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457 Report by Magdalena Krieger, Philipp Jaschke, Martin Kroh, Nicolas Legewie, and Lea-Maria Löbel

Mentoring programs support the integration of refugees

- Mentorship programs help refugees improve their language skills and become more socially active
- Mentors also experience the relationship positively and want to continue volunteering
- Access to mentorship programs should be facilitated for additional groups

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AT A GLANCE

Mentoring programs support the integration of refugees

By Magdalena Krieger, Philipp Jaschke, Martin Kroh, Nicolas Legewie, and Lea-Maria Löbel

- Mentorship programs help refugees improve their German language skills and become more socially active
- Improved language skills and larger social networks could foster medium-term successes, such as labor market integration
- Mentors also experience the relationship positively and want to continue volunteering
- The tandem partnerships focus on shared leisure activities rather than concrete assistance
- Initiatives should expand their attention to refugee women and refugees in rural areas

Mentorship programs help refugees improve their language skills and become more socially active



Sources: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey v.35 (unweighted), 2017 and 2018 waves; authors' own calculations.

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FROM THE AUTHORS

“Language and social participation, which improve with the mentorship program, are stepping stones to education and employment. Therefore, it will be exciting to investigate if the program is having medium-term effects in those areas.”

— Magdalena Krieger —

MEDIA



Audio Interview with M. Krieger (in German)
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Mentoring programs support the integration of refugees

By Magdalena Krieger, Philipp Jaschke, Martin Kroh, Nicolas Legewie, and Lea-Maria Löbel

ABSTRACT

Over a million people sought asylum in Germany between 2014 and 2016. During this time, many Germans began volunteering in various ways to help refugees and mentorship programs in particular gained significance. As this report shows, participating in a mentorship program has a positive impact on refugees: They improve their language skills and become more socially active. Mentors experience the relationship positively and want to continue their volunteer work with refugees. The results presented in this report emphasize the importance of interaction between refugees and Germans. In the future, access to mentorship programs should be facilitated for additional groups, such as refugee women and refugees in rural areas.

Since 2014, the arrival of refugees has been met with conflicting reactions from the German population: On the one hand, more people worry about immigration and the right-wing populist party Alternative for Germany (*Alternative für Deutschland*, AfD) has gained support. On the other hand, many Germans have volunteered to help refugees.¹ For example, around one third of the population in Germany donated money, food, or clothes to refugees in 2016.² Helping refugees also became an increasing focus for organized civil society, such as associations, foundations, and other non-profit organizations. While only around five percent of domestic German organizations focus on refugee support, in 2016 this number rose to 14 percent (about 90,000 organizations).³

Consequently, a wide range of initiatives were established for refugees, including mentorship programs. Mentorship programs have previously been implemented for non-refugee populations such as schoolchildren, students, and early-career professionals. Empirical studies find moderately positive effects on these target groups; for example, schoolchildren in mentorship programs are less likely to skip school.⁴ Such findings suggest that mentorship programs can also support refugees in integrating by functioning as a bridge to the new society. For example, regular contact with someone from Germany gives refugees the chance to improve their German language skills and increase their social circle.⁵ As a result, initiatives such as the *Menschen stärken Menschen* program by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth (*Bundesministerium für Familie,*

¹ Katja Schmidt, Jannes Jacobsen, and Magdalena Krieger, "Soziale Integration Geflüchteter macht Fortschritte," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 34 (2020): 591–599 (in German; available online. Accessed on November 18, 2020. This applies to all other online sources in this report unless stated otherwise).

² Jannes Jacobsen, Philipp Eisnecker, and Jürgen Schupp, "Rund ein Drittel der Menschen in Deutschland spendete 2016 für Geflüchtete, zehn Prozent halfen vor Ort-immer mehr äußern aber auch Sorgen," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 17 (2017): 347–358 (in German; available online).

³ Jana Priemer and Mara Schmidt, "Flüchtlingshilfe in der organisierten Zivilgesellschaft," *Forum Wohnen und Stadtentwicklung* 6 (2019): 331–334 (in German; available online).

⁴ Jean Baldwin Grossman and Joseph P. Tierney, "Does mentoring work? An impact study of the Big Brothers Big Sisters program," *Evaluation Review* 22.3 (1998): 403–426.

⁵ Jörg Hartmann and Jan-Philip Steinmann, "Do Gender-role Values Matter? Explaining New Refugee Women's Contact in Germany," *International Migration Review* (2020) (available online).

Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, BMFSFJ) fund programs that offer mentorship for refugees.⁶

This report investigates to what extent mentorship programs have positive effects on refugees and mentors. To do so, we use data from a program evaluation carried out as a part of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey in 2017 (Boxes 1 and 2). Refugees participating in the survey were given the chance to begin a tandem partnership via the organization Start with a Friend (SwaF). Since 2014, SwaF has been connecting refugees and locals. The organization has established over 6,000 tandem partnerships and in 2017, it was active in 14 cities across Germany (Box 2).⁷ This is a unique aspect of SwaF, as comparable German initiatives for refugees are usually active regionally, not country-wide.

This report analyzes who among refugees and locals is interested in SwaF's program, which activities they participate in as tandem partners, and how the relationship has impacted both of their lives.

Mentors are not randomly assigned

In 2017, 733 adult refugees were asked if they would like to participate in a tandem program by SwaF over the course of the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey (Box 1). The interviewers briefly introduced the SwaF program to the refugees at the end of the annual survey. Of the refugees, 465 expressed interest in the program and 268 expressed no interest in participating in the program.

How effectively the mentoring program can support refugee integration depends in part on the socio-demographic characteristics of those participating. For example, if the only refugees who are interested in the SwaF program already possess strong German language skills, the program will only be able to marginally improve their language skills, on average. Who expresses interest is also of socio-political interest: If refugees with certain characteristics are the only ones interested in government-funded voluntary programs, such programs may not reach other target groups or may not be able to reduce existing inequalities within the refugee population.

Indeed, the groups of interested and uninterested refugees differ in three of the characteristics investigated (Figure 1). First, interested refugees arrived to Germany more recently (and were usually living in a collective accommodation center) compared to uninterested refugees. This could positively affect how SwaF's program supports integration: Recent immigrants generally have particularly limited access to key information via social networks that can help them integrate successfully, for example into the labor market or

⁶ With funding from the *Menschen stärken Menschen* program, over 100,000 partnerships have been established for refugees as of December 2019. More information can be found here.

⁷ SwaF is funded by the BMFSFJ as a part of their *Menschen stärken Menschen* campaign (in German; available online).

Box 1

Program evaluation

The goal of the program evaluation is to identify the causal effect of an intervention, for example the effect of a having mentor on refugee integration. However, a simple comparison of individuals with and without mentors does not enable causal inference because which refugees enter a mentoring program and find a mentor is not random. Rather, participation in a program may be related to many characteristics. Program evaluations avoid this problem by randomly assigning study participants to one of two groups, either the group participating in the program (program group) or the group not participating in the program (control group). Comparing these two groups—which should, on average, be similar at the start of the program due to the random allocation—enables the causal effect of a program to be identified.¹

¹ Joshua D. Angrist and Jörn-Steffen Pischke, *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion* (Princeton University Press: 2008).

educational system.⁸ A mentor from Germany could be especially helpful in this case. Moreover, refugee women express interest in participation in the program less frequently than refugee men. As previous research suggests that refugee women integrate more slowly, they should receive more focus as a target group through programs that are especially tailored to their needs.⁹

Furthermore, the 85 refugees who were assigned a mentor were statistically significantly different from those who were interested in the program but ultimately did not participate. For example, refugees with mentors tend to be unmarried and childless on average, which could be related to the program's time requirements. SwaF suggest that tandem partners meet weekly for two to three hours for six months. This time commitment could be difficult for refugees with families to manage, who often have young children who are additionally less likely to attend day care.¹⁰ Moreover, refugees in a tandem, on average, have stronger German language skills and are younger. This could be due to how SwaF pairs partners, as the organization tries to bring together mentors and refugees with similar characteristics. Therefore, it may be more difficult to find matching partners for older refugees or those with poorer German language skills.

⁸ Christian Dustmann and Francesca Fabbri, "Language proficiency and labour market performance of immigrants in the UK," *The Economic Journal* 113, no. 489 (2003): 695–717.

⁹ Katja Schmidt, Jannes Jacobsen, and Magdalena Krieger, "Soziale Integration Geflüchteter macht Fortschritte," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 34 (2020): 591–599 (in German; available online); Daniel Graeber and Flicitas Schikora, "Hohe Erwartungen der Geflüchteten an die Aufnahme einer Erwerbstätigkeit haben sich teilweise realisiert," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 34 (2020): 571,578 (in German; available online).

¹⁰ Ludovica Gambaro, Guido Neidhöfer, and C. Katharina Spieß, "Kita-Besuch von Kindern aus nach Deutschland geflüchteten Familien verbessert Integration ihrer Mütter," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 44 (2019): 805–812 (in German; available online).

Box 2

Program evaluation process

The program evaluation in this report began in 2017 with the aim of studying how the relationship with a mentor affects refugee integration. To do so, the Socio-Economic Panel (*Sozio-oekonomisches Panel*, SOEP) and the Institute for Employment Research (*Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung*, IAB) collaborated with Start with a Friend e.V. (SwaF).¹

The program evaluation is tied into the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey, a longitudinal study of refugees who came to Germany between the beginning of 2013 and the end of 2016. In 2017, 733 respondents in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey were asked if they were interested in participating in a mentorship program. The group of respondents was limited to individuals who lived in one of the 14 German cities in which SwaF was active in 2017.² Overall, 465 respondents expressed interest in the program while 268 expressed no interest. The interested refugees were randomly assigned to two groups: 234 respondents were assigned to the program group, who would participate in the program, and 231 to the control group. At the end of the interview, the program group refugees' contact information was forwarded to SwaF. The contact information was successfully transmitted for 215 refugees and SwaF began to pair refugees and mentors. The other 19 refugees could not be registered due to technical difficulties. It should be noted here that, due to ethical reasons, refugees from the control group were not prohibited from participating in the SwaF program; they were just not included in the program via the research project. Among the refugees in the control group, one person independently enrolled in the SwaF program and was therefore excluded from the analyses in this report.

After receiving the contact information of the registered refugees, SwaF contacted them to schedule a meeting to meet SwaF volunteers. SwaF volunteers met a total of 127 of the registered refugees. The primary goal of these meetings was to get to know the refugees in order to pair them with suitable mentors. Eighty-five of the refugees were paired with a mentor.

¹ The study (titled "Mentoring of Refugees (MORE)") was financed by the Leibniz Association as a part of the Leibniz Competition 2016. More information on SwaF can be found here.

² The 14 cities are: Berlin, Potsdam, Dresden, Leipzig, Hamburg, Oldenburg, Cologne, Dusseldorf, Aachen, Bonn, Frankfurt am Main, Landau, Stuttgart, and Freiburg.

Mentors are predominantly female, young, and highly educated

The mentors of the 85 refugees participated in three online surveys in which they provided information on their socio-demographic characteristics and their experiences in the tandem program (Box 3). Seventy-two of the mentors answered the first survey, which was conducted around the beginning of the tandem. Mentors are predominantly female (73 percent) and 30 years old on average, which can explain why

refugees with tandem partners are also younger on average than those for whom no tandem partner could be found. Friendship research argues that people are more likely to become friends if they share similar observable characteristics.¹¹ SwaF adopts this notion indirectly when pairing refugees and mentors. Moreover, the majority of mentors are unmarried and childless, which can be explained by their age demographics.

The mentors are predominantly German citizens (92 percent), although 16 of the respondents have a direct or indirect migration background. Eighty-three percent of the mentors passed the *Abitur* exam at the end of their secondary education. Sixty-seven percent are employed and 33 percent are currently students or in vocational training.¹² Mentors' attitudes toward refugees are also more positive on average than the attitudes of the overall German population. For example, 80 percent of mentors see the immigration of refugees as a long-term opportunity for Germany, 17 percent are ambivalent, and only three percent see mostly long-term risks. In comparison, only 30 percent of respondents from the total German population view the immigration of refugees as a long-term opportunity for Germany.¹³

Eighty percent of the respondents indicated that their motivation for volunteering with SwaF is to improve social harmony between refugees and Germans and to become familiar with lives of refugees in Germany. Additionally, many mentors view the tandem partnership as an opportunity to meet and to get to know people and less often view it as a pastime or as an opportunity to develop their own skills.

Tandem partners spend free time, speak German together

Mentors were asked in a second online survey six weeks after the match which activities they pursued during the tandem partnership. We received responses from 54 of the 60 mentors who had met with their tandem partner at least once.

Unlike the mentors' original motivation, there is less of a focus on concrete assistance in the tandem partnerships. Rather, most tandem partners met to eat together (almost 70 percent), to attend cultural events (almost 30 percent), and to learn German (almost 40 percent). All 31 mentors who at the time of the survey had met up with their tandem partner within the previous two weeks indicated that they speak German with their tandem partner. These activities suggest that mentors can assist refugees during integration; in

¹¹ Andreas Wimmer and Kevin Lewis, "Beyond and below racial homophily: ERG models of a friendship network documented on Facebook," *American Journal of Sociology* 116, no. 2 (2010): 583-642.

¹² In comparison: Of the entire German population, 40 percent of secondary school graduates passed the *Abitur* in 2018 (in German; available online).

¹³ Katja Schmidt, Jannes Jacobsen, and Magdalena Krieger, "Soziale Integration Geflüchteter macht Fortschritte," *DIW Wochenbericht* no. 34 (2020): 591-599 (in German; available online).

Box 3

Data

In this report we use data from the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey in 2017 and 2018. Additional information is taken from a survey of mentors that was conducted by SOEP together with the IAB and the Center for Empirical Social Research (*Zentrum für empirische Sozialforschung, ZeS*) in 2017 and 2018. SwaF mentors who were in tandem partnerships with refugees who participated in the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey were asked to participate in three online surveys. The first survey was conducted directly after the tandem partnership started, the second was conducted six weeks later, and the third after four months. Overall, N = 72 of a total of N = 85 mentors participated in the first survey, N = 60 mentors in the second survey, and N = 48 mentors in the third survey. The questions asked in the online survey for mentors are adapted from the SOEP survey.

particular, improved German language skills can function as stepping stones into employment and new social networks.¹⁴

Additionally, the tandem expands both partners' social networks. Among the 31 mentors who participated in the second online survey and who had met with their tandem partner in the previous two weeks, every third respondent indicated that their tandem partner had already met friends of theirs, and 13 percent indicated that their tandem partner had already met their family. In other words, many refugees do not only meet one local through the tandem; rather, they indirectly meet a broader group of locals. These additional relationships can positively contribute to integration. Mentors, too, expand their social circle: thirty percent of mentors report that they have already met their tandem partner's friends and family. According to research on attitudes towards migrants, such encounters can break down prejudices and lead to a more harmonious society.¹⁵

Mentors enjoy their tandems and view their tandem partners as friends

The quality of the mentoring relationship has a direct impact on the effectiveness of the tandem. If both participants get along well and experience the relationship positively, then both are more likely to continue to meet and share information, thoughts, and engage in conversation.¹⁶ Again, we look at the 31 mentors from the second wave of the online survey who had met their tandem partner within the past two weeks (Figure 4). The experience of the tandems shown

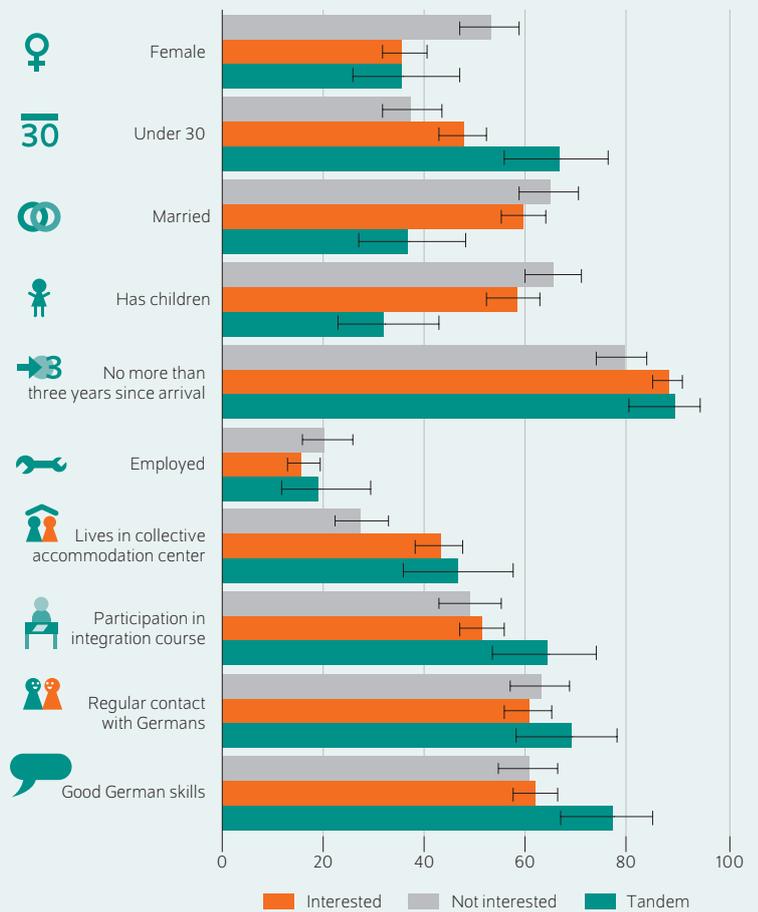
¹⁴ Yuxin Yao and Jan C. van Ours, "Language skills and labor market performance of immigrants in the Netherlands," *Labour Economics* 34 (2015): 76–85.

¹⁵ Linda R. Tropp and Thomas F. Pettigrew, "Relationships between intergroup contact and prejudice among minority and majority status groups," *Psychological Science* 16, no. 12 (2005): 951–957.

¹⁶ Tammy D. Allen and Lillian T. Eby, "Relationship effectiveness for mentors: Factors associated with learning and quality," *Journal of Management* 29, no. 4 (2003): 469–486.

Figure 1

Share of the respective categories of the groups with interest, without interest, and in a tandem
In percent of the refugee group



Note: The vertical lines indicate the 95 percent confidence interval.

Sources: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey v.35 (unweighted), 2017 wave; authors' own calculations.

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Among interested refugees, the share of those who live in a collective accommodation center is higher than among refugees who are not interested in the program.

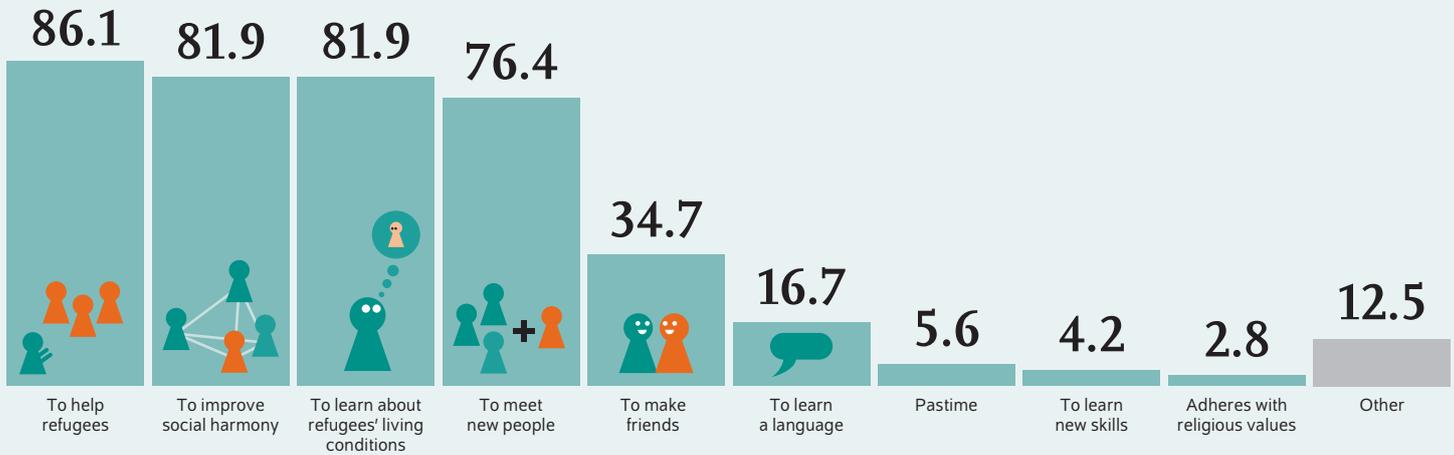
in Figure 4 can only be generalized to a limited extent, as mentors who do not meet their partner regularly are not included. It can be assumed that the answers of those who do not meet regularly would tend to be more negative than the observed answers.

The mentors were asked to rate statements on how well their tandem partnership worked on a scale of 1 ("Completely disagree") to 7 ("Completely agree"). Their answers show that mentors mainly enjoy their tandem partnership and think they get along well with their partner. This is likely due to SwaF's elaborate matching process, in which they consider the hobbies and interests of both parties. Moreover, the majority of the respondents view the tandem partnership as a friendship, although they tend to not speak about feelings often. Despite these positive assessments, however,

Figure 2

Mentors' motivations

In percent of mentors



Note: Multiple answers are possible.

Sources: Online Survey of Mentors (unweighted), wave 1, N = 71; authors' own calculations.

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The majority of mentors want to help refugees.

21 of the mentors also indicated they had at some point considered ending the tandem partnership, mainly due to a lack of time. Overall, the tandem partnerships are predominantly experienced positively by mentors.

Mentors want to continue volunteering in the future

About four months after beginning the program, 48 mentors shared how they believe the tandem has benefited them. Mainly, the tandem has allowed mentors to learn more about the lives of refugees. For the mentors themselves, the tandem had no direct impact on their career and the mentors do not view their tandem partner as someone with whom they can speak openly about feelings or share unpleasant truths.

Additionally, the mentors were asked twice about their personal volunteer work with refugees: once at the beginning of the program and again four months after it began (Figure 5). At the beginning of the program, about half of the mentors indicated that they had already donated money, food, or clothes to refugees. A third also said that they had done volunteer work in person. While the share of mentors willing to donate money or goods was around 50 percent after a year, the share of mentors who want to volunteer in person with refugees directly increased significantly (70 percent). Hence, the experiences at SwaF seem to have a positive effect on the willingness of the mentors to continue their volunteer work. However, the 24 mentors who did not participate in the follow-up surveys may have had negative experiences but are not represented in the above findings.

Refugees improve their language skills and become more social due to their mentors

We use four dimensions of integration to measure how program participation has impacted refugees: social participation, German language skills, education, and labor market participation.

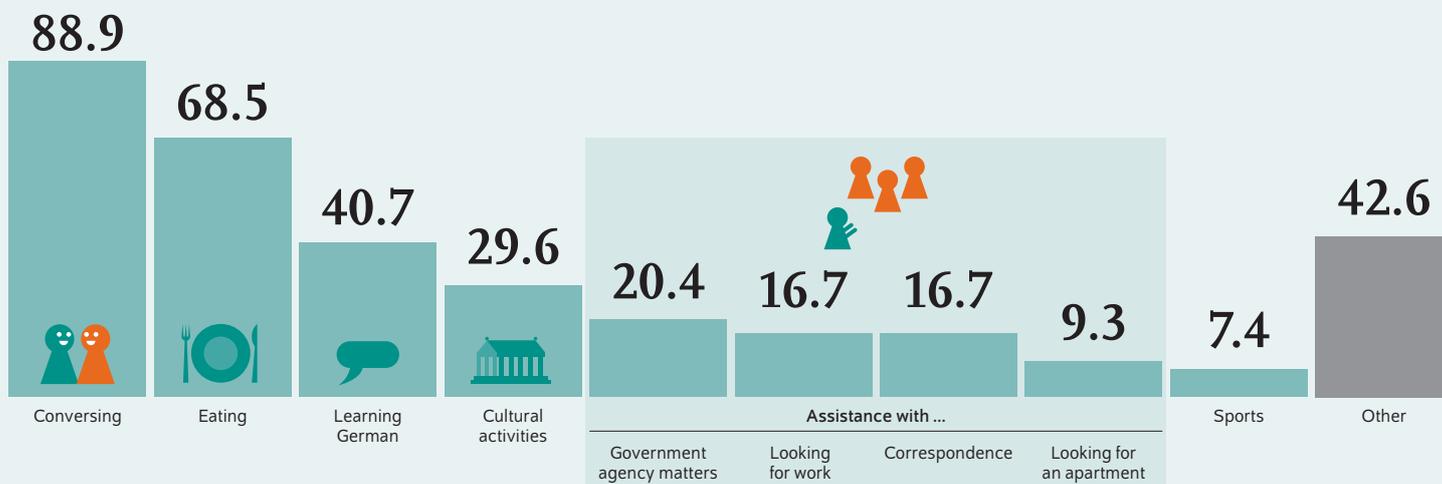
To do so, we compare refugees from the program group with those from the control group. Refugees are included in the program group if they were assigned a tandem partner who they met at least once over a period of four months. This applies to 30 refugees. The control group is comprised of 130 refugees. For both groups, relevant information is available both at the time of joining the program in 2017 and one year later in the follow-up survey. This way, existing differences between the program and control groups can be taken into account in the results.¹⁷

¹⁷ The original program and control groups contained 234 and 231 refugees, respectively. However, not all refugees in the program group were assigned a mentor over the course of the project. Additionally, not all refugees in the program and control groups participated in the follow-up survey to the IAB-BAMF-SOEP survey in 2018 (see Box 2). Therefore, the comparison of the effects was restricted to 30 refugees in the program group and 130 refugees in the control group. We expand on this issue further and address it using propensity-score weighting in a research article currently under review at a scientific journal. With propensity-score weighting, the analyses on the effects of the program statistically take into account which characteristics determine participation in both the program and the follow-up survey. Results from this more detailed analysis do not differ substantially from the results of this report.

Figure 3

Tandem partners' shared activities

In percent of mentors



Sources: Online Survey of Mentors (unweighted), wave 2, N = 54; authors' own calculations.

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A majority of tandem partners spend free time together.

The frequency with which refugees undertake a set of seven activities is used to measure their level of social participation.¹⁸ On average, refugees in the program group indicated in 2017 that they participate in at least two of the seven listed activities at least once a month. This number is not higher at a conventional level of statistical significance compared to refugees in the control group. However, in the follow-up survey a year later, the refugees in the program group reported that they participate on average in almost three activities at least once a month. This increase in participation in activities is lower in the control group (Figure 6).

It is to be expected that an increased level of social participation leads to improvements in German language skills. Refugees in the program group had, on average, better German language skills before beginning the tandem (Figure 6).¹⁹ However, this difference is not statistically significant. The refugees in the program group further improved their German language skills through mentoring, resulting in the share of those with good skills increasing to 60 percent after one year compared to an increase to 34 percent in the control group. Thus, the share of refugees with good language skills increased significantly more in the program group (by 13 percentage points) than the control group (by

four percentage points). This increase of almost ten percentage points can be attributed to participation in the program and roughly corresponds to the average improvement in language skills after one additional year in Germany.²⁰

We also analyze the share of refugees who have invested in education since arriving in Germany as a further component of integration.²¹ Investment in education is of central importance, as refugees generally have a lower average level of education at the time of their arrival compared to the population in Germany. This may be due to less well-funded public education systems in refugees' countries of origin or having their education interrupted by extensive war or violent conflict.²² In terms of investment in education, it can be seen that the refugees in the program group had invested in education in Germany significantly more often—with a share of over a third—even before participating in the program. During the one-year observation period, the share in both groups increased by around five percentage points on average. Thus, the refugees in the program group achieved the same year-on-year improvement as in the control group on average.

¹⁸ The scale ranges from 1 ("Never") to 6 ("Daily"). The possible answers were: (1) Eating or drinking in a cafe, restaurant, or bar; (2) Excursions or short trips; (3) Artistic or musical activities; (4) Exercising; (5) Attending sporting events; (6) Going to a movie theater, concert, or dancing; (7) Opera, classical concerts, theater, exhibitions.

¹⁹ German skills are measured as the average of speaking, writing, and reading skills, each rated on a scale of 1 ("Not at all") to 5 ("Very well"). German skills are defined as good if the rounded average is four or higher.

²⁰ Cristine de Paiva Lareiro, Nina Rother, and Manuel Siegert, "Geflüchtete verbessern ihre Deutschkenntnisse und fühlen sich in Deutschland weiterhin willkommen," *BAMF Kurzanalyse* no. 1 (2020) (in German; available online).

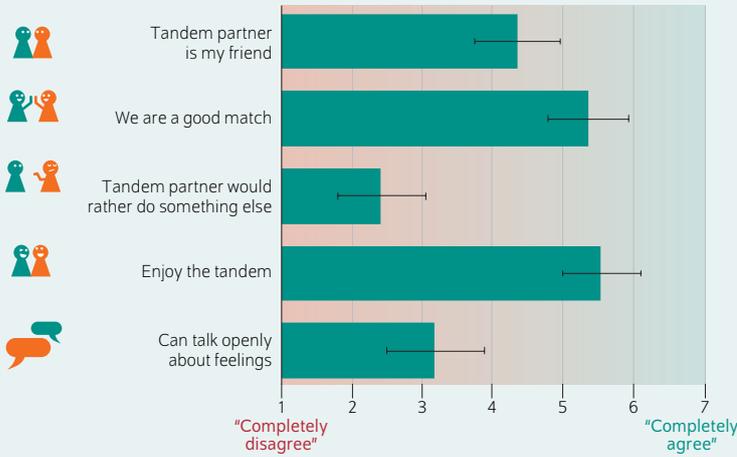
²¹ This includes schools, vocational training, company internships, and attending college.

²² Christoph Spörlein, Cornelia Kristen, Regine Schmidt, and Jörg Welker, "Selectivity profiles of recently arrived refugees and labour migrants in Germany," *Soziale Welt* 71, no. 1–2 (2020): 54–89.

Figure 4

Mentors' evaluation of the tandem partnership

Average responses



Note: The vertical lines indicate the 95 percent confidence interval.

Sources: Online Survey of Mentors (unweighted), wave 2, N = 31; authors' own calculations.

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Many mentors view their tandem partners as friends.

year after. The employment rate of both groups was 16 percent on average in 2017 and 28 percent in 2018.²³ Thus, participating in the tandem program leads to no measurable effects on employment. This can be for many reasons: For example, the program group may be too small (30 people) or the observation period of a year too short. Furthermore, it must be noted that SwaF's program primarily focuses not on finding refugees jobs, but rather on helping them form friendships.

In summary, our results align with SwaF's mission statement and indicate that refugees who participate in a stable tandem become more socially active and further improve their German skills. Considering that many studies find a positive effect of these factors on labor market integration, medium and long-term indirect positive effects of participation in the mentorship program on the employment of refugees seem likely.

Conclusion: Tandems have a positive impact on both refugees and mentors

This report shows the potential of tandem partnerships for supporting refugee integration. Refugees who participated in a tandem improved their language skills over the course of one year and were more socially active compared to refugees without a mentor. These results give hope for further positive effects of participation on refugee integration down the line, as social networks and language skills function as important stepping stones into employment. The mentors, too, experience the tandem partnership positively: The majority views their tandem partner as a friend and want to continue volunteering with refugees in the future. These are encouraging findings for future volunteer work and social cohesion.

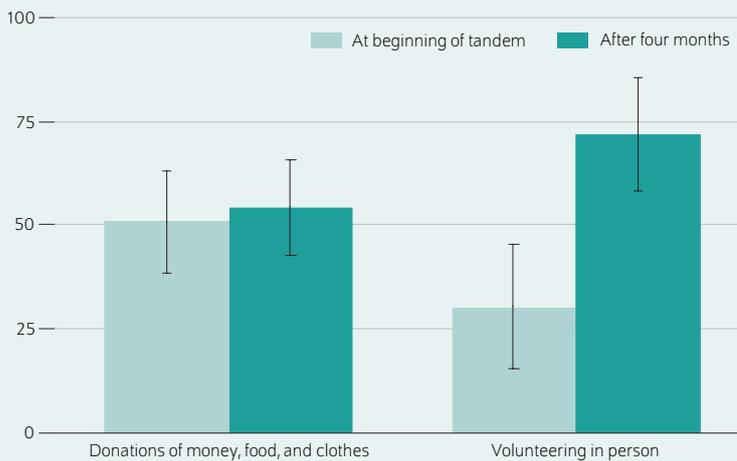
However, our analysis also suggests that not all refugees are equally likely to enter the mentorship program. Not all refugees expressed interest in the SwaF program. In particular, refugee women participated in the program less frequently. As previous studies have already noted the lagging integration of refugee women relative to refugee men, this should be considered an important area in which to take action.

The results clearly demonstrate the positive effects of SwaF's tandem program. Today, the organization is active in 20 cities throughout Germany. While the majority of the refugees in Germany live in urban areas, attitudes toward refugees in rural areas remain particularly skeptical. It is thus important for mentoring programs to be implemented in rural areas as well. It is also apparent that civil society programs aimed at broad groups, such as refugees, should be combined with initiatives that address the needs of specific sub-groups, such as those of refugee women or refugees with only rudimentary German language skills. In this way, all refugees can receive assistance while beginning their new lives.

Figure 5

Mentors' civic engagement for refugees

In percent of mentors



Note: The vertical lines indicate the 95 percent confidence interval.

Sources: Online Survey of Mentors (unweighted), waves 1 and 3, N = 72 and N = 48; authors' own calculations.

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The majority of mentors want to continue volunteering in the future.

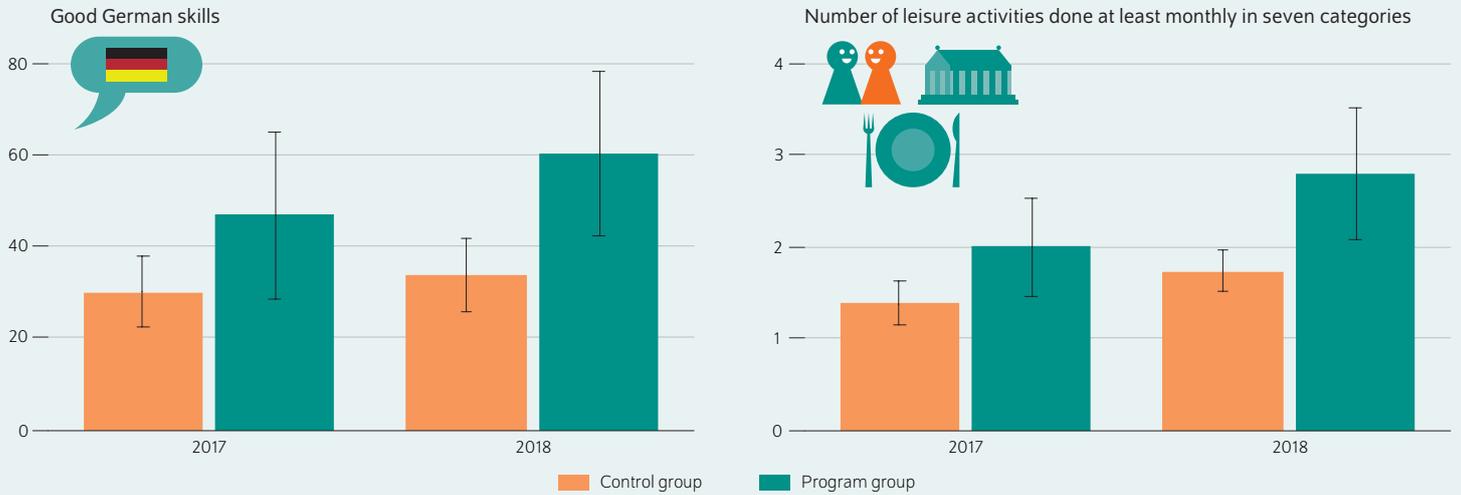
Lastly, we investigate labor market integration using the employment rate as an indicator. There were no statistically significant differences in employment between the program and control groups before beginning the tandem as well as a

²³ This includes full and part-time employment, vocational training, apprenticeships, marginal employment, and company internships.

Figure 6

Tandem's impact on the integration of refugees

In percent of refugees; number



Note: The vertical lines indicate the 95 percent confidence interval.

Sources: IAB-BAMF-SOEP Refugee Survey v.35 (unweighted), 2017 and 2018 waves; authors' own calculations.

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Tandems lead to improved language skills and increased social participation for refugees.

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