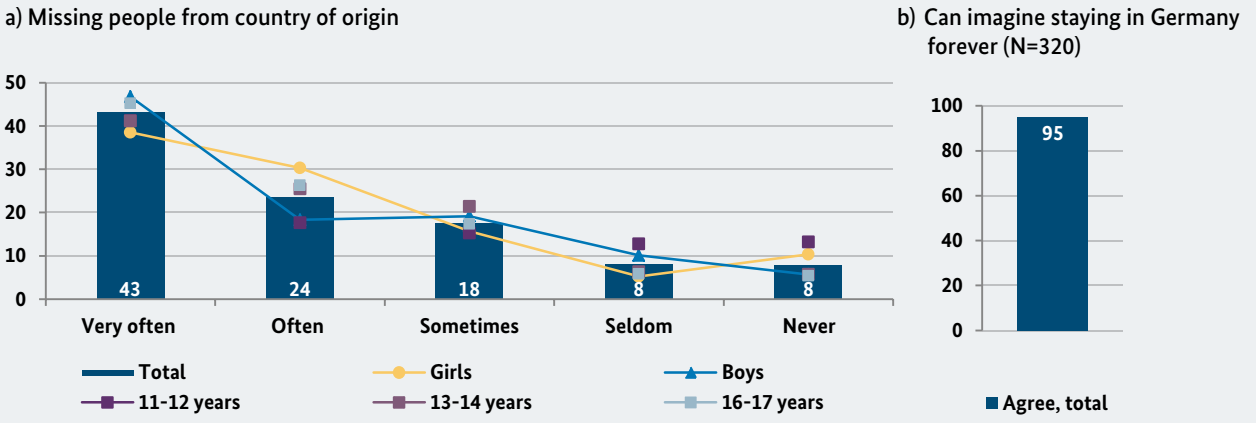
The sense of being welcome did not change for 64% of the respondents between the time of arrival and the time of the survey (Fig. 9b). 16% now felt more welcome by the society than they had before. However, 21% reported that they felt less welcome than at the beginning of their residence in Germany. Here again there are significant differences between genders: 30% of the female respondents felt less welcome in 2017 than when they arrived in Germany, while this was the case for only 13% of the boys. Just under one-quarter of the male adolescents even felt more welcome than they had at the time of their arrival, while the figure among the female respondents was only 6%.

Are refugee children and adolescents content with their lives, and can they imagine staying here?

Separating from a familiar environment and persons with whom one has important relationships also can be a burden on refugee children and adolescents' sense of well-being, and may adversely affect their satisfaction with life. It is therefore little wonder that 67% of the refugee children and adolescents indicated that they often or very often missed familiar people from their country of origin, and only 8% said they never did so (Fig. 10a). There are only gradual differences at a low level between genders and various age groups, and these differences are not statistically significant. Furthermore, almost all the minor refugees could imagine remaining in Germany permanently (Fig. 10b).

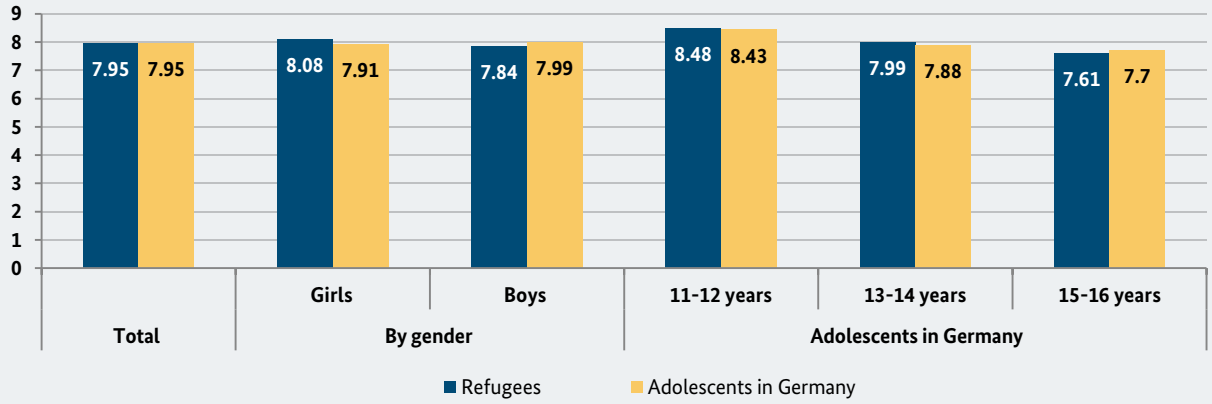
Though they may miss people from their country of origin, the minor refugees consistently reported a relatively high contentment with life (Fig. 11). On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 representing "entirely discontented" and 10 "entirely contented", the children and adolescents reported an average of 7.95 points and were thus within the upper third of the scale. In terms of satisfaction with life, there were again significant differences among the three studied age groups. Children age 11 and 12 were the most contented with their lives, averaging 8.48 points. Adolescents age 13 and 14 averaged 7.99 points, and older adolescents of 16 and 17 were the lowest on the contentment scale, averaging 7.61 points. This finding is consistent with studies of contentment with life among adolescents living in Germany (HBSC-Team Deutschland 2011; HBSC-Studienverbund Deutschland 2015): the percentage of those who reported a very high level of contentment with life declined as the adolescents' age increased, and is also noticeable in the means for contentment with life among children and adolescents without a refugee background in the Socio-Economic Panel Study of the same year (Fig. 11); these figures fall within levels similar to those for the group of adolescent refugees.

Fig. 10: Missing people from country of origin and prospects of remaining (in per cent)



Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, number of observations = missed (329); could imagine staying in Germany (320).

Fig. 11: Contentment with life overall (averages)



Source: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey 2017, data weighted, number of observations = 326; Socio-Economic Panel Study 2017, data weighted, number of observations = 1,575.

Conclusion

The analyses presented above, based on the data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey, offer an insight into the lives of refugee families and their children. Refugee families in Germany originate from various countries; the largest group by numbers is families from Syria, followed by those from Afghanistan (15%), Iraq (11%) and Eastern and South-Eastern Europe (7%).

A large majority of the surveyed children and adolescents entered the Federal Republic with at least one parent or both. Only 13% arrived with acquaintances or other relatives, or unaccompanied. The situation was similar for the families' living situation. On average, the children in the families lived with one or two siblings and one or both parents, and only in a few cases did other relatives or other persons live with them in the household.

Three-quarters of the refugee families (already) lived in private accommodations at the time of the survey; as a rule, such housing offers children more opportunities for private space than communal accommodations. As a result, the children living there indicated more often that they had their own room or their own desk. In general, about two-thirds of the surveyed minors reported that they had their own desk or their own books; on average, older adolescents and girls more often had access to their own rooms. Nevertheless, the spatial equipment in the children's living environments clearly reflected many families' limited financial resources after their flight, because they lagged far behind young people in the same age group who had no refugee background.

86% of the refugee minors assessed their competence in German as good or very good. Girls and older adolescents reported the highest assessments. A majority of the surveyed refugees also indicated that their language competence had improved from when they first started school in Germany. More than two-thirds did not attend language improvement programmes.

Three-quarters of the children and adolescents spent free time with Germans daily, several times a week, or at least once a week. In this case as well, there were differences between age groups and genders. Girls and older adolescents (16 to 17 years of age) stated more often that they never had contacts with Germans during leisure time.

Although two-thirds of the surveyed children and adolescents indicated that they missed people from their country of origin often or very often, almost all of them could imagine remaining in Germany. Over 85% of these minors felt very or extremely welcome in the Federal Republic at the time of the survey. Almost one-third of the girls, however, felt less welcome than when they first arrived in Germany, while this was the case for only 13% of the boys.

In an overall view of results, it is especially evident that girls and older adolescents (age group 16 and 17) repeatedly differed from the other respondents, especially with regard to social and emotional participation. Both groups were the most frequent to indicate that they had no contact with Germans in their free time, and surveyed girls also felt less welcome as time went on. Furthermore, older adolescents of both genders tended to be less contented with their lives. If one compares these findings with participation in the educational system, one finds there too that coming to Germany at a younger age has a positive effect on opportunities to participate, and younger adolescents were more likely to find a place in secondary schools

(de Paiva Lareiro 2019). However, in the educational sphere, girls did not lag behind boys; in fact, they had a higher probability of attending an intermediate secondary Realschule or an upper secondary Gymnasium that qualifies them for university. Thus, female gender has no evident adverse effect on participating in the educational system.

Accordingly, the available data do not permit the assumption that refugee girls face a generalised difficulty in participating in society. However, the literature does include indications, especially in qualitative studies, that "[...] it is more difficult for them to gain access to social space than it is for male adolescents" (Thomas et al. 2018: 231). A more than negligible number of refugee families come from cultural groups where the customary norms and forms of interaction between the genders differ from those in Germany because of religious and cultural factors. This may result in girls' sometimes feeling that they are not treated respectfully enough in their contacts with Germans, so that they themselves, or their parents, refuse contact (Thomas et al. 2018; Lechner/Huber 2017). Hence it is repeatedly pointed out that gender-segregated leisure activities may be helpful in ensuring social participation by refugee girls (Thomas et al. 2018; Lechner/Huber 2017).

In addition to gender differences, differing opportunity structures may also play a role for older adolescents. While adolscents in the two younger age groups generally attend school, less teenagers aged 16 and 17 do, because they are more often involved in vocational training and represent the largest percentage of adolescents who do not participate in any general-educational option and are not engaged in gainful employment (de Paiva Lareiro 2019). Yet school constitutes a social space that makes it possible to encounter individuals of the same age in the host society, and to intensify those contacts so that friendships develop. These opportunities are presumably less available to older adolescents. Moreover, this group is often more extensively involved in assisting their parents than their younger siblings are. For example, they take on the role of translator in such contexts as dealing with the authorities (Lechner/Huber 2017), or must additionally assist their parents in everyday life, for example because the parents have been traumatised by flight or by war experiences. Consequently, there are only limited possibilities for developing and maintaining social contacts outside the family (Rössel-Čunović 2008; Lechner/Huber 2017). One option for empirically testing the discussed correlations and deriving causal effects relating to age or gender would be associated multivariate analyses that allow to take statistical account of further parameters and thus to rule out that the present results are produced by other correlations. Due to the small case numbers, this is not feasible here.

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