

9. Job Quality as a Crucial Measure of Migrants' Economic Integration

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1. INTRODUCTION

Migrants have left their home region since the earliest times for various reasons including economic opportunities, family reunification and education, as well as to escape war, persecution or human rights violations. In recent years, environmental factors have also become significant drivers. According to the United Nations, the global migrant population has reached unprecedented levels, with approximately 281 million people living in a country other than their country of birth in 2020, an increase of nine million from 2019 (McAuliffe and Oucho 2024).

Research has extensively discussed the challenges migrants face in integrating into the labour markets of their destination countries. Traditional studies have focused on earnings as a central indicator of integration, demonstrating that integration tends to improve over time as migrants acquire language skills, country-specific education and firm-specific knowledge (e.g., Chiswick and Miller 2003, 2012). Fewer studies have examined job quality using indicators beyond earnings, such as occupational attainment, skill-qualifications matches and job security.

An important aim of research in this field is the development of policy recommendations for better social and labour market integration, particularly of disadvantaged migrant groups. Here, the identification of institutional, family or other integration barriers is important, while a focus only on labour market entry and the development of earnings to native levels is insufficient to detect the reasons for such barriers. A consideration of multiple, and broad, indicators of job quality is crucial when analysing the integration process of migrants, as well as when comparing the labour market integration of different migrant groups with their respective native peers.

Hence, the aim of this chapter is to examine migrant job quality as a multidimensional and dynamic process, highlighting the differences between

diverse migrant groups and within them, based on gender and the time since their migration to Germany, considering data between 2016 and 2022. New insights are provided to the effect that, despite earnings increasing with duration of stay, other job features, such as job security, do not improve to the same extent. A gender perspective is crucial, considering that migrant women often face higher challenges than men in acquiring country-specific education, language skills or other knowledge necessary for labour market integration, alongside women's greater willingness to work below the level to which they are qualified due to what are, on average, their higher care responsibilities. Furthermore, the inflow of refugees is a major transformational force in this turbulent era (see Piasna and Leschke, this volume).

In recent years, Germany has mostly experienced intra-EU migration, especially from central and eastern EU Member States following the 2004 and 2007 enlargements. For many years, there were hardly any general migration pathways to Germany from non-EU countries for work reasons. However, as a result of demographic challenges, Germany has sought to enhance skilled migration from outside the EU, while it has accepted more refugees in recent years than any other EU country (Brücker et al. 2020). Consequently, it provides a critical case study for analysing the job quality of refugees compared to other migrant groups during their initial years.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Empirical results on the labour market integration of migrants show a consistent pattern: migrants have higher unemployment rates in host countries than the native population. When they do find employment, they are more likely to be in temporary jobs, which are associated with a higher level of insecurity, a lack of social protection and insufficient income while working and when becoming unemployed (Enchautegui 2008; OECD 2015). Compared to natives, the wages of migrants are lower and they more often work in lower-end occupations (Granato and Kalter 2001; Kogan 2016).

The disadvantages faced by migrants in host country labour markets are often explained by an unequal endowment with human or social capital, as well as unequal returns on this due to discrimination (Granato and Kalter 2001; Kanas et al. 2011), or by a lack of host country-specific human capital such as language skills, general local labour market knowledge or firm-specific knowledge (Bonfanti and Xenogiani 2014). Other explanations relate to a higher willingness of migrants to take a job with low occupational status (and wages) due to their expectations of their stay being temporary (Kogan 2004) and to their use of their country of origin as a frame of reference. Employers are also more willing to hire foreign workers in certain sectors of the economy, particularly those with low income and prestige, or in seasonal or

irregular employment, even though unemployed local workers are also available. Moreover, employers may also discriminate against migrants in the job application process for higher positions due to other reasons, especially where there are embedded stereotypes about minorities (Birkelund et al. 2020). This in turn increases the likelihood of migrants taking lower-paid, atypical or even precarious jobs (Kogan 2004, 2016). With increasing length of stay and the accumulation of relevant host country-specific human capital, integration barriers decrease and the quality of migrants' work experience correspondingly increases (Chiswick et al. 2012; OECD 2015). However, this is not the case for all integration barriers that migrants face in acquiring positions with better job quality. Some barriers persist even across generations, although this study focuses only on first-generation migrants, that is, those born in another country.

Migrants not only face the risk of working in occupations with low job quality more often than natives, but there is also considerable intersectionality within the migrant group. This creates multiple layers of disadvantage, particularly influenced by nationality, gender and the reason, or motive, for migration (Fendel and Schreyer 2022; Kanas and Steinmetz 2021; Kosyakova and Salikutluk 2023; Kosyakova et al. 2023). The transferability of foreign education credentials, which affects access to employment opportunities and promotion prospects, varies significantly by country of origin due to differences in educational systems, language, cultural factors and developmental status (Friedberg 2000; Sanromá et al. 2015), leading to segmented job quality outcomes for migrants from different countries of origin. The literature also shows that, in many EU countries, third-country nationals are not only at higher risk of unemployment than native workers or within-EU migrants, but are also more likely to be overqualified or in temporary employment (Granato and Kalter 2001; Kangasniemi and Kauhanen 2013; Kogan 2016). The lack of a permanent residence permit, a high risk of deportation or a lack of a work permit is reflected in an increased risk of precarious employment and lower wages.

Gender is an important factor resulting in differences in job quality for migrants. Due to gender-specific human capital investments and work experience being initially lower, linked in particular to women's predominant role as carers, women have a higher probability than men of migrating based on the occupational aims of the male partner, hence as family migrants or 'tied' movers (Mincer 1978). Tied migration, in turn, has a further negative impact on women's labour market outcomes, including job quality, due to increased caregiving responsibilities, lower investment in local human capital and poor regional job market fit (Shauman and Noonan 2007). Moreover, empirical evidence stresses employment disparities among family migrants and refugees

compared to work migrants (Chiswick 1999), with women at a particular disadvantage (Kanas and Steinmetz 2021; Kosyakova and Salikutluk 2023).

The barriers to accessing quality jobs are formidable for refugees due to substantial institutional hurdles such as the duration of asylum procedures and the legal status they acquire after arrival (Hainmueller et al. 2016; Hvidtfeldt et al. 2020; Kosyakova and Brenzel 2020). Additionally, many refugees suffer from health issues stemming from pre- and post-migration experiences, which can lead to employer discrimination and often force them to accept lower-quality jobs. Unlike other migrants, refugees often have minimal opportunities to prepare for migration, such as learning the language or gaining country-specific education, and have limited ability to choose a destination that better rewards their qualifications (Kosyakova and Kogan 2022).

Labour market integration is a process. It is therefore essential to extend the analysis of migrants' employment to a careful examination of the changes encountered since arrival. While earnings usually increase during integration as migrants acquire more local labour market knowledge and country-specific language skills, resulting in more opportunities to use foreign-obtained qualifications in jobs with higher skills requirements, inequalities compared to natives in other dimensions, not least job security, may remain, particularly for more disadvantaged groups such as women. For instance, while employment rates and hourly wages of migrant women increase following migration, the proportion working in permanent positions often stagnates. Low job security, particularly for part-time workers, negatively influences career prospects and work stability during economic crises. Here, studies have shown that the pandemic had a more adverse impact on the employment of migrants compared to native-born individuals (Borjas and Cassidy 2020), resulting from the higher proportion of migrants working in jobs with low job security (Brücker et al. 2021).

When analysing integration processes, therefore, a consideration of multidimensional job quality indicators thus provides a more nuanced basis for comparing the quality of jobs of different groups of migrants over time, drawing on a normative assessment of what constitutes a good job and also considering trade-offs between different job quality dimensions. An important objective of analysing migrants' labour market integration processes is the design of targeted and effective measures that focus on supporting particularly disadvantaged groups.

This assessment of the job quality of migrants is inspired by the wealth of previous research on job quality that has investigated the links between work and employment conditions, on the one hand, and workers' health and wellbeing on the other (e.g., Piasna 2023).

3. DATA AND METHODS

To explore job quality among migrants, the empirical analysis draws on the harmonized dataset that constitutes the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) (Goebel et al. 2019), incorporating the IAB-SOEP Migration Sample (Brücker et al. 2014) and the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees (Brücker et al. 2025). The most recent dataset is version v39, for the period 2016–2022, which includes refugees arriving in Germany since 2013, while excluding the more recent refugee movements from Ukraine. Figures 9.1 to 9.4 use pooled data (2016–2022) for migrants, given small annual sample sizes. For natives, the information corresponds to 2022, the most recent year. The sample is restricted to the working age population and differentiates between those who migrated for work, family or asylum reasons while omitting those who moved for other purposes such as education or the repatriation of ethnic Germans. The comparator group comprises individuals born in Germany without a migration background and excluding second and third generation migrants whose parents or grandparents had migrated to Germany. The analytical sample consists of 9,190 migrants with 19,224 person-year observations, and 24,398 natives with 79,292 person-year observations.

The GSOEP carries the advantage of enabling a representative analysis of various groups of migrants by gender over multiple post-migration years. However, it includes information on only a limited number of job quality dimensions. These are grouped here into objective indicators of job quality, such as gross hourly wages, forms of employment (full-time, part-time, marginal and irregular employment, vocational training and internships), and types of employment contract (permanent and temporary contracts, or no contract). Occupational skill levels are also examined (differentiating between support worker, skilled worker and specialist or expert levels) from the perspective of how these match the worker's qualifications, thus identifying overeducation and undereducation scenarios in contrast to the situation where the job skill level matches that of the worker. This latter situation corresponds to employees with no qualifications working at the support level, those with vocational or university degrees working at the skilled worker level and those with university degrees working at the expert or specialist level.

In addition to objective measures, subjective measures of job quality focused on respondents' evaluations concerning job satisfaction and their level of satisfaction with earnings, assessed in the Survey of Refugees on a 0–10 scale. Concerns about potential job loss, categorized as 'no', 'somewhat' or 'significant' worries, are also analysed, relating to job insecurity as featured in numerous job quality frameworks.

Although the use of subjective indicators has been debated in the literature (Green et al. 2013; Muñoz de Bustillo et al. 2011a), their inclusion offers much-needed complementarity and nuance for assessing perceived job quality among migrants. Moreover, they enhance understanding of job quality trends among such groups. Longitudinal analysis of objective measures may signal improvements in job quality for some aspects and stagnation for others, whereas longitudinal analysis of subjective measures can provide important information about how migrant employees evaluate these developments themselves and on evolutions in their expectations and reference frame. This, in turn, can inform policymakers about the most relevant integration measures.

Empirically, the differences in objective and subjective job quality between migrants and natives are examined through descriptive analyses, stratified by migration background and reasons for migration and conducted separately for male and female participants. Additionally, potential selection effects are assessed by analysing differences in the sociodemographic composition of and employment rates between the four female and male population groups – work migrants, family migrants, refugees and natives – in the most recent year of observation (2022).

4. RESULTS

4.1 Demographic and Educational Profiles of Migrant and Native Employees in Germany

The analysis first explores the differences in employment rates and sociodemographic composition. This provides a helpful background for the interpretation of job quality differences revealed in the following step of the analysis.

In general, migrants' average employment rate (including all employment forms, not shown in Table 9.1) is eight percentage points lower than that of the native population. The difference is three times larger among women than men. Migrants for work have very similar employment rates to natives, irrespective of gender. Conversely, family migrants have somewhat lower employment rates, while the gap is more pronounced among women. The most significant employment gap compared to the native population is observed among refugees, with a gap of approximately 10 percentage points for men and 50 percentage points for women (see Table 9.1).

A comparison of employment rates between natives and migrants highlights the barriers confronting specific migrant groups in accessing the labour market. It is important to note that all other indicators shown in Table 9.1, as the job quality indicators examined in this study, pertain to the subset of workers who have already successfully overcome these entry barriers.

Table 9.1 *Sociodemographic characteristics, skill level and subjective measures of job quality by migration background, reason and gender*

	Migrants: Work		Migrants: Family		Migrants: Refugees		Natives	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
-								
Number of observations	788	1,115	406	251	162	640	6,123	5,922
Employment rate (%)	81	86	73	81	31	75	82	86
Age	41	43	44	42	36	35	44	43
Partner in household (%)	73	85	83	88	100	87	77	80
Children in household (%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
No children <18	60	53	57	56	91	87	74	75
0-2 years	4	9	3	8	1	0	3	5
3-5 years	7	8	6	10	1	6	6	6
6-17 years	30	30	33	26	7	7	17	14
Years since migration	14	14	23	25	14	11	0	0
Educational level (%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
No qualification	24	30	25	21	69	61	11	12
Vocational qualification	28	30	48	55	4	17	55	52
University degree	48	40	27	24	28	22	33	36
Occupational skill level (%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Support worker	29	12	36	27	29	34	10	6
Skilled worker	33	46	44	41	67	56	51	43
Specialist/expert	38	42	20	32	4	10	39	51
Job satisfaction (0-10)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mean	7.1	7.3	6.9	7.3	6.7	6.6	7.0	7.1

	Migrants: Work	Migrants: Work	Migrants: Family	Migrants: Family	Migrants: Refugees	Migrants: Refugees	Natives	Natives
Standard deviation	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.8	0.2	0.0	0.0
Satisfaction with earnings (0-10)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mean	6.2	6.6	6.1	6.3	6.0	5.1	6.6	6.9
Standard deviation	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.0
Worry about losing job (%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't worry at all	59	48	63	64	87	39	72	70
Worry somewhat	29	42	26	26	3	37	23	26
Worry significantly	11	10	12	11	10	24	5	5

Note: Except for employment rate, data are shown only for those employed. Data for 2022, weighted.

Differences in family composition, and particularly the presence of dependent children in the household, have been shown to be relevant for employment outcomes and job quality, particularly among women. In this respect, significant differences emerge between native and migrant groups. The proportions with no children under 18 years of age living in the household are higher among refugees and natives than among work migrants and family migrants. Most of the refugees, especially men, in the sample arrived around 2015–2016 and often without family. Since workers with children experience more distinct time constraints than those without children, these differences are particularly important when considering employment forms and working hours.

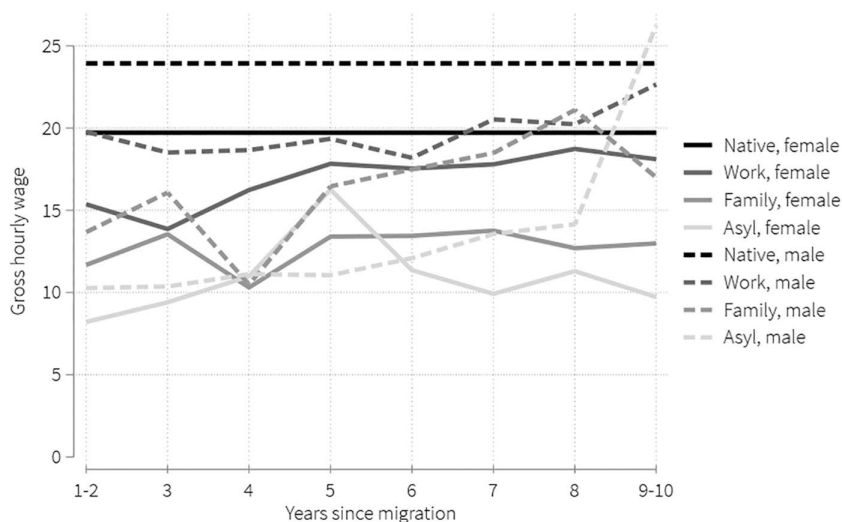
Migrants generally exhibit lower educational attainment compared to natives, but with important differences between the groups. The share of workers with no formal education is much higher among migrants compared to natives, ranging from a two and three-fold difference among work and family migrants, to a six-fold difference among refugees. This is likely to reflect qualifications in their home countries often being obtained ‘on the job’ without receiving transferable degrees. Vocational degrees, held by about one-half of native workers, are similarly common among family migrants, but rarely reported by refugees. Interestingly, work migrants are more likely to be university graduates compared to native workers, and this difference is especially

remarkable for women: nearly half of employed female work migrants hold university diplomas. Finally, employed female migrants exhibit higher levels of tertiary education compared to their male counterparts across all migrant groups.

4.2 Objective Measures of Job Quality

Which migrant groups are more or less successful in securing jobs with high job quality in Germany? Are these differences influenced by gender? Does the disparity in job quality between natives and migrants diminish over time? To address these questions, the analysis first considers hourly wages.

Figure 9.1 displays gross hourly wages for 2016–2022 (pooled data) for migrants over the years since migration and for natives in 2022. Native men and women earn approximately 5–10 euros more per hour than their male and female work migrant counterparts. Furthermore, work migrants consistently earn higher wages than family migrants, who, in turn, generally out-earn refugees.

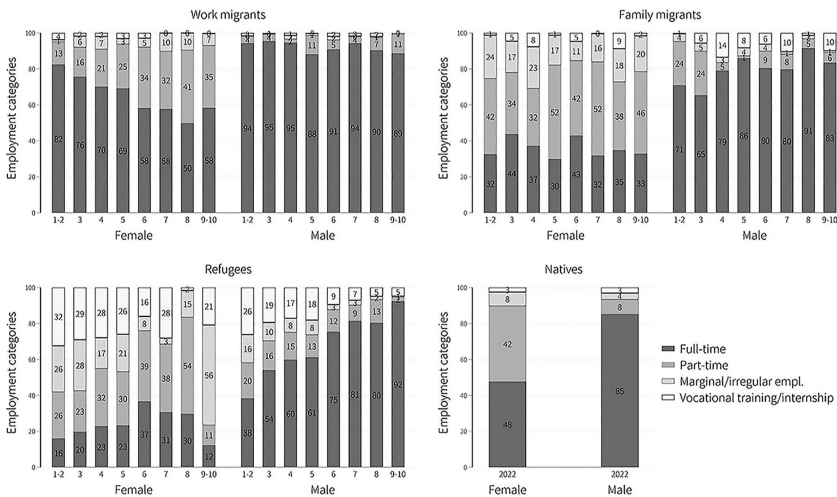


Note: Black lines – gross hourly wage of natives in 2022 (female: solid line; male dashed line). Data for migrants 2016–2022, weighted.

Figure 9.1 Gross hourly wages by gender, migration background/reason and years since arrival

Looking at each group separately for gender differences, the gender wage gap is smaller among family migrants and refugees than among natives and work migrants. While traditional assimilation literature predicts a general increase in earnings over time (Chiswick and Miller 2003, 2012), this pattern is not evident for the work and family migrants in our sample over their first 10 years of living in Germany, and only modestly evident with very small increases over time among male refugees.

Form of employment is the second objective job quality indicator, with the analysis distinguishing four groups: (1) full-time; and (2) part-time employment (both covered by social security); (3) marginal ('minijobs') and irregular employment (including only work contracts with a positive number of working hours); and (4) vocational training or internships. Figure 9.2 illustrates that, among the three migrant groups, work migrants show the greatest similarity to native employees. Similar to native men, most male work migrants are employed full-time, a status that has remained stable over time. For female work migrants, the proportion working full-time is high in the first two years after migration but subsequently declines, aligning closer to the proportion of native women. This decreasing proportion can be assumed to be influenced by childbirth. Also, among family migrants and refugees, the proportion of



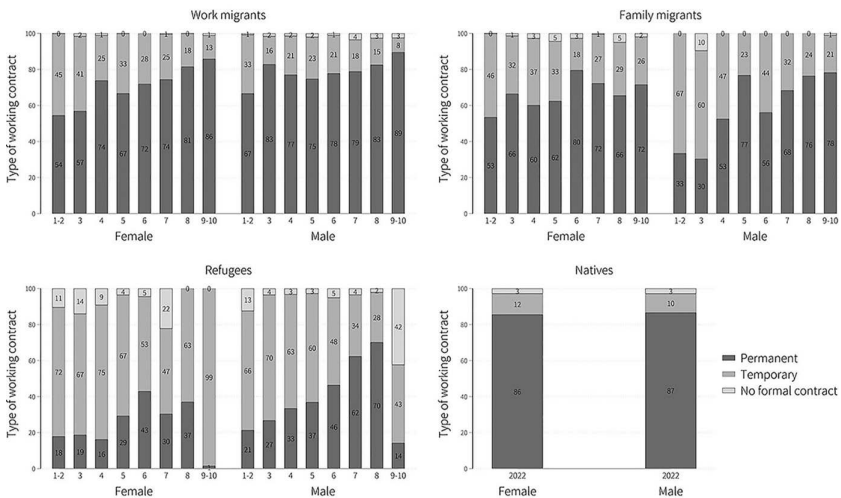
Note: Data for 2016–2022, weighted.

Figure 9.2 Employment forms by gender, migration background/reason and years since arrival

full-time workers is lower among women than among men, mirroring the situation of natives. Migrants are often assumed to be more traditionally oriented, and during their integration process, it is interesting that the work behaviour of women migrating for work reasons does actually fall in line with the traditional one still predominant among women in Germany. Considering part-time employment as a dimension of job quality is therefore especially important from a gender perspective, particularly considering its implications for earnings and social security coverage.

Women across all groups are significantly overrepresented in marginal or irregular employment. Furthermore, about one-third of both male and female refugees are engaged in vocational training or internships. These proportions are notably higher during the first five years after migration than in the subsequent five years, indicating that the focus of German migrant integration measures lies in education and training. Among male refugees, the proportion of full-time workers increased over the observed time period.

As an additional indicator, Figure 9.3 illustrates the developments in employment contracts among migrants over the first ten years after arrival. In all male migrant groups, the proportion of employees with permanent contracts increases over time. Among women, permanent employment is generally



Note: Data for 2016–2022, weighted.

Figure 9.3 Forms of employment contract by gender, migration background/reason and years since arrival

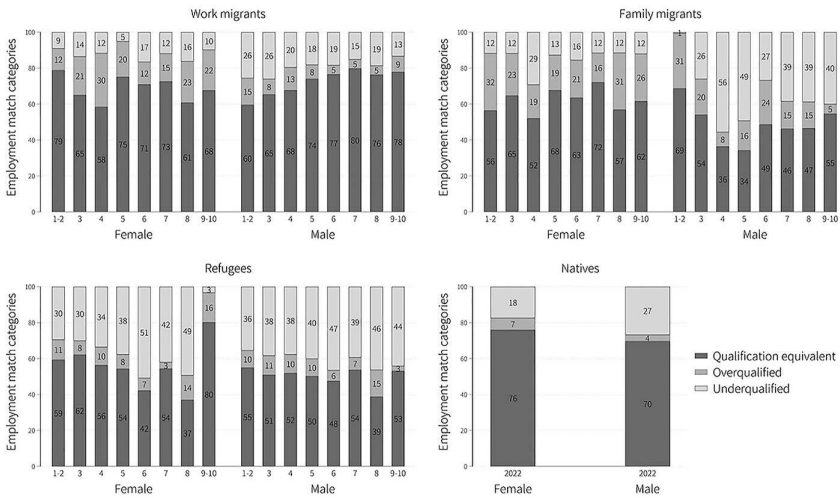
less common, with a somewhat mixed picture among family migrants, with improvement over time in this respect being observed mainly among female work migrants. This stalled progress in job security among women is likely to be related to their higher proportions in part-time, marginal and irregular employment and vocational training or internships, as illustrated in Figure 9.2. It can also be interpreted in terms of the dual burden of family and work responsibilities, resulting in concessions on working time, job security and, ultimately, also income and pensions in favour of greater flexibility to balance care obligations (Fendel 2021; Fendel and Kosyakova 2023). This indicator highlights that a focus on labour market entry and earnings provides a very limited analysis of female migrants' labour market integration processes.

In contrast, male refugees experience notable improvements in their employment forms. Not only does the proportion of those working full-time increase over the first ten years after migration (especially among men; see Figure 9.2), but there is also a significant shift from temporary to permanent contracts (Figure 9.3), indicating enhanced job security.

A third objective indicator is the distribution of employees by occupational skill level (see Table 9.1). In general, a much higher proportion of migrants work as support workers than natives. For female work migrants, there is a noticeable polarization in skill levels, with a high proportion working at specialist or expert level, comparable to female natives, but equally high proportions at support worker level. In the latter case, these are much higher than among male work migrants.

The skill level of a job can itself be an indicator of job quality, with highly skilled jobs tending to offer more scope for the use and development of skills, problem-solving or autonomy. Of particular relevance to job quality is the match between the skills required by the job and those possessed by the worker. A good match can potentially improve job quality during the integration process.

Figure 9.4 illustrates the proportions of employees working in occupations that match their qualifications compared to those who are overqualified or underqualified, tracking the changes in the years since migration for both female and male migrants. The proportion of female migrants working at a skills level that matches their education does not change much with time. In contrast, a positive trend is observed for male work migrants. Among female and male refugees, the proportion working in occupations for which they are underqualified is very high and further increases over time. At first sight, underqualification seems less problematic than overqualification, but it has been shown to have sizably negative effects on job satisfaction (Vieira 2005) and on physical and mental health, especially for women and migrants (Song et al. 2024). Overqualification among refugees is likely to reflect their skills



Note: Data for 2016–2022, weighted.

Figure 9.4 Skill-qualifications match of occupations by gender, migration background/reason and years since arrival

being obtained ‘on the job’; however, it can also be a function of problems in having foreign qualifications recognized in the German labour market.

All this implies that overqualification and underqualification are relevant items in evaluating migrants’ job quality and in shaping their labour market integration processes, for example, with a focus on the recognition and transferability of existing qualifications.

In sum, the findings underscore notable disparities in objective job quality indicators between migrants and natives in Germany, influenced by gender and duration of stay. Furthermore, there are clear differences by reason for migration. In general, the job quality of migrants is most similar to that of native workers among those who had migrated for work reasons. Here, however, there are clear gender disparities. Improvements in job quality are lower among women than men, probably because women often exchange job security and earnings for greater time flexibility to handle the double burden of family and work obligations (see Rubery, this volume). Strong improvements in objective indicators of job quality – again to a larger extent for men than women – are observed among refugees.

4.3 Subjective Measures of Job Quality

Turning the focus to subjective aspects of job quality, the IAB-BAMF-SOEP Survey of Refugees, part of the harmonized GSOEP dataset, asks employees to rate satisfaction with their job and corresponding earnings on a 0-10 scale (see Table 9.1).

Job satisfaction displays little variability among migrants and natives, with average values between 6.0 and 7.0, corroborating findings about the stability of this measure across diverse populations (see Green, this volume; Muñoz de Bustillo et al. 2011a). Only refugees report somewhat lower levels of job satisfaction, while there is also greater variability in their evaluations. However, when focusing on changes over the years since migration, among both men and women in this group, a small improvement in job satisfaction can be observed (results available on request).

In terms of satisfaction with earnings, migrants are somewhat less satisfied than natives, with the biggest difference again being among refugees. While women in general report lower satisfaction than men in most groups, this is reversed among refugees, with very low levels of satisfaction among men for whom the score is nearly two points (on a 10-point scale) below that of native men.

A final subjective measure of job quality is concern among workers about losing their jobs. Generally, migrants express more concerns about job loss compared to natives, this being in line with their overrepresentation among workers with non-permanent contracts. Gender-specific differences are small among most groups except for refugees, with a higher proportion of men having worrying 'somewhat' or 'significant' and a much higher proportion of women having no worries at all (87% of women compared to 39% of men, Table 9.1). When considering changes in perceived job security over time (results not shown), satisfaction among migrants appears to increase, approximating native workers in this respect. Work and family migrants are as satisfied with their jobs as natives, and although refugees are somewhat less satisfied in the initial employment period, the trend improves during their first ten years in Germany.

Comparing these results with the objective measures highlights the importance of including a wide range of dimensions and indicators of job quality to provide a comprehensive and nuanced picture of migrants' integration processes. For example, for some groups of migrants, notably refugees, improvements in subjective job satisfaction are generally in line with improvements in the objective indicators. For others, notably female work migrants, relatively poorer outcomes in objective job quality, alongside few significant improvements over time, are not matched by the subjective evaluations.

Taken together, these findings may point to potential vulnerabilities among female migrants, whose expectations of job quality may decline over time as they make various trade-offs in valued job features to accommodate caring responsibilities, or after encountering a variety of barriers and hurdles in host labour markets.

5. DISCUSSION AND OUTLOOK

Migration remains a significant political issue in many EU countries, driven by dramatic demographic challenges and intensified geopolitical instability in recent years (Fendel et al. 2023; Stehrer and Leitner 2019). In view of this, job quality serves as a vital framework for both research and policy on migration because the quality of employment that migrants have is critical for their effective inclusion in host societies and for their quality of life, as well as for maximizing the economic potential of the new workforce.

This chapter aligns with the broader objectives of this volume by exploring the multidimensional and dynamic nature of job quality among migrant workers. It has moved beyond traditional labour market research, which primarily emphasizes integration metrics like labour market entry and earnings, to include both objective indicators (e.g., contract type and skills-qualifications alignment) and subjective measures (e.g., job satisfaction, income satisfaction and concerns about job loss). This comprehensive approach has provided nuanced insights into the disparities in job quality among migrant groups, as well as gender-specific differences. From a policy perspective, these findings can inform the design of integration measures to support particular migrant groups facing significant barriers, such as refugees or women.

This chapter has highlighted the need to address discriminatory factors. Furthermore, while a job may have seemingly decent characteristics, its quality may be lower for migrants due to reduced bargaining power or other structural disadvantages (see Piasna and Leschke, this volume). Research, including studies by Zwysen and Piasna (2024), highlights that migrants often encounter substantial barriers to entering the labour markets of destination countries and generally experience job quality inferior to that of native workers, particularly during the early years after migration. Furthermore, considerable intersectionality within the migrant group creates compounded disadvantages influenced by migration motives and gender that tend to widen during the integration process (Chiswick 1999; Kanas and Steinmetz 2021).

Prior empirical research suggests that migrants are disproportionately represented in low-skilled, low-paid, physically demanding jobs with poorer subjective job quality (e.g., Diaz-Serrano 2013; Kanas and Steinmetz 2021; OECD 2015), while they often work in conditions detrimental to health, such as excessive time pressures or shift work (Ronda Pérez et al. 2012). Across migrant

groups, refugees frequently face worse labour market conditions compared to work and family migrants, largely due to institutional barriers such as those related to asylum procedures (Hainmueller et al. 2016; Hvidtfeldt et al. 2020; Kosyakova and Brenzel 2020). This chapter's analysis has, on the one hand, corroborated these findings, showing for refugees the lowest gender-specific employment rates and gross wage levels compared to other female and male migrant groups. On the other hand, the results have also revealed more pronounced improvements in the broad set of considered indicators of job quality among refugees over the first ten years after migration than among those other groups. Enhancements in earnings, qualifications-equivalent occupations, income satisfaction and subjective job security are observed for both men and women, with notable increases in full-time employment and permanent contracts, although predominantly among male refugees.

Conversely, compared to their male counterparts, female migrants experience hardly any improvement in objective job security. They seem to exchange job security for increased flexibility and reduced working hours to balance family and work responsibilities. Here, the findings reveal a process little debated within migration research, which often emphasizes the traditional values of migrants as an important determinant of women's difficulties in labour market integration. Female migrants who migrated for work reasons adapted during their integration process to more traditional work behaviour, following the still predominant male breadwinner model in Germany, indicated by the internationally comparable high proportion of women working part-time.

This adjustment goes along with no clear changes in job match quality and with worries about losing their jobs. From a life course perspective, women in general – since this issue does not only apply to migrants – will accumulate lower pension rights when working part-time for many years and face a higher risk than men of falling below the poverty threshold (Jefferson 2009). For migrant women, this problem is even more severe than for native women, considering the double disadvantage resulting from integration barriers such as the lack of country-specific educational qualifications, labour market knowledge and language skills. The vulnerability of migrants with low job security is starkly exposed during economic shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Brücker et al. 2020). Moreover, poor job quality is likely to have spillover effects, as indicated by Dwyer and Papadimitriou (2006), who show that poverty in old age is a more severe problem for migrants than for natives.

Dynamically analysing job quality for migrants is crucial because two potential reasons exist for inferior job quality. First, there may be migration-related barriers, including the transferability of foreign qualifications, a lack of country-specific knowledge and language skills, and of firm-relevant skills – although all these should improve over time. Second, employer discrimination resulting from racial stereotypes or exploitative behaviour and inferior

conditions arising from an intersection with other disadvantages, such as gender or specific migration reasons, can lead to vulnerabilities that persist over time.

This chapter has provided a representative sample with which to analyse job quality across different groups of migrants and by gender over several years. However, these data do not capture all the dimensions deemed relevant in the job quality literature, such as work-life balance, working conditions, training and career development and collective representation (Leschke and Watt 2014; Muñoz de Bustillo 2011b; Piasna 2023). Future research should address these gaps, so as to improve understanding of the issue of job quality for migrants facing compound disadvantage, and thereafter to improve it. Furthermore, the results emphasize that future research needs to extend knowledge of which job quality indicators, beyond labour market entry and earnings, are most relevant in fully capturing the trends and gaining a more nuanced picture of migrants' integration processes.

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