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MOSTLY TRUE: "OF THE MEN WHO ARRIVED IN GERMANY IN 2015/16, 86 PERCENT ARE NOW WORKING"

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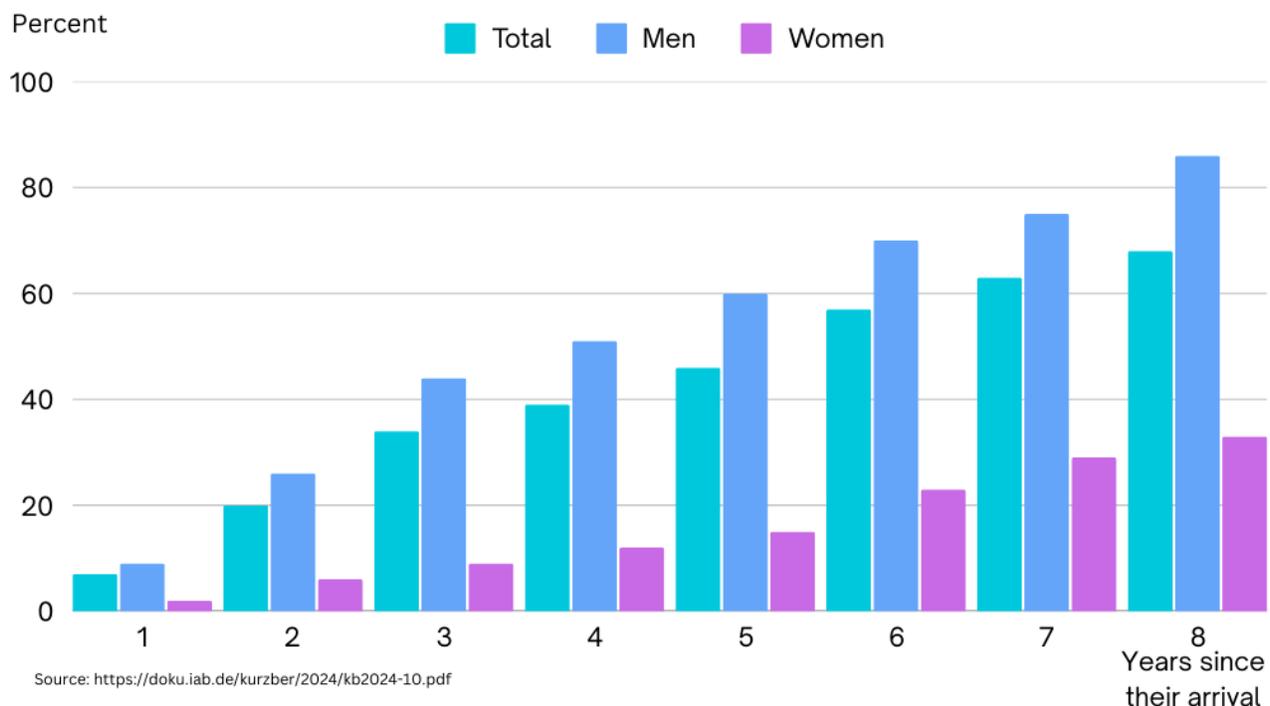
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"Of the men who arrived in Germany in 2015/16, 86 percent are now working. That's more than the average number of men who were born in Germany, which is only 81 percent." This statement was said by Lea Reisner, candidate of the party "Die Linke", on May 22 2024 in the MDR talk show [Fakt ist!](#) However, a closer look at the data shows that the statement is only partially correct.



refugees that were conducted between 2016 and 2022. The analysis shows that men who have lived in Germany for at least eight years reached an employment rate of 86%. This rate describes the number of working people of employable age (usually between the ages of 18 and 64) and takes into account full-time and part-time employment. It is made up of the following components: [Employment rate = employment rate/population*100](#).

Employment rate of Refugees



Reisner uses the 86 percent, but applies it to the group that came to Germany in 2015/16. The same study puts the employment rate of this specific group at just 75% in 2022 – lower than the 86% she quotes.

Dr. Paul Berbée, author of the discussion paper [The Integration of Migrants in the German Labor Market: Evidence over 50 Years](#), points out that the significance of the employment rate should be looked at critically. For example, people who only work a few hours a month are also considered to be employed.



favorable rating of the integration of refugees. The results are not directly comparable with those of the IAB study because he also looks at the age differences of the refugees, says Berbée.

Another problem is the comparison with “German-born men”. Lea Reisner says that their employment rate is 81%. This number also comes from the IAB study and is based on the [2023 microcensus](#), the largest annual household interview in Germany. The microcensus states that 80.8% of all men in Germany are employed. It is not clear whether a difference is made between men who were born in Germany and those who have immigrated. Reisner’s specific formulation “German-born men” is therefore not confirmed by the study.

Conclusion

Lea Reisner’s message is mostly true. The number 86% in the IAB report relates to male refugees who have been living in Germany for at least eight years – not those who arrived in 2015/16. For these, the rate is 75 percent. The comparison with “German-born men” is not entirely clear, as it is not possible to say for sure if and how the microcensus makes a specific difference. The integration of refugees into the labor market is of central importance in the context of the lack of skilled workers. The claim that “Of the men who arrived in Germany in 2015/16, 86 percent are now working. That’s more than the average number of men who were born in Germany, which is only 81 percent.” is mostly true.

RESEARCH | ARTICLE | Luise Schneider, Hochschule der Medien
Stuttgart, Germany

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Categories: Fact-check, Mostly true By Hochschule der Medien Stuttgart, DE January 23, 2025

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