

Wohnsitzauflage: An opportunity for integration?
The Impact of Residential Obligation Policy on Refugee Women's Labor Market
Participation

Aslihan Yurdakul¹ Dr. Adriana Cardozo Silva² and Dr. Yuliya Kosyakova³

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Abstract for Poster Presentation

To promote integration, the German government enacted the Residential Obligation Act (*Wohnsitzauflage*) in 2016, which obliges refugees to maintain their residence in the states to which they have been assigned for a period of three years from the time they are granted asylum or temporary residence. Studies addressing this policy have found controversial effects on labor market integration. However, the gender effects of this regulation have been under researched so far. Therefore, this paper aims to fill this gap by exploring the relationship between the likelihood of refugees' employment and the Residential Obligation Act enacted by the German government through a gender lens. In addition, we aim to understand the interaction of the residence rule with regional macro-conditions on the labor force integration of refugee women. Based on data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey from 2016 to 2020, we use logit models to identify the probability of being employed at paid work. We find that the Residential Obligation Act has no impact for female refugees, while it is negative for males. In this regard, our findings show that the act has not achieved its integration goal in terms of paid employment, and macro-conditions of the regional labor markets, i.e. unemployment rates, have a significant negative impact on refugees' access to paid work."

¹ Ph.D. Candidate, Pompeu Fabra University

² Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP). German Institute of Economic Research (DIW)

³ Institute for Employment Research (IAB) and Otto-Friedrich University, Bamberg