

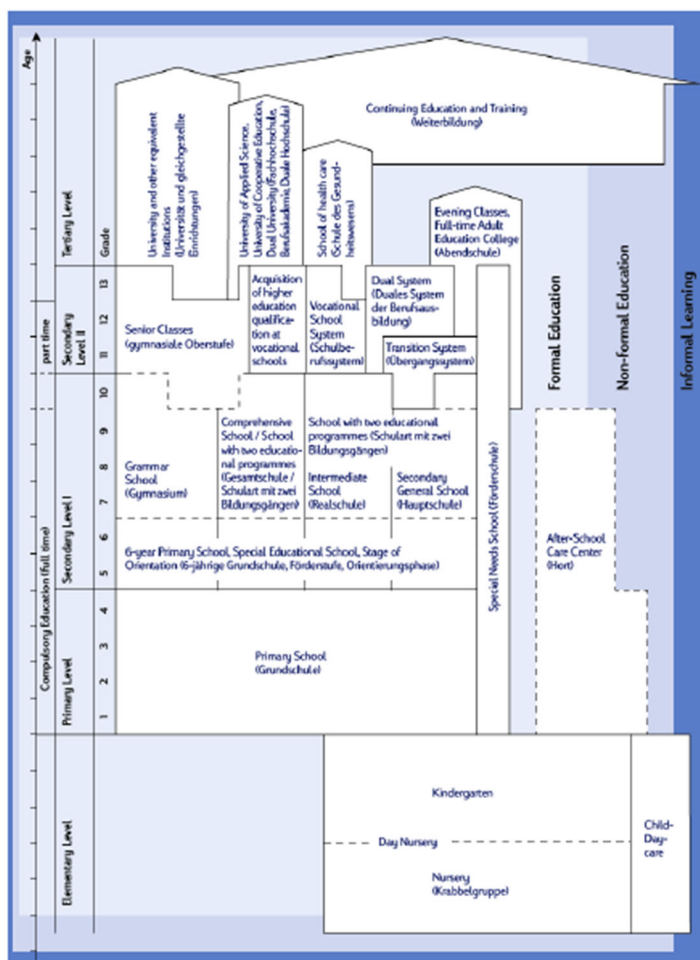
DIST – Digital Integration Story Telling

Analyses of National Migration/Integration Contexts in Germany

1 The school system in Germany: current state of art regarding the immigrants and refugee students

Before going into details about the current situation of migrant and refugee students in Germany, it is impetuous to explain the German education system, as it is very particular and sometimes hard to grasp, especially for persons who are not used to the system and come from abroad.

The following illustration provides an overview of the German education system and its various school types, levels and phases, which are subsequently elaborated in more detail:



Source: Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung (Hrsg.): Bildung in Deutschland 2018: Ein indikatorengestützter Bericht mit einer Analyse zu Wirkungen und Erträgen von Bildung



Germany consists of 16 states, which differentiate in size, traditions, history and governance models. Among these 16 states, there are three city- states like Hamburg, Bremen and Berlin, which are smaller in size as the rest. Thus, it is important to know that Germany does not have a centralised education system like for instance in France. Each German state (*Länder*) is solely responsible for its education system and education policy implementation. In this scheme, the federal government plays only a minor role. Nevertheless, a certain similarity and education pattern can be seen in all states as indicated in the diagram above and current data on the number of pupils attending the German school exists at country level. In the following, we will explain the current German education system and its most relevant data on migration and integration.

1.1 Kindergarten (nursery schools)

The kindergarten or early childhood education and care (ECEC) is provided to all children between one and six years old. This pre-primary level is normally optional, but again it may differ from state to state. Due to the demographic changes (continuing rise in birth rates, immigration) in the last three years, there was also an increase in the number of children under the age of three, which attended the kindergarten. Between 2015 and 2017 the number of children under the age of three increased by 70,000 i.e. to 760,000 and between three and the age of entering school increased by 80,000 i.e. to almost 2.4 Million children (Bildung in Deutschland, 2018). This means that there is a high demand of kindergarten places and at the same time a shortage of qualified kindergarten personnel. In spite of the fact that there are currently more than 600 000 pedagogical staff working in the child day care centres, and thus reaching a new all-time high in the history of Germany, there is a preconized demand of up to 270 000 employees up to 2025. This situation is currently addressed by all German states, as parents have the right by law of receiving a child day care place for children turning three years old. Concerning the number of children, who do not speak German at home, there has been a constant increase from 363 000 to 553 000 between 2006 and 2017. This high number is also explained by the fact that in many cases children from families seeking refuge and asylum were also admitted to child day care.

1.2 Primary school

The primary school (*Grundschule*), which is compulsory for all children, has a duration of four years (1-4) and includes the age group six to nine/ten in most of the 16 federal states. According to Statista (2019) about 733 000 pupils have enrolled the primary school in Germany at beginning of the school year 2019/2020. A number of 230 000 elementary school teacher are teaching these pupils in the 15 399 primary schools across Germany. According to Statista

(2019) in the school year 2018/ 2019, a number of 2.8 Million pupils attended primary school in Germany (Statista, 2019).

Additionally, there are also 'special (needs) schools' (*Förderschule*) especially designated for pupils whose development and learning opportunities are impaired. 3.2% of pupils out of 733 000 were enrolled in special schools in the school year 2019/2020.

It is hard to say how high the number of pupils with immigration background at primary schools is, as there is no exact data on it. However, according to the Mikrokrozensus (2018), in 2018 more than one third (around 37 per cent) of pupils at general and vocational schools in Germany had a migration background. According to the study, all pupils who were born abroad or have at least one parent who was born abroad have an "immigration background". The data of the Microzensus (2018), however, is not based on official school statistics, but on a representative survey of around 830,000 people. According to Statistisches Jahrbuch (2018) in Frankfurt am Main lived 46.9% Germans without an immigration background. Germans with a migrant background were up to 23.6% and foreigners up to 29.5%, which makes 53.1%. In cities like Offenbach 63% were Germans with an immigration background and foreigners. Nuremberg (44.6%), Stuttgart (44.1%), Munich (43.2%) and Düsseldorf (40.2%) also have high proportions of Germans with an immigration background and foreigners. This means that children and youth having an immigration background and foreign parents are also overrepresented in these cities. For instance, 60% of children and youth under the age of 18 in Stuttgart have a migration background (including foreigners). The pull factors for these cities are mostly economic.

1.3 Secondary schools

In between the numerous special schools (*Sonderschulen*), there are up to five different secondary school types as shown in the diagram above. After the 4th grade, students are separated according to their academic competences and wishes of their parents. The first type of school the *Hauptschule*, can be traced in nearly all federal states with the exception of the new East German states and Saarland and comprises grades five to nine or ten. Upon completion students can apply for apprenticeship place mostly in professions in 'lower segment' sectors like for example restaurants/hotels, nutrition/food, construction/building, logistics etc.

However, this type of school is slowly replaced either by *Gemeinschaftsschulen* or by *Realschule* due to low academic quality and the fact that in many places *Hauptschule* pupils have fewer and fewer chances of finding a training place. The students attending this type of school are highly heterogeneous and come normally from families with low socio-economic background. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

(OECD) study (2018) the educational opportunities of students in Germany continue to be strongly linked to social background. This means that students coming from high-educated families are more likely to attend high school and go to university. The students with an immigration background attend *Hauptschule* with above- average frequency. This applies in particular to those who have come to Germany in recent years as children or adolescents. This applies particularly to those who have come to Germany in recent years as children or adolescents. Approximately every fifth young person of this first generation of immigrants attended a *Hauptschule* in 2017(Stiftung Mercator, 2019). The second generation of students with immigration background perform better than the first one, as only 8.9% of them attend *Hauptschule* in 2017. In comparison, only 4.4% of the native peers attend *Hauptschule* as the study shows.

1.4 Realschule- intermediate secondary school

The curriculum of *Realschule* is similar to that of *Hauptschule* being as well oriented to vocational training and education (VET) and to labour market integration of students after finishing the secondary school. This type of school may also be described as an intermediate phase as it may qualify the students to enter the upper secondary phase of the *Gymnasium* or high school. Furthermore, after finishing the high school the students may also qualify to enter various types of vocational upper secondary schools (e.g. *Fachoberschule*) or other types of tertiary education.

According to the Mikrozensus (2018), 50.9% of native peers and almost 44.3% of foreign students obtained an intermediate school-leaving certificate in 2018.

1.5 Gymnasium- High School

This school type is the most popular among students and parents and enjoys high regard among the German population as it opens the path directly to higher education and to better-paid employment. This academically oriented *Gymnasium* includes the school years five to ten and ten to twelve/thirteen and thus encompasses the lower and upper secondary school phases.

According to Stiftung Mercator (2019), 41.1% of all 11 to 14-year-old native teens with no migrant background attended a *Gymnasium* in 2017, and 35.3% of the second-generation immigrant students, which is higher than in 2013 (32.2%). Among newly immigrated 11 to 14-year-olds, the Gymnasial quota in 2017 was of 23.8%, which is lower than that of native teens and second-generation immigrant peers.

1.6 Vocational education

The vocational education and training (VET) system in Germany is rather complex and includes three main tracks: dual system (*Duales System*), full-time vocational schools (*Berufsfachschule*) and so called 'transition system' (*Übergangssystem*).

Secondary school is usually followed by vocational education, after school year nine or ten. While the full-time vocational schools train and prepare students for a wide range of occupations and qualifications, the dual system consists of a vocational on-the-job- training or apprenticeship in a company, either in the private or public sector, and part-time classes at vocational schools (*Berufsschule*). This education track is the classic one and mostly chosen by students after finishing the secondary school, as the apprentices receive a monthly salary paid by the company and after three years upon graduation, they receive a vocational qualification certificate as qualified employer.

Students, who neither enrol in full-time vocational schools nor start an apprenticeship, mostly end up in the so-called 'transition system' (*Übergangssystem*), which is financed and coordinated by the Federal Employment Agency. The Agency then sends them to different measures and trainings, so that they acquire the most needed skills and qualifications on the labour market, before entering the dual system.

As already mentioned above, students completing a *Hauptschule* mostly start an apprenticeship in the 'lower segment' sectors like restaurant/hotel, handcrafts and commercial professions, construction, logistics, care sector etc.

Currently there is a high demand of apprentices in these sectors and offer mostly exceeds demand.

According to Statistische Bundesamt (Destatis) (2019) 1.3 Million apprentices were part of the dual system in year 2018, among which 521 900 have just started their apprenticeship. This means 6200 or 1.2% more than in 2017. Regarding the foreign young people a number of 5500 (+14.8%) men and 740 (+4.2%) women have signed an apprenticeship contract in 2018. A number of 89 502 foreign men and 41 892 foreign women were part of the dual system in 2018. The countries of origin were as follows: from European countries 31 851 i.e. 7 668 Polish apprentices, 2949 Croatian, 2778 Romanian and 3 543 from Greece as mostly represented. From the rest of Europe: 41 802 apprentices, i.e. among others 4890 from Kosovo, 2406 from Albania and 22 905 from the Turkey. From Africa a number of 12 264 apprentices were registered in the dual system. Mostly came from countries as Eritrea 2547, Guinea 999, Morocco 876, Somalia 741 and Nigeria 777. From Asia a number of 41 001 of apprentices were part of dual system. This means from Syria 12 762, from Afghanistan 13 371, from Iraq 3 765, from Iran 2196 and from Pakistan 1164. The experts have observed that while the craft trades have hardly recorded any increase (+0.1%) compared to 2017, they have

observed a strong rise of apprenticeship contracts in industry and commerce (+4 600 or +1.5 %) in 2018.

The number of new training contracts in the federal states has developed differently compared to 2017. The largest percentage increases were recorded in Hesse (+3.0%), Berlin (+2.3%), Saxony (+1.8%) and Brandenburg (+1.7%).

For refugees attending German schools is at first more complicated than for local peers as each state decides individually when the refugees are allowed to enter the German schools. According to the EU Admissions Directive (Art. 14 para. 2, Directive 2013/33/EU), access to school must be granted no later than three months after an asylum application has been filed, but not all the states could enrol students as fast as three months.

2 Current Migration/Integration

2.1 What are currently relevant migrant groups (at school)? Where do they come from? Will they stay – or how long?

According to Statistische Bundesamt (Destatis) (2019) in the school year 2018/2019, 11 Million students attended different school types in Germany. The experts mentioned that out of 11 Million students one in ten is a foreigner and one in three has an immigration background. This means 1.2 Million or 10.7 % had no German citizenship. In the year 2018 there were 1.3 Million refugee and asylum seekers, i.e. 6% more than in 2017.

According to Destatis (2018) in the school year 2018/2019 a number of 500 937 students were reported to come from Europe: 37 923 from Bulgaria, 23 946 from Greece, 36 171 from Italy, 22 500 from Kosovo, 24 375 from Croatia, 57 075 from Poland, 56 847 from Romania and 57 690 from the Turkey. From Africa there were a number of 40 146 students distributed the most as follows: 3 504 from Eritrea, 3 036 from Ghana, 4 524 from Nigeria, 3 042 from Somalia and 3 642 from Morocco. From Asia there were a number of 324 420 students registered. The most of them were from Syria 146 955, Afghanistan 38 826, Iraq 40 848, Iran 11 085 and Pakistan 6 759.

Concerning the distribution according to the school types the data indicated that out of 57 690 Turkish students 17 076 were in primary schools and 8 409 visited a *Gymnasium*. Out of 57 075 Polish students 23 565 were in primary schools and 6 945 in *Gymnasium* and 25 059 students from Romania were in primary schools and 4 854 in *Gymnasium*.

As the biggest group from Asia came from Syria, 67 000 of the students visited the primary schools and 10 269 a *Gymnasium* in 2018.

As one can notice from the data above the origin countries of the foreigner students are quite heterogeneous. In general, the duration of their stay depends mostly on their residence status. Thus, refugee students, asylum seekers and the ‘tolerated’ students (*Duldung*), in general, persons, who have sought protection because humanitarian reasons have only a temporary visa. Of course, there is always a danger to be expelled from Germany, but this depends mostly on the situation in their home countries.

Even there is no data on the period of time they want to stay in Germany, the public perception is that they want to stay over a longer period of time and complete their education in Germany.

2.2 How are they included into the educational system? Are there specific organizational approaches?

As specified before each federal state in Germany has its own education policies and laws. This means that they more or less react differently to how they include immigrant students and refugees in their education system. Nevertheless, the states exchange on their education systems and coordinate among themselves by the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK).

In general, the access to education is granted by all German federal state. As schools are compulsory, students from abroad may wait some time to be included in classes. It depends on the free capacity every region and school has. The situation got better lately, as the refugee waves arriving in Germany has declined.

According to Vogel and Stock (2017) in the school integration there is “no systematic assessment of the competences and learning needs before they are allocated to schools”. Nevertheless, each city and region has schools centers, in which students are enrolled in schools. The pedagogical staff there decides upon the distribution of students to schools. Each student with no German language knowledge is integrated into a preparatory German class, which takes one year. Depending on the language development of each student, he/she is included in regular classes or not upon completion of the preparatory class.

As Vogel and Stock (2017) mention “older teenagers are increasingly taught in special classes that combine subject teaching with German language learning. Refugee students often have substantial gaps in their education backgrounds. These gaps are aggravated by periods in which they only learn German”.

However, as stated in the Unesco Global Education Monitoring Report from the year 2017/2018, Germany supports refugee children particularly well. The authors of the report praised the fact that Germany has: 1) increased its investment in language promotion, by increasing its funding here, especially for language education in day-care centres; 2)

recognised the vocational qualifications from abroad. In 2012, the Federal German Government passed the *Recognition Act*, which makes it possible to recognise foreign professional qualifications irrespective of residence status or nationality. As the Statistisches Bundesamt (Destatis) (2019) reports: "in 2018, 36 400 vocational qualifications acquired abroad were recognised nationwide as fully or partially equivalent to a qualification acquired in Germany". This means 20% more than in 2017. "Three fifths of the increase is due to recognition of qualifications of qualified care personnel and physicians (+3 700). Across all disciplines, Syria was the country with the highest number of recognised qualifications".

3) the development of support programmes. The willingness of the population to help with language acquisition, qualifications or training is "enormously great and a huge help", says Maria Böhmer, President of the German Unesco Commission.

The Unesco report (2017/2018) also notes that sometimes, it is problematic to place too many refugees in special classes for too long. The goal of these classes is that the pupils learn the German as fast as possible. Yet, separating the native peers from the refugees also means that the exchange between these two groups is hindered.

With regard to adolescent refugees and young immigrants entering the VET system, the vocational schools have introduced prequalification classes, in which the teenagers learn the German language for one or two years. After passing the language exams according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (from A1 to C2), they qualify to enter the school system and earn a *Hauptschule* diploma, which allow them to enter an apprenticeship upon completion, or / and to enrol a school that offers a higher school certificate like *Berufsfachschule*.

Additionally, many policies, projects and mentoring programs were created so that these young people enter the VET system and the labour market like for instance: *Jugend Stärken* (Strengthening Youth), *Jugendmigrationsdienst* (Youth Migration Agency), *VerA*, *Ausbildungsbrücke* (Training Bridge), *Einstiegqualifizierung* (Entry Qualification), *Chance betriebliche Ausbildung*, etc. These policies have proved to be effective as the number of refugees and young immigrants stating an apprenticeship has increased over years as mentioned before.

2.3 How are language problems dealt with?

As specified above students attend preparatory German classes when enrolling in schools and prequalifying classes before entering the VET system. The language instructors are usually qualified GFL/GSL teachers (German as a Foreign/Second Language) and work closely with other teachers in school. Schools are funded for purchasing dictionaries and for translators,

when the situation requires it. Programmes like “Start with a Friend” and Language Cafés are also helping young people to learn German in a faster pace and make new friends.

3 Continuing (Migration/) Integration

3.1 Are there groups of second/third generation migrants groups still facing integrational thresholds?

As mentioned before the second/third generation of immigrant groups have improved their school performance. However, students of Turkish and Arabic origin are still facing integrational problems. They drop out of school more frequently, are more at risk of poverty and earn less on average. Only eight percent graduate from university, and 24 percent in families without a migration background, according to the Statistisches Bundesamt (2017). Thus, Turkish descendants as well as the children of Italian immigrants perform significantly worse than the descendants of immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

3.2 Why are they ‘still’ different? Does/how the school system reflect that?

In general, studies report that Turkish students face less support at home regarding homework. Many parents in first generation are so-called “bildungsfern” (uneducated) and do not know how to help their children, which makes the situation of these children more problematic. Another aspect contributing to this ‘difference’ is that according to a research study done by *Berliner Institut für empirische Integrations-und Migrationsforschung* (2017) teachers have reservations towards Muslims, although they are more open-minded towards diversity than the average population. They have lower expectation from Muslim students during the classes and are less likely to call on them.

In one study done by researchers from the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Mannheim (2017) they have found out that children with foreign roots are given lower marks in class tests and mathematics certificates once they have entered grammar school. Despite having the same language skills, similar social background and even if the children scored equally well in standardised tests. “It was well known that pupils with a migration background receive a recommendation for grammar schools much less frequently than children without a migration background,” says Meike Bonefeld from the University of Mannheim, who headed the evaluations. “However, we did not expect that such differences would continue to exist in grammar schools. We interpret this as an indication of systematic discrimination processes in the German education system, even after the significant transition to secondary education.” (Bonefeld et al. 2017).

The situation looks different when students have at least one parent born or raised in Germany. They perform almost the same as their native peers.

3.3 Other Integrational Thresholds

Are there further groups that are systematically discussed concerning their integration at school (e.g. handicapped or gender diverse people)?

Lately, inclusion plays a great role in schools. This means that pupils being impaired are visiting normal classes. In this way, they are not segregated anymore. However, implementing this new pedagogical concept in schools is connected with high costs caused by hiring special pedagogues and difficulties finding qualified personnel.

As well, special cooperation classes were created as it is easier for students to transfer from one school to another.

Another school type that was created in order to decrease disparities between students was *Gemeinschaftsschule* (community schools). The community school is a performance-oriented type of school that fosters children and young people having different talents and different levels of learning. All pupils study together.

4 Teachers

4.1 How are teachers supported to deal with migration/integration?

In general, teachers are supported with language-sensitive lessons/plans (*Fachsensible Unterricht*). Many universities have developed materials in this regard and made them available to teachers, as for instance on the national education server of the land Baden-Württemberg.

According to the national education server: "Language-sensitive subject instruction consciously and systematically conveys the technical content and skills of a subject in technical language skills necessary to understand, reflect on and actively apply the subjects taught in this subject".

They also attend further education classes (and receive training and professional support.

At universities, there are studies that qualify teachers to be a GFL/GSL teacher (German as a Foreign/Second Language).

As a conclusion, OECD report (2019) recommends that students should be supported in the national language at an early age, teachers should be interculturally trained and parents should

be involved in school life. Anti-bullying programmes and good extracurricular activities are also important.

5 Links

https://www.stiftung-mercator.de/media/downloads/3_Publikationen/2019/2019_03/Kurz_und_Buendig_Bildung.pdf

<https://de.statista.com/statistik/daten/studie/197269/umfrage/allgemeiner-bildungsstand-der-bevoelkerung-in-deutschland-nach-dem-alter/>

https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Bevoelkerung/Migration-Integration/_inhalt.html

<https://mediendienst-integration.de/integration/bildung.html>

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<https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Querschnitt/Jahrbuch/statistisches-jahrbuch-2018-dl.pdf?blob=publicationFile>

6 Further Introductory Literature

Berliner Institut für empirische Integrations- und Migrationsforschung (2017): Vielfalt im Klassenzimmer. Wie Lehrkräfte gute Leistung fördern können; <https://www.bim-berlin.de/media/Vielfalt%20im%20Klassenzimmer%2C%20finale%20Fassung.pdf>

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Vogel D., Stock E. (2017): Opportunities and Hope Through Education: How German Schools Include Refugees