

# Refugees in Germany

## Keep up the optimism!

Egon-Bahr-Fellowship 2015

Policy recommendations

# Refugees in Germany

## Outline of the presentation

- General discourse
- Policy recommendations by political level

# General discourse (1/2)

- Change **rhetorics**:
  - no crisis, no flood wave
  - Better: Challenge
  - or even: opportunity for Germany
  - Migration is a chance to counter the demographic challenge
- Germany is able to do it. **Keep up the optimism!**
- Still there will be challenges: **Be realistic**

# General discourse (2/2)

- Be aware of the **complexity of the situation**
  - Work migration and asylum seekers
  - Different reasons for leaving one's country
- Make organisation process more **transparent**
  - refugees know they are taken care of
  - citizens (and international audience) understand how it works
  - more information what happens at what stage

# TV show: „The migrants“

- Example: VOX – „Die Einwanderer“
  - Successful example of integration, learning the languages, getting along with the strange and complicated life in Germany, finding Wifi etc.
  - Perspective of volunteers to create easy identification for the viewer

# Municipal level

- **Big compliment** to how Bad Segeberg organizes the arrival and first integration steps!
- Improve „**Welcoming Culture**“ from official side
  - Professional organization of volunteers and welcoming groups
  - „refugees welcome“-sign on every administration building in Germany
  - Welcoming bags as an example for other municipalities
  - Official acknowledgement of volunteers to keep up the motivation in the long run
- Integrate refugees into **camp organisation**

# State level

- Make unused **commercial buildings** available for housing
  - Create legal foundation (example of Hamburg)
- Continues to make unused **military facilities** (Kasernen) available

# Federal level (1/2)

- **Facilitate working opportunities** for refugees (Vorrangsprüfung)
- **Create migration law** to separate asylum and immigration
  - Legal ways to come to work in Germany
  - At the same time: Avoid brain drain from emigrant countries
  - Provide adequate education, integration and language skills
- **Reform Königsteiner Schlüssel**
  - Use unpopulated municipalities in demographically shrinking regions for refugees
  - Distribution of refugees depending on the available facilities



# Federal level (2/2)

- **Subsidies** for proper housing – example in Bad Segeberg (öffentlich geförderten Wohnungsbau subventionieren)
- **Improve integration**
  - Higher emphasis on fast learning the German language
  - More money for teachers
  - Women empowerment
- **No competition** between social groups
  - Vulnerable groups should not feel left out
  - E.g. keep school gyms open for school sports

# International level

- Tackle the **reasons of forced emigration** at the root
  - Change of development policy
- **Active role** of Germany
  - Create common European migration policy, solidarity
  - Close cooperation with France (EU engine)
  - Take responsibility in the attempt to solve Syrian crisis
- **Cooperation with Russia**
  - Diplomatic initiative
  - Humanitarian aid
  - Improve working atmosphere starting from the highest level
  - Raise awareness and engage civil society
- No **weapon exports** to instable regions
- Create **safe rescue routes** – „refugee airlines“

Thank you for your attention!

...and keep up the optimism!