Potential of Asylum Applicants: Analysis of "Social Component" Data relating to Applicants' Social Structure; Annual Report 2019

Heß, Barbara

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Tätigkeitsbericht, Jahresbericht / annual report

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 2019

Barbara Heß

Forschung

Research Centre
Migration, Integration and Asylum

Contents

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 examines the year 2019.

In 2019 some 71,000 persons of legal age submitted a first-time asylum application in Germany. Around 60,200 (approx. 85%) provided information on characteristics relating to their social structure, education and their most recently pursued occupation.
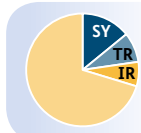
First-time applicants from Syria made up the largest group, comprising over 12,000 persons, followed by persons from Turkey (around 7,500) and Iran (around 6,000). These three countries accounted for slightly less than a third (29.7%) of all first-time asylum applicants of legal age.
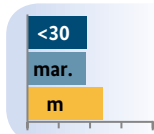
Almost half of the first-time asylum applicants of legal age were under 30 years of age, around 47% were married and 60% were men. The female share has risen as a whole in recent years.
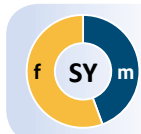
At 55.6%, female first-time asylum applicants from Syria now clearly outweigh their male counterparts. Back in 2015, the share of women from Syria stood at only 21.2%. The share has risen sharply in recent years, although it fell slightly in 2019.
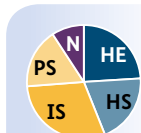
24.0% of those providing information cited a higher education institution (HE), 19.9% a high school (HS), 29.8% an intermediate school (IS) and 17.0% a primary school (PS) as the highest educational institution they had attended. 9.2% stated that they had received no formal schooling (N).
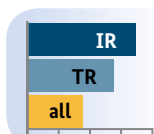
Of the ten main countries of origin, asylum applicants from Iran were the best educated: Some 87% had attended high school at least. Turkey also shows a high share here, at 69% (average across all countries: 44%).

Only 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" = ooW). Of those who pursued an occupation prior to coming to Germany (W), most were employed in manual trades.

The highest level of education was to be found among asylum applicants who had previously pursued an occupation 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

This report comprises an analysis of the "social component" data for 2019. Information relating to applicants' so-called "social component" is collected in the course of first-time asylum applications. This report builds on the previously published reports on "social component" data which have presented similar analyses of first-time asylum applicants from 2015 through to the first half of 2019 (see overview at the end of this report). Official asylum statistics of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees provide a further data source for this publication.

The analyses appear in the series of publications "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 periodically. 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, the highest educational institution they have attended and their most recently pursued occupations. 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 2019. The report is restricted throughout to persons of legal age, as for minors the educational or vocational qualification process is often still in progress. Information on marital status is similarly irrelevant with regard to minors.

2. Database

The BAMF official asylum statistics for the period from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019 and an analysis as per 13 March 2020 of "social component" data relating to persons submitting first-time asylum applications in 2019 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 administrative statistics.

The answers are based on information provided by the interviewees. As such, it cannot be ruled out that the interviewees' behaviour in answering the questions may be influenced by strategic, cultural or gender-specific factors. As the information is collected in the course of the asylum process, it cannot be ruled out that individual asylum applicants might, for example, "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 collection of information and the classification and comparability of schooling and vocational qualifications, particularly when the categories which are customary in Germany[1] 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 from 2015 to 2018, the percentage coverage of "social component" answers ranged between 70% and 80%. For the first half of the year 2019 and the year as a whole, it was even in the order of 85%. 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).

---

1   This refers to the curricula of the different types of schools in Germany (incl. primary school, 'Hauptschule' (~ secondary school), 'Realschule' (~ middle school), high school, 'Gesamtschule' (~ comprehensive school), vocational schools, special needs schools) and the different types of vocational training, as well as the dual system of vocational education and training which is common in Germany.

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 applicants, 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 representativity of the "social component" data, they are compared with the official asylum statistics with regard to the aspect of age structure.

Figure 1: Asylum applicants in 2019 with relevant sub-groups

Asylum applicants: 165,938   **2019**

First-time asylum applicants: 142,509

First-time asylum applicants of legal age: 71,088

First-time asylum applicants of legal age providing information on social component: approx. 60,200

Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for 2019

In all, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees registered a total of 165,938 persons filing an asylum application in 2019 as a whole (Figure 1). This figure included 142,509 first-time applicants, 71,088 of whom were of legal age[2]. Around 85% of these persons provided answers to the "social component" questions. This results in a population of some 60,200 first-time asylum applicants of legal age for the purpose of "social component" analyses. The numbers of answers may vary from one question to another, as not all persons answered all questions.

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; 12,381 first-time asylum applications). These made up a 14.1% share of the overall total, which is markedly lower than in 2018 (17.4%).

Table 1: First-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin and the ten main countries of origin in 2019 and difference to the previous year

Coutry of origin	Number in 2019	Share 2019	Difference to number in 2018	Difference to share 2018
Syria	12,381	14.1%	-2,195	-3.3
Turkey	7,532	8.6%	581	0.3
Iran	6,162	7.0%	-2,155	-2.9
Iraq	5,979	6.8%	-1,371	-2
Nigeria	5,021	5.7%	-1,356	-1.9
Afghanistan	4,221	4.8%	120	-0.1
Georgia	2,405	2.7%	-162	-0.3
Guinea	1,527	1.7%	-465	-0.6
Pakistan	1,485	1.7%	-93	-0.2
Russian Federation	1,434	1.6%	**-510**	-0.7
Sum of main countries of origin	**48,147**	**54.8%**		
Other	39,698	45.2%		
Total	**87,845**	**100.0%**		

Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for 2019

Turkey ranked second in 2019, with 7,532 first-time applications and a share of 8.6%, followed by Iran on 7.0% and Iraq with a similarly high share of 6.8%. As in 2018, Nigeria ranked fifth, but with 5.7% of first-time applicants of legal age in 2019, as compared to 7.6% in the previous year. Afghanistan also retained the same position in 2019 as in the previous year, ranking sixth in the list of main countries of origin, and also claiming a similar share in both years (2019: 4.8%; 2018: 4.9%). At 2.7%, Georgia's share was slightly lower in 2019 than in 2018 (3.1%), but sufficed for seventh place in 2019 as compared to ninth place in the previous year. The following countries - Guinea, Pakistan and the Russian Federation - spanned eighth to tenth positions with shares of 1.7% and 1.6%. With absolute figures ranging between 1,527 and 1,424 persons coming from these

---

2   Persons under legal age also include children born in Germany to asylum applicants, who are included among the first-time applicants.

countries, fewer asylum applicants of legal age came from Guinea compared to 2018, when it ranked tenth with 1,992 persons.

The fact that the shares of the sum total which are attributable to the individual countries are smaller is also due to the fact the overall share of the ten main countries of origin was markedly lower than in 2018. While the main countries of origin accounted for 68.5% of all applicants of legal age in 2018, in 2019 the corresponding figure stood at only 54.8%. This means that the spread over the countries of origin was substantially more heterogeneous than in the previous year. In all, the first-time asylum applicants came from more than 140 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, as well as comparisons between the official asylum statistics and the "social component" database with regard to the age factor, in order to assess the representativity of the latter.

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 in recent years, however, with the male share falling from 64.3% in 2017 to 59.7% in 2018. At 60.1%, the male share is slightly up on the annual average for 2018 (Figure 2).

2019 once again witnessed markedly more female than male applicants from Syria. The declining trend for Syrian men which has been observable in recent years (the male share falling from 48.3% in 2017 to 42.2% in the first half of 2018 and 41.9% for 2018 as a whole) was broken, however, with the figure for 2019 slightly up on the previous year, at 44.4%. Syria nevertheless still has the highest female share of the ten main countries of origin.

For the other nine leading countries of origin, the male share outweighs the female share – though only slightly in the case of the Russian Federation, which shows a 50.3% share of male first-time applicants. The disparity is more pronounced in the case of Iran, Iraq, Nigeria and Afghanistan, whose first-time applicants have a female share of only around 40%. The female share was even lower among

Figure 2: Gender of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin and the ten main countries of origin in 2019 (in per cent)
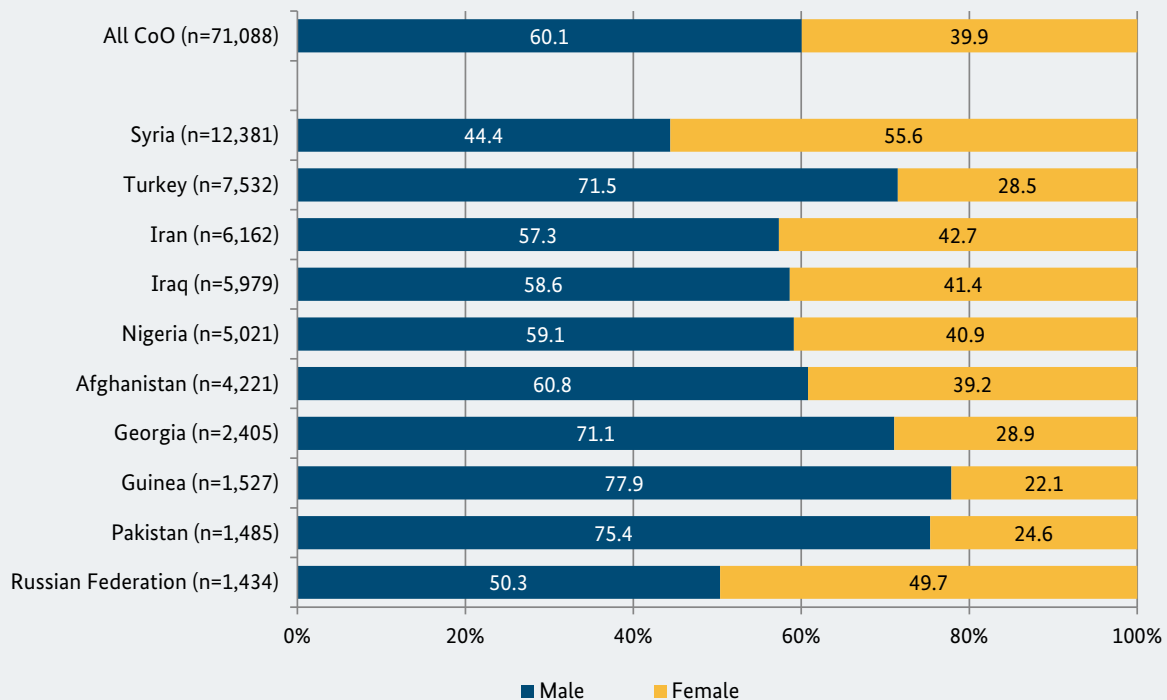
Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for 2019

applicants from Georgia (28.9%) and Turkey (28.5%). The lowest female shares among the ten leading countries of origin applied to Pakistan and Guinea, whose female fractions were below one quarter, at 24.6% and 22.1% respectively.

The male shares have increased for most of the main countries of origin in comparison to the previous year, rising by up to 4 percentage points. The only countries to show a lower male share in 2019 than in 2018 were Iran (57.3% vs. 60.2%) and Afghanistan (60.8% vs. 65.2%).

3.2.2 Marital Status

With regard to the countries of origin, a particularly high share of married persons is noticeable among persons from Syria, at 65.6%. Although this figure was down slightly on the previous year (67.0%), almost two-thirds of applicants were nevertheless married. A similarly high share of married first-time asylum applicants came from the Russian Federation (63.9%). Over half of the first-time applicants from Turkey were also married (56.8%), although this share represents a slight drop in comparison to 2018 (59.9%). An increase in the married share was also recorded among persons from Iran, at 55.1% as compared to 51.7% in 2018, and among persons from Afghanistan (50.4% vs. 56.2% in 2018). In contrast, the share of married persons from Iraq dropped substantially, to 52.2% in 2019 as compared to 59.5% in 2018. The instance of married persons from

Georgia was also lower (53.2% vs. 53.2% in 2018). A notable aspect continues to be the small share of married persons from Guinea (12.2%) and Nigeria (14.8%). This is attributable in part to the comparatively low age of first-time asylum applicants from these countries (see Figure 4). Nigeria shows a substantial drop, from a married share of 17.8% in 2018 to 14.8% in 2019.

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 structure[3] of the first-time asylum applicants of legal age was dominated by young people: According to the official asylum statistics, almost

---

3   It should 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 50.0% in 2019 (cf. Figure 1). This trend indicates the rising number of children and juveniles in the asylum process, some of whom were born in Germany. In 2019 as a whole, first-type asylum applications for children aged under one and born in Germany accounted for 22% of the total volume of first-time applications ((cf. https://www.bmi.bund.de/Shared-Docs/pressemitteilungen/DE/2020/01/asylzahlen-jahr-2019.html, 22.01.2020).

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 2019 (in per cent)
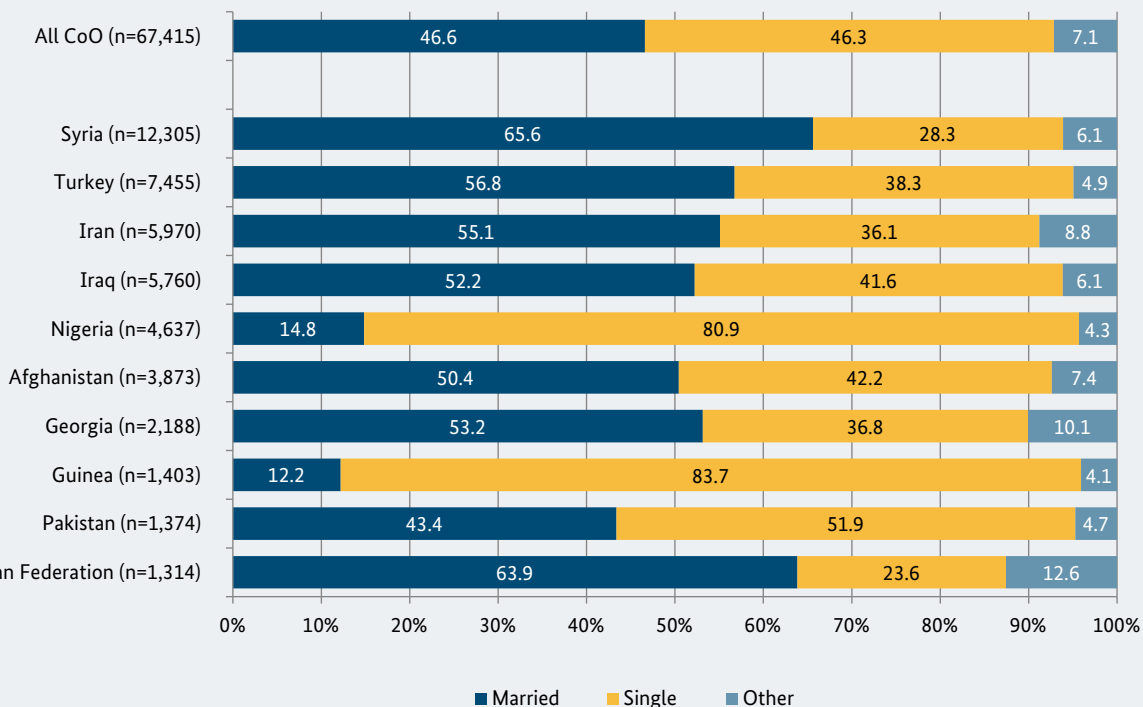
Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2020)

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 2019 (in per cent)
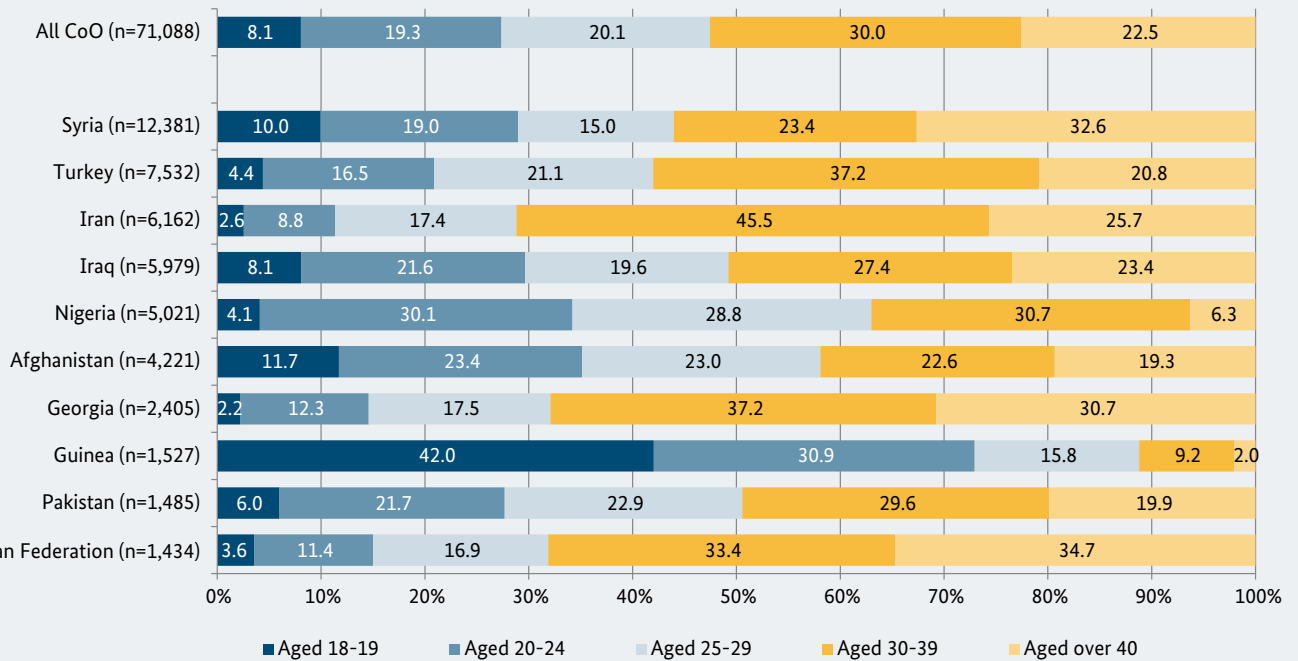
Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for 2019

half (47.4%) were under 30 years of age (Figure 4). The share of persons aged 18 or 19 stood at 8.1%, while the age group between 20 and 24 represents a share of 19.3%. A similarly high share (20.1%) was aged between 25 and 29. The next-oldest age group between 30 and 39 made up a 30.0% share, while persons aged 40 and over accounted for only a good fifth, at 22.5%.

The share of younger persons fell slightly compared to 2018: In 2018, 9.7% of first-time asylum applicants were aged 18 or 19 and 19.8% were between 20 and 24 years old. Together with 20.3% in the age group between 25 and 29, the share of persons aged under 30 thus amounted to almost half the total volume, at 49.8%. The corresponding figure for 2019 stood at only 47.4%. While this difference is not particularly pronounced, it does indicate a trend towards slightly older applicants of legal age. This trend is not peculiar to any individual countries of origin, but applies to all of the main countries of origin.

Marked differences between the respective countries of origin also emerge with regard to the age breakdown. The Russian Federation showed a particularly high percentage of persons aged 40 and over (34.7%), for example, as did Syria (32.6%) and Georgia (30.7%). In contrast, the 30 to 39 age group was prominent among first-time applicants from Iran: With 45.5% belonging to this age group and a further 25.7% aged over 40, over 70% were aged over 30. This

represents the highest share among the ten main countries of origin. A very similar picture also applied to the Russian Federation and Georgia, with first-time asylum applicants aged over 30 making up more than two thirds of the total volume from both of these countries (68.1% and 67.9% respectively).

At 58.0%, the share of persons aged over 30 from Turkey was almost as high as the corresponding share from Syria (56.0%). Syria showed a larger proportion of older persons aged over 40 and persons aged between 18 and 19. The average age only differed by two years between these two countries, however (Syria: 34.3, Turkey: 32.3). An age structure which is slightly "younger" than for these countries but with a similarly "older" bias overall applies to persons from Iraq and Pakistan, from where 50.8% and 49.4% respectively of first-time asylum applicants were aged over 30 years.

In contrast, first-time applicants from Nigeria and Afghanistan are very young. Over half of the applicants from these countries were under 30 years of age (Nigeria: 63.0%, Afghanistan: 58.1%). Afghanistan showed a higher percentage of persons who were only aged between 18 and 19 (11.7% representing the second-highest share in this category among the ten main countries of origin), but also had a higher share of persons aged over 40 (19.3%), as compared to Nigeria's substantially lower share here of 6.3%.

The youngest age structure applied to first-time asylum applicants from Guinea. Here, the share of 18 to 19 year-olds alone accounted for 42.0%. Together with 30.9% in the age group between 20 and 24, this means that almost three quarters of first-time asylum applicants from Guinea were under 25 years of age. When the next-oldest category is also included, it emerges that 88.8% of all first-time applicants were under 30 years of age, as in 2018.

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, or 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 2019. It is also indicated how many of 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" data.

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: 84.6%).

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 male applicants. While no pronounced gender differences are observable among older persons, a substantial disparity is particularly evident among the very young applicants, with the female share markedly lower than the male component.

Figure 5: Age breakdown and gender of 18 to 65 year-old first-time asylum applicants in 2019 (official asylum statistics and "social component" data)
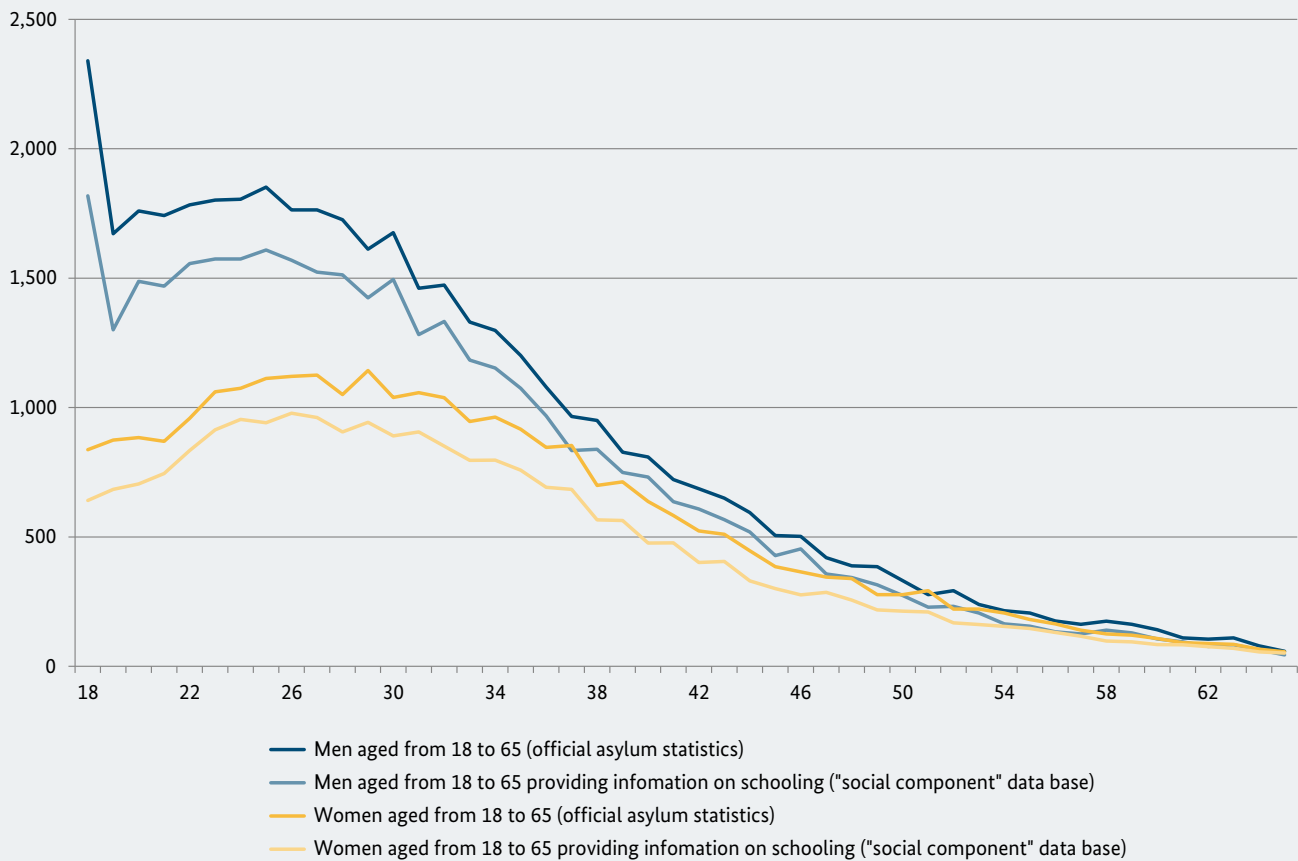
Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for 2018 and "social component" database (13.03.2020)

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 in Germany for a prolonged period and take up employment. With regard to the analysis of both these aspects, however, assessment of the "social component" information is problematic due to the limited comparability of the different school and occupational systems specific to the respective countries of origin, in view of which this information can only serve to provide general indications. This disadvantage is offset by the high numbers of cases, the likes of which are rarely attained in sociological studies.

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 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 (formally) completed their education there. 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

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 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 60,146 first-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2019 who provided information on their schooling, 24.0% stated that they had attended a higher education institution (Figure 6). 19.9% stated that they had attended high school as their highest educational institution. An intermediate school was cited most frequently, at 29.8%. 17.0% stated that they had only attended primary school, while 9.2% had come to Germany without any formal schooling.

In comparison to the schooling of first-time asylum applicants in 2018, the share of persons with a high standard of education (attendance of a higher education institution or high school) was slightly higher in 2019, despite a trend in the opposite direction in the first half of the year. The share of applicants stating that they had attended a higher education institution was 1.1 percentage points higher than in 2018, at 24.0%, while the share of persons who had attended high school was 0.4 percentage points lower, at 19.9%. The share of persons who had attended intermediate school was 0.4 percentage points up on 2018, standing at 29.8% in 2019. The share of persons citing a primary school as the highest educational institution they had attended fell very slightly in comparison to 2018, from 17.3% to 17.0%. The share of persons without any formal schooling dropped by one percentage point in 2019, to 9.2%.

As in the preceding years, first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Turkey and Iran had an above-average level of education. The percentage of persons from Turkey stating that they had attended a higher education institution

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 2019 (in per cent)
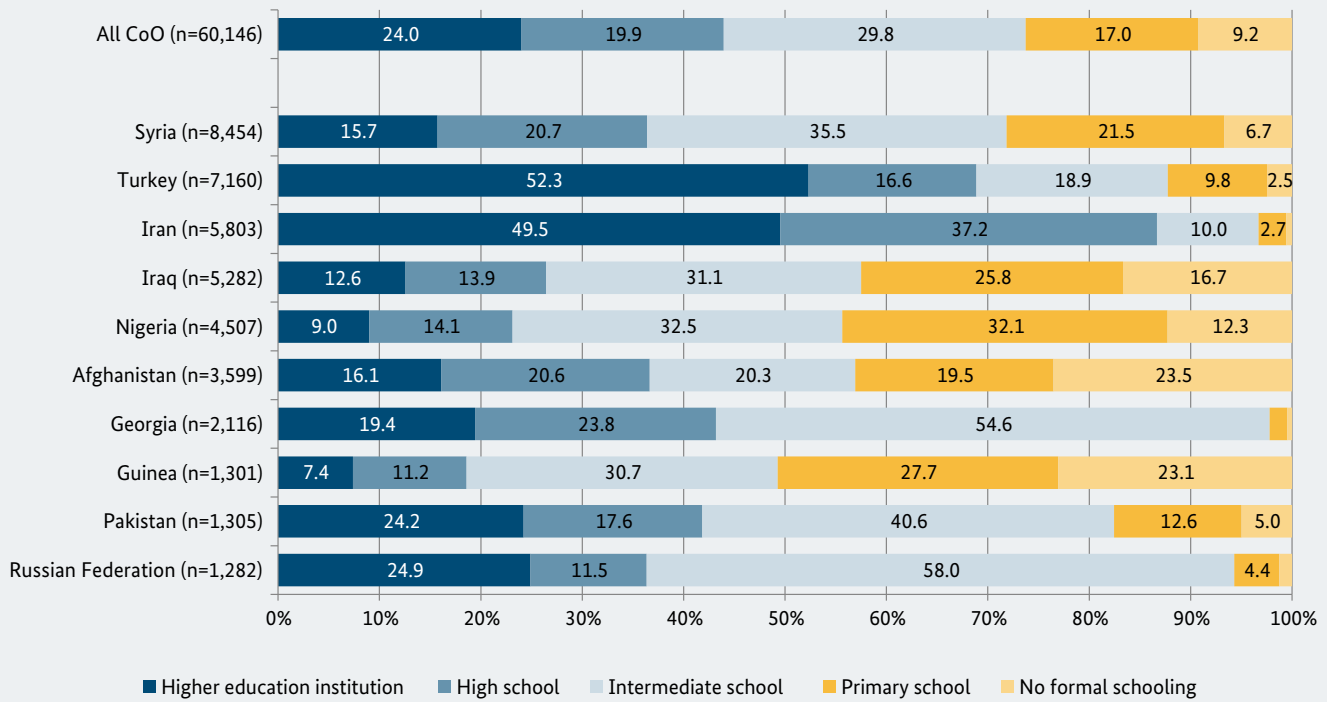
Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2020)
Shares under 2% are not shown.

fell substantially to 52.3% in 2019, however, compared to a figure of 59.3% in 2018. On the other hand, in 2019 16.6% cited a high school as the highest education institution they had attended - up from 14.5% in 2018. Persons from Iran show a contrary trend, with the share of applicants citing attendance of a higher education institution at 49.5% in 2019, as compared to 47.5% in 2018. Conversely, the share of persons who had attended a high school dropped from 39.5% to 37.2%. Taking all instances of attendance of a high school and/or a higher education institution together, in 2019 Iran remained the country with the highest percentage of persons citing high school education at least, with a share of 86.7%, ahead of Turkey (68.9%). As in the preceding years, the share of persons fleeing to Germany from these countries without any school education was negligible once again in 2019, at just 0.6% (Iran) and 2.5% (Turkey). Georgia showed a similarly low share here, at 0.5%. The majority of persons coming from Georgia (54.6%) had attended intermediate school, however. Only applicants from the Russian Federation showed a higher share here, at 58.0%. In addition, one quarter (24.9%) of applicants from the Russian Federation had attended a higher education institution, while 11.5% cited a high school as the highest educational establishment they had attended. The percentage of persons coming from Georgia who had attended a higher education institution was slightly lower than the corresponding share among persons from the Russian Federation, at one

fifth (19.4%). On the other hand, Georgia showed a higher share of persons who had attended high school (23.8%). As such, Georgia had the highest share among all the main countries of origin of people who had attended intermediate school at least (97.8%), followed closely by Iran (96.7%) and the Russian Federation (94.3%).

The first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Pakistan also included a particularly high share of persons with intermediate school education (40.6%). While the share of persons who had attended a higher education institution was slightly above average (24.2%), the number of applicants who had attended a high school was below average (17.6%). The percentage of persons coming from Pakistan without any formal schooling was also very low, however, at 5.0%. Syria showed a similar share of persons without any schooling, at 6.7%. This figure furthermore represents a drop in comparison to 2018 (7.5%). The share of persons who have attended a higher education institution has been in steady decline in recent years, however, falling continually from 27.0% in 2015 to 15.7% in 2019. A similar picture applies to persons from Syria citing a high school as the highest education establishment they have attended, their share having fallen continually over the last four years, from 26.6% to 20.7%. On the other hand, there has been a continual rise in the share of applicants citing intermediate or primary schooling. 63.6% of asylum applicants cited a

Figure 7: **Highest educational institution attended by first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin by gender in 2019 (in per cent)**

Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2020)
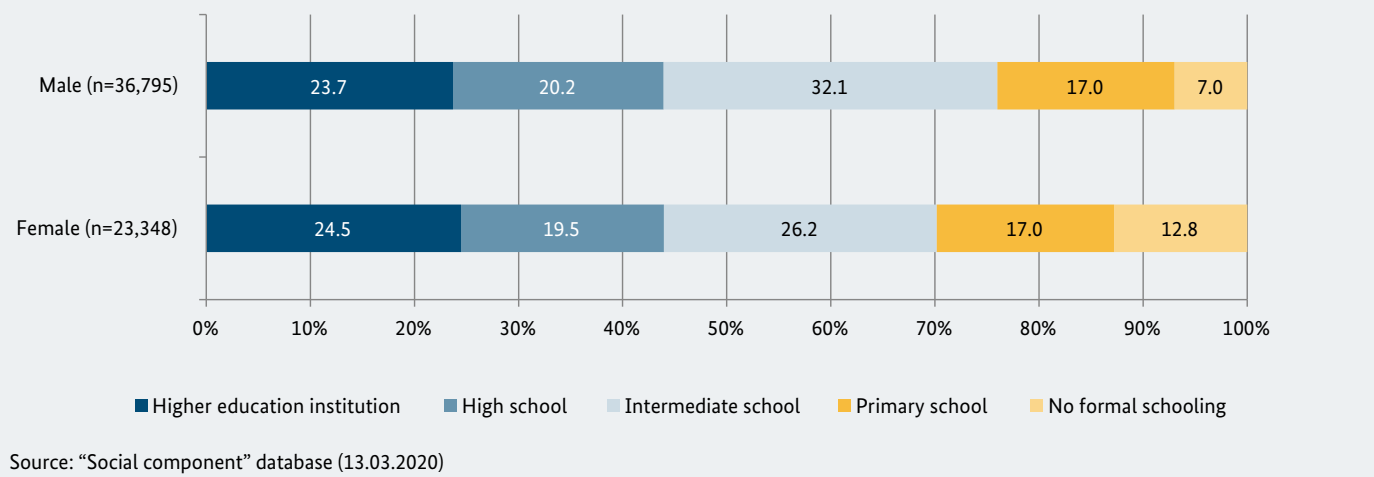
standard of education below high school in 2019, which was well above the overall average of 56.1%.

Weaker educational structures than those among Syrians were to be observed among the other countries of origin. Afghanistan shows a very even spread across all categories of education. In 2019, around one fifth of first-time applicants cited high school, intermediate school or primary school education. While the share of persons who had attended a higher education institution was slightly under one fifth, at 16.1%, the percentage without any formal schooling stood at 23.5%. It should be emphasized, however, that the overall share of persons who had attended a higher education establishment or a high school was substantially higher in 2019 than in 2018, at 36.6% as compared to 30.9%.

The figures for both persons with a high standard of education (higher education institution/high school) and persons without any schooling were not quite so high for Iraq and Nigeria. Around one quarter of applicants from these two countries had attended a higher education institution, while the respective shares of persons without any schooling stood at 16.7% (Iraq) and 12.3% (Nigeria). Persons who had attended an intermediate school or primary school accounted for large shares from these countries, with 64.6% from Nigeria and 56.9% from Iraq falling into this category. While Iraq shows an increase first and foremost in persons with intermediate schooling compared to 2018 (2018: 26.8%, 2019: 31.1%), among persons from Nigeria the increase is primarily in the category of persons who have attended a higher education institution (2018: 6.4%, 2019: 9.0%).

Among all of the main countries of origin, Guinea had the lowest share of asylum applicants citing a higher education institution or a high school as the highest educational establishment they had attended, with only 7.4% citing higher

education and 11.2% citing high school attendance. While the share of persons who had attended intermediate school was in the average range, the percentages with primary schooling and without any formal schooling were second only to Nigeria and Afghanistan respectively, at 27.7% and 23.1%. This means that over half (50.7%) of the first-time applicants from Guinea had no formal education or only primary schooling.

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 (23.7%) than among women (24.5%), while the male share is slightly higher in the high school category (20.2% as compared to 19.2% for women). This may be attributable to the above-average share of men in the age group between 18 and 20, who have not yet had an opportunity to attend higher education. The overall share for the higher education and high school categories together is roughly equal for both genders, at around 44% (men: 44.0%, women: 43.9%). All of these figures have risen slightly in comparison to 2018.

Greater differences emerge with regard to the other educational establishments: While 32.1% of men had attended an intermediate school, the corresponding figure for women stands at only 26.2%. While the share of persons with primary schooling is identical, at 17.0%, 12.8% of women had had no schooling, as compared to only 7.0% of men. As considerably more men than women of legal age have filed a first-time asylum application in recent years, the higher share of persons who have attended intermediate school has a correspondingly greater impact on the overall average. The percentage differences between men and women were

Table 2: Most recently pursued occupations of first-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2019

Occupational fields / most recent occupation	number of persons	share	share males	share females
Manual trades	4,537	7.5	9.7	4.0
Services	4,489	7.4	7.6	7.2
Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work	3,682	6.1	7.4	4.0
Construction	2,932	4.9	7.9	0.1
Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions	2,838	4.7	6.7	1.5
Office work, banking, insurance	2,753	4.6	3.9	5.6
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	2,743	4.5	6.1	2.1
Wholesale and retail	2,554	4.2	5.0	3.0
Teaching professions	2,544	4.2	2.9	6.3
Automotive	1,749	2.9	4.7	0.0
Artistic profession, fashion	1,548	2.6	2.3	3.0
Hotel and catering trade	1,499	2.5	3.0	1.6
Street trading, petty trading	1,460	2.4	3.0	1.5
Public service, church, public safety and security	1,448	2.4	3.2	1.1
Medical, chemical professions, laboratory work	1,370	2.3	1.7	3.1
Transport and tourism	1,333	2.2	3.4	0.4
Soldier	774	1.3	2.0	0.2
Executive position, science, corporate management	616	1.0	1.2	0.8
Other	**1,950**	**3.2**	**2.8**	**4.0**
Housework, pension, school or studies	**11,033**	**18.3**	**6.2**	**37.5**
Out of work	**6,437**	**10.7**	**9.2**	**13.0**
All occupational fields	**60,289**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2020)

of a similar order in 2018, and no fundamental change is to be observed here.

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. 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 findings indicating 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 60,289 first-time asylum applicants of legal age who answered the question as to their most recently pursued occupation, the largest share (7.5%) of those who were recently in work were employed in a manual trade (Table 2). Manual trades were also the most commonly cited occupation in 2018, accounting for a 7.1% share. Also similarly to in 2018, the category of "Services" ranked second, on 7.4% (up from 6.8% in 2018). "Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" claimed the third-largest share at 6.1% – the same level as in 2018. "Construction" rose from being the eighth most frequently cited occupation in 2018 to fourth position in 2019, on 4.9%. With a 4.7% share, "Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions" was in a similar range to "Office work, banking, insurance" (4.6%) and "Agriculture, forestry and fishing" on 4.5%. "Wholesale and retail" and "Teaching professions" showed a figure of 4.2%. All of the other occupational categories had shares under 3%. The shares of "Soldiers" (1.3%) and the category

Table 3: First-time asylum applicants of legal age from the ten main countries of origin and their most recently pursued occupations, 2019

Occupational fields / most recent occupation	Syria (n=8,337)	Turkey (n=7,164)	Iran (n=5,750)	Iraq (n=5,284)	Nigeria (n=4,530)	Afghanistan (n=3,652)	Georgia (n=2,106)	Guinea (n=1,324)	Pakistan (n=1,290)	Russian Federation (n=1,279)
Manual trades	8.7	4.7	6.2	6.6	15.5	8.4	7.1	7.4	5.0	7.2
Services	5.7	5.5	9.4	6.5	11.9	6.7	8.4	8.5	7.1	9.7
Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work	4.6	3.6	3.1	6.9	8.1	4.1	6.8	7.5	6.0	3.8
Construction	3.8	5.6	3.0	5.0	6.4	5.3	9.9	3.0	3.4	7.6
Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions	3.0	5.4	12.7	2.4	4.1	2.9	3.2	1.4	5.9	6.3
Office work, banking, insurance	2.3	7.5	9.9	2.1	1.5	3.5	4.1	2.0	5.0	6.4
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	3.5	3.5	1.0	4.9	4.4	6.0	3.7	4.5	7.7	1.9
Wholesale and retail	2.4	3.1	6.1	3.5	3.8	4.0	4.3	5.4	5.2	4.8
Teaching professions	4.3	15.1	4.3	2.3	1.0	3.3	1.3	0.7	3.8	3.0
Automotive	2.7	1.2	2.6	3.6	5.6	2.4	3.6	4.9	3.0	3.0
Artistic profession, fashion	2.9	1.6	4.6	1.6	6.6	2.5	1.9	1.3	1.6	2.0
Hotel and catering trade	1.9	4.1	1.4	2.3	1.8	1.0	2.2	1.1	1.7	2.1
Street trading, petty trading	1.2	1.2	3.4	2.0	3.8	2.3	1.6	4.5	2.9	1.8
Public service, church, public safety and security	1.2	6.2	1.6	3.1	0.8	3.5	3.5	1.2	0.7	2.7
Medical, chemical professions, laboratory work	2.2	3.4	4.4	1.5	0.8	2.1	2.1	0.5	1.7	3.2
Transport and tourism	1.7	1.6	2.0	2.0	2.3	1.6	3.5	3.3	2.5	3.5
Soldier	0.5	3.1	0.9	1.5	0.7	1.5	2.7	1.3	0.2	0.6
Executive position, science, corporate management	0.4	1.9	2.7	0.5	0.3	0.9	0.8	0.2	1.9	1.6
Other	2.8	4.5	4.3	2.3	1.5	2.8	3.2	1.5	3.3	4.5
Housework, pension, school or studies	35.1	12.0	13.5	29.9	5.5	26.3	11.9	13.4	18.0	16.7
Out of work	9.0	5.1	2.9	9.4	13.6	8.8	14.3	26.4	13.3	7.7
All occupational fields	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 (13.03.2020)

"Executive position, science, corporate management" (1.0%) were particularly low. These shares vary little from the corresponding shares in the previous years.

As in the preceding years, the category "Housework, pension, school or studies" accounted for the largest number of persons. Its share of 18.3% was down on the figures for 2017 (21.5%) and 2018 (18.9%), however. At 10.7%, the share of persons "out of work" was slightly lower than in 2018 (11.4%). These two groups together add up to a share of 29.0%. This means that 71.0% had been in employment prior to coming to Germany.

Marked differences apply here between the sexes: Among women, the largest shares in the area of paid work were in the fields of "Services" (7.2%), "Teaching professions" (6.3%) and "Office work, banking, insurance" (5.6%). While the same respective rankings also applied in 2018, the shares of the first two occupational fields have changed. In 2018, 8.0% of women were occupied in the "Services" category and 5.5% in "Teaching professions". This means that the share in "Services" has fallen by 0.8 percentage points and the share in "Teaching professions" has risen by the same amount.

Among men, the category of "Manual trades" ranked first among all first-time asylum applicants, as in the previous year, accounting for a 9.7% share. As in 2018, "Construction" ranked second, with a 7.9% share. "Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work", which ranked third in 2018, claimed a 7.4% share to move up just behind "Services" on 7.6%. "Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions", which are among the sought-after occupational groups in Germany, ranked fifth with a 6.7% share. "Agriculture and forestry, fishing" also represented a share of over 6%, at 6.1%.

The greatest disparities are to be found in the category "Housework, pension, school or studies", however. Here, the female share stood at 37.5%, marking an increase over 2018 (35.6%), while men accounted for only 6.2% of this category (2018: 6.1%). According to the information provided by the first-time asylum applicants themselves, the share of these persons who were out of work stood at 9.2% among the men (2018: 9.6%) and 13.0% among the women (2018: 13.6%).

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 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 were particularly low (light colouring) or particularly high (dark colouring).

The share of persons employed in manual trades was relatively high, with levels in excess of six per cent in all of the main countries of origin except Turkey (4.7%) and Pakistan (5.0%). Nigeria was particularly noticeable here, with a share of 15.5%; the same applied to the service sector (11.9%). Relatively low shares of first-time applicants from Turkey and Syria had been employed in the service sector (5.5% and 5.7% respectively), while persons from the Russian Federation (9.7%) and Iran (9.4%) showed the highest shares among the main countries of origin after persons from Nigeria. First-time asylum applicants from Iran also 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 9.9%. The "teaching professions" are prominent among persons from Turkey, accounting for a 15.1% share. A particularly large number of first-time applicants from Georgia had previously been occupied in the construction sector (9.9%).

A high incidence in the fields of "Housework, pension, school or studies" is noticeable for persons from almost all countries of origin. The highest shares apply here among asylum applicants from Syria (35.1%) and Iraq (29.9%). A large number of persons coming from Afghanistan also cited this field of occupation (26.3%). These countries were also among those with the highest shares here in 2018. From the other main countries of origin – with the exclusion of Nigeria – between 11.9% and 18.0% of first-time asylum applicants cited this field of occupation. Nigeria shows a very low share in this category, at 5.5%. Persons who were out of work prior to coming to Germany make up a further large group from this country. Nigeria's high share here of 13.6% is similar to the figures for Pakistan (13.3%) and Georgia (14.3%). Only Guinea (26.4%) had an even higher share of previously out-of-work persons. In this connection it should be noted that particularly young persons fled to Germany from this country. For the remaining main countries of origin the shares ranged between 2.9% (Iran) and 9.4% (Iraq).

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

Figure 8:   Educational mean values of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin in 2019 by occupational fields

Occupational field	Value
All occupational fields	3.3
Teaching professions	4.7
Office work, banking, insurance	4.6
Executive position, science, corporate management	4.5
Medical, chemical professions, laboratory work	4.5
Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions	4.3
Public service, church, public safety and security	4.2
Soldier	3.9
Wholesale and retail	3.4
Artistic profession, fashion	3.3
Hotel and catering trade	3.3
Services	3.2
Transport and tourism	3.2
Street trading, petty trading	3.1
Construction	2.9
Automotive	2.8
Manual trades	2.8
Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work	2.8
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	2.5
Other	3.9
Housework, pension, school or studies	3.0
Out of work	2.9

Source: "Social competence" database (13.03.2020) n = 59,396 (all persons submitting information both on the highest educational institution attended and their most recently pursued occupation)

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, however, as education 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 applied to the area of "Teaching professions", at 4.7, followed by "Office work, banking, insurance" on 4.6 and "Executive position, science, corporate management" on 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" (4.5) and "Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions" (4.3). The area of "Public service, church, public safety and security" also showed a level of over 4 (4.2).

Low educational mean values apply to first-time asylum applicants who were previously employed in the areas of "Agriculture, forestry, fishing" (2.5). At 2.8, below-average mean values also apply to those who were employed in the "Automotive" sector, "Manual trades" and "Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work". Persons who were "out of work" prior to coming to Germany show a level of 2.9, as do those who were employed in "Construction". There is no change to the overall average in comparison to 2018 (3.3) and the individual occupational fields also show only negligible differences in comparison to the first half of 2019.

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

Figure 9: Schooling of first-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2019 in the occupational field "Housework, pension, school or studies" by gender (in per cent)
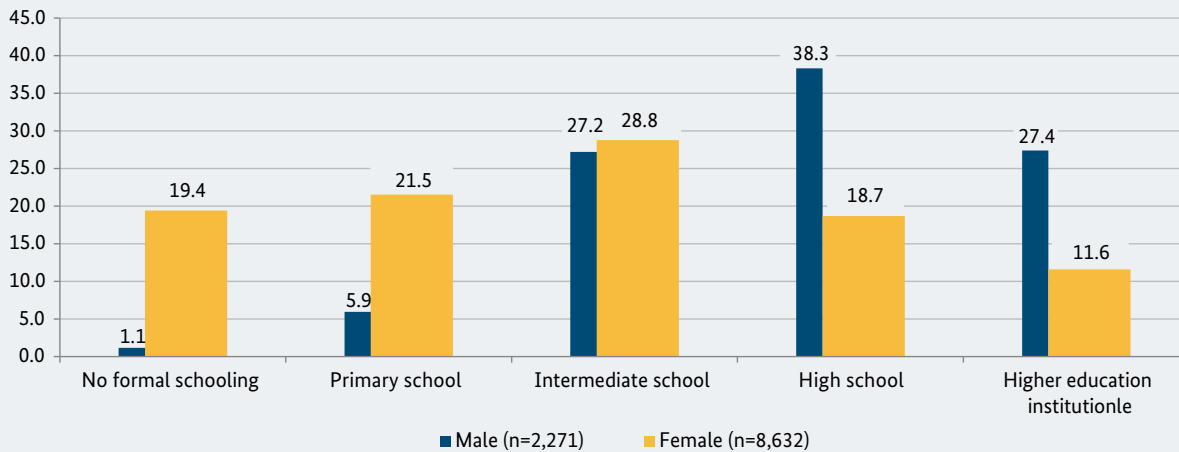
Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2020)

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 ratio between the sexes.

92.9% 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 59.0%. The figure clearly shows that the shares of persons with no formal schooling or whose highest educational establishment was a primary school were markedly lower among men, at 1.1% and 5.9% respectively, compared to women, at 19.4% and 21.5% respectively. The percentage differences were low with regard to attendance of intermediate school, but become substantial again with regard to the higher-ranking educational institutions: 38.3% and 27.4% 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 18.7% and 11.6% respectively.

The high number of women in the groups with no or little schooling suggests that many 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 also 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.

5. Summary: Characteristics of First-Time Asylum Applicants from the Main Countries of Origin in 2019

In order to provide a synoptic overview, the key characteristics pertaining to the respective main countries of origin in 2019 are presented here in tabular form and – where possible – the trend in comparison to 2018 as a whole is indicated in graphic form by means of arrows. This is intended solely to provide a rough 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 percentage[4] changes, while the direction of the arrows shows whether the trend concerned is upward, downward or virtually constant (see the legend at the bottom of the table).

---

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 2018

First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2019		
Characteristics in 2019		**Comp. to previous year 2018**
Syria		
Share of total	Remains the largest group comprising 12,381 persons, share of 17.4% (2018) has fallen to 14.1%	⬇⬇
Female share	Sustained increase over several years, with 55.6% there is a slight decrease compared to 2018	➡
Share of married persons	Slight decrease from 67.0% to 65.6%	➡
Share of under 30 year-olds	First-time asylum applicants of legal age and under 30 accounted for 44.0%	➡
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Over 1/3 (36,4%) have attended a higher-level educational institution	⬇
Occupational fields	High share of persons assignable to category "Housework, pension, school or studies" (35.1%)	
Turkey		
Share of total	Now second-largest group, comprising 7,532 persons, share increased slightly from 8.3% to 8.6%	➡
Female share	Decrease of share of women from 31.8% in 2018 to 28.5%, over 2/3 were men	⬇
Share of married persons	The share of married persons (56.8%) was slightly lower than 2018 (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 (68.9%), but lower share than in 2018 (73.9%)	⬇
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories "Teaching professions" (15.1%), "Office work, banking, insurance" (7.5%)	
Iran		
Share of total	2018 second-largest group, now with 6,162 persons third-largest group, share of 9.9% in 2018 has fallen to 7.0%	⬇⬇
Female share	With 42.7% only country besides Afghanistan with an increase in the female share (2018: 39.8%)	⬆
Share of married persons	Slightly over half (55.1%) were married, a slight increase compared to 2018 (51.7%)	⬆
Share of under 30 year-olds	With 28.8%, less than one third were under 30 years of age, in 2018 the share was still 32.0%	⬇
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Very high share of applicants have attended high school or higher education, at 86.7%	➡
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories "Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions (12.7%) and "Office work, banking, insurance" (9.9%)	

First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2019		
Characteristics in 2019		**Comp. to previous year 2018**
Iraq		
Share of total	Third-largest group in 2018, now forth-largest group comprising 5.350 persons, share of 6.8%	↓↓
Female share	Decrease of share of women from 45.0.% in 2018 to 41.4%	↓
Share of married persons	Decrease of share of married persons from 59.5% to 52.2%	↓
Share of under 30 year-olds	The share of under 30 year-olds has fallen from 42.7% in 2018 to 49.2%	↓↓
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	26.4% have attended high school or a higher education institution (2018: 28.0%)	↓
Occupational fields	High share of persons assignable to category "Housework, pension, school or studies" (29.9%)	
Nigeria		
Share of total	Overall decline despite an increase in the beginning of 2019, share has fallen from 7.6% (2018) to 5.7%.	↓↓
Female share	Decrease of share of women from 44.8.% in 2018 to 40.9%	↓
Share of married persons	Only 14.8% were married, significantly less than in 2018 (17.8%)	↓↓
Share of under 30 year-olds	Very high share of young persons: 63.0% wered under 30 years of age	↓
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	23.1% of applicants have attended a higher-level educational institution, increase over 2018 (20.7%)	↑
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories "Manual trades" (15.5%), "Services" (11.9%) and "Out of work" (13.6%)	
Afghanistan		
Share of total	Like in 2018 sixth-largest group, 4.221 persons, share of 4.8% (similar to 2018)	→
Female share	Share increased from 34.8% to 39.2%, besides Iran only country with increase	↑
Share of married persons	With 50.4%, more than half were married in 2019 (2018: 47.3%)	↑
Share of under 30 year-olds	58,1% were under 30 years of age, slight decrease compared to 2018	→
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	At 36.6%, more than 1/3 were in higher education, a high increase compared to 2018 (30.9%)	↑↑
Occupational fields	High share of persons assignable to categories "Housework, pension, school or studies" (26.3%) and "Out of work" (8.8%)	
Georgia		
Share of total	2018 ninth-largest group, now despite a slight decrease seventh-largest group with 2.7%	↓
Female share	Slight decrease of share of women from 31.9% in 2018 to 28.9%	↓
Share of married persons	Over half (53.2%) were married, in 2018 the share was higer (56,2%)	↓
Share of under 30 year-olds	Decline from 37.4% in 2018 to 32.1% in 2019	↓
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	43.2% have attended high school or a higher education institution	→
Occupational fields	High shares in the categories "Construction" (9.9%) and "Out of work" (14.3%)	
Guinea		
Share of total	Instead of tenth place now eighth, but share only 1.7% and with 1,527 persons less than 2018 (1,992)	↓↓
Female share	Share of women increased in recent years, now slightly down to 22.1%, remains low	→
Share of married persons	At 12.2%, the share was only slightly higher than in 2018, a low share also because many were young	↓
Share of under 30 year-olds	With 88.8% under 30 years of age, Guinea remains the country with the youngest average age, the same as in 2018	→
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Less than one fifth (18.6%) with high school or higher education	→
Occupational fields	High share of persons assignable to categories "Out of work" (26.4%) and "Housework, pension, school or studies" (13.4%)	

First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2019		
Characteristics in 2019		Comp. to previous year 2018
Pakistan		
Share of total	With 1,485 persons, only slightly fewer applicants than from Guinea, same share with 1.7%.	Was not among the ten main countries of origin in 2018
Female share	Low share of women, at 24.6% only just under 1/4	
Share of married persons	With 43.4% less than half were married	
Share of under 30 year-olds	50.6%, slightly over half, were under 30 years of age	
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	41,8%, around 2/5, were in higher education	
Occupational fields	High share of persons assignable to categories "Housework, pension, school or studies" (18.0%) or "Out of work" (13.3%)	
Russian Federation		
Share of total	With 1,434 persons, only slightly fewer applicants than from Guinea and Pakistan, 1.6%.	Was not among the ten main countries of origin in 2018
Female share	Nearly half (49.7%) were women	
Share of married persons	63.9% were married, almost 2/3	
Share of under 30 year-olds	Only 31.9% and thus less than 1/3 were under 30 years of age	
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	36.3% indicated a high school or higher education institut as the highest educational institution attended	
Occupational fields	High share of persons assignable to categories "Services" (9.7%) or "Housework, pension, school or studies" (16.7%)	

⬆⬆⬆ 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%)

Note: Changes measured in percent, not percentage points
Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2020)

6. Focal Topic: Female First-Time Asylum Applicants of Legal Age, 2015-2019

The reports to date show a marked rise in recent years in the percentage of women of legal age filing a first-time asylum application in Germany. While a slight decrease is to be observed between 2018 and 2019, the share of women in 2019 was nevertheless a great dealer higher than in 2015, at around 40% as compared to around 26%. The absolute number of women immigrating to Germany has nevertheless fallen, as the number of first-time asylum applicants

was exceptionally high in 2015 and 2016 and the total fell sharply in the subsequent years.

Table 5 and Figure 10 show the female share from 2015 to 2019 for all countries and for six selected countries. The latter represent the six countries with the most first-time asylum applicants in 2019 (Syria, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria and Afghanistan). Approx. 41,300 persons, corresponding to

Table 5: Share of female first-time asylum applicants of legal age 2015-2019 in per cent

	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	share f in%	n (m+f)	share f in%	n (m+f)	share f in%	n (m+f)	share f in%	n (m+f)	share f in%	n (m+f)
Syria	21.1	116,560	32.7	164,505	51.7	18,510	58.1	14,576	55.6	12,381
Turkey	24.7	1,099	24.0	4,027	29.7	5,642	31.8	8,317	28.5	7,532
Iran	30.1	4,337	26.2	21,900	40.5	6,370	39.8	7,350	42.7	6,162
Iraq	24.3	20,537	34.6	58,003	46.0	10,446	45.0	6,951	41.4	5,979
Nigeria	30.8	3,675	32.3	9,586	39.9	5,528	44.8	6,377	40.9	5,021
Afghanistan	24.8	17,610	29.6	70,170	29.0	6,868	34.8	4,101	39.2	4,221
All CoO	26.1	304,420	30.6	460,984	35.7	109,110	40.3	83,633	39.9	71,088

Source: "Social component" database, analyses from the respective years 2015-2019

Figure 10: Share of female first-time asylum applicants of legal age 2015-2019 in per cent
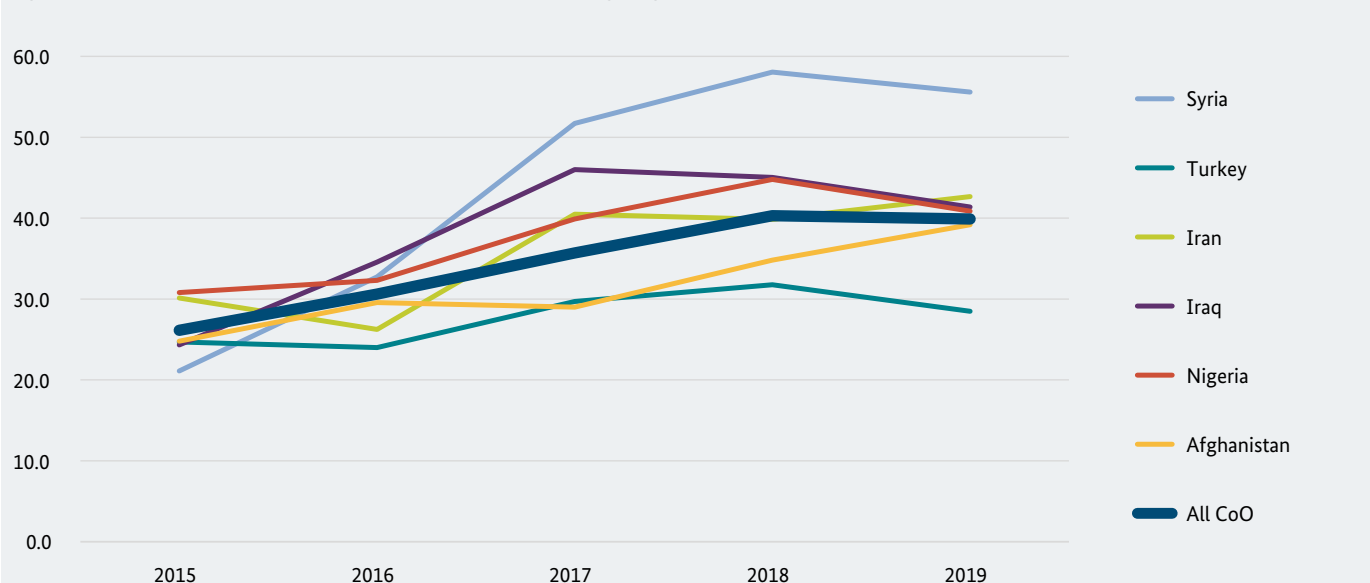
Source: "Social component" database, analyses from the respective years 2015-2019

85.8% of all first-time asylum applicants of legal age, came from these six countries in 2019. Four of these countries (Syria, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan) were represented in the respective lists of the ten main countries of origin for all the years concerned. Nigeria was not included in 2015, and Turkey was not included in 2015 and 2016. Both of these countries show substantial quantitative gains in recent years, however.

While the female share from all countries as a whole rose at a virtually constant rate from 2015 to 2018, a slight fall was to be observed between 2018 and 2019. The female share developed along quite divergent lines in the respective countries under review. As Figure 10 shows, the fall between 2018 and 2019 did not apply to all countries of origin, either. As the predominant country of origin in all years, Syria had a strong influence on the overall average. A particularly sharp increase in the female share is discernible here: It rose from 21.1% in 2015 to 58.1% in 2018, before dropping to 55.6% in 2019, which still represents a marked surplus of immigrating women over men. A different situation applies with regard to Turkish women: The female share here was low in all years, remaining below one third and varying between 24.0% and 31.8%. A drop in the share of Turkish women was also observable between 2018 and 2019.

The share of women from Afghanistan was in a similar range to the share of women from Turkey in 2015 and 2017. It initially rose above the female share from Turkey in 2016, and subsequently rose to 34.8% in 2018 and to 39.2% in 2019. The female share among Iranian and Nigerian nationals also increased between 2015 and 2019 – by more than ten percentage points in both cases, with a number of isolated exceptional years. The share of women among first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Iraq rose sharply until 2017, followed by a slight fall in 2018 and 2019.

While the female share from Iran, Iraq, Nigeria and Afghanistan showed a divergent course of development, it is notable that these four countries were all relatively close in 2015, with a share of between 24.3% and 30.8%, and were again close in 2019, spanning an even smaller interval between 39.2% and 42.7%. In addition, the female share from five of the six countries was markedly higher in 2019 than in 2015. Turkey was an exception here, showing only a slight rise.

A focus solely on persons filing a first-time asylum application in 2019 shows marked differences in the gender split according to countries of origin and age groups (Figure 11).

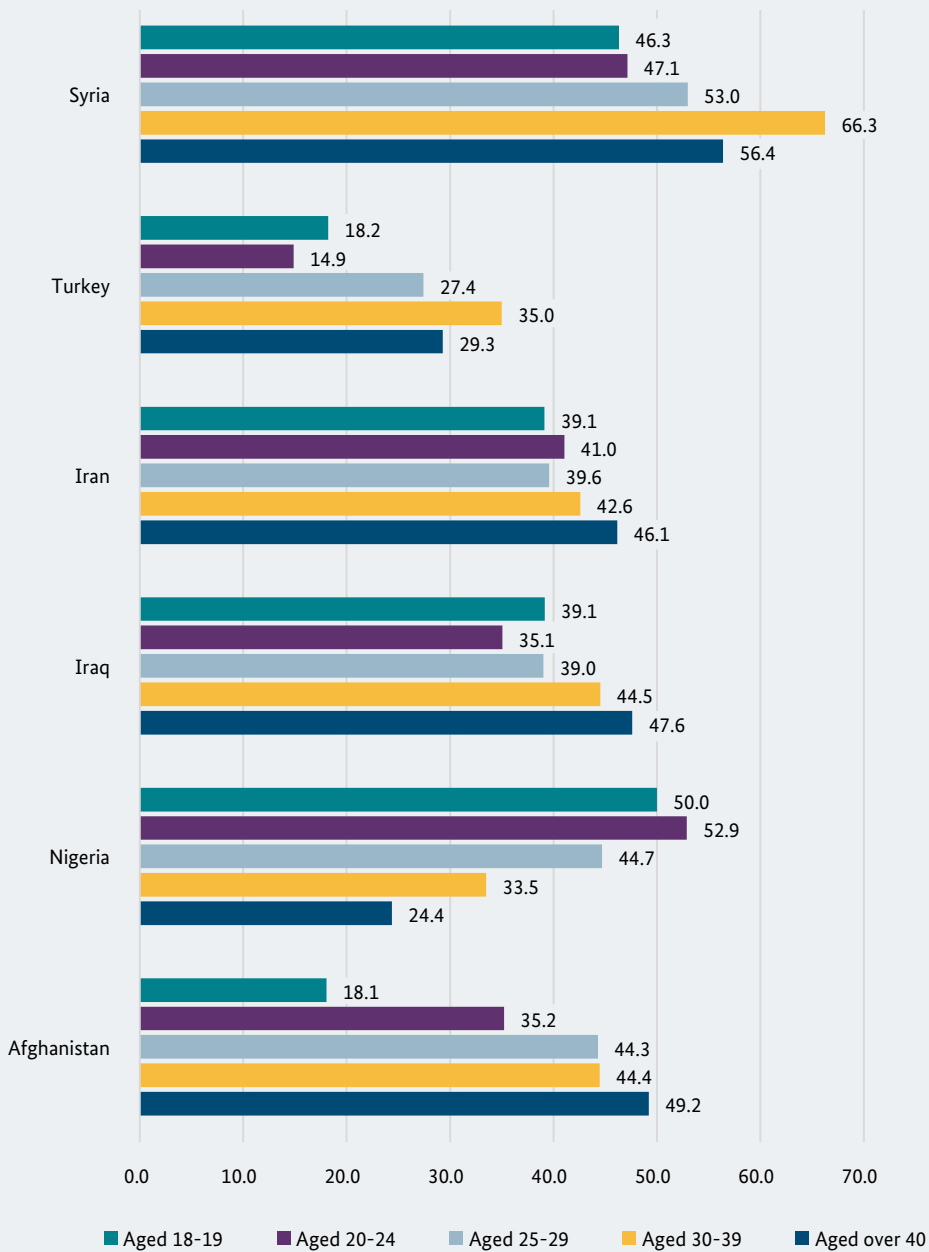Syria showed the largest female share overall all, though not in all the examined age groups. While the female share in the 18-19 age group and the 20-24 age group was high at 46.3% and 47.1% respectively, it fell short of the corresponding shares for Nigeria (50.0% and 52.9% respectively). The female share among applicants from Syria led the other age groups, however. In the 30-39 age group, it was even in the region of two thirds, at 66.3%. While the smallest percentage share of women overall came from Turkey, the female share from this country surprisingly only ranked last in the group of 20-24 year-olds and 25-29 year olds. Afghanistan showed a slightly lower figure for 18-19 year-olds (18.1% as compared to 18.2% for Turkey), while Nigeria had the smallest shares of persons aged between 30 and 39 and 40 and over but stood out with particularly high shares among young first-time applicants. The female share from Nigeria thus spanned a broad range, and was more than twice as high among 20-24 year olds (52.9%) as among over 40 year-olds (24.4%). The female share here tended to be lower among older immigrants than among younger immigrants. Afghanistan presented a quite different picture: The female share from this country was markedly lower among younger applicants (18.1% and 35.2% respectively in the youngest age groups) than in the older groups (between 44.3% and 49.2%).

Iran and Iraq showed the most evenly spread breakdown of the female share by age groups among all the six countries examined. In all age groups, the female share ranged between 39.1% and 46.1% (Iran) and between 35.1% and 47.6% (Iraq). For both countries, the female share was lower in the age groups up to 30 than in the groups over 30. The high share of immigrating women may thus be partly due to female spouses applying for asylum in order to join their male spouses in Germany. This may be the case in particular with regard to persons from Syria, as the entitlement to family reunification was suspended for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection between March 2016 and July 2018. Since 1 August 2018, family reunification has again been possible for closest family members (spouses and minor children) wishing to join beneficiaries of subsidiary protection in Germany. A limited contingent of 1,000 persons per month applies, however[5].

---

5   There is no legal entitlement to family reunification, however. It is decided on the basis of humanitarian grounds who is to receive a residence permit in Germany. The duration of separation and the age of the children come in for special consideration here. Other humanitarian grounds are serious illnesses or concrete threats to family members in the country of origin (https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/aktuelles/neue-regeln-fuer-den-familiennachzug-1008342).

Figure 11: Share of female first-time asylum applicants of legal age by selected countries of origin and age groups in 2019 in per cent

Syria
- Aged 18-19: 46.3
- Aged 20-24: 47.1
- Aged 25-29: 53.0
- Aged 30-39: 66.3
- Aged over 40: 56.4

Turkey
- Aged 18-19: 18.2
- Aged 20-24: 14.9
- Aged 25-29: 27.4
- Aged 30-39: 35.0
- Aged over 40: 29.3

Iran
- Aged 18-19: 39.1
- Aged 20-24: 41.0
- Aged 25-29: 39.6
- Aged 30-39: 42.6
- Aged over 40: 46.1

Iraq
- Aged 18-19: 39.1
- Aged 20-24: 35.1
- Aged 25-29: 39.0
- Aged 30-39: 44.5
- Aged over 40: 47.6

Nigeria
- Aged 18-19: 50.0
- Aged 20-24: 52.9
- Aged 25-29: 44.7
- Aged 30-39: 33.5
- Aged over 40: 24.4

Afghanistan
- Aged 18-19: 18.1
- Aged 20-24: 35.2
- Aged 25-29: 44.3
- Aged 30-39: 44.4
- Aged over 40: 49.2

■ Aged 18-19 ■ Aged 20-24 ■ Aged 25-29 ■ Aged 30-39 ■ Aged over 40

Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2020)

Figure 12 presents a breakdown of first-time asylum applicants by gender and marital status. It is noticeable that the number of married Syrian women immigrating to Germany in 2019 was particularly high. While almost three quarters (74.8%) of women immigrating from Syria were married, only just over half of the men were married (54.1%). A large number of the married women were over 30 years of age. The same applied to the married men. A very large number of single men immigrated to Germany, however, the majority of whom were aged between 20 and 24.

Substantially more married than single women also immigrated to Germany from Turkey. The number of immigrating men clearly outweighed the female share, however. The over-30 age group represented the largest share of married men. While the number of single men immigrating to Germany was almost the same, these were substantially younger and predominantly in the age span between 20 and 30.

Figure 12: Number of first-time asylum applicants of legal age by selected countries of origin: Gender and marital status in 2019
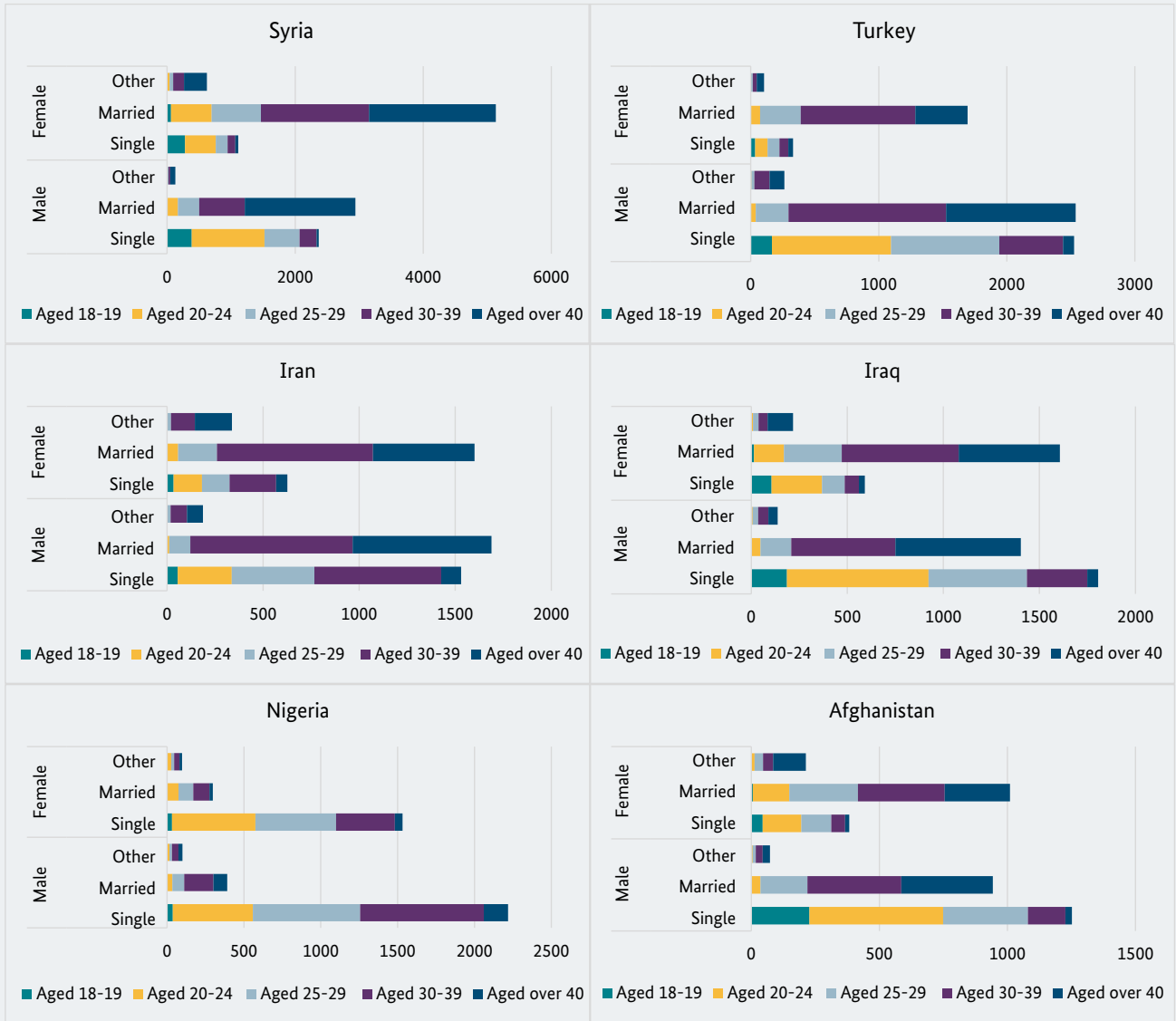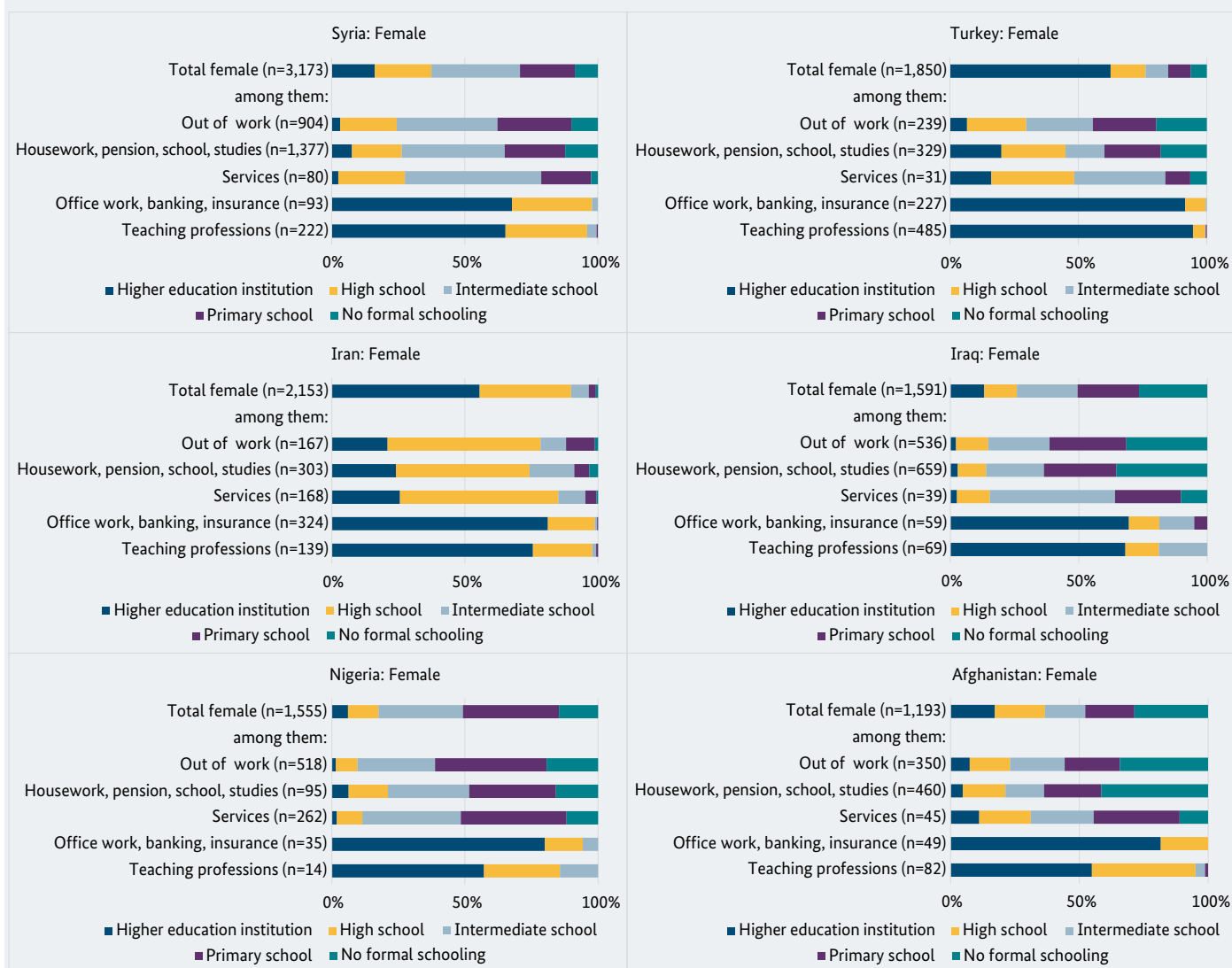

Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2020)

Married female first-time asylum applicants from Iran and Iraq also clearly outweighed their single counterparts. The share of married women from both countries stood at around two thirds (Iran: 62.4%, Iraq: 66.5%). The two countries differed with regard to male applicants, however. While around half of the men from Iran (49.6%) were married, the corresponding figure for Iraq stood at 41.9%. Single men were particularly predominant among male applicants from Iraq. 80% were under 30 years of age. A similar breakdown is to be observed for Afghanistan. Here too, the number of married women was markedly higher than the number of single women, while the reverse applied to male applicants and the single men were very young.

As noted in Chapters 3.2.2 and 3.2.3, Nigeria showed a high share of young and single persons. Single first-time asylum applicants were clearly predominant among both the male

and female shares, and only a small number of persons were aged over 40. The share of 30-39 year-olds was markedly higher among single men than among single women, who were younger on average than the men. The share of married immigrants was similar among both genders, at 15.4% for women and 14.4 for men.

As Table 2 shows, in addition to "Housework, pension, school or studies" and "out of work", the occupations most recently pursued by women prior to coming to Germany also included "Services", "Office work, banking, insurance" and "Teaching professions". 19.1% of female first-time asylum applicants were employed in these three occupational fields prior to filing their applications in Germany. Together with 13.0% "out of work" and 37.5% in "Housework, pension, school or studies", these fields covered almost 70% of all first-time asylum applicants of legal age. As it is not

Figure 13: Female first-time asylum applicants of legal age for selected countries of origin by highest educational institution attended and by most recently pursued occupations in 2019 in per cent

Source: "Social component" database (13.03.2020)

possible to present and illustrate all occupational fields in detail, Figure 13 covers these selected fields and shows the percentage shares of the respective highest attended educational institutions according to occupational fields for the six selected countries.

It is apparent that the occupational fields are accompanied by very different qualifications in the respective countries. It is not surprising that women from Iran were very well educated in all occupational fields, as they showed the highest overall average standard of education in comparison with the other countries. Around three quarters of the women who were out of work had also attended a higher education institution or high school. As an above-average number of women with high educational mean values were employed in the fields of "Teaching professions" or "Office work, banking, insurance" (cf. Figure 8), it equally comes

as no surprise that virtually all women employed in these two occupational fields had attended a higher education institution or high school, both in Iran and in all the other countries of origin. Significant shares of women (up to a maximum of 18.8%) who had attended intermediate school applied solely among the women from Iraq and Nigeria, while in the other countries examined the figures for these two areas were under 4%.

In the area of "Services", the educational categories show a more heterogeneous spread. Apart from Iran, with very high shares of women who had attended a higher educational institution, all the other countries show high shares of persons who had attended high school, intermediate or primary school. While comparatively high shares of women from Syria and Turkey had attended high school (25.0% and 32.2% respectively), women who had only attended

primary school were more common in Nigeria and Afghanistan (39.7% and 33.3% respectively). Syria (51.3%) and Iraq (48.7%) showed a very high share of women with intermediate schooling.

Women in the category "Housework, pension, school or studies" and women "out of work" predominantly had a below-average standard of education compared to all women as a whole. While this education gap was relatively moderate for Syria, Nigeria, Afghanistan and Iraq, a major disparity applied above all with regard to women from Turkey. Overall, very large numbers of well-qualified women with high school or university education came from this country. In the case of persons "out of work" and in the category "Housework, pension, school or studies", however, the share of women who had attended a higher educational institution was markedly lower and the share who had attended high school was higher than the overall average. The breakdown was not conspicuous in comparison with the other countries, however, on account of the overall good standard of education among women from Turkey.

In the category "Housework, pension, school or studies", this standard may, of course, be influenced by persons who were still attending school and had not yet had an opportunity to begin their studies at a higher educational institution. While the share of particularly young people was lower among women than among men, 7.5% of all female first-time asylum applicants were nevertheless aged between 18 and 19 and 18.0% were between 20 and 24 years of age. This means that around one quarter were aged under 25 and thus belonged to an age group in which many people are still undergoing training or studying.

SOCIAL COMPONENT ANALYSES PUBLISHED TO DATE

Heß, Barbara (2020): Potenziale von Asylantragstellenden: Analyse der „SoKo"-Sozialstrukturdaten. Halbjahresbericht 2019. Reports on migration and integration, Series 3, Research Centre for Migration, Integration and Asylum at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (available in German only).

Heß, Barbara (2019): Potenziale von Asylantragstellenden: Analyse der „SoKo"-Sozialstrukturdaten. Jahresbericht 2018. Reports on migration and integration, Series 3, Research Centre for Migration, Integration and Asylum at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (available in German and English).

Heß, Barbara (2019): Volljährige Asylantragsteller in Deutschland im ersten Halbjahr 2018. Sozialstruktur, Qualifikationsniveau und Berufstätigkeit. Edition 03|2019 of the Brief Analyses drawn up by the Research Centre at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nuremberg (available in German only).

Schmidt, Hans-Jürgen (2018): Volljährige Asylantragsteller in Deutschland im Jahr 2017. Sozialstruktur, Schulbesuch und Berufstätigkeit im Herkunftsland, Edition 03|2018 of the Brief Analyses drawn up by the Research Centre at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nuremberg (available in German only).

Neske, Matthias (2017): Volljährige Asylantragsteller in Deutschland im ersten Halbjahr 2017. Sozialstruktur, Qualifikationsniveau und Berufstätigkeit, Edition 03|2017 of the Brief Analyses drawn up by the Research Centre at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nuremberg (available in German only).

Neske, Matthias (2017): Volljährige Asylerstantragsteller in Deutschland im Jahr 2016. Sozialstruktur, Qualifikationsniveau und Berufstätigkeit, Edition 02|2017 of the Brief Analyses drawn up by the Research Centre at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nuremberg (available in German only).

Neske, Matthias/Rich, Anna-Katharina (2016): Asylantragsteller in Deutschland im ersten Halbjahr 2016. Sozialstruktur, Qualifikationsniveau und Berufstätigkeit, Edition 04|2016 of the Brief Analyses drawn up by the Research Centre at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nuremberg (available in German only).

Rich, Anna-Katharina (2016): First-time asylum applicants in Germany in 2015. Social structure, level of qualifications and employment, Edition 03|2016 of the Brief Analyses drawn up by the Research Centre at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nuremberg (available in German and English).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Barbara Heß is a research associate at the Research Centre for Migration, Integration and Asylum at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Division FIII - Migration and Integration: Monitoring and Series of Reports).

Contact:
barbara.hess@bamf.bund.de

Visit us:
www.facebook.com/bamf.socialmedia
@BAMF_Dialog

https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/Forschung/Veroeffentlichungen/veroeffentlichungen-node.html