

IRE214

CULTURE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

Maya Hadar

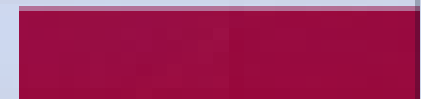
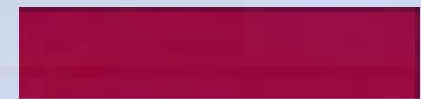
Fall 2019

Final Session

On the Agenda for Today

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- **Short Comparative Summary**
- **Contemporary Challenge: The Refugees Crisis**
 - German and Austrian responses
- **The final exam**



Austria vs. Germany



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Austria

Federal Republic (Vienna)

Occupied by Germany during World War II

Formerly an empire ruled by the Habsburgs who controlled much of Europe

Germany

Federal Republic (Berlin)

Large surplus, exporting is very important for the German economy

Protestant Reformation started here by Martin Luther

EU Member

Democratic government

Diverse economies, tourism

Western, Rich, Successful

Right wing increased in political power in recent years

German language & cultural influence

The Alpine Countries



Austria

EU Member

- Federal Republic (Vienna)
- Occupied by Germany during World War II
- Formerly an empire ruled by the Habsburgs, who controlled much of Europe

Switzerland

- Independent since 1600s (Bern)
- Confederation of 26 cantons
- Politically neutral- haven for foreign industry+ business
- Has not joined the EU
- French, Italian, German, Romansh languages common

Located in/around the Alps, mountainous terrain

Diverse economies, foreign operations, manufacturing, tourism

Democratic government

Not NATO members

Western, Rich, Successful

German language & cultural influence

Who is a Refugee?

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- **The Refugee Convention (1951)** => *“A person fleeing armed conflict or persecution”*
 - Outlines the **basic rights** that states should award refugees
- Refugees should **NOT** be expelled, or returned to situations where their **life and freedom** would be **under threat**

Who is a Migrant?

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- *"Any person who lives **temporarily** or **permanently** in a country where s/he was **not born**, and has acquired some significant **social ties** to this country"*
- According to some states, a person can be considered a migrant even when s/he is **born** in the country
- **UN Convention on the Rights of Migrants** => *"The term 'migrant' ... should be understood as covering all cases where **the decision to migrate is taken freely** by the individual concerned, for reasons of '**personal convenience**' and without intervention of an external compelling factor"*

Who is a Migrant?

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- **Dominant forms of migration** can be **distinguished** according to:
 - **Motives** (economic, family reunion, refugees) or
 - **Legal status** (irregular migration, controlled/free emigration/immigration)
- Countries have various distinct **categories** in their migration policies and statistics => Reflect the **lack of an objective definitions of migration**
- **Common categorization** of international migrants:
 - **Temporary labour migrants (guest workers):** People who migrate for a **limited** period of **time** in order to take up **employment**

Who is a Migrant?

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- **Common categorization of international migrants:**
 - **Highly skilled & business migrants:** People with **qualifications** (managers, executives, professionals, technicians) who seek **employment** through **international** labour markets
 - Many countries **welcome** such migrants and have **special 'skilled and business migration'** programmed to encourage them to come
 - **Irregular/Illegal migrants:** people who enter a country, usually in search of employment, **without the necessary documents** and permits

Canadian Immigration Points Calculator

Comments (0)



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– [Canada skilled immigration - Express Entry](#)

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[Canada Federal Skilled Worker Program points requirements](#)

[Canadian Immigration Points Calculator](#)

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[Canada Experience Class](#)

[Canada National Occupation Classification List](#)

[Canada Work Visa Guide for Employers](#)

+ [Canada Business Visas](#)

+ [Canada Family Visas](#)

+ [Canada Student Visas](#)

+ [Useful Information for Canada](#)

+ [Archive of old Canada Visa Categories](#)

Do you think when you emigrate you will be able to show the following funds? *

- I am a single applicant and can meet the proof of funds requirements of CAD\$ 12,164
- There are two people in my family unit and we can meet the proof of funds requirements of CAD\$ 15,143
- There are three people in my family unit and we can meet the proof of funds requirements of CAD\$ 18,617
- There are four people in my family unit and we can meet the proof of funds requirements of CAD\$ 22,603
- There are five people in my family unit and we can meet the proof of funds requirements of CAD\$ 25,636
- There are six people in my family unit and we can meet the proof of funds requirements of CAD\$ 28,913
- There are seven or more people in my family unit and we can meet the proof of funds requirements of CAD\$ 32,191
- None of the above

Have you at least completed one year of continuous full-time or equivalent paid work experience in the past 10 years in a skilled occupation (National Occupational Classification skill level 0, A or B)? *

- Yes
- No

Have you passed or do you think you will pass the minimum threshold of language ability in one of Canada's two official languages, English or French at CLB 7? *

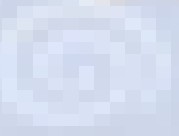
- Yes

Who is a Migrant?



- **Common categorization of international migrants:**
 - **Irregular/Illegal migrants:** People who enter a country, usually in search of employment, **without the necessary documents** and permits

IMMIGRATION



Who is a Migrant?

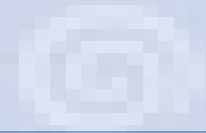
- **Forced migration:** Broadly includes people who were **forced to move due to external factors** (refugees, asylum seekers but also due to environmental catastrophes)
- **Family members/reunion:** People who wish to join family members who have already entered an immigration country under one of the categories
 - Many countries recognize the right to **family reunion** for legal migrants, others (especially those with contract labor systems), deny or limit the right

Who is a Migrant?

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- **Migrants are NOT refugees or people who were displaced/forced/compelled to leave their homes**
- **Migrants are people who choose when to leave and where to go, even though these **choices are sometimes extremely constrained****
 - **Voluntary and involuntary migration**

Humanitarian Crisis



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- Syria's civil war is the **worst humanitarian crisis of our time**
- **Half of the country's pre-war population** (>11 million) has been **killed or forced to flee** their homes
- Families are **struggling** to survive inside Syria, or make a new home in host countries (mostly neighboring countries), others are risking their lives on the way to Europe
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ikhglsRM0Y>

IMMIGRATION



The Refugee Crisis- Context

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- **NOT a natural disaster**, has **concrete causes** and was partly **foreseeable**
- The refugee crisis in Europe is **NOT a new phenomena-** it has been present for years in **specific countries** (Greece, Macedonia and Italy), but recently became a topic for massive news coverage for two main reasons:
 1. It has **penetrated from the periphery of Europe to the heart of the European Union**
 2. **Increasing scale of a humanitarian crisis** at the back yard's of the rich and 'enlightened' west

The Refugee Crisis- Context

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- **The Arab Spring (2011) => A series of pro-democracy social uprisings/protests that enveloped several largely Muslim countries (Tunisia, Morocco, Syria, Libya, Egypt & Bahrain)**
 - **Ultimately resulted in regime changes in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya**
 - **Not all of the movements deemed successful in increasing democracy & cultural freedom- for many countries the period since has been hallmarked by increased instability and oppression (Syria, Libya)**

The Refugee Crisis- Context

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- **The war in Syria => Civil war**
 - Asad's family is **controlling Syria for over 30 years**
 - **Proxy war: Syria became a 'sandbox' for competing Middle Eastern powers,** (Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran and, more recently, Russia)
- The Syrian civil war **forced many to leave the country** and seek refuge in Lebanon, Turkey, Greece and throughout Western Europe
- For sometime, the militant group **ISIS had declared a caliphate** (nation governed by Islamic law) in Syria's north-east
- Although **ISIS** has largely been **defeated** in Syria, the oppressive regime of long-time dictator Bashar al **Assad remains in power**

The Refugee Crisis- Context

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- September 2, 2015
=> A picture of Aylan Kurdi, 3 year old child who **died** in an attempt to reach **European territory** sparked **public discussion**
- Global attention** to the 'Shocking, cruel reality of Europe's refugee crisis'



Refugees' Arrival in the EU

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- **Germany, Sweden and the UK** expressed their wish to **accept refugees** into their countries and assist them with **integration**



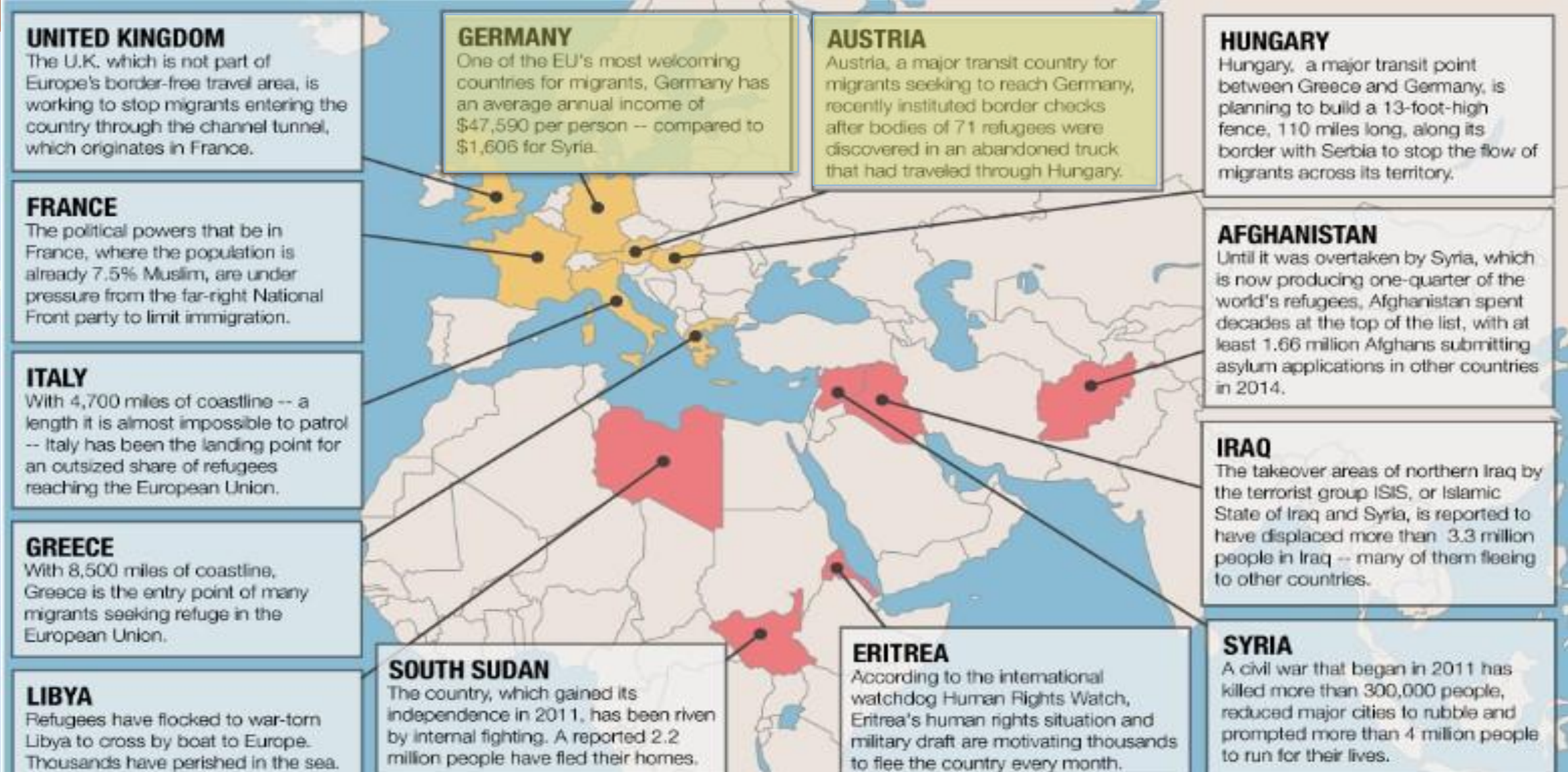
Football fans showed their support for the campaign at the 3rd day of the Bundesliga

Refugees' Arrival in the EU

19



The Refugee Crisis- Important Players



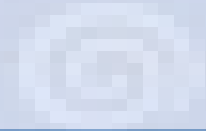
The German Plan

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- Providing states **billions of euros** for the construction of over **150k accommodations** for refugees
- **650 new positions** in the **Federal Office for Migration and Refugees** to shorten the time until **asylum status** is granted
- Refugees can work/start training **3 months** after arrival (used to be **9 months**)
- **Refugees** were sent to **various states** depending of wealth and size



The German Plan



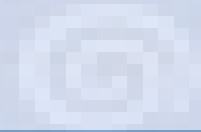
Public reaction =>

- **Middle Class Germans** (students, left wing) **mostly understood** that supporting refugees is not only **morally** right but also **good for Germany**
 - Fill labour gaps
- **Extreme right wing Germans** saw/see **refugees** as a **threat-** threatening rhetoric used by extremists to **campaign against 'refugees welcome'**
 - Attacks against asylum seekers' centers (mainly in the former GDR, specifically in Saxony)
 - "Risk" that **economic migrants** from the Balkans will **mingle** with the flow of **Middle Eastern refugees**

IMMIGRATION



German Motives

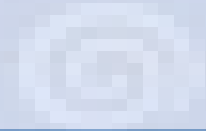


Political Considerations

- August 2015 => Merkel: *"humanitarian values"* of Europe, there would be *"no tolerance for those who question the dignity of others"*
 - **Historical (ww2) duty?**
 - Possible **re-election?**
 - **Germany's image:**
 - **Defender** of refugees (unlike other European countries)
 - **Example** of openness, generosity & solidarity
 - Can easily forget that **Germany is not military involved**

IMMIGRATION

German Motives



Economic and Demographic Considerations

- Aging population, who will pay the retirement funds?
- Need young workers
- Professional skills rather than a PhD

IMMIGRATION

The need for the European solution:

- Merkel's open borders was a **temporary, country specific measure**
- Need to find a **European solution** to the crisis => A **European distribution of migrants** (quotas)



An End to the Welcoming Spirit

25

- **Merkel couldn't maintain her policy of openness**
 - **Changing public opinion** following **terror attacks** (Paris) and **crime** (rape events on New Year eve in Cologne) involving immigrants (inducing fear, **racism**)
 - **Massive number of refugees VS. lack of sufficient organization & infrastructure**



An End to the Welcoming Spirit

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- Chancellor Merkel paid a **high political price** for her migration policy => **CDU lost public support**
- **Rising support** for the **'Alternative for Germany'** right-wing/far-right political party
- **Hostility** and **anti immigrants/refugees voices** in Europe (UK, France, Germany)
- **Public opinion** in highly dependent on **media coverage**



The EU/Turkey Pact (2015)

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- Following a joint **EU-Turkey Action Plan**, a pact was made in order to **end illegal migration** from Turkey to the European Union:
 1. **Irregular migrants** crossing from **Turkey** to the Greek islands after March 2016 **will be returned to Turkey**
 2. Turkey will take all necessary measures to **prevent new sea/land routes** for **irregular migration** from Turkey to the EU
 3. The **EU** will, in close cooperation with Turkey, further speed up the disbursement of the initially allocated **€3 billion** under the Facility for Refugees in Turkey
 - The **EU** will **mobilise additional funding** (around €3 billion to the end of 2018)

Refugees in Germany

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- Germany has one of the **highest numbers of refugees** of any country worldwide (UNHCR)
 - Only four countries worldwide have more refugees – Turkey, Pakistan, Uganda, and Sudan
 - Of the **top ten refugee host countries**, Germany is the only western industrialized nation
- 217k recognized refugees in 2014
- Migrant flows to Germany hit a peak in 2015
- End of 2018: 1.06 million, 1.3% of the population (2.5% in Sweden, 15% in Lebanon)



Refugees in Germany

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- **Over half** of the refugees in Germany are from **Syria**, the rest are mostly from **Iraq** (136k) & **Afghanistan** (126k)
- 2018: the number of people claiming **asylum** in Germany continued to **decline**, relative to other countries Germany is still among the nations receiving the **most applications**
 - 162k in 2018— more than any other European country and third worldwide (behind the USA and Peru)
 - France => 114k asylum applications in 2018, Greece => 65k and Spain 23k, Italy => 48k people applied for asylum, half as many as in 2017

Refugees Welcome?

■ Xenophobic Incidents

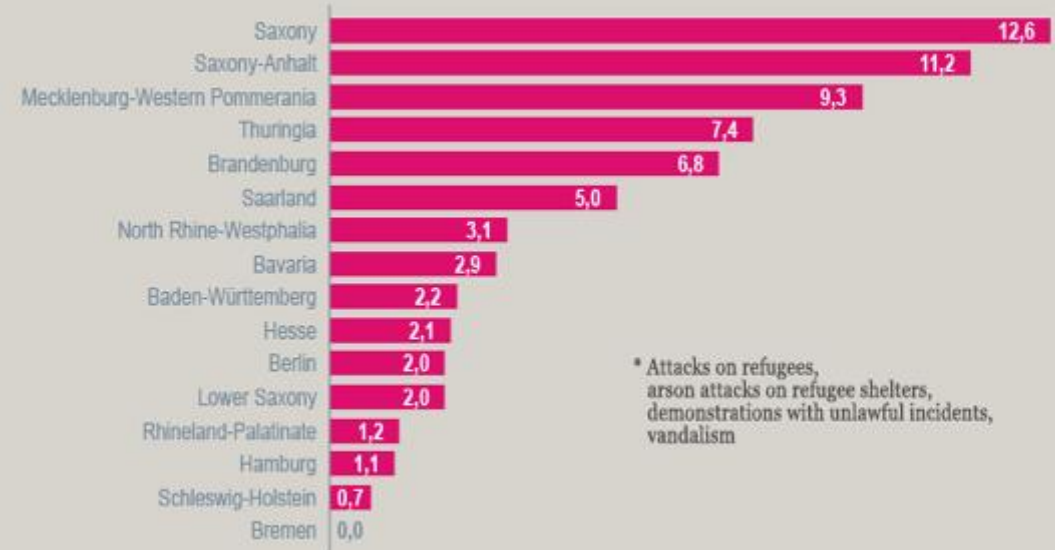
- 2016: over 450 asylum-related assaults on politicians and aid workers (police records)
- Record number of arson attacks on shelters in Germany in 2015.
- Attacks overwhelmingly committed by right-wing extremists/German nationalists in both categories

Xenophobic incidents* targeting refugees 2016

Total



Per 1,000,000 inhabitants



* Attacks on refugees, arson attacks on refugee shelters, demonstrations with unlawful incidents, vandalism

German Parties

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- The 2 major parties are the CDU (Christian Democratic Union) and the SPD (Social Democratic Party)
- The 'Alternative for Germany' is a right-wing, populist, Eurosceptic political party
 - Founded in April 2013
 - 2013: 4.7%, 2017: 12.6%

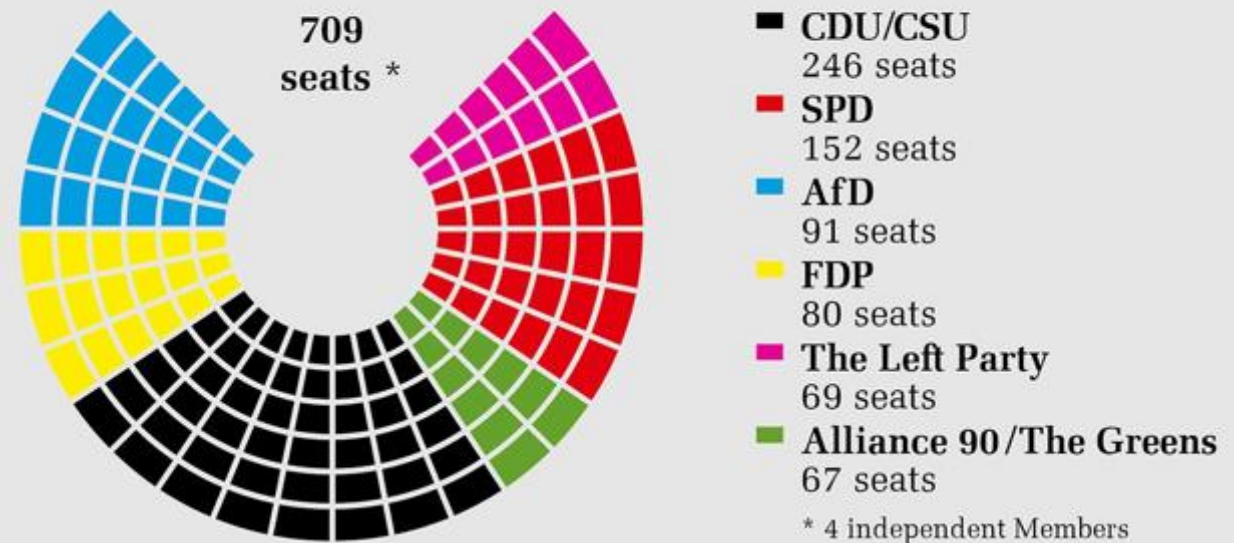


Current Bundestag (2017-)

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- **A Political Shift/change of trend=>**
 - Increasing support of the wing-wing populist 'Alternative for Germany'
- Merkel's (4th candidacy)
CDU/CSU got the most seats (no realistic coalition without them)
- However, they only received 33% support (no 'majority')-
why? Discontent with policies (immigration etc.)

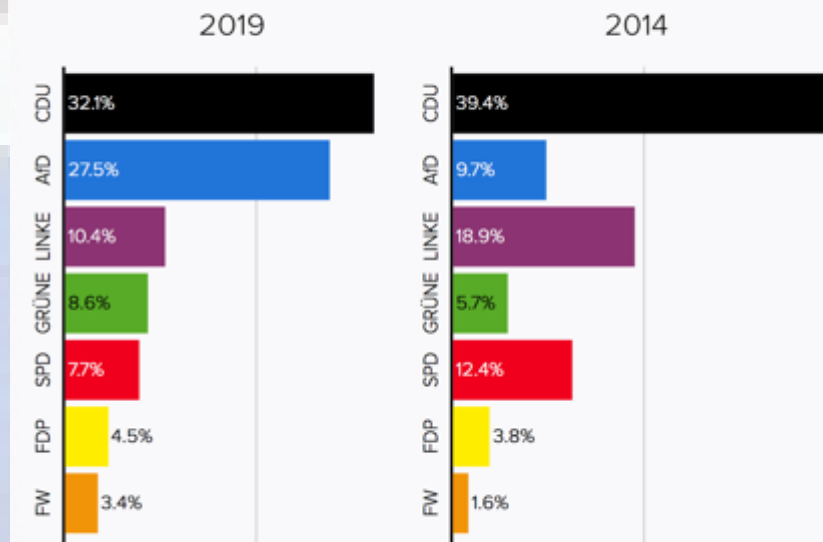
Distribution of seats in the 19th electoral term
Last updated: January 2019



Recent Developments

- October 2019 => German far right surges in eastern elections (Saxony + Brandenburg)
 - The AfD didn't win either state but achieved its best-ever results in both => A **strong message to Merkel's centrist coalition**
- **Saxony** =>
 - The AfD nearly tripled its 2014 result
 - The CDU (ruled the state since German reunification) finished first (32.1%), but lost nearly one-fifth of its support compared with 2014 result

... AND IT ALSO MAKES BIG GAINS IN SAXONY
Voters elected the 126 members of Saxony's Landtag also on September 1.



Recent Developments

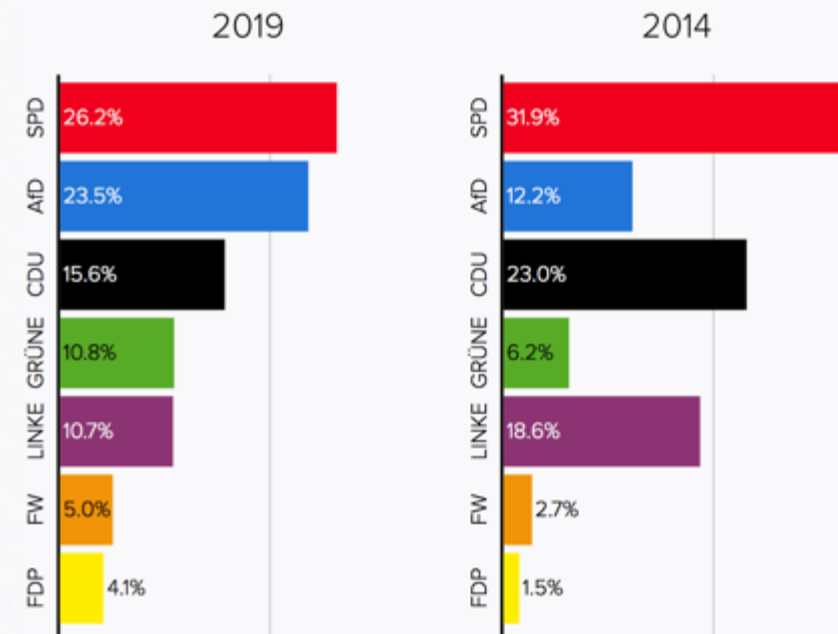
34

■ Brandenburg =>

- The AfD finished second behind the ruling SPD with 23.5% (up from the 12.2% in 2014)
 - The SPD, which has dominated Brandenburg's politics for 30 years, reached 26.2%, compared with 31.95 in 2014
 - Merkel's party (CDU) won only 15.6% down from 23%
- Results appear to confirm **the fracturing of the electorate in eastern Germany**

GERMAN FAR RIGHT GROWS IN BRANDENBURG ...

On September 1, voters elected the 88 members of Brandenburg's Landtag.



2014 vote share corresponds to party list vote, not constituency vote.

How did the Refugees Crisis impact Europe?

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- Rise of **right wing parties**
- Re-establishing **border control/check points** (Denmark, Belgium, Hungary, France, UK, Slovakia)
- BREXIT
- **Terrorist attacks?** => Fear that ISIS will disguise terrorists as refugees
- Increased **islamophobia** and **racism**
- **Pact between EU and Turkey**





Migrants in Austria

National Level: **Legal Framework**

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- **Austria has no comprehensive integration strategy** – a fact that was noted with concern by the **European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)** in a report (2010)
- Following the report (2010), the Austrian government established a **National Action Plan for Integration**
 - After years of consultations with NGOs, expert reports and panels, etc.
 - **Produced** extensive political **discussion**, but **few improvements** so far
- **Most initiatives to promote integration are still local + regional**, which are **limited** in time and scope

National Level: **Impact on Politics**

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- Third country nationals have **no right to vote + stand for election** (municipal councils, provincial parliaments, national parliament)
- Political **participation in trade unions** and representations of interests is **possible** but **restricted** (Workers' Councils, Student representation)
- Participation through “**Foreigners/integration councils**” exist in several cities
 - Umbrella term for committees/other organs that represent the **interests of foreign residents** at the local level (relationships with municipalities)
- Traditional route of political participation => **Obtaining Austrian citizenship**



National Level: **Impact on Economy**

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- Migrants have a **lower annual income** (due to lower skills, low wage industries, high proportion of seasonal work and limited opportunities to join core work force) and **higher unemployment rates** than natives
- Migrants are increasingly turning to **self-employment**: Setting up business in services and retail trade (cleaning, food, transportation, etc.)
- Austria has NOT been able to attract **highly skilled migrant workers in large numbers** => Largely due to bureaucratic hurdles



National Level: **Impact on Economy**

40

Obstacles to Employment =>

- **Recognition of foreign qualifications**
- **Low educational level**
- **Insufficient language proficiency**
- **No free access to the labour market for non-EU temporary residents**
- **Discrimination**



National Level: **Impact on Economy**

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Education and Qualifications

- **Immigrant pupils rarely attend schools** where they can earn a high school **diploma**, but rather secondary, vocational schools
- The educational level of the **second generation** has already considerably adapted to that of Austrian
- Urgent need for action concerning **young people** with an **immigration background** who have **only completed compulsory school**/have no leaving certificate => limited employment opportunities



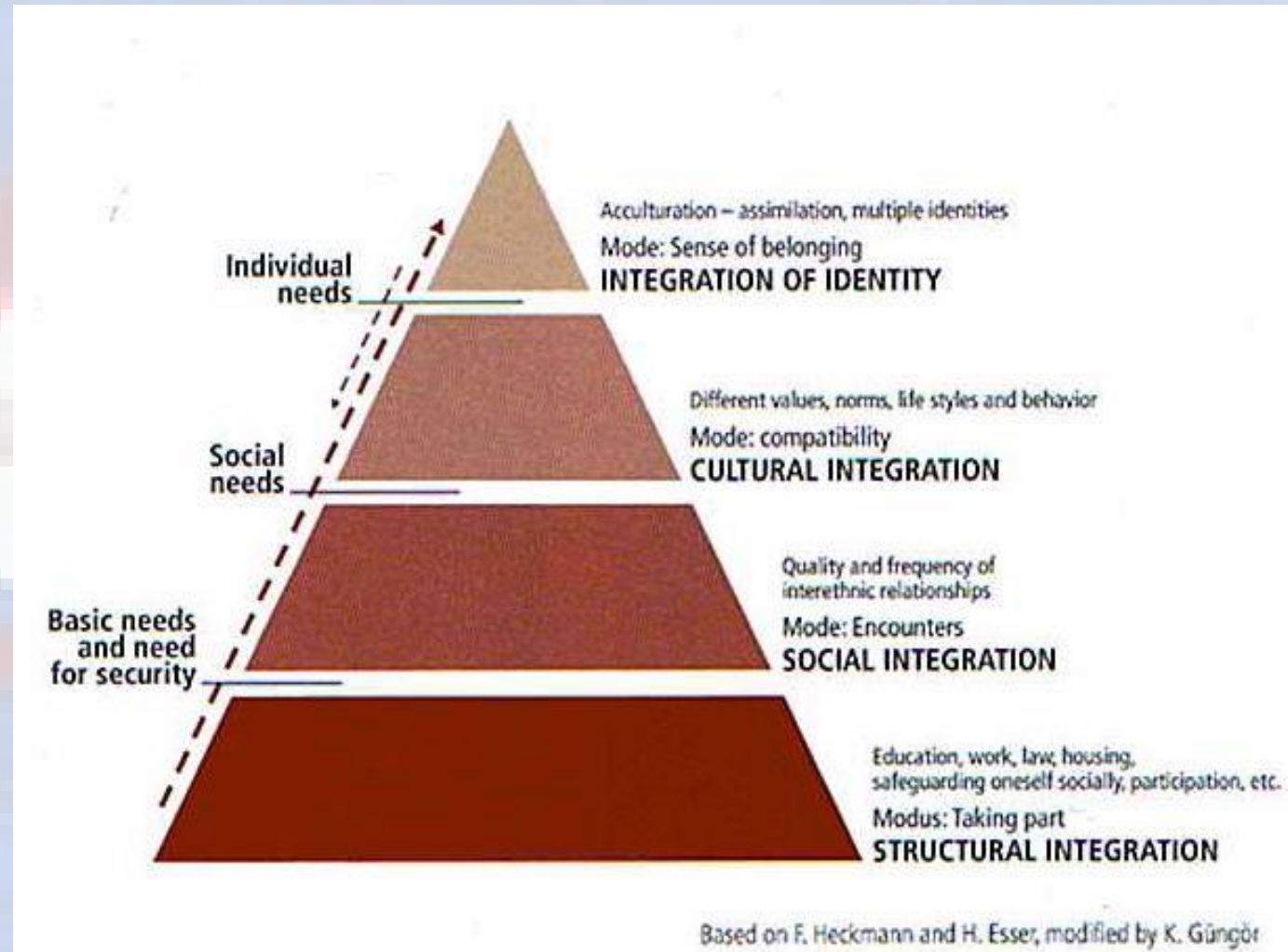
National Level: **Impact on Culture**

- Role of **food** as an indicator for **growing cultural diversity**: Growing number of Turkish & Asian restaurants
- **Migrants' print media** are **limited** to papers of individual associations
- **Cultural policy** is still **criticised** for not committing itself to create a sustainable infrastructure for development and establishment of a “**migrant-culture**”



Regional Level: Integration Initiatives

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„Integration and Diversity“: Integration Concept Vienna

The Exam

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- Please register on IS
- Open questions
- 60%
- Please ensure your handwriting is legible

Feedback

45

- What is the one thing/fact/class that interests you the most?
- Your opinion matters!
- Please e-mail me your comments/drop by my office

**Thank You For Your Attention, attendance and
interest in the course!**

Questions???