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Support Structures for Refugee Integration in Austria

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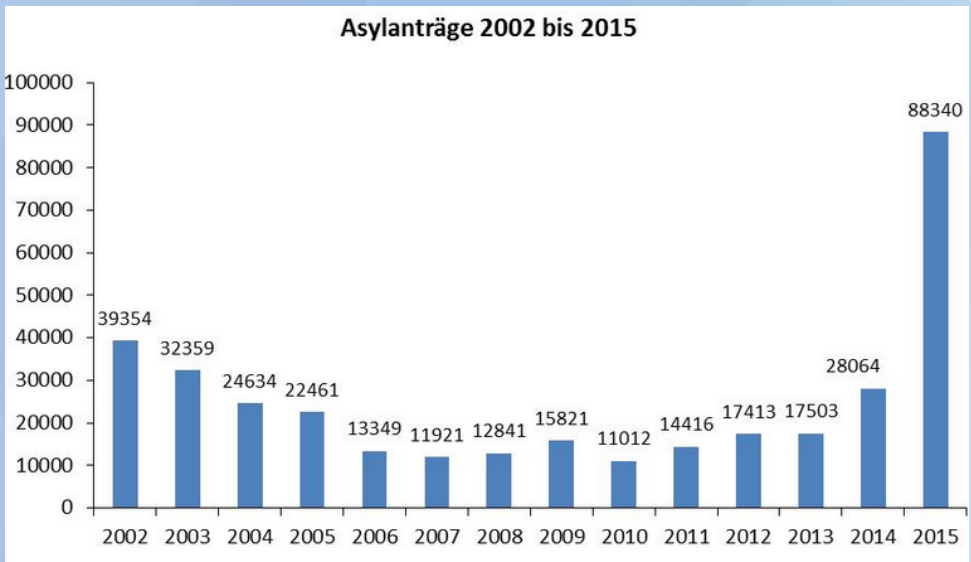
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Recent Refugee Flows to Austria



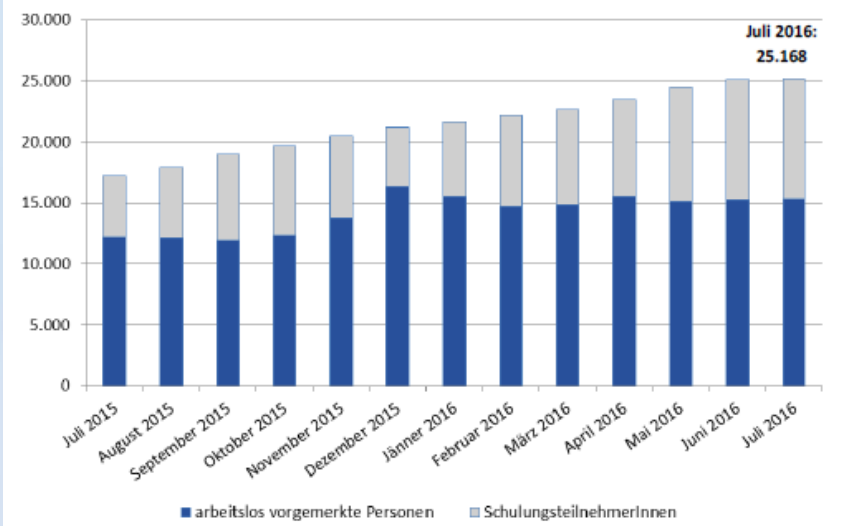
Austria 2015:

- 88,340 applications for international protection
- 57% from Afghanistan and the Syrian Arab Republic
- 16,891 positive final decisions



Source: Austrian Ministry of the Interior.

Abbildung 1: Bestand anerkannter Flüchtlinge und subsidiär Schutzberechtigter beim AMS zum jeweiligen Stichtag (AL und SC)



Source: Public Employment Service.

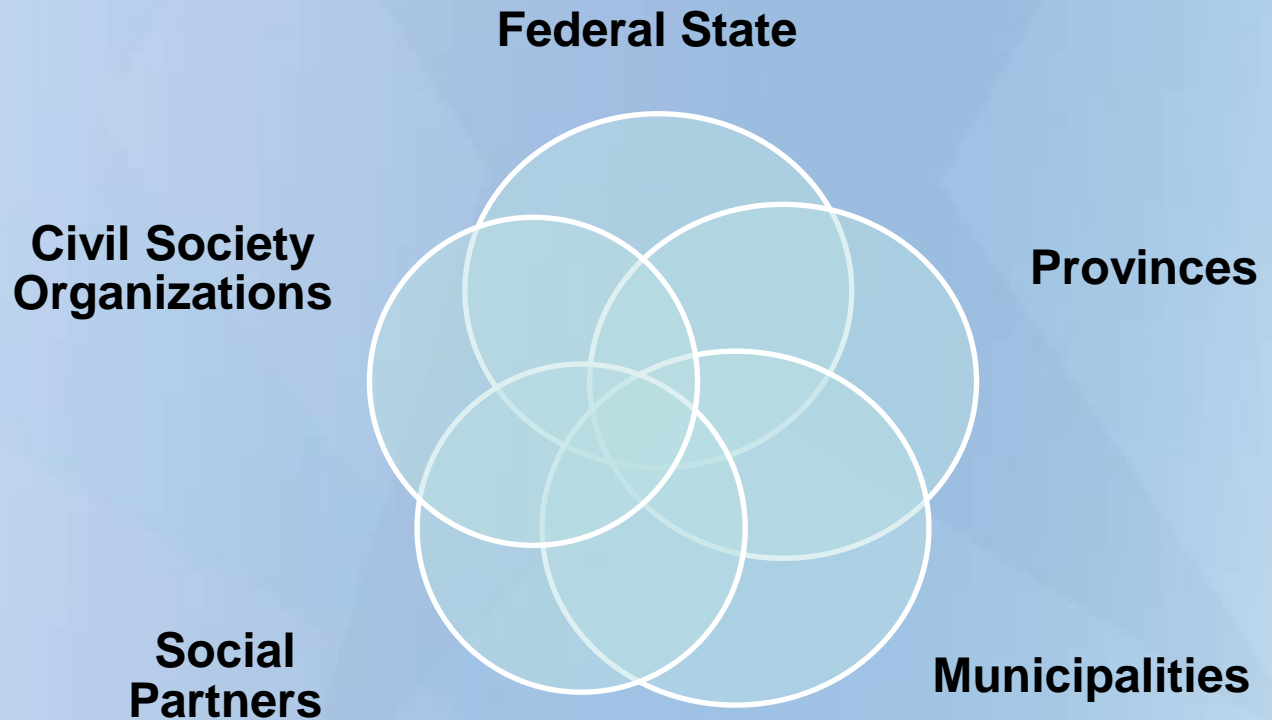
Austria December 2015:

- 16,286 registered job-seeking beneficiaries of international protection

The Austrian Integration Structure



- ✳ Integration as a **cross-sectional** and **multi-stakeholder** task



The Austrian Integration Policy



National Action Plan on Integration (2010)

✳ Target group:

“the society at large, foreign nationals settled permanently in Austria and Austrian citizens born in another country, as well as people with a migration background who are permanently settled in Austria or already possess Austrian citizenship but whose parents were born in another country”

✳ General guidelines on integration policy:

“the integration of persons granted asylum and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection [...] represents a special challenge in view of their vulnerability”

The Austrian Integration Support



- ✚ According to **Austrian law** foreign nationals who have asylum status or who are entitled to settle in Austria can be granted integration support. This support includes:
 - ✓ Language courses;
 - ✓ Education and training courses;
 - ✓ Events on the introduction to the Austrian culture and history;
 - ✓ Joint events with Austrian citizens for mutual understanding;
 - ✓ Information provision on housing (only for persons with asylum status); and
 - ✓ Activities of the Austrian Integration Fund.

- ✚ Since June 2016: Included are also asylum-seekers who are most likely to be granted international protection.

(Art. 68 Asylum Act; Art. 17 Settlement and Residence Act)

Targeted Integration Policies



✘ Following the refugee inflows of 2015 integration policies were debated, funding was earmarked and action points were set.

- ✓ **July 2015:** Expert Paper on the Integration of Persons Granted Asylum and Beneficiaries of Subsidiary Protection
- ✓ **September 2015:** Integration Package
- ✓ **November 2015:** 50-Point Plan for the Integration of Persons Granted Asylum and Beneficiaries of Subsidiary Protection in Austria

Targeted Integration Measures



- ✘ Amendment of the **Asylum Act** (1 June 2016): After being granted their residence status, beneficiaries of international protection have to visit an integration centre of the Austrian Integration Fund (*Art. 67 para 1 Asylum Act*).
- ✘ Since 2016 - “**Values and Orientation Courses**” for beneficiaries of international protection and asylum-seekers; Topics: fundamental rights, Austrian society, and everyday life.
- ✘ Since 2015 - **Numerous integration support measures**, which specifically target beneficiaries of international protection, were initiated.

Good Practice Example



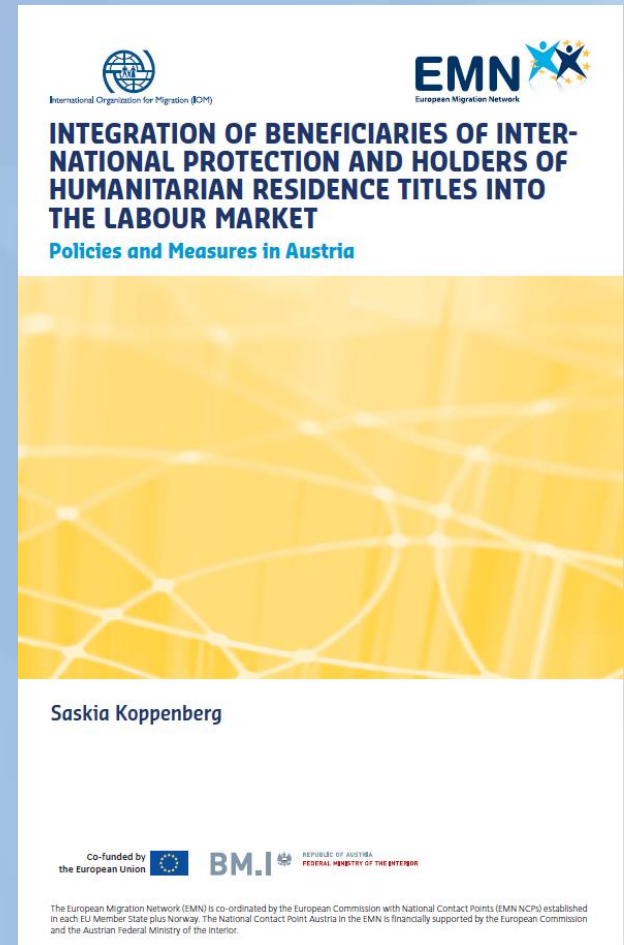
- ✦ Pilot project for the **assessment of competences** started in August 2015:
 - ✓ ‘Competency Check’ for beneficiaries of international protection registered with Public Employment Service (PES);
 - ✓ Five-week course: qualifications/skills assessment and documentation, workshops, German language courses;
 - ✓ Individualized counselling, further training, support with formal recognition;
 - ✓ Commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, run by PES and training institutions.
 - See [EC’s database on promising practices](#).

- ✦ **Law on Recognition and Assessment of Qualifications** (12 July 2016): Provision of specific procedures for beneficiaries of international protection.

Further Reading

The presentation was based on the following EMN study

- ✳ Title: Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection and Holders of Humanitarian Residence Titles into the Labour Market: Policies and Measures in Austria
- ✳ Timeframe: August – December 2015



➤ The study is available for download at www.emn.at/en/publications/studies.



Thank you for your attention!

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