



## Germany Does Not Know Where 130,000 Asylum Seekers Are

Responding to a question presented by Germany's Left Party, German officials released a document on February 26 stating that government officials do not know the whereabouts of 130,000 migrants who registered for asylum last year. These missing aliens represent about 13 percent of the refugees, mostly from the Middle East, who entered Germany in 2015.



AFP, which broke the story, quoted a statement from the document noting, "About 13 percent did not turn up at the reception centers to which they had been directed." The document offered several possible explanations, including that some migrants might have returned to their home countries, or moved on to other European countries, and some may have also registered more than once.

AFP also cited a statement from a spokesman for Germany's interior ministry that a package of new measures approved by parliament on February 25 is designed to help address the problem of unaccounted-for migrants. The measures provide for an identity document to be issued upon the arrival of a migrant, which would allow authorities to store personal data under a common database and thereby help to avoid repeated registrations.

A February 26 article in Britain's *Daily Mail* speculated that thousands of the missing refugees in Germany "might even be on their way to France and Belgium in a bid to try to sneak into the UK, where asylum seekers are given accommodation, benefits, health care and education."

The *Daily Mail* reported that the missing aliens failed to arrive at the government accommodations assigned to them.

The BBC reported that Frank-Juergen Weise, the head of Germany's migration office admitted on February 25 that up to 400,000 people were in the country under unknown identities. The BBC also noted that the new measures for processing refugees were proposed after scores of native German women complained about being sexually assaulted and robbed by a crowd of predominantly migrant men during New Year's Eve celebrations. The report noted that Syrians represent the largest group of asylum seekers in Germany, followed by Afghans.

NPR published an article on February 26 reporting that many asylum seekers are now deciding to leave Germany and go back to their homelands. The article noted that the government's delays in processing their applications for asylum have caused some to become pessimistic about their prospects to remain legally in Germany. The report cited Stephan Mayer, who is with the German ruling parliamentary



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coalition's group in charge of home affairs. Mayer said that parts of Iraq are safe, especially now that ISIS has withdrawn from some areas. "It's not so difficult to live there in Kurdistan and northern Iraq," said Mayer, "so I don't see any problem if those from Iraq turn back to Erbil."

Another report in the *Washington Post* noted an unexpected tendency among German immigrants, notably, that about one-quarter of migrants stated in a survey that they believe Germany should stop taking in refugees altogether. The results of this survey were initially reported in the German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

The *Post* noted that migrants are opposed to the refugee influx in far greater proportions than the overall German population, only four percent of which opposes granting asylum to these refugees. Among the reasons cited for the greater opposition among established immigrants to the more recent arrivals, are fears that negative publicity, such as that stemming from the New Year's Eve assaults, could spill over and change Germans' views toward all immigrants.

Although Germany initially welcomed huge numbers of refugees fleeing to Europe from the turmoil in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Afghanistan, as the flood continued, the nation eventually decided that a change in policy was necessary. Germany's Interior Minister Thomas de Mazière announced the change in policy last September 13, when he stated:

At this moment Germany is temporarily introducing border controls again along [the EU's] internal borders. The focus will be on the border to Austria at first.

The aim of these measures is to limit the current inflows to Germany and to return to orderly procedures when people enter the country.

De Mazière explained that the new restrictions were partly necessary for security reasons and added: "This step has become necessary. The great readiness to help that Germany has shown in recent weeks ... must not be overstretched."

The concerns of those who worried that terrorists might have hidden among the flood of refugees and entered Europe along with those who were legitimately fleeing from the ongoing war and upheaval in places like Iraq and Syria proved to be well founded.

Hans-Georg Maaßen, the president of Germany's domestic security agency (known as the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution — BfV) told ZDF, the German public broadcaster, on February 5 that his agency had received more than 100 warnings that Islamic State (ISIS) militants have entered his nation among refugees. Maaßen said:

We have repeatedly seen that terrorists ... have slipped in camouflaged or disguised as refugees. This is a fact that the security agencies are facing.

We are trying to recognize and identify whether there are still more IS fighters or terrorists from IS that have slipped in.

Maaßen said there was "concrete evidence there are people planning terror attacks in Germany," although there was "no indication of an imminent attack."

Following the terrorist attacks in Paris on November 13, European authorities became more vigilant concerning the possibility of members of ISIS and other Islamic terrorist groups hiding themselves among the immense flow of refugees to enter Europe.

The findings of German intelligence authorities that there are ISIS terrorists among the refugees who



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have entered Germany should also make U.S. officials wary of allowing these refugees to enter the United States, at least until a more reliable vetting process can be developed. U.S. officials should also make certain that the whereabouts of all aliens who enter the United States, even legally, should be accounted for. If 130,000 migrants can go missing in Germany, the possibility of a much larger number disappearing in the vast United States is substantially greater.

Photo of refugees to Germany: Bwag/Commons

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