

Andover High School
Tufts IGL Inquiry 2019
Cities at the Vanguard
Athens Meeting

Berlin, Germany

Briefing Paper

Intro:

We, the Berlin representatives, believe that the only way to successfully combat the migration crisis is for cities to implement rigorous socio-economic policies of integration for migrants, while maintaining their stability and keeping with the Paris Accords. We have been at the forefront on the topic of mass migration for many years, and feel that our knowledge and input is valuable. In comparison to other cities, we have taken in more migrants and have had great success in integrating them into our society.

For this summit, the city of Berlin is interested in posing several questions which we have not yet found the answer to. First, what is to be valued most: consensus or the wellbeing of our immigrant groups? Meaning: are our cities supposed to serve the interests of our large moderate-leaning citizen populations when they have grown weary of their new neighbors? Secondly, should we as cities make distinctions between permanent and temporary residents? Should we be establishing a culture and community in which immigrants, and more likely refugees, feel that they can stay and grow roots? Or should we encourage that they maintain connections with their homeland, and work to return their at some point? Our third question might journey into the realm of philosophy: do cities have a duty to take in immigrants?

All of this aside, our city has much to learn and improve upon in this assembly.

Key Points:

- Enfranchise our migrant populations and integrate them into our government
- Establish more accessible resources to address mental health
- Foster cultural diversity and appreciation for our new neighbors
- Support our new neighbors in their economic endeavors
- Provide safe and affordable housing for new arrivals
- Establish a more efficient system to address healthcare issues
- Strengthen Berlin's education system with a specific focus on integrating refugees

Committee of Leadership/Governance:

Nelia Romanus

Germany has become known for its welcoming stance to those displaced by war, persecution, economic depression, climate change, and a multitude of other reasons beyond their control. We have welcomed any who wish to apply for asylum in our borders to wait out the process. During this waiting period, German cities such as Berlin will provide the necessary food, water, and shelter as these immigrants take the much needed time to adjust and comprehend their long journey. Furthermore, the city of Berlin as well as other non-profit groups work with migrants to give them the essential skills needed to begin their life anew, such as language lessons, job training, education, as well as other culturally immersive programs to bring together native Germans with the newcomers.

Of course the Berlinian experience with immigrants is unique with respect to our history and our housing market. Immigrants from across the world have come to live in our fair city, enriching its vibrancy with art, food, music, and other aspects of their culture to create a truly spectacular community. Although some tensions have been expressed between our longer

staying residents and newcomers, the majority of our population is quick to accept and welcome those just arriving. It is for this reason we come to know ourselves as the city of immigrants, by immigrants, for immigrants.

Yet for all Berlin prides itself with the work done with migrants and refugees, our strategies are far from the standard we had originally pictured. In part this is due to the lack of voice from the migrant population. In no way do we try to pin the blame on these war stricken people, trying our best to give them an adequate amount of time to readjust, but not being able to understand where we can improve in our faults has caused our shortcomings. In this we feel it's essential for the people of Berlin to elect a counselor to speak for these people and other immigrants alike. In fact to establish a whole committee equipped with such necessary personnel as psychiatrists and politicians with said counselor would ensure the immigrant population a voice, but in such a way so that we approach them when and only when they are ready.

With some funding from the national government as well as the EU, we hope to right the wrongs we have caused to any immigrants. Although many nonprofits have stepped up to aid immigrants, the responsibility of such task they have taken on (such as integrating immigrants into the population, giving immigrants much needed jobs, and helping to zone potential areas to build more temporary shelters) should fall under the government's responsibility.

On the topic of funding it is necessary to address the security threats some of our citizens have expressed. Our law enforcement, for all the great work its done, is lacking due to lack in funds. Again, to receive more funding from the parliament as well as the European Union would enable us to install adequate surveillance and employ more police officers so as to protect both the established population as well as the immigrant population. Furthermore, by working with

EU law enforcement we hope to establish a more efficient vetting process that can work around the problem of missing paperwork. As of now it is difficult to process the influx of immigrants without proper paperwork, limiting their ability to access certain much needed services.

Although it is almost impossible to recover their former histories due to the war ravaging their country, we would like to still give them the chance to prove themselves worthy citizens, perhaps assigning them to a local so that they can receive the benefits the local can provide while also giving the government the opportunity to monitor their behavior and either allow them to become full fledged citizens or distinguish the few who come with the intention of harming our people.

With the help of other cities across the EU, implementing the same processes we have outlined here today, we can establish a system to receive this wave of immigrants and provide them with what's needed to begin a new life. By spreading these immigrants across various different cities, we can assure that each individual receive the attention they need while also providing countries with a manageable amount of immigrants to surveille over. In this way we can turn what has come to be known as a refugee crisis into an opportunity for all EU countries to diversify their societies.

Urban Planning:

Sidney Conway and Mitali Gupte

Concerns over housing and shelter have accompanied widespread patterns of mass immigration and consumed the attention of urban planners. Berlin's immigrant population has increased dramatically over the course of several years, due to the millions of refugees seeking

asylum. Urban planners in Berlin have dauntlessly begun to construe the several prevalent issues induced by the influx of immigration including concerning overcrowding, accessibility, integration, transportation, and electricity.

The socioeconomic status of new settlers confines them to necessitous areas that aid in crafting a homogeneous mass culture. Many newcomers commonly come directly to ‘arrival cities’. These ‘cities’ within cities are packed with newly arriving people looking for work and shelter. Living conditions in such cities are highly substandard. In Berlin, Kreuzberg has become one of the main destinations for new arrivals. In 2013, the realities of harsh living conditions for immigrants was revealed when a group of asylum seekers occupied an abandoned school in Kreuzberg. Currently, asylum seekers and refugees are put into large reception centers, or *lagers*, which house hundreds to thousands of asylum seekers at a time, until further notice.

The prevalent language barrier which obstructs the means of integrating natives and immigrants has become a very relevant matter. Integration of natives and immigrants in Berlin is believed to be a crucial part of releasing tension between the two groups, as well as being able to absorb new populations within the community. Because of the language barrier between refugees and natives, it is hard for immigrants to actually be able to integrate, however, Berlin is already working towards fixing this issue. Language classes are offered to asylum seekers through their caseworkers, and children are offered to school. These language integration classes buttress several important skills such as writing emails, interviewing for a job, and talking within administrative offices. A “welcome class” model has currently been put in place which assists in the learning of German within a small group of immigrant children before they are put into the

regular class. As of 2015, about 1,100 welcome classes resided within Berlin according to government statistics (“Integration Courses”).

The spread of pathogens within confined arrival cities commands for extensive reforms. Additionally, scientists in Berlin believe that the unhygienic conditions of arrival cities may have given way to a new, incurable, epidemic which the World Health Organization was named “Disease X” (Gannon). With so many people coming in, it is hard for them to keep up with the spread of disease and germs. More precautions on the wellbeing of these cities need to be made. Some of these reforms could include more medical hospitals and a larger cleanup crew for areas that are in desperate need.

When aiming to have these arrival cities be more integrated and prosperous, the economic and physical states are key. To ensure these advances, urban planners need to take into account transportation in these areas. The addition of roads would allow for greater integration, as well as economic improvement,

An influx of immigration over a short period of time in Berlin creates many issues involving housing and living conditions that urban planners have to face. By creating new blueprints for cities and adjusting things such as the transportation system and infrastructure, it is crucial to creating places that are much more livable and healthy for the new arrivals.

Economic Integration:

Gabriella Rickards and Andrea Pantazi

As more refugees enter the EU and Germany, the economy of those countries is greatly affected by the mass influx of new people with new skill sets and needs such as healthcare and

housing. Economic sectors benefit from the increase of available workers and the consumer markets are greatly affected as well.

Each immigrant brings their own unique set of skills to contribute to the economy of the country they choose to be in. Migrants have the capability of risk-taking, as they usually leave all that is known in their lives to start anew with an uncertain future. This risk-taking is an essential quality for entrepreneurs. Immigrants have been recorded to have high rates in entrepreneurship, and by creating these new businesses, they also create more jobs for natives and refugees alike. Migrants also bring an immense resource for physical labor, since it is the easiest job to take because it usually does not require fluency with the country's language. This helped propel the German car industry so quickly in the 60s, which in turn helped the economy and reduced production costs more rapidly than other competitors. Occupations in factories and basic services can be eased for refugees to enter and begin to gain the experience needed to grow. As people grow less xenophobic, immigrant entrepreneurs can succeed as tolerance grows for people with different backgrounds.

There are generally three sectors of the economy. An influx of migrants would especially help the tertiary or service sector. In fact, foreign-born workers accounted for "90 percent of the new jobs in the welfare sector, particular health care and elderly care," ([Lindeberg](#)). The available physical laborers needed for factories and industry would be beneficial for the second sector as well-the one responsible for manufacturing and producing finished goods.

EU immigration had boosted Germany's GDP growth by an average of 0.2% every year between 2011 and 2016. Migrants increase the consumer pool for German producers. "Migrants consume and invest as they do in their country of origin. Therefore, the demand for German

products increase. A third of all first-time asylum applications are filed in Germany, making it the most popular country for displaced people in Europe to apply for asylum status.

Unbanked residents as defined by the FDIC (the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) are those who do not hold an account at a bank or any other financial institution and are considered to be outside the mainstream for one reason or another. This reason can be because they are refugees. “Migrants are likely to use nonbank money-transfer services to send money [to friends or family internationally,” ([...](#)). Some don’t use banks because they cannot reach the minimum balance requirements set out upon them. This can make it difficult for those who are just moving into the country and just starting out their financial endeavors. A possible solution for this is the “Bank On”, a partnership between “ city government, financial institutions, and community groups aimed at making banking more accessible and affordable,” ([Bloomberg](#)). This initiative has been successful in the US, where customers have opened nearly 3 million Bank On-certified accounts since 2005. With new resources that close the gap and help make banking less expensive and more obtainable, these “unbanked” residents can start integrating into the financial mainstream.

The private sector-the part of the national economy that is not under direct government control-is a key stakeholder in the fight against poverty. These public-private partnerships can be key to building new highways, bridges, ports, and apartment buildings, which are all essential for the influx of immigrants coming in every year. In Germany the most notable of the many laws that facilitate PPPs (Public Private Partnerships) is the PPP Acceleration Act. There are currently about 10,000 projects under this act.

Social Cohesion:

Ben Roldan

When developing an analysis of social cohesion within such a large community as Berlin one must find a way to marry qualitative and quantitative data, and then deliver it with accuracy. The quantitative data, of course, is in our population statistics and the number of ethnic groups, new and old. Whereas, the qualitative data tends to be more eluding: it is reliant on the first-hand accounts of Berlin's citizens, refugees, immigrants, Berlin's officials, and political groups. It is especially important to hear from all sides of the political spectrum: Berlin has a sad history of being a hotbed for slumbering far-right extremism that can only be learned from by keeping tabs on such groups. Qualitative data can be very fickle as accounts, especially in Berlin, tend to vary from neighborhood to neighborhood and so a complete picture of the social climate of Berlin can be hard to form.

In addition to a need for a broad and in-depth view of the situation at hand, we as the city of Berlin have to show the work we have done: economic stimulus and policies that are specific to social integration. We must distinguish between the work individuals have done and the work our local government has done, which is necessary as it indicates the general feelings towards migrants and refugees. Finally, we must highlight our successes and areas in which we have made great advances in fostering a stable, and healthy social climate, and areas in which we have fallen short of this.

First, some context: Berlin has always been a city open to immigrants and refugees. Since the 1970s hundreds of thousands have flocked from Turkey, Lebanon and Palestine. Whether they were fleeing civil war, economic depression or social unrest they saw Berlin as a place to

call home, and as a result this city has become one of the foremost centers of migration within Germany, and more broadly, Europe. Currently, around 1 million (or 30%) of our population is of foreign-born heritage. It wasn't until very recently, however, that the Nation, and as a result Berlin, has experienced such a large influx of refugees. Due to political events in the Middle East— specifically the heightening of the Syrian Civil War in 2015— and the subsequent welcoming on the part of Germany's government, Berlin has seen a foreign-born population increase like never before. Germany is now reported to have around 600-700,000 Syrian refugees, and another thousands of Middle Eastern origin.

Berlin is proud to say that we believe our integration of Syrian refugees, has historically, been one of the most successful in the city's history. Nationwide 97% of these refugees have been granted asylum, which has granted them welfare benefits and the ability to work. This has translated to a burgeoning economy and heightened multiculturalism within Berlin. The city's government has worked incredibly hard in fostering this multiculturalism and creating a safe place for the refugees by funding housing development projects and establishing thoroughgoing task forces. One example of a housing project undertaken is the conversion of an old Nazi airport, Tempelhof, to a temporary refugee camp for Syrians. Berlin's government has promoted social cohesion further by developing education programs for children, which allow for them to enter the school system after passing certain benchmarks. And while the government has handled the influx of refugees very well, it is the work of individual Berlinites that has caused the most positive impact on our social climate.

The work that Berlin's citizens have undertaken to make their new neighbors feel welcomed is both extensive and non-traditional. A Brooks Institute report highlights that "a new

generation of mostly young, independent volunteers has emerged who use online platforms to sign up for projects and who experiment with a variety of creative responses.” These individuals have established large social connections between the refugees, have worked to provide temporary and permanent housing, assisted with mental and emotional trauma relief, and help provide education services. A great example of the work done by individuals is the Albatross gmbH organization which, according to *the Economist*, has “cared for some 40,000 people in reception centres.” Since the fall of 2015 Albatross and their team of psychologists, other medical professionals, translators, and volunteers have been helping refugees transition into our community. From the initial reception centres these refugees are directed to hostels, one of which is directed by Friedrich Kiesinger a psychologist who also works with Albatross. Kiesinger’s hostel has become something of a temporary residence for the “tortured, traumatised, and disabled refugees” and as a result the home, like many others has received an outpouring of support: around 100 Berlinites volunteer there. Individuals like Kiesinger not only work to make sure that the refugees are stable but that they can acclimate to the culture: which takes place at the schools and language classes that many Syrians take.

Other positive developments within the social fabric of Berlin have appeared in the economic realm, and are often lead by collaborations between citizens and refugees themselves. One such initiative is Querstadtein, a non-profit, who give walking tours of the neighborhoods of our great city. These walking tours are led by paid guides of a refugee background, Syria and Iraq. While the guides show citizens and tourists around Berlin they talk about their experiences in the city and why they were forced to flee their homelands. The goal is to give the refugee population a voice in the conversation while showing citizens and tourists around Berlin.

Querstadtein's website reads: "In the debate about forced migration, those affected hardly get to be heard", which really summarizes the initiative. Many non-profits like Querstadtein have popped up around Berlin and show a positive trend of refugees getting a pedestal to share their experiences. Another development in our economic realm is the revitalization of Sonnenallee, now known as "Arab Street". Since 2015, as Syrians arrived this area has become filled with confectionaries, fruit stands, markets, and various Syrian restaurants. The culinary atmosphere has even become known as a "Foodie Paradise." Because this street is located near the center of Berlin the presence of refugees has become an integral part of our culture, unlike cities such Paris where the immigrant populations are pushed to the outskirts our new neighbors have stayed, literally, at the forefront of all progress within Berlin.

Angela Merkel's policy choices have caused for great enrichment of our diversity and culture as a city but have also led to conflicts within our city. The settling of Syrian refugees in Berlin faces opposition from two major groups; far-right German Nationalists and older generations of Arab immigrants. First, the more pressing is the rise of the far-right. They (specifically, the AfD) recently received 12.6% of the national votes and have emerged as the third-largest party in parliament. They maintain a large amount of support within the Berlin neighborhoods of Marzahn-Hellersdorf, which are unfortunately often cited as "no-go areas for refugees who look visibly 'different'" according to Dr. Sina Arnold, and expert on the topic. One refugee said he was fearful of the gains the AfD have made saying, "[The far right] are getting more powerful; lots of people are believing them and starting to be more afraid." To add to this problem, nationwide in 2016 there were around 3,500 attacks on the refugees. Berlin has yet to figure out how to deal with this large movement but the citizens seem to be fighting back as

more than 242,000 Germans marched through Berlin on October 13, 2018 in an anti-far right demonstration.

Finally, the more confounding problem: intergenerational and inter-ethnic conflicts have begun to materialize within our city. As Syrians have arrived many older residents of Lebanese, Palestinian, and Turkish backgrounds have voiced their anger. They specifically cite the expedience with which their new neighbors have been allowed to settle. One Palestinian-Syrian woman who has lived in Berlin for 25 years said "The government opened new horizons for the refugees, horizons which we did not see." Also on the topic of their asylum status and benefits she added, "When I saw what they received, I wished I was a refugee,." These same feeling have been echoed by many older, middle-eastern residents who have pushed back on their new neighbors. Such sentiments have manifested themselves in a confrontational, violent way: many Syrian business owners are forced to pay off existing Arab gangs or "receive unofficial approval of older, established migrants", particularly in the aforementioned Arab Street. A reason for these conflicts could just be envy of the rapid acceptance of Syrians into our society or it could be as one of the newer refugees puts it "Maybe life here was very harsh to them (old migrants) so they became like this." Either way, Berlin takes this to be a bittersweet problem, so-to-speak: clearly the treatment of the refugees has been historically one of our greatest moments, but now we have to deal with some of the aftermath, which we look to you all for help with.

Youth/Education:

Dia Keita and Emma Dowty

Can educationally-minded programs fill the gaps where the school system fails? What is working and what is not? And, how can programs aid the students that need it most? The students that need it the most are migrants who come Berlin with refugee status. To provide a framework in which to locate the support network for migrant youth, research shows that two major types of programs exist outside the official school structure. The first category consists of programs aimed at students who are already excelling in school and offers assistance and opportunities to exploit that potential. The “Talent im Land” program through the Robert Bosch foundation and the START program initiated and funded by the Hertie Foundation are exemplary. Both programs target students with a migrant background age 14 and older who are excelling academically and are civically engaged. Seminars are offered with both scholarships on a range of topics, from applying for a job to human rights in Europe. Recipients receive financial support which they can use for extra lessons, cultural activities or other opportunities. Some of the cultural activities include receiving funding for traveling to France to participate in a gathering with other Iranians.

The second type of program targets an entirely different group of migrant youth, those that are failing. We visited two interconnected branches of one such program funded by the Mercator Foundation. The central branch, “Medienhof: Berlin-Wedding” is an informal after-school program for migrant youth who are struggling in school. The program is open four times a week and provides a casual setting where students can stop by to get homework help or other academic assistance from university students. The program’s director, Herbert Weber, informed us that the social and economic realities of the Wedding district necessitated educational support.

Bringing these children into the fold is a difficult task for Germany's decentralized education system, which is understaffed and unaccustomed to diversity. The system has been especially strained in the last two years as the country accepted more than 1 million refugees fleeing conflicts in Syria and elsewhere.

Committee on Health:

Ella Reck and Amelia Faucher

Health issues have long been a challenge for cities taking in immigrants. Around 8.6% of Berlin's population has an immigrant background. Berlin has taken many actions in order to find solutions to these evident health issues such as providing health care, mental health services, sanitation systems, and access to medication. However, up to one million individuals are estimated to be illegal immigrants in Germany which creates a larger concern in the area of receiving health services. A new range of issues is brought to light when there is a difficulty of providing these services for the substantial influx of migrants.

Germany has a universal healthcare system that is one of the oldest in the world. Everyone legally residing in Germany is entitled to healthcare and is even required by law to have health insurance. This insurance covers hospital care, basic dental care, and access to all public health institutions, but has no coverage for private doctors or surgeons, vision products for adults, and for dental subsidies beyond the very basic. Additionally, an individual cannot be legally employed without health insurance. Similarly, if an individual has a visa or residence permit for staying in the country, one usually needs to show proof of health care coverage as well. One aspect of the German health care system is the coexistence of public and private healthcare. Public health insurance is more widespread while the option of private health

insurance is dependent on certain criteria and is not available to everyone. Most salaried workers are automatically registered for public health insurance and their contributions are taken out of their monthly paycheck. About 15.5% of a worker's salary is paid for by public health insurance, but half of that value (7.3%) is paid by the employer. On the other hand, the criteria for private health insurance includes an individual's income, medical history, legal status, along with an individual's age and the services they prefer. The benefits of private healthcare include shorter waiting times and some doctors will only accept patients with private healthcare.

Immigrants face several barriers to accessing German healthcare services in Berlin. Most basic of these barriers include language skills, inability to understand and follow a doctor's advice, culture differences, low-income, absence of health insurance, and individual attitudes towards medical treatment. Through a health system of integration, acceptance of migrants as an integral part of society, development of healthcare according to migrant's needs, and diversity training for medical staff, these barriers can be defeated. However, these barriers are even larger for illegal migrants. An illegal migrant in Germany is defined as individuals who enters Germany without a valid passport, visa or a residence permit. Additionally, staying past these residence permits or visas can result in becoming an illegal immigrant as well. In Berlin alone, up to 250,000 people live without any personal identification documents meaning that these individuals lack the health insurance card that is required to get full medical treatment. Asylum laws in Germany state that these people are entitled to medical treatment in cases of emergency. The problem that arises from this is that if their identities are revealed, they will be treated accordingly, but they might end up being deported as well. Additionally, health institutions are often called upon to help illegal migrants but can be subject to legal action if these facilities fail

to report illegal immigrants to authorities. Public health care is covered by insurance providers so facilities that provide care for illegal immigrants without insurance will end up having to pay for the treatment themselves. Many doctors have said that they should not be required to report personal information in order to protect the migrants from being discovered. Another potential solution is the idea of an anonymous health insurance card delivered on a case-by-case basis that would allow illegal residents to obtain proper medical care without revealing their identities. Welfare offices would cover the costs for the cardholders' treatments.

It is extremely difficult for refugees to access mental health care in Berlin. 40 to 50 percent of refugees in Berlin were found to be experiencing mental health issues and within months of arriving in Germany, over 400 refugees had attempted suicide. Some of the biggest mental health concerns include PTSD, depression and anxiety. Additionally, asylum seekers struggle with constant anxiety over their futures, specifically if they are given temporary subsidiary protection in which they would need to reapply for asylum every year. Many refugees perceive deportation as a death sentence and with a one year visa, this fear is crippling. A step towards improving these mental health conditions would be to reinstate acceptances of family unification applications. Countless refugees suffer from distraught due to separation from their families who may still be in danger. Additionally, for individuals seeking psychological help, it can take months before a spot in therapy opens up. Waiting lists can go on for months. Currently, there are online therapy sessions, but only a handful of health insurance companies cover the costs. Individuals most likely have to pay out of pocket for therapy sessions. Especially for refugees, the longer the wait for therapy and mental health services, the stronger the negative effects on their mental health. Many of these issues can be resolved if health insurance

companies would cover therapy treatments and increase the number of therapists in Berlin with integration and diversity training. It would be extremely beneficial if these therapists were additionally trained to have the language skills to overcome the communication barrier between migrants and medical professionals.

Germany does not have an immunization law for its citizens or for arriving immigrants. There tends to be a low immunization rate among migrants and refugees which puts them at a greater health risk when entering the nation. Additionally, these refugees have a variety of medical backgrounds shaped by conflict and trauma. Unfortunately, there are a few challenges that make it difficult for immigrants to obtain the recommended vaccinations. Some of these challenges include lacking information about their own immunization status, language barriers, fear of legal consequences, and most vaccinations require multiple doses, while migrants are often transient. Some of these issues could be resolved if Berlin took action in improving health literacy among migrants and refugees, provided information materials in the migrants' languages, and offered training and culturally relevant information to healthcare providers. Every migrant who arrives at a reception center in Berlin receives a compulsory medical check-up. During these check-ups, doctors offer the necessary vaccinations to the refugees, but the refugees have the option to refuse them. Because of the substantial number of migrants, it has been difficult to document and register the refugees with authorities. However, Germany has a national refugee ID card that is tied to a nationwide database on refugees which allows authorities to keep track of the refugees. Every individual applying for asylum is entered on this database automatically.

Berlin has been using food to show the benefits of immigration and in order to foster more inclusivity within the nation. Food is being used as a connective tool in order to generate dialogue between different cultures. Over 900 cities in Germany support local food banks that distribute to the homeless and needy. Berlin founded the first food bank, the Berliner Tafel, in Germany over 20 years ago and it now feeds over 125,000 Berliners a month. Germany uses the nutrition circle as its food guide. The nutrition circle is divided into six food groups: cereals and potatoes; vegetables; fruits; milk and dairy products; meat, sausages, fish and eggs; and fats and oils. The size of the group segments decreases from the first to the last group, thus illustrating the relative quantities of the individual food groups. A seventh group (water and beverages), represented by a glass of water, is placed in the middle of the nutrition circle.

Public water supply and sanitation in Berlin is universal and of good quality. Recycling plays a huge role in German lifestyles along with the idea of being eco-friendly, effective, and progressive. The city government is mostly responsible for garbage collection and is collected weekly or biweekly based on material. There is a selective system of waste disposal that consists of specifically colored bins for organizing different waste materials. In turn, this makes waste collection much easier and is part of a process that aims to conserve natural resources and manage waste in an environmentally sound manner.

Committee On Resilience:

Sara Wiley

As recent waves of refugees into the city of Berlin become increasingly polarizing, welcoming and integration efforts have expanded alongside. The goal of Berlin's current process

of managing migration is to facilitate the integration of migrants into German society. Germany offers programs such as migrant advisory services (integration courses, German language classes, etc.) and legal counsel to those seeking permanent residence. While Berlin does not claim to have all the answers, the processes put in place to integrate migrants have been widely successful.

For a period of up to six months, asylum seekers are housed in initial reception centers. After this duration has ended, and a decision on the asylum application has been decided, applicants are then moved to collective accommodation centers. This process requires that asylum seekers are restricted to the geographical area in which they are located. As obligatory per German law, city-states are entitled to distribute the responsibility of maintaining these facilities to municipalities or themselves. Most often, the responsibility falls on local governments, who, at their discretion, can transfer the management to Non-governmental organizations. Germany's Asylum Act ensures that all asylum seekers are provided with shelter, most often in collective accommodation, however the recent influx of migrants demands a change in the system. Assistance in facilitating the housing of migrants in Berlin, from the European Union, would streamline the efficiency and ensure that all asylum seekers are provided with safe and comfortable housing.

Mental health services for migrants are not easily accessible. Across Germany, high numbers of migrants with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder are reported. A study conducted by Friedrich-Alexander University discovered that 30% of participants (Syrian refugees) met the criteria for at least one mental health disorder: PTSD, depression, or anxiety. Improving housing conditions and other aspects of migrants life could decrease the enormity of this issue. In

addition, the language barrier between the available German therapists and migrants prevents them from seeking help. Offering services (i.e. counselors who speak Arabic) at initial reception centers in Berlin would address the immediate mental health needs of refugees. In relation to this issue, it is recorded that 400 refugees in Germany have attempted suicide. However Berlin, though it accepts more refugees in proportion to other city-states, does not record data on refugee suicide attempts. Keeping track of this data would ensure that the proposed changes to mental health services would be held accountable.

The use of technology throughout the process of integration is a tool both beneficial for Berlin and individual migrants. The Federal Office of Migration website highlights the services offered for immigrants. The process of integration, through mandatory language classes and education for migrant youth, is easily accessible on the website. Due to volunteer efforts in recent years, refugees in Berlin have access to free Wifi.

In order to ensure that the rights and safety of all migrants are protected, efforts to shatter the harmful stereotypes about refugees in German society must be put in place. Educating the public would allow for an easier process of integration. While Germany does have relatively generous immigration policies, the way of getting there has been dangerous and deadly for many. Cases of murder, rape and sexual violence have made the journey from Syria (where the majority of Berlin's migrants are from) to Germany a treacherous path.