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EUROPE'S REFUGEES: REFOCUSING ON INTEGRATION

BRIEFING NOTE

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In 2015, an unprecedented influx of asylum seekers took Europe by surprise. Since then, more than three million men, women, and children who have been uprooted from their homes by violence have arrived from Syria and other nations, hoping to find safety and the chance for a better life.

The flow of asylum seekers has subsided since its peak in 2015–16. But the debate has not. Europe's intake of new arrivals and its management of asylum requests was the first point of contention. Now governments face an even bigger challenge: integrating those who are planning to stay and repatriating those who need to leave.

In 2016, the McKinsey Global Institute published *People on the move*, a comprehensive study of global migration and its economic impact, as well as a companion report focused specifically on Europe's unfolding refugee crisis. Both found that successful integration yields economic benefits. MGI's report, *Europe's new refugees*, in particular, emphasized the critical importance of making an active long-term commitment to helping new arrivals gain a foothold in their communities and the labor market.

More than a year later, indicators suggest that integration efforts are falling short. Many new arrivals continue to struggle with learning a new language, and their educational and professional credentials do not translate easily into the European context. Furthermore, many of them bear the scars of trauma.

For European host countries, overcoming these obstacles is a humanitarian issue, an economic imperative, and an opportunity. Since only 17 percent of the new arrivals are over the age of 34, they can help address the demographic challenge in aging societies.

Immigration, if handled well, could provide dynamism that translates into a positive overall contribution to GDP. Successfully integrating only the refugees who have arrived in Europe since 2015 into the labor market could add roughly €70 billion–€80 billion to annual GDP by 2025. Equally important, it could establish a template for the future, potentially yielding much wider economic and social impact. The success or failure of integration will ultimately determine whether host countries can capture the benefits of immigration—or whether they will risk social cohesion by creating a disaffected and disadvantaged population.

In addition to updating our earlier research on the challenges facing Europe, this briefing note aims to further the discussion by outlining a more data-driven approach to integration. Using data-driven job matching, for example, to move an additional 10 percent of the EU's more highly educated refugees into jobs that better match their qualification would boost their incomes by about €5 billion–€7 billion. This approach can help European countries scale up their efforts while simultaneously addressing the needs of individuals and businesses. Governments across the continent need new ideas to make

this situation work, not only for the migrants themselves but also for their host communities.

While the number of new arrivals has declined, their distribution across Europe remains uneven

The sense of crisis has ebbed since 2015 and 2016, when scenes of asylum seekers in desperate circumstances dominated the news. At one point, up to 10,000 people were arriving in Europe each day, creating the continent's largest wave of refugees since World War II.

The flow of new arrivals has slowed significantly

The EU-28 countries have absorbed some three million asylum seekers in total since 2015. But the number of asylum applications dropped sharply after 2016, according to Eurostat data (see exhibit below). After more than doubling from 2015 to 2016, the number of positive asylum decisions

then dropped sharply. Rejections have steadily increased. Not only have many countries taken harder stances on asylum, but they have also been clearing a backlog of more complicated cases postponed from the earlier stages of the crisis.

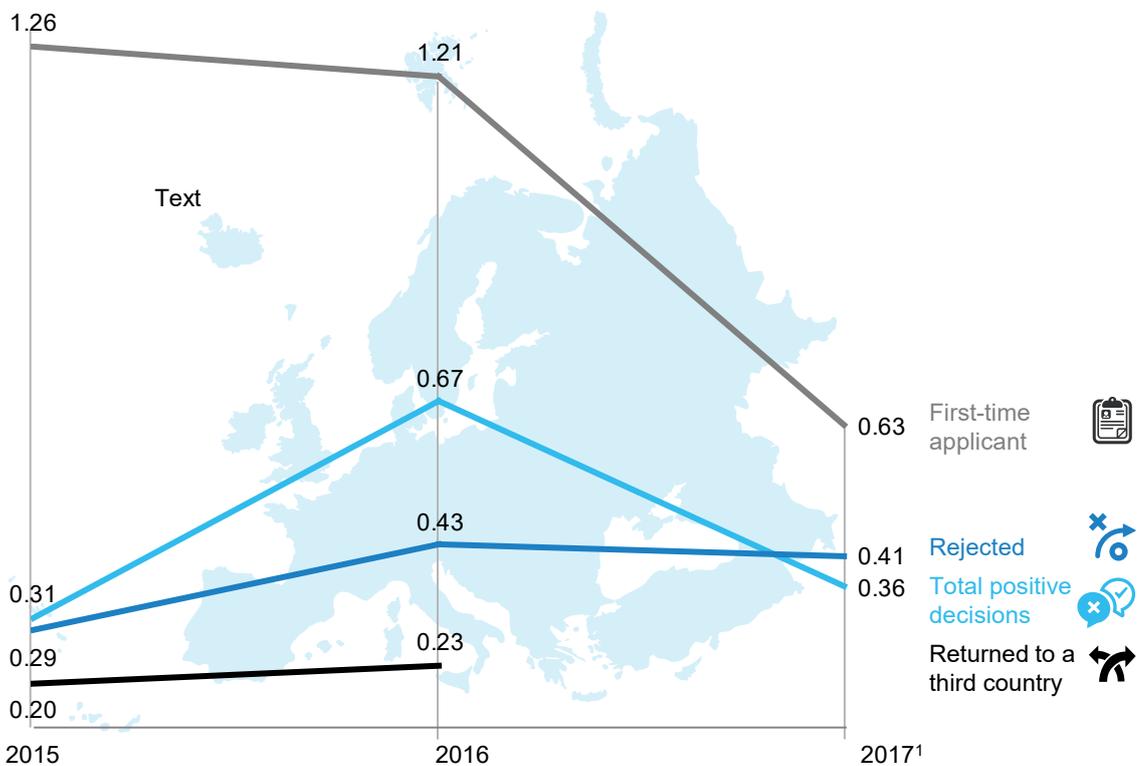
Transit patterns have also shifted. UNHCR, the United Nations refugee agency, estimates that the total number arriving through Greece, Italy, or Spain decreased from roughly one million in 2015 to only 180,000 in 2017. The share arriving through Greece fell from 83 percent to 17 percent over that period. Two-thirds of new arrivals came via Italy in 2017, and Spain has become a more common route as well, with 15 percent of arrivals.

Several factors have contributed to the decline in overall arrivals and the shift in transit patterns. In March 2016, Turkey agreed to seal its borders in exchange for substantial aid payments from the

Exhibit

The number of asylum seekers in the EU-28 countries is down significantly from its recent peak

Million



¹ Data for 2017 not yet available.

NOTE: "Returned to a third country" data for 2017 not yet available.
SOURCE: Eurostat data; McKinsey Global Institute analysis.

EU to assist the millions of Syrians currently in the country. In addition, both sides agreed to a “one in, one out” policy. It allows Greece to return arriving migrants to Turkey if they do not apply for asylum in Greece itself or if their asylum applications had been denied previously. For each Syrian migrant sent back to Turkey, the EU agreed to resettle a Syrian from Turkey with a valid asylum claim. After the EU-Turkey Statement was adopted, arrival numbers through Greece dropped immediately, from 57,000 in February 2016 to only 3,500 in April.

Other factors behind the drop include bilateral agreements between transit countries (such as a memorandum by Italy and Libya to reinforce border security) and efforts in countries of origin to clamp down on migrant smuggling. In addition, the EU as a whole and individual member countries have instituted stricter border management policies and put more resources toward enforcement. In December 2016, for instance, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency launched a “rapid reaction pool” of up to 1,500 border guards, experts, and equipment that can be deployed on short notice if member states on the EU’s external borders need emergency support. Furthermore, countries including Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, and Sweden have reintroduced temporary border controls.

The current cohort of asylum seekers represents a wide mix of age and educational attainment. According to Eurostat data, just over half of all asylum seekers in 2015–17 were of prime working age (18–34). About 30 percent were under age 17, and 17–18 percent were over age 35. Looking specifically at German asylum seekers, more than half had upper-secondary education, 12 percent had tertiary education, and the remainder had no upper-secondary education.

Asylum seekers have come to the EU from a diverse set of countries, and the mix has shifted slightly over time. Syrians, Afghans, and Iraqis accounted for just over half of all asylum seekers entering Europe in 2015–16, but that share dropped to 28 percent in 2017 (January to October data). During that same period, the combined

share of asylum seekers from Nigeria, Guinea, and Bangladesh rose from 4 percent to 13 percent.

These demographics imply a diversity of languages, cultures, and skills among the new arrivals, which in return affects their needs and the challenges integration will entail.

Asylum seekers and refugees are settled unevenly across Europe

In 2016, just five countries (Austria, France, Germany, Greece, and Italy) took in more than 80 percent of the new asylum applicants. In the first ten months of 2017, seven countries (Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom) absorbed a comparable share. Germany has consistently had the highest share of asylum applications (35 percent in 2015, 60 percent in 2016, and 29 percent in 2017).

Three million new arrivals represent only 0.6 percent of the EU’s total population of 510 million. But the countries where they are concentrated feel a disproportionate strain on housing supply, education systems, and labor markets. In a period of less than three years, Sweden, for example, took in 20 asylum applicants per 1,000 inhabitants. Germany and Austria received 16 and 17 asylum applicants per 1,000 inhabitants, respectively. This compares with 0.5 to 1.6 applications per 1,000 inhabitants in the Baltic countries and the United Kingdom. As our global research confirms, migrants tend to gravitate toward urban rather than rural areas if they can. This means that the challenge is more acute in certain cities and regions.

The uneven distribution across countries is influenced by the relative attractiveness of various EU member states to asylum seekers and the welcoming or discouraging stances adopted by each country. Germany, for example, has been a highly sought-after destination because of its strong social infrastructure and good job prospects, while the Baltics have less attractive social services and employment opportunities.

Many asylum seekers are expected to stay in Europe

Many refugees came to Europe with long-term plans in mind. In a 2016 survey of 4,500 asylum seekers in Germany (conducted jointly by the Institute for Employment Research, the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, and the German Socio-Economic Panel), 95 percent of respondents said they are planning to stay.

A common pattern during this crisis has been for people fleeing their homes to seek safety in a neighboring country first, then to make an active decision to undertake another long and arduous journey to find a better life in Europe. They may obtain refugee status or “subsidiary protection” for a defined timeframe, after which their individual situation is re-evaluated. Even if a request for asylum is denied, applicants may not leave immediately—or ever.

Eurostat data shows significantly fewer actual returns than total asylum claim rejections. About 430,000 asylum applications were rejected by EU-28 countries in 2016, yet only about 230,000 individuals returned to a third country that year (including people ordered to leave outside the asylum context). This discrepancy can be attributed to a number of factors. Forced returns often fail because authorities cannot locate unauthorized migrants. The information gaps sometimes stem from a lack of coordination between agencies or between host countries and countries of origin. Although voluntary returns are widely preferred and are more cost-effective than deportations, they depend on a functioning support network of counseling and financial assistance. But follow-through on deportation affects the compliance rate of voluntary returns. If unauthorized migrants see deportation as the likely eventual outcome, they will be more inclined to make use of voluntary return assistance.

Europe faces an imperative to step up integration efforts

With the flow of new arrivals slowing, Europe needs to shift its focus to helping those who will stay build new lives and begin making productive contributions. As MGI’s 2016 research outlined,

the integration process involves language and sociocultural integration, economic and labor-market integration education, and access to housing and healthcare. Successfully integrating the 2015–17 refugee cohort into the labor market could produce a positive GDP impact of about €70 billion–€80 billion annually by 2025.

Many promising initiatives and pilots are under way

No European country has consistently met the refugee population’s full range of needs. But the EU, its member states, individual cities, and civic groups are putting resources, energy, and innovation into the effort. They are also increasing funding commitments. Sweden, for example, plans to provide its municipalities with an additional €30 million in 2018 for educating and training newly arrived immigrants, including refugees, and the government plans to increase those funds in the future. Germany raised its spending on integration programs from €2.1 billion in 2016 to €3.2 billion in 2017. Among other programs, this funding will cover language courses, since immigrants need basic language skills as a prerequisite for finding jobs. Investment in rapid integration courses ultimately produces savings. Each refugee requires roughly €10,000 in annual support, and any delay in acquiring language skills extends that period of public support. The sooner refugees become conversant, the sooner they can move from relying on social benefits to earning income, paying taxes, and making productive contributions.

Recognizing that job placement is vital and the workplace itself is a valuable platform for integration, many EU countries have found ways to encourage private-sector hiring and engagement:

- In March 2016, Denmark introduced a two-year workplace integration training program. Using a vocational education model, it allows Danish companies to employ refugees as student-apprentices. They work, earn student salaries, improve their fluency in Danish, and gain the skills necessary to succeed in the job market over the long term. As of early 2018, an estimated 1,500 people were enrolled.

- Germany offers job-specific language courses that combine vocational German lessons with practical working experience. In 2015–16, 56,000 people participated, improving their chances for sustainable employment in Germany.
- Sweden subsidizes “step-in” jobs that combine language training with part-time employment for refugees. The program led to full-time employment for nearly half of the 20,000 participants in 2015 and 2016.
- In July 2016, France piloted a holistic professional integration pathway that offered social and professional support, workshops, and graduate training. Some 1,000 protected persons and refugees of all skill levels had gone through the program by the end of 2017. The initiative is a joint effort of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Employment and Housing, the National Employment Agency, and the French Office for Immigration and Integration.

Many countries are addressing the difficulty of formally recognizing qualifications that refugees obtained in their home countries:

- The Danish government established a website with guidelines, application forms, details on the comparability of foreign and Danish qualifications, information on locally regulated professions, credit transfers, and tools to translate qualifications into internationally understandable forms.
- In the Netherlands, the city of Tilburg is currently testing a “competence card” that enables refugees to create a public profile with information on their professional experience and skills.

To integrate refugee children into the local education system, many EU member states have introduced special support classes to help them catch up and eventually join regular classes. In Denmark, France, Hungary, and the Netherlands, refugee children attend separate

classes for up to two years; they are assessed for readiness before they join regular classes.

Efforts on healthcare for refugees do exist, but they tend to be fragmented and local. Vienna, for example, issues an aid service e-card to ensure that refugees have easy access to the health-care system. The German state of Brandenburg connects refugees in distress with certified psychologists.

Denmark is one of the European countries that have targeted schemes for the allocation of refugees to municipalities in order to increase the chances of successful integration. This involves matching individual characteristics (including employment opportunities) of refugees with the opportunity structures offered in specific municipalities.

Despite the commitment and efforts of national and local governments, integration is currently falling short

Fragmented integration efforts leave many people behind. Integration is not an easy concept to measure, particularly since no existing data set conclusively tracks and combines all of its aspects. Laws governing data protection make it difficult to track an individual’s progress from arrival through full integration into employment and a community. Germany, for example, has three different data systems: for the asylum process, for integration courses, and for employment. These systems are not connected, which makes it impossible to track the processes on an individual level.

Looking at the indicators that are available makes it clear that a patchwork approach is not serving the full refugee cohort:

Language. Language barriers and cultural differences continue to hinder many arrivals from finding jobs and fitting into local communities. Language classes are critical, but there are simply not enough slots to meet demand. In the United Kingdom, for example, it is common for prospective students to remain stuck on waiting lists for a year or more; providers often have waiting lists of 500 to 1,000 students. Almost

half of Swedish municipalities responding to a National Agency for Education survey in 2017 said they could not meet legal requirements to enroll foreigners in language classes within three months of the date they register at a permanent address. Even when they are able to attend language classes, many refugees struggle to become fluent. In Germany, less than 60 percent of refugees who took language classes provided by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees and participated in an assessment were able to pass B1, and pass rates have actually been falling.

Sociocultural integration. In many European countries, the task of bridging cultural divides is not part of formal government integration programs. It is mostly an ad hoc effort that falls to civil society actors or local community groups. Many Europeans are uneasy about the influx of arrivals. Forty percent of Germans responding to a Bertelsmann survey two years ago said the country had reached its limits in welcoming refugees; by 2017, this share increased to 54 percent. Reticence and resentment make it harder for newcomers to fit in.

Economic and labor market integration. Securing a job can be a daunting prospect for an immigrant in Europe. In 2016, the unemployment rate in more than half of the European OECD countries was more than four percentage points higher for all immigrants than for the native-born population. The highest gaps were in Sweden (11 percentage points), Belgium (nine), and Finland (nine). The challenge is even greater for non-European immigrants. In Germany, the unemployment rate for this group stood at 43 percent in October 2017, while the rate for native-born Germans was only 5 percent.

It often takes considerable time for immigrants to find employment—and the challenges are magnified for refugees from distant countries. In addition to language barriers, they typically lack local networks and may be unfamiliar with how local labor markets work. Employers may not know what to make of their past experience and educational credentials. Some host countries have made efforts to test and certify these

credentials in a centralized way, but their outreach and awareness is still insufficient. In Sweden, for example, refugees without job credentials can have their skills tested by a committee in their mother tongue. France offers to test and certify refugees who state that they have more than three years of experience in a specific job. The approach is compelling, but the program is still limited in scale.

Education. Education is critical for refugee children to re-establish normalcy, immerse themselves in the local language, and reach their full potential. But many refugee children struggle to keep up with their local peers, especially if they arrive past primary-school age. A 2017 report in the *International Journal of Inclusive Education* found that only 27 percent of “latecomers” in Sweden completed their final (ninth) year, and only 19 percent received passing grades in all subjects. The Greek Education Ministry reported in April 2017 that school attendance among refugee children is erratic, and dropout rates are significant. Many refugee children had their education interrupted, and they may have lost valuable learning time. The Migration Policy Group points to the cyclical, inflexible school-year structures in places, such as Austria’s, as one cause for delays. Other issues include the length of asylum application processing, language barriers, lack of information provided to families, the inability of refugee parents to advocate effectively for their children, and a shortage of specially trained teachers and counsellors.

Access to housing. Finding housing is another challenge for migrants, regardless of their status, particularly in places such as Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, and Sweden. Many countries across the EU have no limitations of the length of stay in reception centres, and many asylum seekers wind up staying for extended periods. Despite the decline in arrival numbers, this problem has persisted in many European cities with housing shortages.

Access to healthcare. Lack of information and documentation, as well as language barriers, are among the factors limiting refugee access to healthcare services. Even though most refugees

surveyed as part of a 2015 WHO report had a general physician, many turn to emergency rooms for care, even in non-emergency situations.

The incidence of mental health problems is almost five times higher among refugees than among the average population. While all countries perform medical checkups when asylum seekers arrive in reception centres, they do not always evaluate mental health—and psychological issues brought on by the experience of trauma often go untreated. Female refugees in particular seem reluctant to seek healthcare, and inadequate access to regular pre-natal care risks both child and maternal health. A Charité hospital study found that only 15 percent of female refugees reported contacting a doctor for physical issues and only 4 percent for mental stress.

Governments need to share best practices and better align national and local efforts

There is growing urgency to act, since failing to achieve better outcomes could create disaffected populations with high unemployment rates, straining the social fabric. Immigration has become a hot-button topic, dominating the political debate—and 2017 election results in multiple EU member states showed growing (although still minority) support for explicitly anti-immigration candidates and platforms.

This sentiment has taken root in part because many European countries have not focused enough on lasting integration and have ignored the resulting build-up of concern. In Germany, for example, foreign employees (*Gastarbeiter*) who arrived in the 1960s did not receive any integration courses. In fact, integration courses were not even introduced in Germany until 2005, 50 years after the first *Gastarbeiter* arrived. The consequence is visible, even in the second generation: some 10 percent of the children of *Gastarbeiter* have no educational qualification, seven times more than natives in the same cohort.

By contrast, Portugal has a relatively well-developed infrastructure for integration—and it has paid off. The employment rates of immigrants are similar to those of native-born workers in Portugal. The country's High Commission

for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue coordinates multiple stakeholders and has created two National Centres for the Integration of Immigrants that provide a broad range of integration services under a single roof.

The path ahead: Europe needs a bold, holistic, and data-driven integration agenda

Europe needs a clear, comprehensive strategy for achieving better integration outcomes. The approach has to combine scale and flexibility; it needs to reach the entire refugee population and meet a wide range of individual needs. Putting more effective systems into place can have the double benefit of supporting the recent wave of arrivals while also leaving Europe prepared for any future humanitarian crises in the years to come.

Capturing better data is critical

A recent report by the International Organization for Migration and McKinsey, *More than numbers*, notes that reliable, comprehensive data is critical for managing immigration and integration more effectively. It can alert policy makers to areas that need attention and enable more evidence-based decision making. It facilitates planning, early intervention, and a faster integration process. Regardless of how much money individual governments allocate, taking a more data-driven approach is a no-regrets move that will better target that spending and make the entire integration process more cohesive.

Governments and institutions across the EU can make more effective use of data to design specific programs. A study of the UK labor market, for example, indicates that immigrants' employment rates can be increased by 15–20 percentage points by using data to identify language gaps early and providing targeted local access to language classes.

Data can be a powerful tool for tackling the issue of underemployment, which constrains the prospects of immigrants and the potential economic benefits for society as a whole. As the IOM–McKinsey study notes, some 30 percent of highly educated immigrants in the EU are overqualified for their jobs. Placing an additional 10 percent of highly educated immigrants in jobs

that are aligned with their qualifications could boost incomes by about €5 billion–€7 billion.

Using data and digital platforms to match qualified candidates with openings and training opportunities could address the disconnect that drives a great deal of underemployment. In Germany, for example, a McKinsey study conducted in 2016–17 found that more than 60 percent of immigrants are currently employed in semiskilled occupations, many in warehouses or restaurants. But more than half of the current refugee cohort have upper-secondary education, and 12 percent have tertiary education. Meanwhile, Germany has shortages in more skilled roles such as geriatric nurses (15,000 vacancies as of March 2018) and electrical engineering technicians (12,000 vacancies as of March 2018). As the population continues to age, skills shortages will worsen, with some three million vacancies projected by 2030. Similar shortages are expected across the continent. Immigrants could fill more of the demand in a whole range of better-paying jobs, but only if systems are in place to facilitate the right kind of training, matching, and placement.

The entire integration approach needs to be custom-built and modular

Integration has to work for many individuals with a wide range of characteristics and circumstances. The recent wave of asylum seekers in Europe is highly diverse in terms of country of origin, age, educational background, literacy level, work experience, and personal needs. Some were academics in their country of origin; others had little quality schooling and were illiterate. Some are children; some are elderly. Some are still traumatized by their experiences, while others are not. Integration measures have to take such differences into account and put individuals on a path that makes sense for them.

Within each area of integration, designing interventions in a modular fashion simultaneously enables both scale and a bespoke approach that is relevant to each individual. Rather than putting the entire refugee population through an identical, one-size-fits-all sequence, each person should be able to navigate through the process

at an adequate speed and focus on the elements that suit their circumstances and ambitions as well as their employer's needs. Establishing a modular set of programs enables them to move at their own pace, skipping interventions that are irrelevant to them (such as literacy courses for those who are already fluent) and taking more time where needed. At the same time, it allows authorities to allocate budgets wisely.

It is critical to test and learn, measure outcomes, discard ineffective approaches, and make quick adjustments. Data regarding how individuals with particular profiles progress over time should be collected continuously. If authorities build data sets of aggregated information on refugee cohorts and integration outcomes, they will learn which measures are effective for which group of refugees. Further, fully transparent data about each person's progress should be visible to coordinating authorities so they can make contact and intervene if necessary for the individual.

Swift, fair, and transparent rulings on asylum applications are essential.

Ensuring that decisions on asylum applications are reached without delay saves government resources and reduces uncertainty for entrants and host countries alike. Asylum seekers need to feel confident about their future so that they can fully dedicate themselves to fitting into their new environment. Similarly, those not eligible for asylum or subsidiary protection need to have their status clarified as quickly as possible so they can make plans to return to their home countries.

Some parts of the integration process should begin even while new arrivals are waiting for a ruling. In fact, these early days are a valuable window that should not be wasted for anyone who might possibly stay. Regardless of the outcome, starting some simple measures right away can help asylum seekers acclimate, feel less anxious during the application process, and communicate. But these measures should focus on carefully chosen basics (such as introductory language lessons) so that governments do not spend unnecessarily on people who may not stay.

After the asylum decision, a two-step segmentation approach can put refugees on a path that meets their needs. The first step is segmenting new arrivals according to the legal outcome of their applications. The second step involves grouping them by personal characteristics to connect refugees with the interventions they need.

Segmenting by legal status is essential so that resources can be focused on those likely to stay. It also sends a clear signal to those who are to be repatriated. New arrivals will fall into three groups. First, those who have been awarded full or partial asylum rights (such as refugee status in accordance with the Geneva Conventions or subsidiary protection) need longer-term and more focused support. Second, applicants who are granted a “tolerated status” (not awarded asylum but allowed to stay for a defined period of time based on circumstances such as health issues) may also require assistance to make their way for the time being and possibly find employment. Finally, arrivals whose asylum applications have been rejected and are obliged to leave do not need

integration measures. The sole focus should be on fair and swift repatriation to their home countries, perhaps with reintegration support as an incentive.

The second step of segmentation should be based on personal characteristics. To make a tailored approach work, agencies need to create personal profiles with comprehensive data on age, language skills and literacy, formal education, work experience and professional qualifications, physical and mental health, family status and size, contacts in the host country (if any), and aspirations. Some of these data points may be simple to ascertain, but others (such as informal education, soft skills, motivation, and mental health) may require assessment and personal judgment. This information can be used to offer each person the most relevant integration programs.

Implementing this approach requires addressing two key challenges. The first major task is setting up a comprehensive system to collect and analyze data. In addition to tracking who is entering their countries, governments need hard evidence about which integration

Integration in action: Learning the local language

It is no easy thing for someone newly arrived from Afghanistan to try to conduct everyday transactions in a new language such as Swedish. Language is a cornerstone of integration—and it illustrates the importance of evaluating each person’s starting point and making modular yet flexible pathways available.

Even while they are waiting to learn their legal status, every asylum seeker can be immediately engaged in acquiring some basic phrases via an online course or an app. Germany, for example, has created “Willkommen in Deutschland”.

Only those receiving a positive decision or tolerated status will proceed with further language training. In addition to administering an initial language test to evaluate any prior knowledge, officials should look for data points such as age, formal education, number of other languages spoken, informal qualifications, and motivation. These outcomes and factors determine which courses participants

should pursue. Someone with a college degree who knows three other languages is a candidate for a faster track, while someone who had little opportunity to learn to write in their first language will need to move at a much slower pace.

Language acquisition, unlike some other aspects of integration, has a common yardstick for measuring progress. Authorities can use the six official levels (A1-C2) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Standard courses can be created to align with each of these levels, with each module having a clearly defined objective learning goal. Regular assessments reveal how students are progressing, and each person should demonstrate mastery of the material in one module before moving on to the next. Continued data collection about their progress will show whether the program needs to be tweaked, either in the way students are segmented or in the instruction itself.

interventions work. As noted above, this starts with systematically collecting more data points about new arrivals. But data must be collected continuously, not just on arrival, to monitor each person's progress in different measures over the longer term. The system should be designed to flag when someone is struggling and needs additional types of intervention. Over time, larger volumes of data can reveal correlations between characteristics, interventions, and outcomes. Governments can draw on these insights to continuously improve the process and allocate their resources in the most effective way.

The second issue is coordination. Integration has multiple dimensions, which means that many different entities are involved: national ministries, employment agencies, regional and municipal governments, public schools, language schools, health providers, nongovernmental organizations, and communities. Their efforts are often fragmented, which makes it harder for refugees to connect with services and for authorities to have a good overview. Governments should empower one institution for this coordination. On the local level, refugees also need one point of contact who has a full overview of the individual progress across all integration dimensions.

This research was led by Jonathan Woetzel, an MGI director and a senior partner of McKinsey & Company based in Shanghai; Eckart Windhagen, a McKinsey senior partner and a member of the MGI Council based in Frankfurt; Kalle Bengtsson, a McKinsey senior partner in Stockholm; Anu Madgavkar, an MGI partner in Mumbai; Jan Mischke, an MGI partner in Zurich; Solveigh Hieronimus, a McKinsey partner in Munich; Julia Klier, a McKinsey partner in Munich; and Sahil Tesfu, a McKinsey associate partner in Munich. The project team comprised Katharina Ecker, Viola Hartmann, Sarah Seidl, and Nina Preschitschek.

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