



Migration Profile

GERMANY

A. Executive Summary

The Federal Republic of Germany has been a member of the European Union since 1958, part of the Eurozone since 1999, and a member of the Schengen area since 1995.ⁱ

Traditionally, Germany has been an excellent place to migrate to, due to its quality of life and job opportunities. In recent years, the number of skilled migrants has increasedⁱⁱ because of the shortage of local skilled workers in all sectors.ⁱⁱⁱ Turkey, Poland, Romania, Syria, and Italy are the immigrants' leading countries of origin;^{iv} but since February 2022, because of the ongoing conflict, there has been a substantial increase of Ukrainian immigrants.^v

Likewise, since the summer of 2015, Germany has been the main target country for people seeking refuge, and their number keeps growing.^{vi vii} The increase of refugees has also caused significant challenges regarding their integration into German society.^{viii} Indeed, as a consequence of recent events related to the current situation in Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine, and also because of the subsequent increase of refugees, many German districts have reached their maximum capacity to accept newcomers and public services are overwhelmed.^{ix}

German emigration, instead, is motivated by better salaries, professional careers, and lifestyle.^x The main destination countries are Switzerland, Austria, Spain, the United Kingdom, and France.^{xi}

In 2020, the most critical sectors of the German economy were services (70%), followed by the industrial sector (23%), while the agricultural sector accounted for less than 1%.^{xii}

In 2021 the German GDP amounted to US\$ 4,223,116.21^{xiii}, with an annual growth rate of 2.9%.^{xiv} In 2020 Foreign investment (FDI) net inflows represented 3.7% of the country's GDP.^{xv} The inflation rate in 2022 is 10%.^{xvi}

Country Profile

I. Basic Information

The Federal Republic of Germany is located at the centre of Europe.^{xvii} France, Switzerland, and Austria border the country to the south, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg to the west, Denmark to the north, Poland and the Czech Republic to the east.^{xviii} Its territory covers an area of 357,376 sq. km.^{xix} Its capital city is Berlin, and its official language is German.^{xx}

Germany has a population of 83,237,124 inhabitants^{xxi} and recognises the following minorities: the Danish-speaking in the north of Schleswig-Holstein, the Frisian-speaking in the north-west of Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony, the German-born Sinti and Roma, and the Sorbs in Saxony and Brandenburg.^{xxii}

There is no official religion, and the population is divided between the Protestant north and east and the Catholic south and west.^{xxiii} In 2018, 23 million Germans were Catholic, 21 million Evangelical, and 5% of the population was Muslim.^{xxiv}

II. International and Internal Migration

As of June 2022, Germany had approximately 11,900,000 immigrants (14.1% of the whole population), and 48.6% of them were women.^{xxv} In 2021, 1,139,816 foreigners arrived in the country, 14.6% more than in 2020. Of particular importance for the year 2022 is the increase of Ukrainians: 952,000 between February and August.^{xxvi}

As of December 2021, the majority of foreign-born citizens were originally from Turkey (over one million), Poland (over 800,000), Romania (over 770,000), Syria (over 750,000), and Italy (over 490,000).^{xxvii} However, in 2021 immigrants arrived mainly from Romania, Germany, Poland, and Bulgaria.^{xxviii} Interestingly, the second nationality with the most arrivals in 2021 was German, and included both returnees and foreign-born Germans, as well as naturalised foreigners.^{xxix}

Germany has traditionally been an excellent country to migrate to, due to its quality of life and job opportunities.^{xxx} In 1950 and for a few years, emigration was larger than immigration. Since 1990 the number of immigrants has increased significantly, thanks to a favourable economic situation and the stability of the labour market.^{xxxi} Moreover, the great number of skilled workers who entered Germany by December 2021, even during the Coronavirus pandemic (when growth did not stop), stands out.^{xxxii} In 2021, about 70,000 Blue Card holders (scientists and scholars), especially from India, were registered and mostly settled around Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, and Hamburg.^{xxxiii}

Furthermore, immigrants are often younger than the local population, especially within the 18-40 years of age range (61% of immigrants vs 26.6% of nationals), and this phenomenon is rectifying the existing demographic gap caused by the low birth rate in the country, especially if they decide to keep working for a long term, contributing thus to economic prosperity and success in three ways:^{xxxiv} firstly, by increasing the number of workers and thus the goods and services produced; secondly, because there is a shortage of local skilled workers;^{xxxv} and thirdly, because they are better qualified than locals, therefore increasing productivity.^{xxxvi}

Finally, internal migration between Länder (federal states) for 2021 remained at its usual level, reflecting the same number of national emigration and immigration for that year (1.06 million).^{xxxvii} Nevertheless, migration between municipalities within the same Länder was much higher than the one mentioned above (2.72 million) and not far from its historical record (3.23 million in 2016).^{xxxviii} The two main patterns of internal migration (from west to east and vice versa) affect the east with a population decline and its fast ageing process, while the west has a higher portion of foreign population and a slower ageing rate.^{xxxix}

III. Emigration and Skilled Migration

By 2020 there was a year-on-year emigration variation of -21%,^{xi} mainly due to the confinements and restrictions. In 2019, the Federal Statistical Office reported that 3.6% of those who left the country moved to the United States, the country with the most German immigrants (at a decreasing rate, though^{xii}): 14% of them in all. ^{xiii} Furthermore, in 2021, of the 994,303 new emigrants, 25% had a German passport, which means that a considerable number of that million were former immigrants who had decided to undertake another migratory project.^{xiii} The main destination countries were Switzerland (31%), with a 45% female rate; Austria (21%), with a 50%; Spain (14.1%), with a 51%; UK (14.3%); France (8.3%), with a 55.1%; and the Netherlands (8.2%), with a 56.5%.^{xiv} The main reasons to emigrate were income, professional career, and lifestyle^{xlv}, although language and proximity were crucial factors for two of the main destinations.^{xlvi}

According to the German Emigration and Remigration Panel Study, more than 60% of people who left the country migrated because their income abroad was *better* or *much better* (in the case of women or people with a lower level of education, this salary contrast may be even more significant).^{xlvii} In addition, for 37% of migrants their partner's career was the main reason for their relocation, and 20% stated they moved abroad to study. More than 75% of German migrants have a university degree, and therefore the improvement of theirs or their partner's profession was a significant reason to migrate.^{xlviii} Finally, most emigrants were between 20 to 40 years old, and their average was 36-37 years old.^{xlix}

IV. Forced Migrants (Internally Displaced Persons, Asylum Seekers, Refugees, and Climate Displaced Persons)

In 2021 Germany registered 1,255,694 refugees and 253,867 asylum seekers.ⁱ Their main countries of origin were Syria (49.51%), Afghanistan (12.69%), Iraq (11.78%), Eritrea (5.03%), and Iran (3.68%).ⁱⁱ 38.66% of them were female, and 60.08% were male.ⁱⁱⁱ The main age group was between the ages of 18 to 59.ⁱⁱⁱⁱ The main reasons for fleeing their countries were political instability, war, poverty, disease, lack of medical care, persecution, and human rights violations.^{liv lv}

At the end of September 2022, 134,908 asylum applications were registered in Germany.^{lvi} Ukrainians are not included in this figure, as they can enter Germany without a visa and do not need to apply for asylum.^{lvii}

Three types of accommodation for asylum seekers have been set up.^{lviii} In the initial reception centres (*Aufnahmeinrichtung*), asylum seekers are obliged to stay for a period of up to 18 months after the submission of their application. As a rule, they must be accommodated in collective accommodation centres (*Gemeinschaftsunterkünfte*).^{lix} Nevertheless, most asylum seekers in some states, such as Rhineland-Palatinate, Lower Saxony or Schleswig-Holstein, are in decentralised accommodation and usually live in their flats.^{lx}

In Germany, refugees are allocated across the 16 federal states.^{lxi} The German approach implies that local governments assume greater responsibility for housing, education, and social services in the integration process.^{lxii} Most refugees are settling in medium-sized cities such as Nordrhein-Westfalen, Baden-Württemberg, and Bayern.^{lxiii}

Since 2012, Germany has also been part of the refugee resettlement programme.^{lxiv} Through this programme, particularly vulnerable refugees can safely and legally leave their first country of asylum and enter the third country willing to receive them.^{lxv} At the beginning of

2022, the German government increased the annual admission target to 6,000 persons.^{lxvi} At the same time other humanitarian programs were developed at federal and national level, together with the Community-Sponsorship program “*Neustart im Team*” (NesT). NesT was established in 2019 to increase reception capacity within the resettlement program and to involve civil society more closely in the reception of resettled refugees. In the three years following its creation, 139 refugees have been taken in by 31 mentor groups, mostly in western Germany, while 200 more are expected to arrive in 2023.

Since the summer of 2015, Germany has been the top destination country for people seeking refuge, and the growth of this phenomenon has been posing significant challenges for their integration. Despite the efforts made by the German government, the main problems faced by refugees are issues related to social isolation and discrimination, lack of employment opportunities, and the difficulty of access for children to education and care services.^{lxvii lxviii}

Furthermore, Germany is facing major problems due to recent events like the crisis in Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine in 2021 and 2022.^{lxix} The number of people seeking protection has increased, and many districts in Germany have already reached the limit of their capacity to accept refugees.^{lxx} In that sense, some refugees already resettled in Germany would no longer be able to live in private accommodations and would have to move to collective housing or emergency shelters.^{lxxi} This concern has also involved childcare centres, schools, and medical care because they are overstretched.^{lxxii}

Finally, by 2021, 17,340 internal displacements occurred in Germany, mainly caused by floods.^{lxxiii}

V. Victims of Human Trafficking

Regarding human trafficking, Germany is categorised as a Tier 2 country, part of those nations whose governments do not fully satisfy the *Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000* minimum standards for eliminating human trafficking, but are making significant efforts to comply with them.^{lxxiv} In 2019, according to the US Department of State report, prosecutions and convictions increased, while investigations did not, and sentences were still very lenient.^{lxxv} The Criminal Code, however, establishes penalties between six months and ten years in prison, while stricter punishments are applied in case of sex trafficking and penalties for severe crimes such as rape.^{lxxvi} The German government also persisted in its general protection efforts and increased funding for NGO counselling centres. On the other hand, it identified 494 victims, of whom 86% were victims of sex trafficking and 13.5% of labour trafficking, including one victim of forced begging and 23 of forced criminality.^{lxxvii} Among the victims of sex trafficking, 95% were women, and approximately 14% were children.^{lxxviii}

Victims of forced labour mainly work in construction, hotels, seasonal industries, restaurants, and private homes.^{lxxix} In the same way, the vulnerability of foreign workers, especially in meat processing plants and in those cases in which companies outsource services, must be highlighted.^{lxxx} Roma people and unaccompanied children are victims of sex trafficking, forced begging, and other coerced criminal behaviour.^{lxxxi}

In 2021 Germany financed the administration operations of the Network Against Trafficking in Human Beings (KOK) and *Servicestelle*, the NGO that operates the Service Centre against Labor Exploitation, Forced Labor, and Trafficking in Human Beings.^{lxxxii} Likewise, the government supported the victims of human trafficking (through NGOs) allocating almost 6

million euros, including costs related to the pandemic, that nearly doubled in comparison to the ones incurred during the previous year.^{lxxxiii}

The Federal Government continues to work with trade unions, the private sector and society to increase awareness about human trafficking and labour exploitation.^{lxxxiv} Likewise, it keeps contributing to preventing trafficking in supply chains and strengthening corporate responsibility, relying on the UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the EU Committee of Ministers to Member States' Recommendation CM/Rec (2016)3 on human rights and business.^{lxxxv}

VI. National Legal Framework

Migration and Asylum general legislation in Germany can be found in these seven norms: the Immigration Act (*IA*, 2005), the Immigration Act for Skilled Workers (*IASW*, 2020), the Asylum Act (*AA*, 2015), the Integration Act (*InA*, 2016), the Recognition Act (*RA*, 2012), the Nationality Act (*NA*, 2000) and the General Act on Equal Treatment (*GAET* 2006).^{lxxxvi lxxxvii}

The 2005 *IA* deals with the entry and residence of foreign citizens within the federal territory and establishes the procedures for asylum.^{lxxxviii} Then, in 2006 the *GAET* incorporated four European anti-discrimination directives into the national legislation; in 2007 eleven more directives were adopted to facilitate the residence application for entrepreneurs and to fight fake marriages.^{lxxxix} The 2016 *InA* is the first German law on integration at the federal level; it promotes integration from a "support and demand" perspective.^{xc} The 2000 *NA* regulates the acquisition of nationality, restricting the *ius soli* for children born in Germany of foreign parents on the condition that one of the parents had been legally residing in the country for more than eight years and had permanent residence at the time of the child's birth.^{xci}

The 2015 *AA* is responsible for determining the legal status of refugees and asylum seekers.

The 2020 *IASW* handles the immigration of skilled specialists from non-EU countries to Germany.^{xcii} This law allows people without an employment contract but with a recognised professional qualification to obtain a six-month residence permit to find a job.^{xciii} This measure has been implemented to address labour shortages in all productive sectors.^{xciv} Finally, in 2021, several Länder (federal states) added additional counselling centres to fight labour exploitation as part of the more extensive network *Beratungsstellen Arbeit*, funded by the European Social Fund.^{xcv}

VII. Main actors

The State

The state actors involved with migration issues are the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*BAMF*), under the Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Employment Agency (*BAA*), the Commissioner for Migration, Refugees, and Integration (under the Ministry of State), and the Federal Foreign Office (or Ministry of Foreign Affairs).^{xcvi}

The *BAMF* is the coordinating body for the German governance of asylum, migration, and integration processes.^{xcvii} Its efforts are, however, implemented by local actors within the national territory.^{xcviii}

The BAA is an independent public agency in charge of integrating the population into the labour market by providing German language courses (given by the BAMF), the recognition of qualifications, the consultation and placement of workers, and consulting in financial, educational, entrepreneurial, and social security issues.^{xcix}

The Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration promotes the coexistence of all country residents and carries out social-cohesion-promoting initiatives such as the National Action Plan, which brings together more than 300 partners from federal states, municipalities, businesses and society (and more than 75 migrant organisations are also included).

The Federal Foreign Office coordinates interaction and exchange with the entire planet on business, culture, science and technology, the environment, human rights, and development.^c

International Organisations

The leading international organisations involved in migration issues can be found in Germany. The International Organization for Migration (IOM, UN Migration) offers assistance and protection to the migrant population, combats human trafficking, and supports the reintegration of returnees. It also helps governments protect refugees and create appropriate management environments.^{ci}

Based in Berlin, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) monitors that the country adheres to the international refugee law and its standards and conditions.^{cii}

The European Union Agency for Asylum supports member states when applying European laws on asylum issues, international protection, and reception conditions collected in the Common European Asylum System (CEAS).^{ciii}

Finally, UNICEF has a vital collaboration with Germany, which supports the organisation with voluntary contributions of 6.5 million euros annually. With the assistance of around 8,000 volunteers and 120 permanent staff, the organisation fosters non-discrimination, protection against violence, and the right to education.^{civ}

NGOs and Other Organisations

The International Rescue Committee is devoted to helping people, whose lives and livelihoods have been destroyed by disasters (including the climate crisis' effects), survive and regain control over their future.^{cv} The Committee supports German organisations and partners working with this group of people, especially by looking after the education of refugee children and labour integration and psychological support of adults.^{cvi}

Pro ASYL, founded by churches, trade unions, refugee councils and human rights organisations, since 1986 has been advocating for human rights and refugee protection in the country and Europe.^{cvi}

VENRO, founded in 1995 and including 140 institutions, is the umbrella organisation of humanitarian and development NGOs in Germany.^{cvi} It works with independent and church-related development cooperation, humanitarian aid, development education, public relations, and advocacy.^{cix}

Finally, *Stiftung Zukunft* (Futures Foundation) coordinates the project Work for Refugees, in Berlin.^{cx} The main objectives of this project are to support newly arrived individuals who need

to use their previous skills with jobs that may require adjustments and additional learning; to provide intercultural, linguistic and professional skills for staff with a refugee/immigration background; and to enable the person to live independently from social assistance and the best opportunities to be in social interaction with the local population and integrate with their families.^{cxv}

The Catholic Church

The German Bishops' Conference (DBK) is proactively working in addressing migrants and refugees needs through its Migration Commission, which deals with pastoral, social and political issues relating to migration in Germany, including the pastoral care of Catholic migrants within the country and German Catholics abroad. Since 2015, the DBK has been also organising the "Catholic Prize against Xenophobia and Racism". The prize is intended to honour the commitment of Catholics who oppose inhumane attitudes and stand up for a respectful coexistence of people of different origins, while encouraging also other initiatives.

The German Bishops' Conference - together with the Evangelical Church in Germany - provided joint guidelines of action on migration and refugee issues. In connection with the incoming flow of refugees to Germany via Belarus and Poland,^{cxvii} both institutions published a document called *Migration menschenwürdig gestalten (Shaping Migration in a Humane Manner)*, stressing the importance of focusing on the universal common good and therefore the inviolability of the dignity of every human person and the respect of their human rights, in order to pursue a just system of migration, nationally and internationally. The document also called for cooperation of the multiple involved stakeholders (i.e. churches, policymakers, science, business, cultures or civil society).^{cxviii} In addition, the DBK recently also published a document, based on the Joint Statement, on the Church's responsibility with regards to inclusion and integration of migrants and refugees. Its title is "Recognition and Participation" ("Anerkennung und Teilhabe") and it provides some key theological and practical orientations.^{cxix}

Furthermore, recalling Pope Francis and the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE) appeals to foster and promote welcoming attitudes towards refugees, the Church in Germany called for an expansion of reception programmes and more efforts to overcome the humanitarian crisis at the external borders.^{cxv}

DBK is also very committed to the fight against human trafficking and labour exploitation in Europe and works in conjunction with the Santa Marta Group,^{cxvi} by developing effective joint strategies.^{cxvii} Furthermore, the German Caritas Association operates the Church's counselling centres for victims of human trafficking.

In 2022, the German Bishops' Conference and the Santa Marta Group jointly organised the 1st European St. Marta Group Conference^{cxviii}, bringing together partners from across the continent to discuss concrete action steps to prevent and combat human trafficking. As a result of the initiative, the *Action Plan against Human Trafficking* was published, outlining nine key recommendations essential to combat human trafficking. Presenting a recommendation, rationale, and action for each of the nine points, the Action Plan calls for concrete measures on the part of the states, with regard to ratifying and/or implementing international and regional instruments for the fight against human trafficking, as well as invites all who want to engage to identify more actions and work for their implementation in Church organisations, law enforcement agencies and other decision-making bodies.^{cxix}

The DBK Commission for Migration also established the Working Group against Trafficking in Human Being, inviting Catholic organisations in the country, such as Solwodi (Solidarity with Women in Distress), Missio (International Catholic Mission Society),^{cxx} Renovabis (Solidarity initiative of the German Catholics with the people in Central and Eastern Europe), and IN VIA, to join forces and address human trafficking.^{cxxi}

It is also important to highlight the presence of the Catholic Forum Living in Irregularity. It is a consortium of several Catholic organisations: the German Bishops' Conference (Commission for Migration and National Directorate for the Pastoral Care of Foreigners), the German Caritas Department for Migration and Integration, JRS Germany, and Malteser (Order of Malta).^{cxxii} The consortium's main objective is to ensure that people with irregular residence status in Germany can freely claim their basic rights. It supports, for example, the right for persons with no residence to access the public health system and standard medical care, and to receive adequate legal protection. Or, for children born to parents whose status is irregular, it upholds the right to receive a birth certificate and subsequently to attend kindergarten and school.^{cxxiii}

Misereor is the German Catholic Bishops' Organisation for Development Cooperation which for over 60 years has been committed to fighting poverty in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Latin America.^{cxxiv} By accompanying the most vulnerable and highlighting their right to a life of dignity, the organisation believes that cultural diversity should be recognised and promoted, and that all human beings should be actively involved in shaping their communities. For this purpose, taking into account the fact that poor and disadvantaged people too possess the strength to improve their lives, projects supported by *Misereor* strengthen people's initiative and encourage them to express their interests and needs by getting to know their rights and duties and helping them become self-independent.^{cxxv}

Likewise, the German Caritas Association focuses on counselling and accompanying migrants and refugees arriving in Germany.^{cxxvi} It also fosters the willingness of society to welcome and integrate refugees.^{cxxvii} To this end, the organisation cooperates with the Integration and Migration Service, offering advice and support on specific migration issues.^{cxxviii}

Immigration in Germany has a significant percentage of Muslims.^{cxxix} Therefore, German Dioceses are open to the hospitality of immigrants and to the mission of pastoral action on behalf of communities speaking another language.^{cxxx}

The Order of Malta runs social assistance programmes for undocumented migrants and supports asylum seekers.^{cxxxi} Furthermore, the *Malteser* organisation is one of the largest humanitarian relief agencies in Germany, operating in more than 100 refugee aid centres across the country and assisting about 25,000 people.^{cxxxii} ^{cxxxiii} It also focuses on the accommodation and care of asylum seekers in the so-called initial reception facilities and central accommodation facilities (ZUE), as well as in municipal accommodation. Specifically with regards to migrants and refugees, there is also the Malteser Refugee Aid which strives to integrate people who have fled to Germany due to war, violence and persecution, by helping them to build a new life in the country, in safety and freedom.

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Germany provides different services to migrants and refugees in Brandenburg, Bavaria, Berlin, Essen, and Munich.^{cxxxiv} It offers pastoral care for detained migrants, psychosocial support, legal assistance, temporary housing, education, and

scholarships. Particularly, JRS is committed to ensuring that forcibly displaced children and communities can access education, as, with the skills and knowledge provided by education, refugees can feel a sense of stability and normalcy and integrate more easily into society.

The Scalabrinians in Germany mainly focus on the pastoral care of migrants in Frankfurt am Main, Munich and Stuttgart, while also engaging in their education and health issues.

October 2022

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