Potential of Asylum Applicants: Analysis of "Social Component" Data Relating to Applicants' Social Structure; Annual Report 2021

Heß, Barbara

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Tätigkeitsbericht, Jahresbericht / annual report

gesis
Leibniz-Institut
für Sozialwissenschaften

Mitglied der
Leibniz-Gemeinschaft

Diese Version ist zitierbar unter / This version is citable under:
https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-89996-0

Federal Office
for Migration
and Refugees

REPORT SERIES ON MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION – SERIES 3

Potential of Asylum Applicants: Analysis of "Social Component" Data Relating to Applicants' Social Structure

Annual Report 2021

Barbara Heß

Forschung

Research Centre
Migration, Integration and Asylum

Content

At a Glance

The so-called „social component" data are collected by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees 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 previous occupations of those seeking protection. In this report, adult asylum seekers of the year 2021 are considered.

In 2021, around 75,000 persons of legal age submitted a first-time asylum application in Germany. Around 50,100, or about 67%, provided information on socio-structural characteristics, education and their most recently pursued occupation.
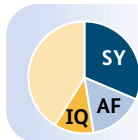
First-time applicants from Syria made up the largest group with about 23,500 persons, followed by persons from Afghanistan (around 12,000) and Iraq (around 8,500). Around 59% of the adult first-time applicants thus came from one of these three countries.
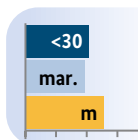
More than half of the adult asylum applicants were under 30 years of age, around half were married and around 64% were men. The female share has risen as a whole in recent years, but has been declining again since 2019.

The share of women from Syria has continued to decline. In 2015, the share of women among first-time applicants from Syria was only 21.2%, rising to 58.1% in 2018. Since 2019, however, it has declined again and was 35.7% in 2021.
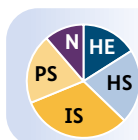
16.0% of those providing information cited a higher educational institution (HE) as the highest educational institution attended, 21.2% a high school (HS), 31.6% an intermediate school (IS) and 19.9% a primary school (PS). 11.3% stated that they had no formal schooling (N).
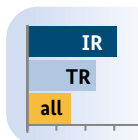
Of the ten main countries of origin, applicants from Iran reported the highest level of education: Around 76% had attended at least a high school. Turkey also shows a high share here, at around 61% (average of all countries: 37%).

Slightly less than one third of the asylum seekers were not in paid employment at last ("housework, pension, school, study" or "without work" = out of work = ooW).
Of those most recently employed (W), most were employed in the manual trades.

The highest level of education was to be found among applicants with a previous occupation in the category "teaching professions", while the lowest level of education was found among those in the fields of "agriculture, forestry, fishing" or "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work".

1.   Introduction

This report comprises an analysis of the "social component" data for the year 2021. Information relating to applicants' so-called "social component" is collected in the course of first-time asylum applications. The report builds on previously published reports on "social component" data, which published similar analyses on first-time asylum applicants from 2015 through to the first half of 2021 (see overview at the end of this report). Official asylum statistics of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) 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 of the Federal Office and spans the data reports which appear periodically. In addition to this pub-lication, this also includes the "Monitoring on educational and labour migration" and the "Freedom of Movement Monitoring" (series 1 and 2 respectively).

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. When "asylum seekers" are referred to in this analysis, this refers exclusively to persons of legal age who submitted a first-time asylum application to the BAMF within the year 2021. 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 also of little significance for minors.

2. Database

The BAMF official asylum statistics for the period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 and an analysis as per 1st February 2022 of "social component" data relating to persons submitting first-time asylum applications in 2021 provide the source of data for this report. The "social component" data are collected in the course of interviewing fist-time asylum applicants and thus do not originate from a scientific survey, but are part of administrative statistics.

The answers are based on self-reports by the respondents. It cannot therefore be ruled out that the interviewees' behaviour may be influenced by strategic, culturally conditioned or gender-specific factors. Since the data is collected in the context of the asylum process, it cannot be ruled out that individual applicants "upgrade" their educational and professional 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 therefore advantageous that an interpreter is present during the interview, so that language problems or comprehension problems should not arise. In addition, the interpreters are usually familiar with the educational and professional systems of both countries and can thus provide assistance in classifying the highest educational institution attended or the profession practiced. Despite certain limitations, the "social component" data are therefore well suited to making reliable statements on the educational structure and previous employment monitoring developments and identifying trends.

Coverage of the "social component" questions is very high, with a substantial majority of applicants providing information on their education or previous occupation in the initial survey in recent years. In the analyses conducted through 2018, the percentage of "social component" responses was consistently between 70% and 80%, and as high as around 85% for 2019. In 2020, the figure was only 67%. This is due to the fact that with the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic in Germany, traffic in the Federal Office was reduced as part of the protective measures from spring 2020. Instead of submitting applications in person, a digital application procedure was introduced. Interviews on travel routes and the social and professional background of asylum seekers were put on hold. This is still the case for 2021, when the response coverage was also back at 67%. However, the fact that the response coverage does not correspond to 100% is not problematic insofar as there are no systematic reasons for failure - 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).

The Covid 19 pandemic has not only temporarily changed the processes of the asylum procedure. The data of the official asylum statistics also show that the number of asylum applications has decreased overall as well as for most of the main countries of origin, decreased significantly in the course of 2020. However, it increased again in 2021. While in 2020 there were around 122,000 asylum applicants, in 2021 the number was around 190,000. For the adult asylum applicants in focus in this report, rising numbers were recorded for all current main countries of origin - with the exception of Iran. For this country, the number of adult first-time applicants decreased by around 360 persons compared to 2020.

---

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 of the total number of asylum applicants and the respective subgroups (first-time applicants, first-time applicants of full age) as well as the gender breakdown, marital statuses and age breakdown. In addition, the ten most frequent countries of origin are identified, which are examined in more detail in the following chapters. Both data from the official asylum statistics and the "social component" data serve as sources here. In order to draw conclusions on the representativeness 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 2021 with corresponding subgroups

Asylum applicants 190,816	Year 2021
First-time asylum applicants: 148,233	
First-time asylum applicants of legal age: 74,952	
First-time asylum applicants of legal age providing information on social component: approx. 50,100	

Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for the year 2021 and „social component" database (01.02.2022)

In 2021, the BAMF registered a total of 190,816 persons filing an asylum application (Figure 1). This included 148,233 first-time applicants. Of these, 74,952 were of legal age.[2] Around 67% of these persons answered to the "social component" questions; the basic population for the evaluations thus comprises around 50,100 first-time asylum applicants of legal age. The number of responses may vary depending on the question, as not all persons answered all questions.

3.1 Main Countries of Origin

As in previous years, the majority of first-time asylum applicants of legal age came from Syria (Table 1; 23,514 first-time applications). Their share of the total was 31.4%, significantly higher than in 2020 (27.5%) and 2019 (14.1%). Afghanistan was again in second place in 2021 with 11,989 first-time applications (16.0%). This is the highest percentage increase compared to 2020 (9.4%). In absolute terms, about two and a half times as many persons came from Afghanistan in 2021 compared to the previous year (4,459 persons). In third and fourth place (in reverse order to 2020) are Iraq (8,540 applications, 11.4%) and Turkey (5,093 applications, 6.8%).

The share of Georgia increased slightly compared to 2020. With 3.5% of first-time applications by persons of legal age, this country of origin is in fifth place in 2021 with 2,640 persons. Among the main countries of origin, Iran recorded the largest decline. The share fell by 2.1 percentage points compared to the previous year to 2.3% (1,700 persons),

Table 1:   First-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin and the ten main countries of origin in 2021 and difference to the previous year

	Country of origin	Number Year 2021	Share Year 2021 in%	Share Year 2020 in%	Difference to share Year 2020 in percentage points
1	Syria	23,514	31.4	27.5	+3.8
2	Afghanistan	11,989	16.0	9.4	+6.6
3	Iraq	8,540	11.4	8.5	+2.9
4	Turkey	5,093	6.8	8.7	-1.9
5	Georgia	2,640	3.5	3.3	+0.2
6	Iran	1,700	2.3	4.4	-2.1
7	Somalia	1,564	2.1	1.7	+0.4
8	Algeria	1,417	1.9	2.3	-0.4
9	Republic of Moldova	1,367	1.8	1.5	+0.3
10	North Macedonia	983	1.3	0.3	+1.0
	Total ten main countries of origin	**58,807**	**78.5**	**70.2***	**+8.3**
	Other	16,145	21.5	29.8	-8.3
	Total	**74,952**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**0.0**

Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for the year 2021

* Main countries of origin in 2020 with Nigeria and Vietnam instead of the Republic of Moldova and Northern Macedonia

---

2   Persons who have not reached the age of majority also include children born in Germany to asylum applicants, who are then also counted as first-time applicants. See also footnote 4.

closely followed by Somalia with 2.1% (1,564 persons). The other main countries of origin, Algeria and the Republic of Moldova, each had shares of 1.9% and 1.8% of the total number. Northern Macedonia had a share of only 0.3% in 2020 and is newly represented among the main countries of origin with 1.3% in 2021.

Due to the sharp increase in the share of adult first-time applicants from Syria and Afghanistan, the share of persons who came from the ten main countries of origin increased from 70.2% in 2020 to 78.5%. The distribution was thus more homogeneous than in 2020.

In addition to these two countries, the share of persons from Iraq has also increased (+2.9%). For all other main countries of origin, the shares of the total have changed only slightly, with the exception of Northern Macedonia, which has newly moved up into the main countries of origin, but in tenth place has a low share of 1.3%.

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 adult asylum applicants, the evaluations from the official asylum statistics show that in 2021 – as in previous years – the majority of applicants were male. After the share of men had fallen from the beginning of the "social component"-analyses between 2015 and 2018, it has been rising again since 2019 and was at 64.3% in 2021, exactly the same as in 2017. Among the main countries of origin represented in 2020, the share of men rose for persons from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, Algeria and Iran. In contrast, it fell slightly for persons from Somalia

Figure 2: **Gender of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin and the ten main countries of origin in 2021 (in per cent)**
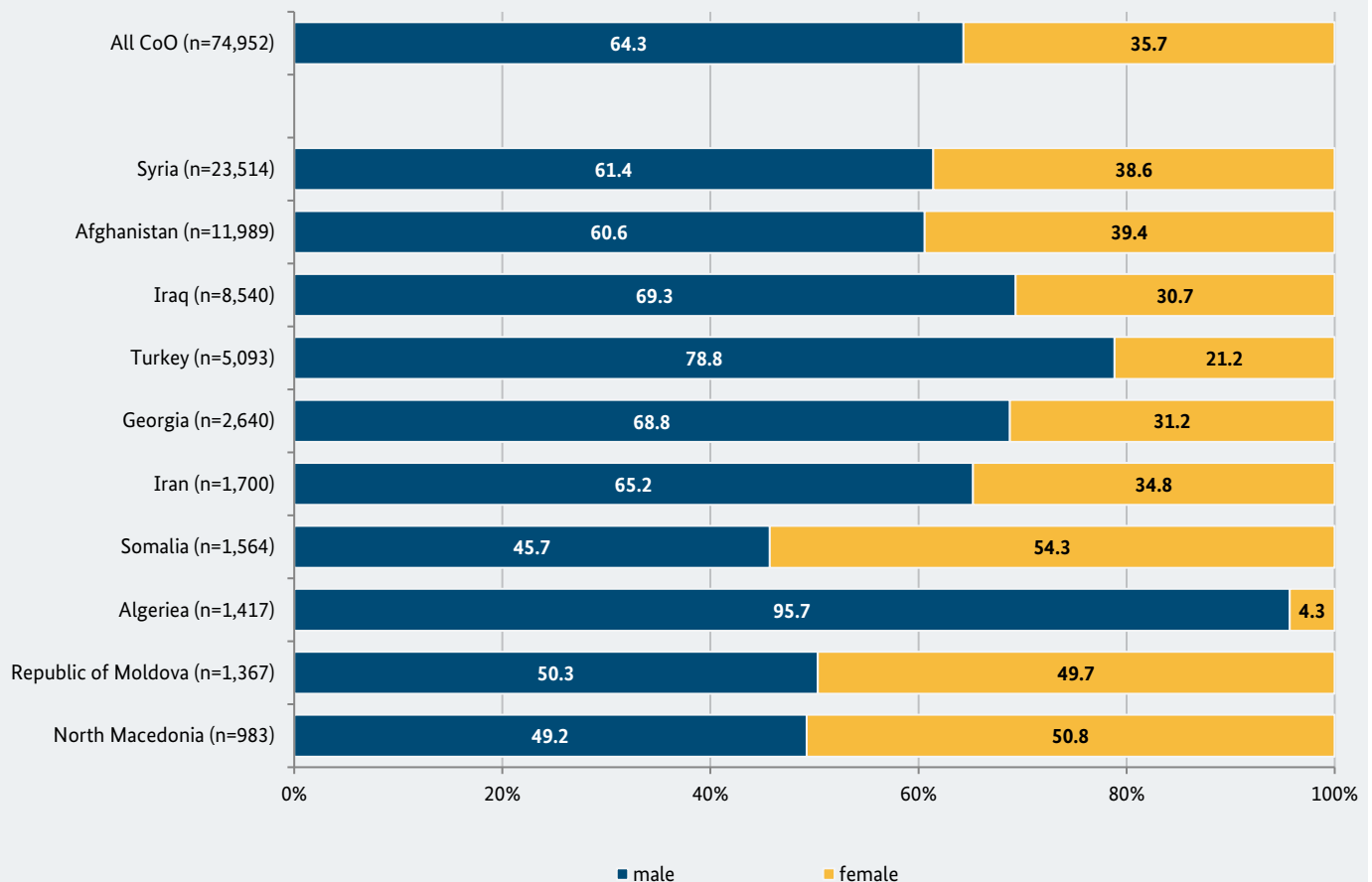
Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for the year 2021

and significantly for persons from Georgia (from 76.6% in 2020 to 68.8% in 2021).

The temporarily declining trend with regard to Syrian men (in 2017, 48.3% were male, in 2018 41.9%) did not continue since 2019: After the share of men was at 44.4% in 2019 already slightly higher than in 2018, it was 56.6% in 2020 and 61.4% in 2021. It has thus increased significantly. At 38.6%, the share of women is still above average, but no longer noticeably high.

While half of the main countries of origin show a share of women between 30% and 40%, the other five countries clearly stand out. Somalia (54.3%), the Republic of Moldova (49.7%) and Northern Macedonia (50.8%) show particularly high shares of women, at almost or over 50%. The share of women among Turkish persons is below average at around one fifth. Algeria is the most noticeable country with a share of women of only 4.3%. The share, which has been low in recent years anyway, fell again in 2021.

3.2.2 Marital Status

Looking at the first-time asylum applicants of legal age from the "social component" database, we see that in contrast to the previous year, more persons were married

(49.7%, Figure 3) than single (44.4%). 5.9% stated another marital status.[3]

Syria had a below-average share of single persons, at around one-third (32.9%). Only a slightly higher share (35.7%) was recorded for Afghanistan. The smallest share, however, was found among persons from Northern Macedonia: Here, the share of single persons was only 17.1%, and almost four-fifths of the first-time applicants (79.0%) were married. At 37.0%, Georgia shows a similar share as in 2020 (38.9%). While 39.7% of Iranians were single in 2020, the figure was significantly higher at 43.5% in 2021.

The highest shares of single persons can be seen among persons from Algeria (88.3%) and the Republic of Moldova (62.3%). Correspondingly, the share of married persons is below 10% for persons from Algeria and below 30% for persons from the Republic of Moldova. In the case of Algeria, this may also be due to the very young average age (see Figure 4).

In this connection it should be pointed out that these statistics do not provide any indication as to whether the

---

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

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 2021 (in per cent)**
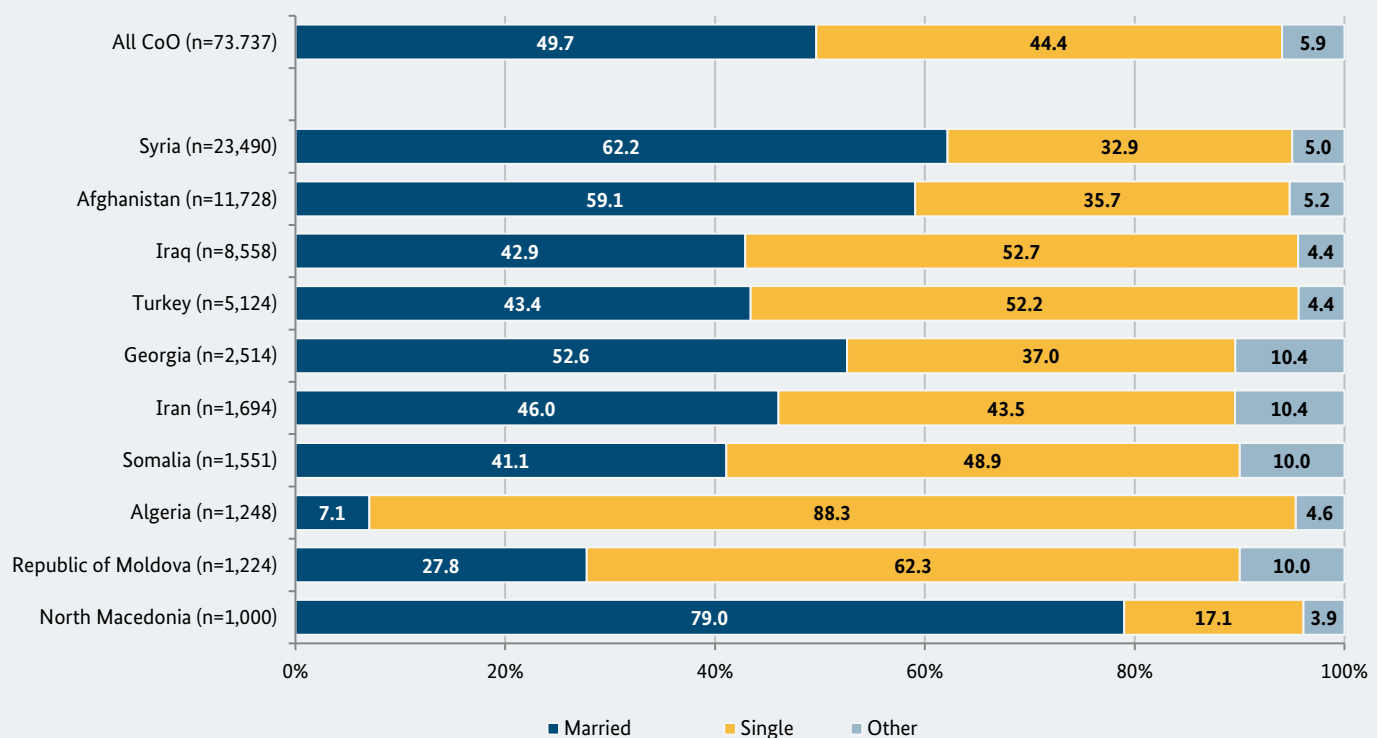
Source: „social component" database (01.02.2022)

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 2021 (in per cent)

	18-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	30-39 years	40 years and older
All CoO (n=74,952)	8,4	22,8	22,2	27,9	18,8
Syria (n=23,514)	9.5	24.6	21.3	25.6	19.0
Afghanistan (n=11,989)	10.3	21.1	23.1	27.4	18.1
Iraq (n=8,540)	7.7	28.9	22.8	24.1	16.5
Turkey (n=5,093)	5.1	22.5	20.8	32.9	18.8
Georgia (n=2,640)	2.3	11.3	18.1	39.0	29.3
Iran (n=1,700)	3.6	9.6	17.1	44.9	24.8
Somalia (n=1,564)	15.2	32.2	24.2	18.9	9.5
Algeria (n=1,417)	10.2	21.7	31.3	30.1	6.6
Republic of Moldova (n=1,367)	8.2	14.0	13.9	26.8	37.2
North Macedonia (n=983)	8.1	25.7	19.2	26.4	20.4

Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for the year 2021

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

The age structure[4] of adult asylum applicants in 2021 was, as in previous years, dominated by young people: More than half (53.4%) were under 30 years of age according to the data of the official asylum statistics (Figure 4). The share of people aged 18 to 19 was 8.4%, and 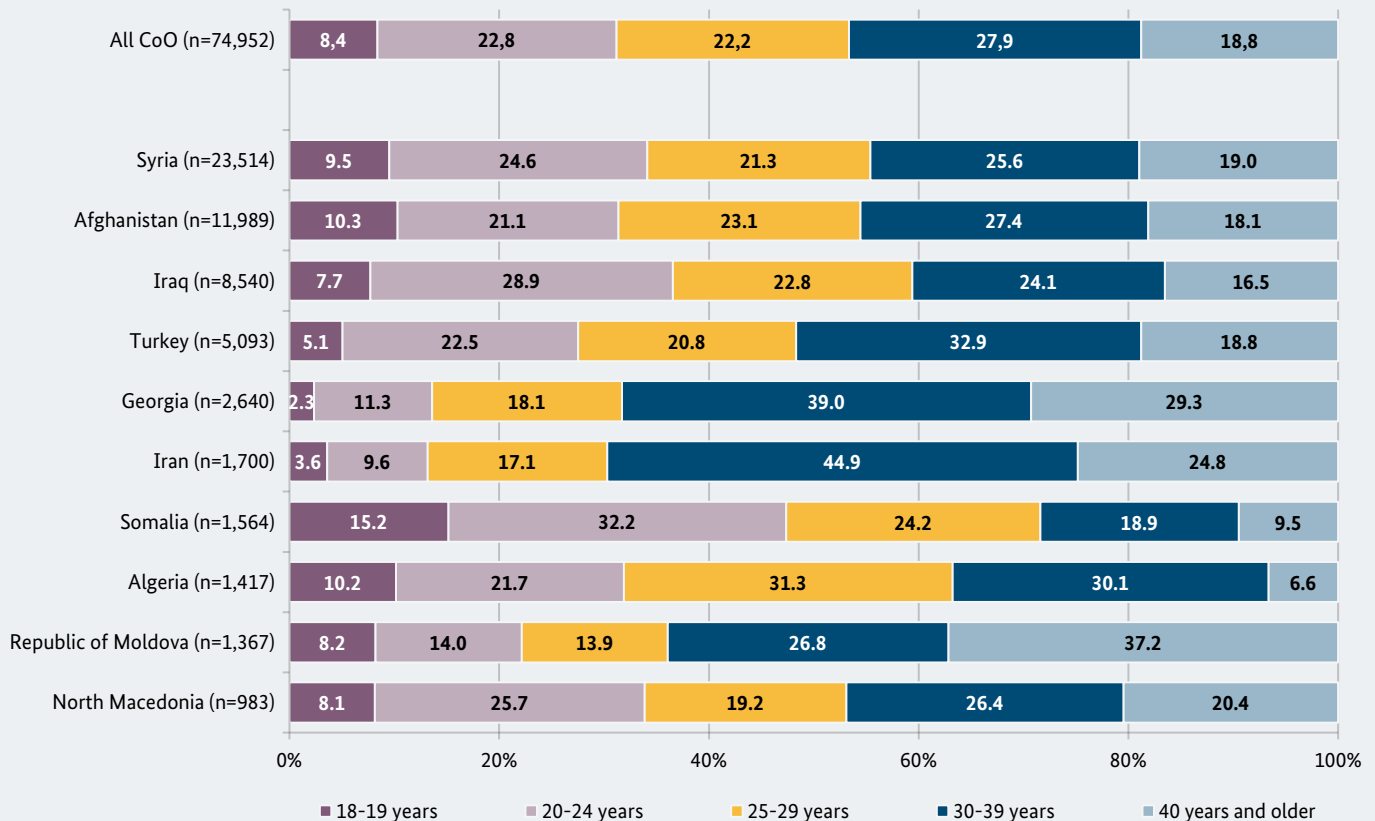those aged 20 to 24 represented 22.8%. A similar share (22.2%) were between 25 and 29 years old. 27.9% were in the next oldest group

between 30 and 39 years old. 40 years and older was less than a fifth at 18.8%.

Compared to 2020, the share of persons under 30 years of age increased slightly in all categories, while it decreased in the categories over 30 years of age. Particularly large shares of persons under 30 years of age were shown by Somalia with a total of 71.6% and Algeria with 63.2%. Both countries also had by far the smallest share of persons over 40 years of age among the main countries of origin (9.5% and 6.6% respectively). Somalia also had the largest share of persons between 18 and 19 years of age (15.2%) and persons between 20 and 24 years of age (32.2%).

In contrast, as in previous years, a comparatively "old" age structure was recorded among Iranian and Georgian persons. The share of people over 30 was 69.7% (Iran) and 68.3% (Georgia). At 24.8% (Iran) and 29.3% (Georgia), these countries also had comparatively high shares of persons aged 40 and over. This share was only surpassed by first-time applicants from the Republic of Moldova: at 37.2%, more than a third were 40 years and older. Due to a lower share of persons between 30 and 39 years of age compared to Iran and Georgia, the share of persons over 30 years

---

4   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 46,1% in 2020. In 2021, it increased to 50.6 % (cf.Figure 1). Underage asylum applicants also include children born in Germany. In 2021 as a whole, first-type asylum applications for children aged under one and born in Germany accounted for 17.5% of the total volume of initial applications (cf. https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Statistik/AsylinZahl-en/aktuelle-zahlen-dezember-2021.html, accessed 07.02.2021). While this share has risen steadily in recent years, it was lower in 2021 than in 2020 (25.9%).

of age from the Republic of Moldova was 63.9%, directly following the shares of these two countries.

3.2.4   Comparison of Official Asylum Statistics and „Social Component" Data

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 2021. 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.

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 distribution and gender of 18- to 65-year-old first-time asylum seekers in 2021 (official asylum statistics and „social component" data)
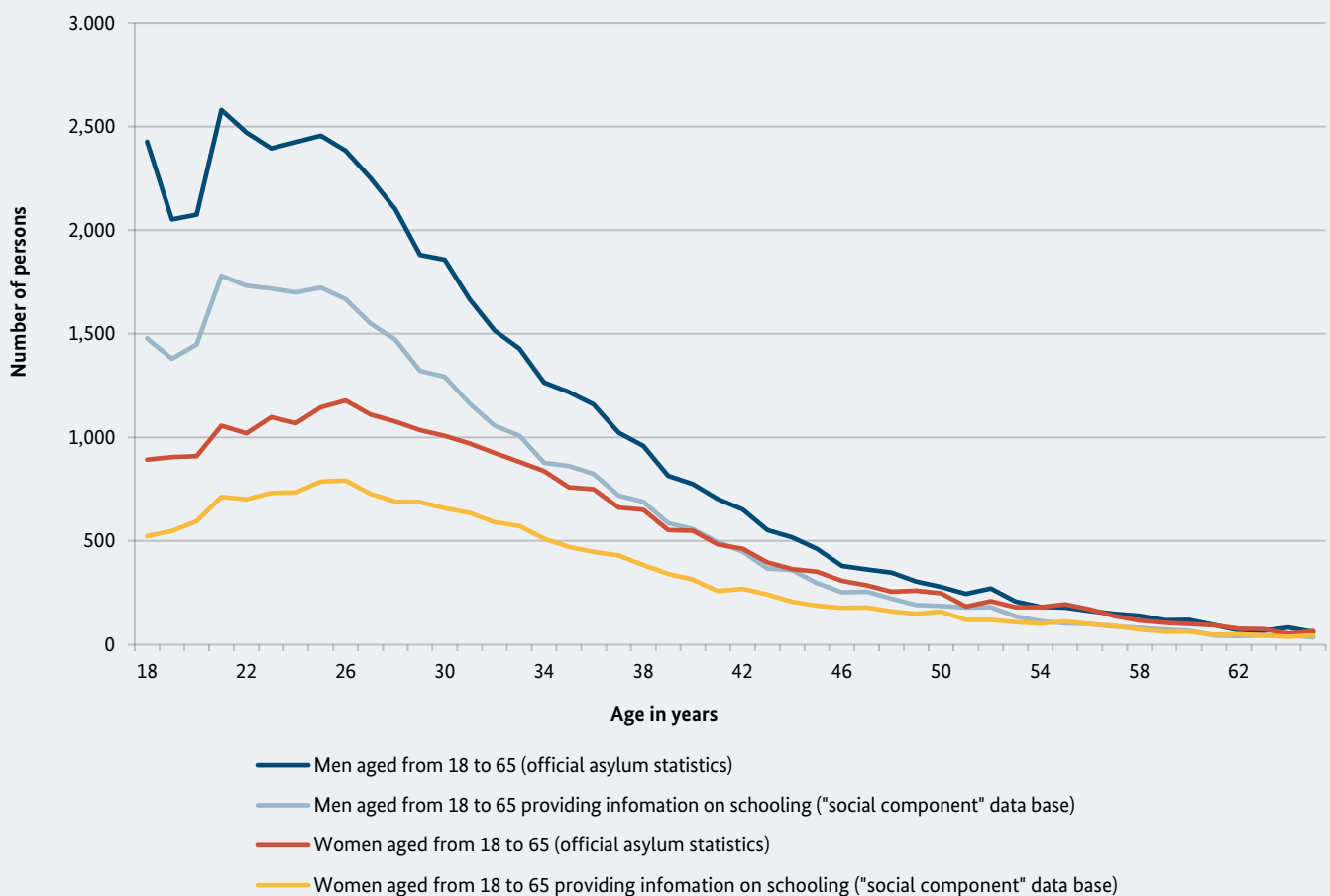
— Men aged from 18 to 65 (official asylum statistics)
— Men aged from 18 to 65 providing infomation on schooling ("social component" data base)
— Women aged from 18 to 65 (official asylum statistics)
— Women aged from 18 to 65 providing infomation on schooling ("social component" data base)

Source: BAMF official asylum statistics for the year 2021 and „social component" database (01.02.2022)

4. Qualification 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[5] comprise:

■ Higher educational 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 50,175 first-time asylum applicants in 2021 who provided information on their schooling, 16.0% reported having attended a higher educational institution (Figure 6). A further 21.2% stated having attended a high school as their highest educational institution. At 31.6%, the most frequently stated educational institution was an intermediate school. Only 19.9% had attended primary school, while 11.3% arrived in Germany without any formal schooling.

In recent years, the share of people with tertiary education has fallen significantly (from 24.0% in 2019 to 18.3% in 2020 and to 16.0% in 2021). The share of people with high school attendance changed only slightly from 2020, falling from 21.5% to 21.2%. Secondary school attendance also fell slightly (from 32.5% to 31.5%). On the other hand, primary school attendance increased from 17.9% to 19.9%, as did the share of persons with "no formal schooling" (from 9.8% to 11.3%). Overall, education thus declined on average. While in 2020 around two-fifths of the adult first-time applicants had still indicated a high school or university as their highest educational institution, in 2021 this was only around one-third at 32.5%. After a decline in this share of four percentage points in 2020 compared to the previous year, there now is a further decline of almost three percentage points.

As in previous years, Iranian and Turkish asylum applicants of legal age had an above-average level of education. In the case of Iran, however, there was a further decline after 2020. While in 2019 86.7% had still attended a a higher

---

5   Categories are based on the German school system. In other countries, different classifications may apply (e.g. longer periods of primary school, shorter periods until acquisition of the higher education entrance qualification).

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 2021 (in per cent)

Country	Higher education institution	High school	Intermediate school	Primary school	No formal schooling
All CoO (n=50,175)	16.0	21.2	31.6	19.9	11.3
Syria (n=14,944)	12.2	20.3	36.2	24.6	6.7
Afghanistan (n=8,089)	15.5	19.2	20.8	20.7	23.8
Iraq (n=6,390)	12.8	16.8	33.9	24.1	12.4
Turkey (n=3,245)	37.1	23.5	27.2	10.0	2.2
Georgia (n=2,033)	15.2	35.3	47.1		2.0
Iran (n=1,185)	37.9	38.2	16.6	6.2	
Somalia (n=882)	3.9	9.5	22.3	28.3	35.9
Algeria (n=727)	8.3	17.2	49.4	21.2	4.0
Republic of Moldova (n=1,146)			24.3	35.5	37.5
North Macedonia (n=633)		4.7	22.9	34.3	37.4

Source: „social component" database (01.02.2022)
Shares below 2 % are not reported.

educational institution or a high school, in 2020 it was only 83.8% and in 2021 76.1%. This is mainly due to the group of people with tertiary education, where the share fell from almost half (49.5%) in 2019 to 45.8% in 2020 and 37.9% in 2021. Nevertheless, the share of this group remains high and Iranian first-time applicants continued to have the highest average education among the ten main countries of origin.

Among first-time applicants from Turkey, there was also a sharp decline between 2019 and 2020, especially among those with a university education (from 52.3% to 37.5%). In 2021, the decline was less pronounced, with 37.1% indicating that they had attended university. However, the share with a high school education increased slightly, so that the overall share of persons that attended a higher educational institution or a high school was – with 60.6% - slightly higher than in 2020 (60.0%), but still significantly lower than in 2019 (68.9%).

Another country with above-average education among first-time applicants in 2021 was Georgia. Over half of the persons from this country (50.5%) attended a higher educational institution or a high school as their highest level of education, although the share of higher education was slightly below average at 15.2%. On the other hand, the

share of all adult first-time applicants from Georgia who attended a high school was 35.3% and thus more than one third, which is the highest share among the main countries of origin after Iran. Georgia also had the lowest share of persons without formal schooling (0.4%).

While in 2015 to 2017 there were above-average numbers from Syria who had attended a higher educational institution or a high school, the shares attending a higher educational institution had already been below average since 2018. The share with high school attendance has also declined in recent years. In 2021, the share of 12.2% for university attendance was exactly the same as in 2020 and also again in the below-average range. With a share of 20.3% for high school attendance, this value was also below the average, albeit only slightly. On the other hand, proportionally more people attended a secondary school (36.2%) or a primary school (24.6%). 6.7% had no formal school education.

Algeria showed the highest share of people with middle school education in 2021. At 49.4%, almost half had attended middle school. At 4.0%, few people came from this country without formal schooling. However, the share of first-time applicants with university education was very

low at 8.3% and that with high school attendance was also below average at 17.2%.

People from Afghanistan and Iraq had a distribution relatively similar to the average. Attendance at higher educational institutions or high school was slightly lower, while Iraq had a slightly higher share of middle school attendance than the average (33.9%). With 20.8% for Afghanistan, this share was significantly below the average of 31.6%. On the other hand, the share of persons without formal schooling was very high for this country of origin, at almost a quarter (23.8%).

This value was even higher for the three countries with the lowest education scores among the ten main countries of origin. The Republic of Moldova, Northern Macedonia and Somalia all had over a third with no formal schooling. Around another third had attended primary school, and middle school was reported as the highest educational institution by slightly less than a quarter. While at least 9.5% of Somalis had attended high school and 3.9% had attended a higher educational institution, these figures were only 4.7% (high school) and 0.6% (higher educational institution) for Northern Macedonia and 1.6% (high school) and 1.1% (higher educational institution) for Moldova. Thus, less than 6% (Northern Macedonia) and less than 3% (Republic of Moldova) of first-time applicants with higher educational institution or high school education came from these two countries.

If one adds up the groups of persons who indicated at least middle school attendance, it shows that on average across all countries 68.8% of adult first-time applicants attended at least a middle school. This value has significantly decreased compared to 2020 (72.3%). The Republic of Moldova, Northern Macedonia and Somalia are far behind with values between 27.0% and 35.7%. In contrast, Turkey (87.8%), Iran (92.7%) and Georgia (97.6%) have extremely high shares.

If we look at the breakdown of highest educational institution attended by gender (Figure 7), differences can be seen especially in the area of lower education. In the case of higher educational institutions, it can be seen that the share of people with a university education and a high school education was slightly higher among men (16.1% and 22.4% respectively) than among women (15.7% and 19.1% respectively), but the differences are small. Compared to 2020, the shares in the higher education categories have fallen slightly for both men and women, with the exception of a minimal increase of 0.2 percentage points for males with high school education.

There are greater differences in middle school education: While 34.0% of the men had attended a middle school, this only applies to 26.9% of the women. The percentage of primary school attendance is almost the same, 19.8% for men and 20.0% for women, but 18.4% of women had not attended school at all, which was only the case for 7.7% 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 of a similar order in 2020, 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.

Figure 7:   Highest educational institution attended by asylum applicants of legal age of all countries of origin by gender in 2021 (in per cent)
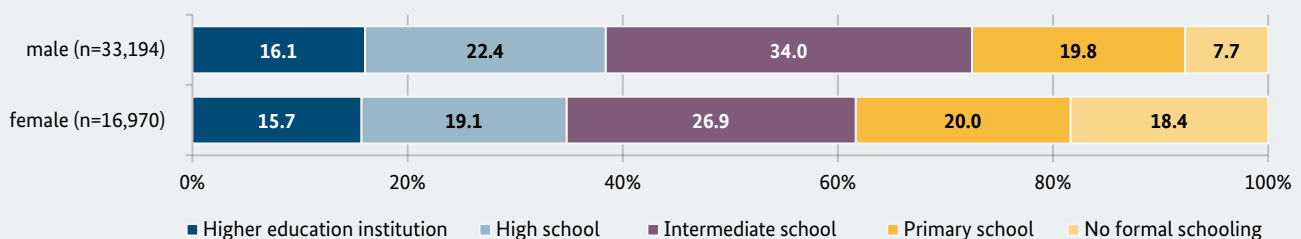
Source: „social component" database (01.02.2022)

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 50,081 adult first-time applicants who answered the question about their last occupation, the largest share of those last employed was in the "manual trades" sector (8.8, Table 2). In second and third place, with 7.0% each, were "agriculture, forestry, fishing" and services. "Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work " had the fourth largest share with 6.9%. Construction was in fifth place with 6.3%. This order corresponds to that of the previous year, with the exception of the category "Agricul-

ture, forestry, fishing", which moved up from fifth to second place. The other sectors of activity had shares of 3.6% or less. The share of the first five fields of activity was 36.1% in total, which means that more than one third of the first-time applicants worked in one of these fields.

"Wholesale and retail", "Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions", automotive and "office, banking, insurance" also had high shares with values between 3.6% and 2.9%, whereby a slight decline was recorded in these categories compared to 2020. What is striking is a clear decline in the "teaching occupations" that follow. Here, the share fell from 3.3% to 2.8% compared to the previous year. There was also a decline in the "hotel and catering trade" (from 3.0% to 2.7%). The other occupational categories all had shares of 2.1% or less. The share of "soldiers" (1.1%) and persons in "executive position, science, corporate management " (0.6%) was particularly low.

As in previous years, most people were represented in the category "housework, pension, school or study". The share was at 20.5% and was thus slightly higher than in 2020 (19.1%). The share of people "without work" was 10.4% and

Table 2: Most recently pursued occupations of first-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2021

Fields of activity / last profession	Number of people	Share in %	Share of men in %	Share of women in %
Manual trades	4,412	8.8	11.4	3.7
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	3,529	7.0	9.0	3.3
Services	3,488	7.0	7.7	5.5
Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work	3,474	6.9	8.5	4.0
Construction	3,174	6.3	9.6	0.1
Wholesale and retail	1,798	3.6	4.3	2.1
Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions	1,667	3.3	4.6	0.8
Automotive	1,512	3.0	4.5	0.1
Office, Banks, Insurance	1,452	2.9	2.8	3.1
Teaching professions	1,410	2.8	1.7	4.9
Hotel and catering trade	1,346	2.7	3.5	1.2
Artistic, Fashion	1,056	2.1	2.1	2.2
Transport, tourism and traffic	1,052	2.1	3.1	0.2
Public Service, Church, Public Safety	974	1.9	2.6	0.8
Street trading, petty trading	973	1.9	2.5	0.9
Medical, chemical professions, laboratory work	907	1.8	1.5	2.3
Soldier	558	1.1	1.6	0.1
Executive position, science, corporate management	302	0.6	0.7	0.4
Other	**1,516**	**3.0**	**3.0**	**3.1**
Housework, pension, school or study	**10,285**	**20.5**	**6.3**	**48.2**
Without work	**5,196**	**10.4**	**9.1**	**12.9**
Total	**50,081**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: „social component" database (01.02.2022)

was also slightly higher than in 2020 (9.8%). Adding these two groups gives a share of 30.9%. Thus, 69.1% of the adult asylum applicants were previously employed, slightly less than in 2020 (71.1%).

There were clear differences between the genders in terms of the last occupation: Among women, the largest share of paid employment was in the fields of "services" (5.5%) and "teaching professions" (4.9%). While in third place in 2020 was "office, banking, insurance", in 2021 the third largest share was in "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and ware-house work" with 4.0%.

Among men, the category "manual trades" remained in first place with 11.4% of all first-time applicants, as in previous years. As in 2020, construction was in second place with 9.6%, but unlike in 2020, it was followed by "agriculture, forestry and fishing" (then still in fifth place) with 9.0% and "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" with 8.5%. Services accounted for 7.7%, less than in 2020 (8.3%). All other categories had shares below five per cent. "Engineering, IT, electrical and technical occupations", in which many occupational groups sought in Germany are found, also had a lower share among the men in 2021 (4.6%) than in 2020 (5.4%).

However, the biggest difference between the genders was registered in the category "housework, pension, school or studies". Here, the share for women was 48.2%, a further increase of more than 5 percentage points compared to 2020 (after an almost equally high increase between 2019 and 2020). For men, this share was just as low as in 2020, at 6.6%. Another difference was seen among asylum applicants without work: Self-reported, it was 9.1% for men (2020: 8.7%) and 12.9% for women (2020: 12.0%). This share has thus increased for both men and women.

When looking at the ten main countries of origin, there were differences in the distribution of occupational categories in 2021 - as can already be assumed from the different educational structure. 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).

In the five most frequently mentioned fields of activity, "manual trades", "agriculture, forestry and fishing", services, "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" and construction, Syria was represented in all fields with shares of 5.8% or more. The share was particularly high in the "manual trades" sector (11.0%). This value was only surpassed by Algeria with 17.9%. Many people from

Algeria also previously worked in one of the other four most frequently mentioned sectors. In addition, Algeria had high percentages in the areas of "hotel and catering trade" and "street trading, petty trading", each with over five per cent. For the countries Afghanistan and Iraq, there are hardly any remarkable features in the areas of activity. They also had high percentages in the five most frequently mentioned fields of activity and significantly lower percentages in the other categories. Persons from Turkey showed a similar distribution as these two countries with regard to the main areas of activity, but also had high shares in "teaching professions" (8.3%), "hotel and catering trade" (6.2%) and "office, banking, insurance" (5.9%).

As in previous years, a high share of first-time applicants from Georgia were last employed in the construction industry. At 11.7%, Georgia has the highest share among the main countries of origin. The "manual trades" sector (8.5%) has also increased in percentage terms for this country of origin in 2021 (2020: 5.2%). Since a particularly large number of well-qualified refugees came from Iran, the share of un-skilled work, in construction or agriculture and forestry was relatively low for this country of origin, while above-average values were seen in the area of "engineering, IT, electrical professions, technical professions" (11.0%), services (9.5%) and "office, banking, insurance" (7.4% and the highest share among the main countries of origin). However, Iran also had a high share in "manual trades" at 8.5%, which was even lower in 2020 at 7.8%. Persons from Somalia, on the other hand, were rarely employed in manual trades (2.5%), while a high share was discernible in the area of "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" (13.0%). However, this share was significantly higher again for the Republic of Moldova (15.5%) and Northern Macedonia (17.7%). For these two countries, a high share in the sector "agriculture, forestry, fishing" was also noticeable at 7.2% (Republic of Moldova) and 10.3% (Northern Macedonia).

It can be seen that people from almost all countries of origin were very often represented in the areas of "housework, pension, school or study". The highest share was among applicants from Northern Macedonia (28.1%), Afghanistan (26.5%) and Syria (25.8%). Somalia (24.8%) and Iraq (23.8%) followed directly behind. Algeria (4.2%) and Turkey (8.4%), on the other hand, had only a few people who mentioned these fields.

On average, 10.4% were without work. Here, the variance among the ten main countries of origin is also very large: people from the Republic of Moldova (26.2%) and Somalia (22.3%) stated that more than a fifth had previously been without work. The figure for Northern Macedonia (19.2%) was also significantly above average, while the figures for people from Turkey (5.4%) and Iran (4.8%) were very low.

Table 3: First-time asylum applicants of legal age from the ten main countries of origin and their most recently pursued occupations, 2021

Occupational fields / most recent occupation	Syria (n=14.705)	Afghanistan (n=8.235)	Iraq (n=6.325)	Turkey (n=3.255)	Georgia (n=2.013)	Iran (n=1.183)	Somalia (n=995)	Algeria (n=721)	Republic of Moldova (n=1.159)	North Macedonia (n=634)
Manual trades	11.0	8.7	7.6	7.9	8.5	8.5	2.5	17.9	4.3	5.0
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	7.8	7.7	7.1	6.8	5.4	2.0	6.4	6.7	7.2	10.3
Services	5.8	5.5	7.8	7.6	6.8	9.5	7.7	9.7	4.4	4.3
Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work	5.8	5.5	7.7	5.2	7.0	4.2	13.0	8.6	15.5	17.7
Construction	6.3	6.3	5.7	8.4	11.7	5.2	0.6	9.0	6.6	4.7
Wholesale and retail	2.7	3.0	4.1	3.5	3.9	6.1	3.4	3.3	5.4	1.6
Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions	3.1	2.3	2.5	4.9	2.4	11.0	1.5	2.9	0.7	0.5
Automotive	3.5	2.2	3.7	1.5	3.5	3.6	0.0	3.9	1.1	1.6
Office work, banking, insurance	1.5	3.4	2.1	5.9	3.7	7.4	0.7	1.9	0.3	0.2
Teaching professions	2.9	3.4	1.8	8.3	1.3	3.2	1.0	1.4	0.2	0.3
Hotel and catering trade	2.5	0.7	3.0	6.2	2.9	1.9	2.8	5.1	0.4	0.5
Artistic profession, fashion	2.4	3.0	1.4	1.2	1.7	4.4	1.0	0.8	0.3	0.9
Transport and tourism	2.0	1.3	2.6	1.8	4.1	1.9	1.8	2.6	1.5	0.5
Public service, church, public safety and security	0.9	3.8	2.3	4.3	2.5	1.8	0.4	1.1	0.3	0.5
Street trading, petty trading	1.0	2.2	1.9	1.1	1.4	2.8	4.9	5.0	3.1	2.5
Medical, chemical professions, laboratory work	1.9	1.9	1.2	2.6	2.1	2.2	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.6
Soldier	0.7	1.5	1.1	2.7	2.4	0.8	0.4	2.2	0.1	0.0
Executive position, science, corporate management	0.3	0.7	0.3	1.2	1.1	1.5	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.0
Other	2.7	2.8	2.7	5.0	4.2	3.7	3.5	4.4	1.0	1.1
Housework, pension, school or studies	25.8	26.5	23.8	8.4	11.4	13.3	24.8	4.2	21.1	28.1
Out of work	9.6	7.7	9.6	5.4	11.9	4.8	22.3	8.3	26.2	19.2
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 % und mehr**

Source: „social component" database (01.02.2022)
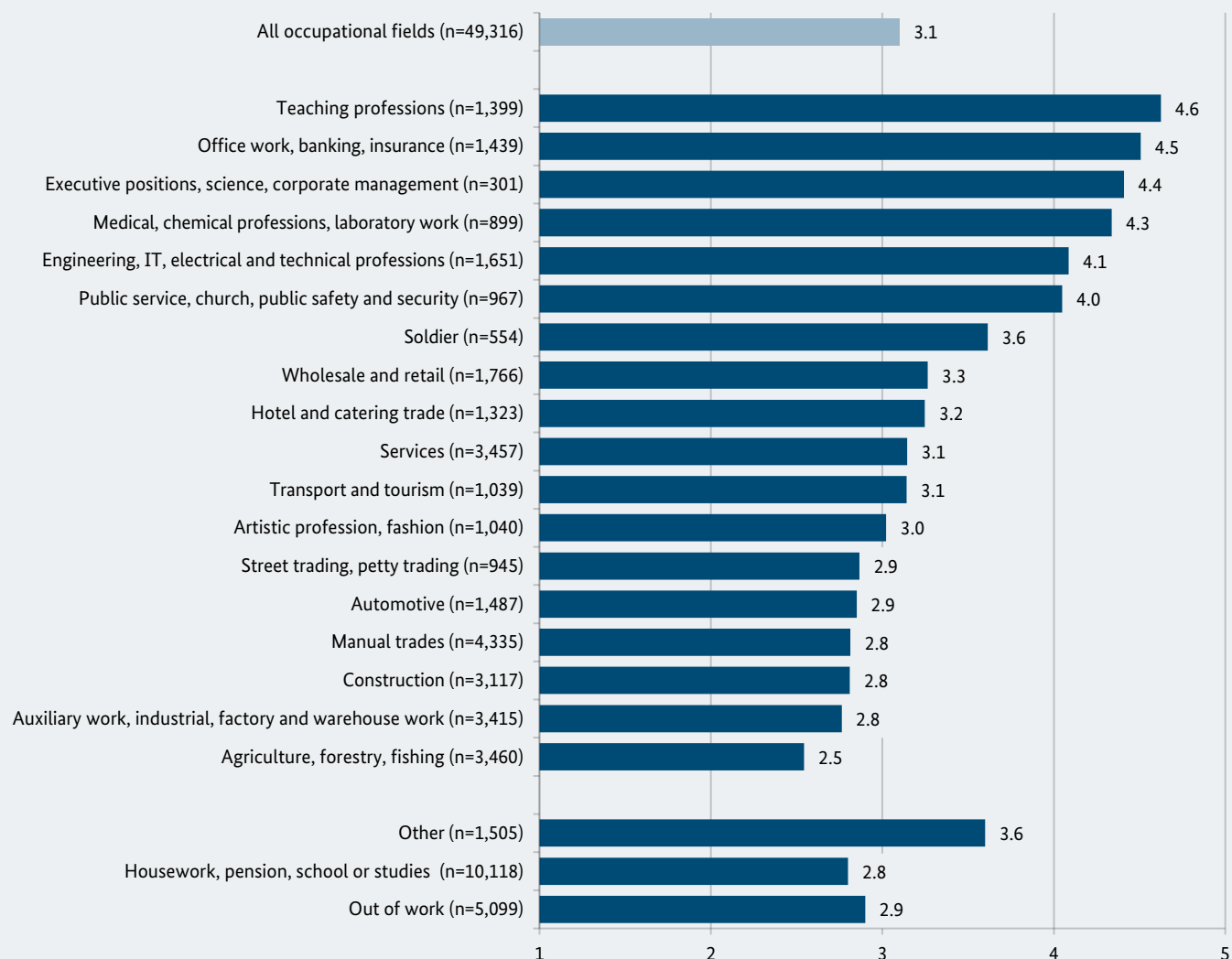
4.3 Links between Occupation and Education

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

Figure 8 shows so-called educational mean values by occupational fields. This provides an indication of the areas in

which persons with a predominantly higher level of education and those with a lower level of education were most recently employed. The educational mean values are obtained by applying values to the schooling categories (1 = no formal schooling to 5 = higher education). The educational mean value for each occupational field can be obtained by multiplying these values by the share of correspondingly educated persons per occupational group. This method can only provide a rough assessment, 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 3.1. This has hardly changed compared to previous years, and there were only minor deviations in the individual categories. As in previous years, the highest average value was in the area of "teaching professions" with 4.6, followed by "office

Figure 8:   Educational mean values of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from all countries of origin in 2021 by occupational fields

Occupational field	Value
All occupational fields (n=49,316)	3.1
Teaching professions (n=1,399)	4.6
Office work, banking, insurance (n=1,439)	4.5
Executive positions, science, corporate management (n=301)	4.4
Medical, chemical professions, laboratory work (n=899)	4.3
Engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions (n=1,651)	4.1
Public service, church, public safety and security (n=967)	4.0
Soldier (n=554)	3.6
Wholesale and retail (n=1,766)	3.3
Hotel and catering trade (n=1,323)	3.2
Services (n=3,457)	3.1
Transport and tourism (n=1,039)	3.1
Artistic profession, fashion (n=1,040)	3.0
Street trading, petty trading (n=945)	2.9
Automotive (n=1,487)	2.9
Manual trades (n=4,335)	2.8
Construction (n=3,117)	2.8
Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work (n=3,415)	2.8
Agriculture, forestry, fishing (n=3,460)	2.5
Other (n=1,505)	3.6
Housework, pension, school or studies (n=10,118)	2.8
Out of work (n=5,099)	2.9

Source: „social component" database (01.02.2022), n= 49,316 (all persons with information on both the highest educational institution attended and the most recent occupation)

work, banking, insurance" with 4.5 and "executive position, science, corporate management" with 4.4. Close behind were "medical, chemical professions, laboratory work" with 4.3 as well as people in the area of "engineering, IT, electrical professions, technical professions" (4.1), which can be classified at least partially in the MINT[6] area. People in the field of "public service, church, public security" also had above-average mean education value (4.0).

On the other hand, asylum applicants who had previously worked in the fields of "agriculture, forestry, fishing" (2.5) had low educational mean scores. The mean values for those who had worked in "manual trades", in construction, in "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work", in the automotive sector or in the area of "street trading, petty trading" were also below average at 2.8 and 2.9 respectively. For persons who had previously been "without work", the value was also low at 2.9. It is noticeable that the five most frequently mentioned areas of activity (see Table 2) all had a below-average mean education value.

A special area with regard to occupational fields concerns persons in the category "housework, pension, school or studies" (educational mean value 2.8), who were neither

---

6   MINT=Mathematics , Computer Science, Natural Science and Technology.

primarily active on the labour market, nor assignable to the "social component" category "out of work". This category, grouping together persons living in highly diverse situations without any income of their own, is considered in a separate analysis (Figure 9). As this group contains around four times more female than male asylum applicants, the thickness of the bars additionally represents the ratio between the sexes.

While 91.3% of the adult men included in the category "housework, pension, school or university" reported that they had attended an intermediate school, high school or higher educational institution, only 51.7% of the women did so. The figure clearly shows that the shares of those who had no formal schooling or attended primary school as the highest educational institution were much lower among men, at 1.0% and 7.7% respectively, than among women at 23.7% and 24.6%. The percentage differences were small intermediate school attendance, but again significant for higher educational institutions: 39.9% and 24.2% of men from the activity area " housework, pension, school or university" had attended a high school or higher educational institution respectively. For women, the shares were only 16.6% and 7.3% 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

Figure 9:   Schooling of first-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2021 in the occupational field "housework, pension, school or studies" by gender (in per cent)
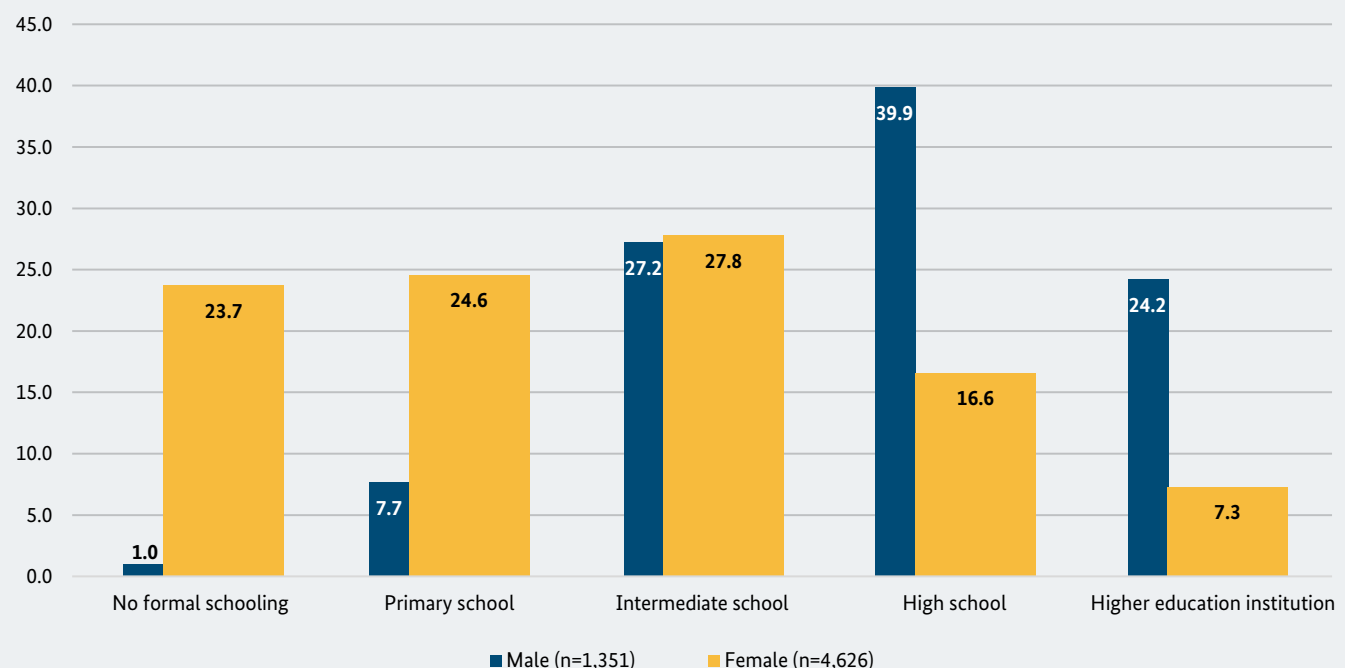
Source: „social component" database (01.02.2022), n=49,316 (all persons with information on both the highest educational institution attended and gender as well as the last occupation held).

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 Applicants from the Main Countries of Origin in 2021

In order to provide a synoptic overview, the key characteristics pertaining to the respective main countries of origin in 2021 are presented here in tabular form and – if possible – the trend in comparison to 2020 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[7] 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).

---

7   A change from 20% in 2020 to 30% in 2021 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 2020

First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2021		
Characteristics in 2021		**Comp. to previous year 2020**
Syria		
Share of total	Remains the largest group comprising 23,514 persons, share increased from 27.5% (2020) to 31.4%.	⬆
Female share	Further decline to be recorded, share decreased from 43.4% (2020) to 38.6% in 2021.	⬇
Share of married persons	The share of married persons remained exactly the same at 62.2%.	➡
Share of under 30 year-olds	Small increase in the proportion of younger people under 30, from 52.9% in 2020 to 55.4% in 2021.	➡
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Small decrease in the share from 33.4% in 2020 to 32.6% in 2021.	➡
Occupational fields	High share in "manual trade" (11.0%), around a quarter in "housework, pension, school or study".	
Afghanistan		
Share of total	As in 2020, in second place with 11,989 persons. Percentage share increased sharply from 9.4% in 2020 to 16.0% in 2021.	⬆⬆⬆
Female share	Share increased from 37.0% in 2020 to 39.4% in 2021.	⬆
Share of married persons	Increase from 53.8% in 2020 to 59.1% in 2021.	⬆
Share of under 30 year-olds	54.4% of individuals were under 30 years old, very small decrease from 2020.	➡
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Increase in share of persons attending high school or higher education institution to 34.7%.	⬆
Occupational fields	As in 2020, the categories "housework, pension, school or study" (26.5 %) and "manual trade" (8.7 %) had the highest shares, with a slight decrease in "manual trade" compared to 2020.	
Iraq		
Share of total	With 8,540 persons and a share of 11.4% in 2021, there is an increase compared to 2020 (8.5%).	⬆
Female share	Significant decrease in the share of women to 30.7% (2020: 38.2%).	⬇⬇
Share of married persons	Also significant decrease in married persons from 53.1% in the previous year to 42.9% in 2021.	⬇⬇
Share of under 30 year-olds	The share of people under 30 has increased significantly compared to 2020 (47.4%) and is at 59.4% in 2021.	⬆⬆
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Significant increase in persons attending high school or higher education institut from 24.4% in 2020 to 29.6% in 2021.	⬆⬆
Occupational fields	"Housework, pension, school or study" again account for the largest share at 23.8%. Also high shares in "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" at 7.7% and "services" (7.8%).	

First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2021		
	Characteristics in 2021	**Comp. to previous year 2020**
Turkey		
Share of total	Fourth largest group with 5,093 persons, share fell from 8.7% in 2020 to 6.8%.	⬇⬇
Female share	At 21.0%, the share is only minimally lower than in 2020 (21.7%).	➡
Share of married persons	At 43.4%, almost the same share as in 2021.	➡
Share of under 30 year-olds	48.3% (2021) of first-time Turkish applicants were under age 30, little change compared to 2020.	➡
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Share almost identical to 2020 at 60.6%.	➡
Occupational fields	Particularly high share compared to other countries in "teaching professions" (8.3%), but also in construction (8.4%). Hardly any people previously in "housework, pension, school or study" (8.4%).	
Georgia		
Share of total	2,640 first-time applicants of legal age in 2021, equivalent to 3.5%, up from 3.3% in 2020.	⬆
Female share	Strong increase from 23.4% in 2020 to 31.2% in 2021.	⬆⬆
Share of married persons	Share increased from 49.1% in 2020 to 52.6% in 2021.	⬆
Share of under 30 year-olds	Very small decrease from 32.1% (2020) to 31.7% (2021).	➡
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Increase from 44.8% in 2020 to over half (50.5%).	⬆
Occupational fields	Very high share in construction (11.7%), many previously unemployed (11.9%).	
Iran		
Share of total	Further decline compared to 2019 (7.0%) and 2020 (4.4%) to now 2.3% with 1,700 people.	⬇⬇⬇
Female share	High decline from 42.1% in 2020 to 34.8% in 2021.	⬇⬇
Share of married persons	Share in 2021 at 46.0% slightly lower than 2020 at 49.5%.	⬇
Share of under 30 year-olds	Share increased slightly from 28.7% in 2020 to 30.3% in 2021.	⬆
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Share is still comparatively very high (76.1%), but decreased compared to 2020 (83.8%).	⬇
Occupational fields	Particularly high share in "engineering, IT, electrical and technical professions" (11.0%).	
Somalia		
Share of total	1,564 persons, or 2.1% of the total, came from Somalia, an increase compared to the previous year (1.7%).	⬆⬆
Female share	At 54.3%, slightly more women than men arrived, slight increase compared to 2020 (51.9%), largest share among the main countries of origin.	➡
Share of married persons	41.1% were married, small decrease compared to 2020 (43.5%).	⬇
Share of under 30 year-olds	At 71.6%, the share was similar to 2020, highest share among main countries of origin.	➡
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Decrease compared to 2020 (14.1%), share in 2021 was 13.4% and thus also very low overall.	⬇
Occupational fields	High shares in "housework, pension, school or study (24.8%) and "without work" (22.3%), many employed in "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" (13.0%).	
Algeria		
Share of total	With a share of 2.3% in 2020 and a share of 1.9% in 2021, there has been a significant decline.	⬇⬇
Female share	Share of women was by far the lowest among the main countries of origin at 4.6% and has fallen again compared with 2020 (6.4%).	⬇⬇
Share of married persons	Sharp decline in share from 11.1% (2020) to 7.1% (2021), thus has the lowest share of married persons among the main countries of origin.	⬇⬇⬇
Share of under 30 year-olds	Slight decrease from 64.4% in 2020 to 63.2% in 2021.	➡
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Decrease in share from 29.2% (2020) to 25.4% (2021).	⬇
Occupational fields	Highest share in the category "manual trades" (17.9%), comparatively low shares in "housework, pension, school or study" (4.2%) or "without work" (8.3%).	

First-time asylum applicants of legal age in 2021		
Characteristics in 2021		**Comp. to previous year 2020**
Republic of Moldova		
Share of total	In ninth place among the main countries of origin, with 1.8% and 1,367 persons.	**was not among the ten main countries of origin in 2020**
Female share	Third-highest share of women among the main countries of origin; almost half are women (49.7%).	
Share of married persons	Share is in the lower range at just over a quarter (27.8%).	
Share of under 30 year-olds	Above-average number of older people, only 36.1% were under 30 years of age.	
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	Only 2.7% had attended higher education institution or high school, the smallest figure among the main countries of origin.	
Occupational fields	High share in "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" (15.5%). Many persons previously "without work" (26.2%).	
North Macedonia		
Share of total	With less than 1,000 persons and 1.3%, it ranked tenth among the main countries of origin.	**was not among the ten main countries of origin in 2020**
Female share	Slightly more than half (50.8%) were women.	
Share of married persons	At 79.0%, largest share of married persons compared to the other main countries of origin.	
Share of under 30 year-olds	53.1% were under 30 years of age.	
Share of applicants with high school or higher education	At only 4.7%, the share of married persons was second lowest among the main countries of origin after the Republic of Moldova.	
Occupational fields	High share in the activity sector "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" (17.7%). Many persons previously "without work" (19.2%) or in "housework, pension, school or study" (28.1%).	

⬆⬆⬆ 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 decrease (under -15 % to -35 %)

⬇⬇⬇ very strong decrease (under -35 %)

Note: Changes mesasured in percent, not percentage points.
Source: „social component" database (01.02.2022)

6. Focal Topic: First-time Asylum Applicants of Legal Age from Afghanistan from 2017-2021

Due to the withdrawal of the US and NATO forces from Afghanistan and the takeover by the Taliban in August 2021, many people fled from Afghanistan to Germany, among other places. Their share of 9.4% of all adult first-time applicants, which was already high in 2020, increased further to 16.0% in 2021. This chapter therefore presents the development for people from Afghanistan over time and looks at it in more detail. The focus is on the variables gender, marital status and age, as well as education and last occupation, which are also presented in the chapters above. We analyse the time period of the last five years between 2017 and 2021. The years 2015 and 2016 were characterised by an overall high number of adult asylum applicants and are not considered here, as a comparison of the figures is not target-oriented due to the special situation with very high numbers of arrivals in these two years.

a) Total Number and Gender Ratio

After the total number had risen sharply in 2015 and 2016, the number of adult Afghan asylum seekers was 6,868 in 2017 and fell to 4,101 the following year. There was a slight increase in the following two years until 2021 when, due to political developments in Afghanistan, the number rose to almost 12,000, almost three times the number in previous years (Table 5).

In 2017, the share of women was still low at 29.0%. In the following two years, the share rose to nearly 40% and was in 2020 with 37.0% and in 2021 with 39.4% in a similar range, meanwhile even slightly above the average of all countries of origin. The lower share of women from 2017 could be due to the offshoot of the development in 2015/2016, in which a high share of (single) male refugees was recorded overall. In the following years, however, more women and married persons arrived from Afghanistan (cf. the analyses in c).
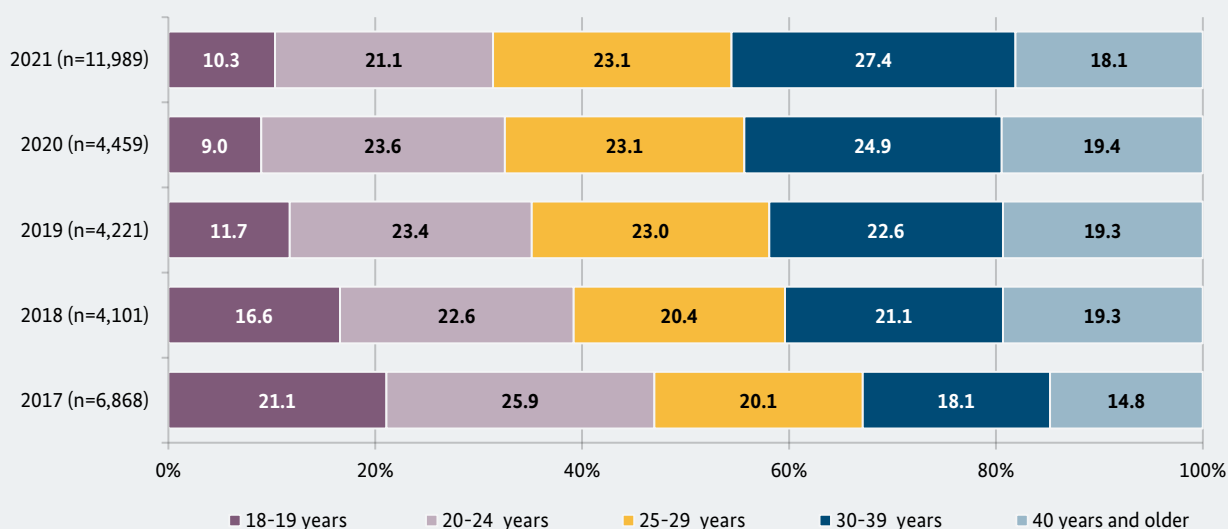
b) Age Groups

In the following, we will look at the extent to which the age structure of adult asylum applicants from Afghanistan has changed. As Figure 10 shows, there has been a shift towards an "older" structure in recent years. While in 2017, 21.1% of adult first-time applicants were aged 18-19, the share fell steadily in the following years to 9.0% in 2020, with a small increase to 10.3% in 2021. In the next age group, the decline was not remarkable: In 2021, 21.1% were aged 20-24, this figure was only slightly higher in the previous three years, with figures between 22.6% and 23.6%. In 2017, however, it was still over a quarter (25.9%). The share of 25-29 year-olds has also changed little, ranging between 20.1% and 23.1% in all years.

What is striking, however, is an increase in the share of people aged between 30 and 39: This share has risen over all five years and in 2021, at 27.4%, it was significantly higher than the share of 18.1% in 2017. Persons aged 40 and older still made up the smallest share in 2017 (14.8%), but in the following years the share was then consistently at 19.3% and 19.4% and only fell again slightly in 2021, at 18.1%.

Table 5: Number of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Afghanistan by gender, 2017-2021

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total	**6,868**	**4,101**	**4,221**	**4,459**	**11,989**
Male	4,874	2,673	2,567	2,807	7,263
Female	1,994	1,428	1,654	1,652	4,726
Share of women	29.0	34.8	39.2	37.0	39.4

Source: Official asylum statistics for the years 2017-2021

Figure 10: Age distribution of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Afghanistan, 2017-2021 (in per cent)

Year	18-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	30-39 years	40 years and older
2021 (n=11,989)	10.3	21.1	23.1	27.4	18.1
2020 (n=4,459)	9.0	23.6	23.1	24.9	19.4
2019 (n=4,221)	11.7	23.4	23.0	22.6	19.3
2018 (n=4,101)	16.6	22.6	20.4	21.1	19.3
2017 (n=6,868)	21.1	25.9	20.1	18.1	14.8

Source: Official asylum statistics for the years 2017-2021

Overall, a shift in the age structure towards older people can be observed.

c) Marital Status

Parallel to a slightly older age structure, it can be seen that the share of married persons from Afghanistan has increased significantly over the last five years (Figure 11). While 45.4% were married in 2017, the share rose over the coming years to 59.1% in 2021. Correspondingly, the share of single persons fell from 49.9% in 2017 to 35.7% in 2021, and thus from half to just over a third.

d) Highest Educational Institution Attended

Overall, first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Afghanistan have had a below-average level of schooling in recent years (Figure 12). While the share of those with tertiary education was still very low in 2017 at 8.8%, this had risen by 2019 and almost doubled (16.1%). However, it then fell back to 10.8% in 2020 and was almost back to the 2019 level in 2021 at 15.5%. The share has thus fluctuated greatly in recent years. The share of people who had attended a high school as their highest educational institution was higher. Here, the values ranged between 18.3% and 20.6% in

Figure 11: Marital status of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Afghanistan, 2017-2021 (in per cent)

Year	Married	Single	Other
2021 (n=11,728)	59.1	35.7	5.2
2020 (n=4,218)	53.8	40.0	6.2
2019 (n=3,873)	50.4	42.2	7.4
2018 (n=3,762)	47.3	45.6	7.1
2017 (n=3,770)	45.4	49.9	4.7
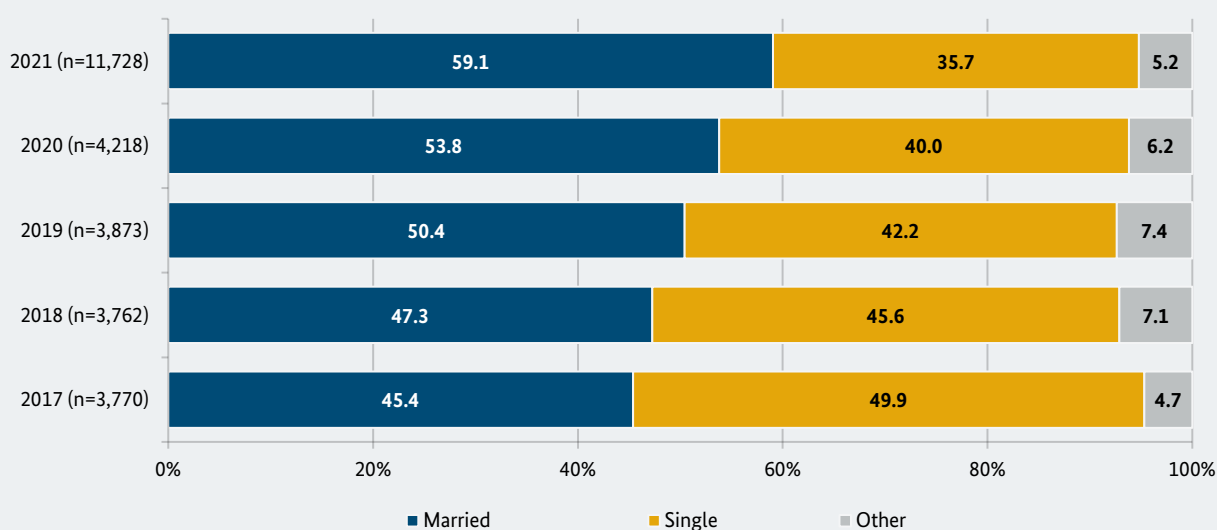
Source: „social component" database for the years 2017-2021

Figure 12: Highest educational institution attended by first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Afghanistan, 2017-2021 (in per cent)

Year	Higher education institution	High school	Intermediate school	Primary school	No formal schooling
2021 (n=8,089)	15.5	19.2	20.8	20.7	23.8
2020 (n=3,243)	10.8	20.4	22.6	20.9	25.3
2019 (n=3,599)	16.1	20.6	20.3	19.5	23.5
2018 (n=3,331)	11.8	19.1	20.6	22.8	25.7
2017 (n = 5,075)	8.8	18.3	22.0	24.2	26.7
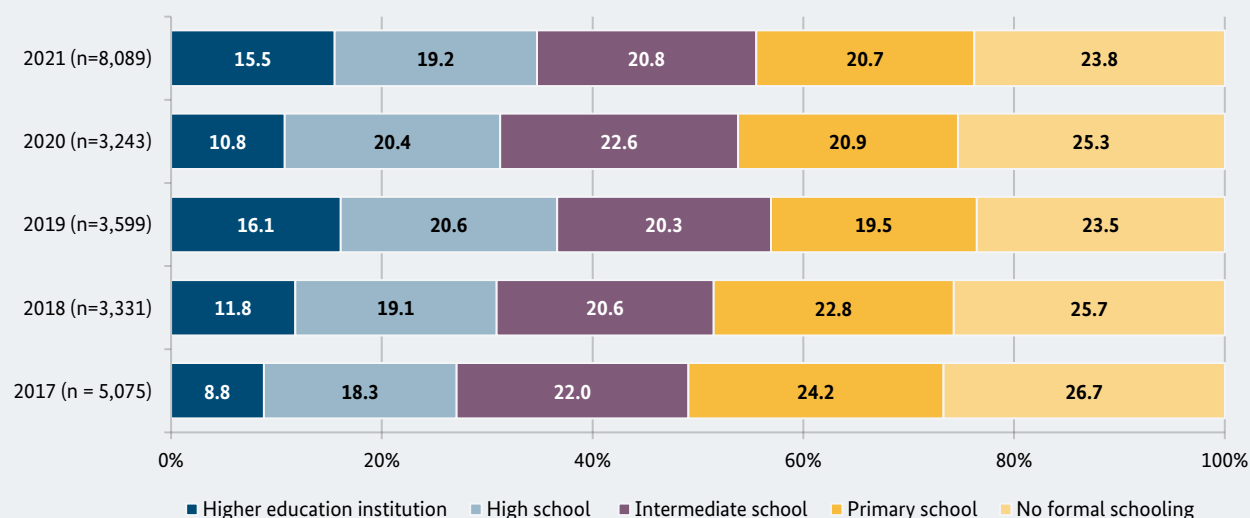
Source: „social component" database for the years 2017-2021

the five years considered and have thus changed little. This also applies to middle schools. After a decline from 22.0% in 2017 to 20.3% in 2019, the figure rose again slightly (2020: 22.6%) and in 2021 was again at a similar level to 2018 at 20.8%. The share of people with primary school attendance fell slightly from year to year with one exception, dropping from 24.2% to 20.7% between 2017 and 2021.

However, persons from Afghanistan also show a persistently high share without formal schooling. Although this has also decreased slightly over the years, it is still almost a quarter (decrease from 26.7% in 2017 to 23.8% in 2021).

e) Most Recent Occupation

As was already presented in chapter 4.2, there are particularly high shares for five fields of occupation for most

countries of origin. While individual countries of origin also have conspicuously high shares in one or the other area, the five areas most frequently mentioned by all are also in the top five positions for persons from Afghanistan, albeit in a different order in recent years. Table 6 shows the distribution among the five fields of occupation „manual trades", "agriculture, forestry, fishing", construction, services and "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work" as well as for the groups "domestic work, pension, school or study" and "without work". "Other" includes all other areas of activity. The ranking of the most recent occupations is according to the frequency in 2021.

Compared to the other main countries of origin, the share of persons "without work" was consistently low, ranging between 7.3% and 8.7% in all years. At around a quarter, the share of persons in "domestic work, pension, school or

Table 6: Selected areas of activity of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Afghanistan, 2017-2021 (in per cent)

Fields of activity / last profession	2017 (n=4,947)	2018 (n=3,344)	2019 (n=3652)	2020 (n=3,304)	2021 (n=8,235)
Manual trades	10.8	9.4	8.4	10.0	8.7
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	7.4	7.2	6.0	7.9	7.7
Construction	6.9	5.3	5.3	6.7	6.3
Services	5.6	5.4	6.7	6.6	5.5
Auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work	5.2	5.5	4.1	5.4	5.5
Other	32.4	33.5	34.4	29.9	32.2
Housework, pension, school or studies	24.3	25.0	26.3	26.2	26.5
Out of work	7.4	8.7	8.8	7.3	7.7

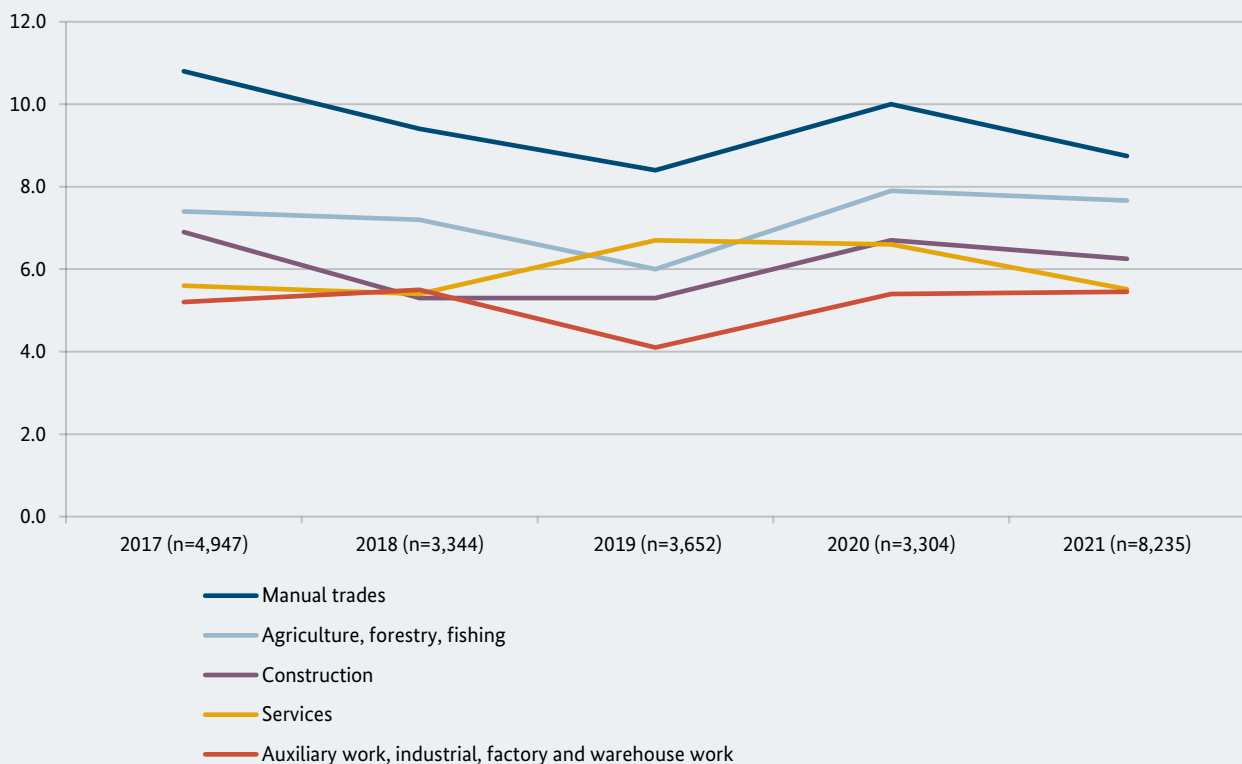Source: „social component" database for the years 2017-2021

study" has changed little; the shares were between 24.3% and 26.5% in the years considered. The development of the five most frequently mentioned fields of occupation shows an interesting parallel to the qualification structure. Figure 13 graphically shows the percentage shares of these areas for the five years.

It is obvious that „manual trades" had the highest share of previous professional activities of persons from Afghanistan in all years. However, this share has declined with the exception of 2020. On the other hand, the share in "agriculture, forestry, fishing" rose again significantly after a decline in 2017 and 2018, similar in "manual trade". The shares in services, on the other hand, initially increased and showed the second highest share in 2019. In the following years, however, the share fell again. The reverse was true for "auxiliary work, industrial, factory and warehouse work ": Here, a sharp drop was seen in 2019, followed by an increase until 2021, when a similar share as in 2017 was reached.

In terms of the highest educational institution attended among applicants from Afghanistan, it was noticeable that in 2019 there was a temporary increase among those who had attended university or high school. This goes hand in hand with the sharp decline in occupational groups with low educational averages (see Figure 8) and an increase in services associated with higher education on average.

Afghanistan thus shows itself to be a country from which a high number of people come who previously held jobs in areas with low educational requirements or were active in the area of "household, pension, school or study". The development of the last few years shows that the age structure has evolved towards somewhat older applicants, but who have also attended a higher educational institution on average. In addition, more people have been temporarily employed in services. The distribution among the quantitatively most important occupational groups has become more heterogeneous.

Figure 13: Five most frequently mentioned areas of occupation of first-time asylum applicants of legal age from Afghanistan, 2017-2021 (in per cent)

Source: „social component" database for the years 2017-2021

SOCIAL COMPONENT ANALYSES PUBLISHED TO DATE

Heß, Barbara (2021): Potenziale von Asylantragstellenden: Analyse der „SoKo"-Sozialstrukturdaten. Halbjahresbericht 2021. Berichtsreihen zu Migration und Integration, Reihe 3, Nürnberg: Forschungszentrum Migration, Integration und Asyl des Bundesamtes für Migration und Flüchtlinge (available in German only).

Heß, Barbara (2020): Potenziale von Asylantragstellenden: Analyse der „SoKo"-Sozialstrukturdaten. Halbjahresbericht 2020. 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 (2020): Potential of asylum applicants: Analysis of "social component" data relating to applicants' social structure. Annual Report 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 and English).

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): Potential of asylum applicants: Analysis of "social component" data relating to applicants' social structure. Annual Report 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 scientific advisor at the Research Centre for Migration, Integration and Asylum at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Section FIII - Migration and Integration: long-term monitoring and series of reports).

Contact:
barbara.hess@bamf.bund.de

Visit us:

www.facebook.com/bamf.socialmedia

@BAMF_Dialog

@bamf_bund