OF CAMPUSES & CRISES

CANADA, GERMANY, HIGHER EDUCATION, & THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

PARKER BEEMER

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I

Introduction

1.1 The Syrian Refugee Crisis

When the Syrian Civil War began in 2011, few observers rightly anticipated the magnitude of the migratory crisis that would soon follow. According to the most recent statistics from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), more than twelve million individuals have been rendered displaced as a result of the conflict: 5.6 million of those have ended up as refugees outside their home country.[1] Coupled with increased numbers of refugees from other parts of Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, the Syrian Civil War has fuelled migratory crises in Europe and elsewhere unseen in scope since the end of World War Two. Many of the Syrians fleeing their homeland have found refuge in the neighbouring countries of Jordan and Turkey, both of whom have taken in a disproportionate number of displaced individuals. Others have looked further afield, seeking new lives and new opportunities in Europe. Germany has been a champion in this regard, opening its doors to just under two million refugees and providing an effervescent response in a time of great urgency.[2]

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[1] UNHCR, "Syria Refugee Crisis," *The UN Refugee Agency*, web. https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/syria/.

[2] European Commission, *Integrating Asylum Seekers and Refugees into Higher Education in Europe: National Policies and Measures* (Luxembourg: Publication Offices of the European Union, 2019), 8.

Other parts of the world have proven to be equally ambitious with their refugee portfolio. Despite its geographical distance, Canada has starkly ramped up its resettlement efforts since the Syrian crisis began. With 28,100 refugees resettled in 2018 alone, the UN noted that Canada had topped its list for the highest number of refugee resettlements in that particular year.[3] Such action by the Canadian government is particularly noteworthy at a time when the United States—a historic migration haven in North America—has increasingly become wary of accepting migrants. In the first year of Donald Trump's presidency, for example, the ceiling for admissible refugees to the United States of America fell from 110,000 in fiscal year 2017 to 45,000 in fiscal year 2018.[4] With such drastic cuts being made by their southern neighbours, Canada's response is measurably more significant when placed in the North American context.

Regardless of the particular nation that refugees choose to resettle in, the very act of accepting new migrants prompts the arrival of new associated challenges. Some of these challenges are anticipated and already have institutionalized structures in place to mitigate them; others are unforeseen and require original responses. In both cases, the challenge often stems from an issue that is in many cases difficult to assess and quantify: integration.

1.2 Educators and the Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis

As refugees begin the process of resettling in new countries, the challenge of integration has become a major issue on the agenda of various local, regional, and federal policymakers. Housing, employment, and support services have been areas of particular interest, primarily because of the primacy they play in the lives of refugees upon arrival. As these individuals settle, however, new needs soon develop. Some of these needs are more metaphysical or abstract in nature: creating a sense of belonging or fostering meaningful community engagement are two examples. Others are considered more strategic long-term investments, needs such as counselling

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[3] Teresa Wright, "Canada resettled more refugees than any other country in 2018, UN says," *CTV News*, June 19, 2019, web. https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/canada-resettled-more-refugees-than-any-other-country-in-2018-un-says-1.4473523.

[4] Sarah Pierce and Andrew Selee, *Immigration under Trump: A Review of Policy Shifts in the Year Since the Election* (Washington: Migration Policy Institute, 2017), 4.

or education. In the case of the latter, universities themselves have become important centres of response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Firstly, they provide educational services to the large number of Syrian refugees who are comparatively well educated and desire or are in need of certifications that reflect previous circumstances. Universities are equally important, however, for their capacity to provide services outside their traditional educational mandates, ones that are a critical component of integration.

In light of this, universities, NGO's, and policymakers have actively worked together to find ways in which universities might continue to respond to the needs of the refugee community. Socio-economic, cultural, and political issues in many cases dominate the conversation, but there are many other challenges to overcome on route to successful integration that universities have sought to address. The core question, therefore, is where do these institutions belong in the process. More specifically, how should university-based responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis be quantified and constituted within the larger program of integration?

There are a number of supporting questions that bolster this thesis' main line of inquiry. The following three are deemed most important. What methods are universities employing in response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis? What limitations exist? What are the best policies and practices for responding? This paper asserts that the most effective method for understanding these questions articulated above—and ultimately the main line of inquiry—is through a comparative study of different tertiary educational responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. More specifically, this thesis will employ a comparison of the responses carried out in the universities of Canada's Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor in Canada and those located in Germany's Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region. Such a comparison is warranted on a number of grounds: both regions are similar in size and population, both have a comparable number of high calibre universities, and both metropolitan areas have taken on the most number of refugees in their respective nations. Through this comparison, this paper will yield a number of key considerations that policymakers can be mindful of when addressing education, integration, and policy in the future.

The remainder of chapter 1 will explore both the historiography and theoretical conceptions that relate to the present line of inquiry. An overview of existing literature related

broadly to integration and specifically to university-based initiatives will act as both an introduction to the topic and a tool for establishing this thesis' place within academic study. The theoretical component, on the other hand, will outline the theory and method that will be applied for the purposes of this study. In chapter 2, the history of Canada and Germany's involvement with 20th century refugee crises will be explored. Particular emphasis will be placed on the milestones that led to greater involvement by the higher education community and the national actions that influenced them. Chapter 3's analysis will be more survey in nature, exploring in detail how universities in both regions have responded to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. By highlighting the nature and scope of these varied responses, a more tangible understanding of how universities respond can be nuanced. Chapter 4 will approach the topic of limitations. It will demonstrate the regional contexts that can hinder these policies, practices, and programs and address some of the reasons behind shortcoming. In chapter 5, the notion of success will be explored in detail and responses will be measured for the role they play in broader integration strategies. Chapter 5 will also pose a number of suggestions that scholars and policymakers alike should be mindful of in the future. Chapter 6 will provide a summary of findings and suggest some final thoughts to take away as a conclusion.

The importance of understanding the university-based response to the Syrian refugee diaspora is not simply a question of localized response or education policy. At its core, this paper needs to be contextualized within the overall issue of integration at a time when its success hangs so critically in the balance. International right-wing populists such as President Trump continue to regard Syrian refugees as a potential 'trojan horse' for Islamic State militants.[5] The decades long impacts of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have fed into fears about retaliation or retribution from those considered the 'other.' Financial declines have led to austerity and ensuing cuts on services that affect those such as refugees who need it most. Stressors like these mean that getting resettlement right is so crucial. Successful integration—be it brought on by the tertiary education system or more broadly—mitigates the chance of refugee communities becoming disenfranchised, societal burdens, or seen as some form of enemy within. Answering

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[5] Marissa Schultz, "Trump says Syrian refugees could be a 'Trojan horse' for ISIS," *New York Post*, October 11, 2015, web. https://nypost.com/2015/10/11/trump-says-syrian-refugees-could-be-a-trojan-horse-for-isis/.

this paper's questions is therefore not just about policy, but providing profound answers for broader Canadian, Germany, refugee, and international societies.

1.3 The Current Literature

Within the broad spectrum of refugee integration research, a distinct pedagogical discipline emerged in the 1990's that was specifically devoted to exploring education's role as a response to humanitarian crises. Deemed 'education in emergencies,' this conceptual framework gained particular traction in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, when new pressures on the international system forced practitioners of humanitarianism to reformulate their attention and action.[6] Some of the earliest work specifically devoted to universities within this framework came from Janet Hannah, who outlined some of the critical stressors associated with refugees in high education, particularly the conflicting notions of obligation versus passion and ongoing trauma.[7] Inspired by Hannah's earlier work, a number of other scholars have explored the challenges that come with integration in the university system, particularly from a mental health standpoint. Carla Hilario and her colleagues' review of mental health literature related to refugee students is a prime example: their survey concluded university initiatives aimed at supporting the mental wellbeing of refugees still needs augmentation beyond the scope of merely individualized assistance programs.[8]

Other research has taken a similar perspective, albeit with a more macro approach. Instead of focusing on individuals or small groups, a related body of literature has explored the role that universities can play in transforming conflict-affected societies as a whole. One of the most influential early works in this regard was by Kenneth Bush and Diana Saltarelli, whose

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[6] Dana Burde, Amy Kapit, Rachel L. Wahl, Ozen Guven and Margot Igland Skarpeteig, "Education in Emergencies: A Review of Theory and Research," *Review of Educational Research*, vol. 87, no. 3 (2017): 621-622 .

[7] Janet Hannah, "Refugee Students at College and University: Improving Access and Support," *International Review of Education*, vol. 45, no. 2 (1999): 158.

[8] Carla Theresa Hilario, John L. Oliffe, Josephine Pui-Hing Wong, Annette J. Browne and Joy Louise Johnson,"Migration and Young People's Mental Health in Canada: A Scoping Review," *Journal of Mental Health,* vol. 24, no. 6 (2015): 414-415.

paradigm-shifting policy paper encouraged a more societal view of education in emergencies.[9] Authors Sansom Milton and Sultan Barakat have given important analysis in this regard, laying foundation for further research by establishing four distinct contexts in which the relationship between recovery and higher education should be explored: reconstruction, state-building, peace building, and stabilization/securitization.[10] Milton and Barakat's literature has influenced a number of subsequent works, among them Tristan McCowan—whose work suggests universities play a critical role in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals agenda as it pertains to assisting refugee societies[11]—and Tejendra Pherali, whose published articles give particular focus to cross-national educational partnerships as a means of establishing sustainable societal solutions for refugees.[12]

These inquires into individual and societal wellbeing have often been channeled through geographical-based case studies, be they on the municipal, regional, federal, or continental level. In the case of Canada, exploration of the state of affairs for refugees in the higher education has not been a new development inspired by the influx of Syrian migrants. Rather, some scholars have been conducting ongoing research into refugee integration and the nation's tertiary education system for the better part of a decade. In review, a large portion of this work has a tendency to incorporate the challenges of tertiary education integration into broader conversations on the challenges associated with refugee integration as a whole.[13] There are, however, a handful of academics who have narrowed their scholarly inquiry towards questions that give specific focus to this higher education integration problem. Jaswant Kaur Bajwa has arguably been the most influential of them: her work has been cited dozens of times and has

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[9] Kenneth Bush and Diana Saltarelli, *The Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict* (Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2000): 34.

[10] Sansom Milton and Sultan Barakat, "Higher Education as the Catalyst of Recovery in Conflict- Affected Societies," *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, vol. 14, no. 3 (2016): 406.

[11] Tristan McCowan, *Higher Education for and beyond the Sustainable Development Goals* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 32.

[12] Tejendra Pherali and Alexandra Lewis, "Developing global partnerships in higher education for peacebuilding: a strategy for pathways to impact," *Higher Education* vol. 78, no. 4 (2019): 733-734.

[13] Soojin Yu, Estelle Ouellet and Angelyn Warmington, "Refugee Integration in Canada: A Survey of Empirical Evidence and Existing Services," *Refuge*, vol. 24, no. 2 (2007): 19.

provided much need analysis on the informational barriers faced by refugee students pursuing higher education in Ontario.[14]

In the German context, investigations of the tertiary education response to refugee populations has been less developed historically; much of the existing literature has been inspired by the recent wave of Syrian refugees entering the country. Despite its infancy, this literature is rich in analysis. Bernhard Streitwieser's various scholarly assessments of individual university responses to Syrian refugees has been particularly influential, as has the work of Michael Grüttner, Stefanie Schröder, Jana Berg, and Carolin Otto: their study of Syrian refugee aspirations for universities is as inspiring as it is important for future research.[15] Other particularly noteworthy research has come from Lisa Unangst, whose evaluation of policy related to refugee integration has yielded important proposals related to university admission systems and an expansion of support services.[16]

Comparative studies that contrast different regions and their university-based approaches to the Syrian Refugee Crisis do exist. Among them, the general research agenda tends to take a nation-state based approach in its analysis. Daniel Kontowski and Madelaine Leitsberger have explored the early responses from universities in Austria and Poland and compared how their measures have assisted Syrian refugees. Despite some key policy differences, Kontowski and Lietsberger note that campaigns and projects that emphasized the welcoming nature of each university, community, and nation were particularly important in sustaining the wellbeing of Syrian refugee groups.[17] Other comparative analyses have given particular focus to the role of public opinion in determining responses, demonstrates in works like Melissa Carlier's exploration of action in Canada and the United States.[18] More recently, Bernhard Streitwieser,

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[14] Jaswant Kaur Bajwa, Sidonia Couto, Sean Kidd, Roula Markoulakis, Mulugeta Abai and Kwame McKenzie, "Refugees, Higher Education, and Informational Barriers," *Refuge*, vol. 33, no. 2 (2017): 57

[15] Michael Grüttner, Stefanie Schröder, Jana Berg and Carolin Otto, "Refugees on Their Way to German Higher Education: A Capabilities and Engagements Perspective on Aspirations, Challenges and Support," *Global Education Review*, vol. 5, no. 4 (2018): 115.

[16] Lisa Unangst, "Refugees in the German higher education system: implication and recommendations for policy change," *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*, vol. 3, no. 2 (2019): 144-145.

[17] Daniel Kontowski and Madelaine Leitsberger, "Hospitable universities and integration of refugees: First responses from Austria and Poland," *European Educational Research Journal*, vol. 17, no. 2 (2018): 266.

[18] Melissa Carlier, "Explaining Differences in the Canadian and American Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis," *Virginia Policy Review*, vol. 9, no. 2 (2016): 72-73.

Bryce Loo, Mara Ohorodnik, and Jisun Jeong applied a model of rationale to their comparative study, seeking to understand why different institutions in North America and Europe choose to pursue integration programs for refugee populations.[19]

Overall, the existing literature surrounding refugee integration and the tertiary education system is an emerging field of scholarly inquiry. Indeed, a rich body of literature has been developed, but its comparably small size means a number of opportunities for new and insightful research are open for pursuit. This is especially true in the case of comparative studies that focus on more localized regions, the focus of this study.

1.4 Theory & Method

Previous studies that have sought to explore higher education's role in refugee integration have done so through a variety of different theoretical frameworks. In most instances, however, the existing literature has employed theories and methodologies that are often lacking in both substance and applicability. Take for example the recent study by Streitwieser, Loo, Ohorodnik, and Jeong. Employing a revision to Jane Knight and Hans De Wit's theory on education internationalization, Streitwieser and his colleagues suggest that there are five reasons that universities might choose to actively pursue programming aimed at assisting refugees: academic, political, economic, sociocultural, and humanistic.[20] For the purpose of their study, the final rationale—humanistic—is suggested to be the most impactful. Despite its interesting conclusions, the revised theory of Knight and De Wit used by Streitwieser and his colleagues is limited in its applicability. It only seeks to understand rationale; it does not seek to understand how that rationale might have been formed, the implications of that rationale, or the overall impact of integration programming once it has been enacted.

In a separate investigation, Streitwieser and a different set of coauthors relied on the 'Campus Crisis Management Matrix' framework to guide their study. Laid out by Zdziarski,

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[19] Bernhard Streitwieser, Bryce Loo, Mara Ohorodnik and Jisun Jeong, "Access for Refugees Into Higher Education: A Review of Interventions in North America and Europe," *Journal of Studies in International Education*, vol. 23, no. 4 (2019): 474.

[20] *Ibid.*, 475.

Dunkel, and Rollo, the 'Campus Crisis Management Matrix' argues that there are a set of five crisis stages—Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery—that universities must undergo and evaluate in the face of critical situations.[21] In the case of refugees, the stages of Response and Recovery are deemed most important. This framework may seek to provide a sleek and comprehensive model, but yet it falls short. The assumption that a such a rigid and structural model can be universally applied to all examples of university-based refugee integration programs is both naive and unsubstantiated, not to mention limited in its ability to make meaningful conclusions outside of plotting on a hypothetical timeline.

Instead, this thesis suggests an application of discourse analysis as a means for grounding and guiding the investigation. In its simplest form, discourse analysis focuses on the relationship between meaning and communicative language, either written or spoken.[22] In more lay terms, discourse analysis is concerned with how language shapes action, structures, or institutions. Inspired largely by the work of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, the central conceptions of discourse analysis have permeated across the social sciences and humanities, international relations being no exception. When it comes to applying discourse analysis to international refugee integration strategies, a variety of different approaches can be taken. One could, for example, focus on the notion of security speech acts. Similar to Ole Wæver's study of securitizing actors, one could analyze the repeated employment of language by those with influence or political clout to reveal why the notion of refugees and integration has been transformed into an issue where extraordinary measures need be employed.[23]

Conversely, one could could approach the topic from a more Foucault-influenced perspective: drawing inspiration from Marxist concepts to analyze the power relationships at the discursive level between governments and refugees.[24] Both methods would make for interesting

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[21] Bernhard Streitwieser, Lukas Brück, Rachel Moody, and Margaret Taylor, "The Potential and Reality of New Refugees Entering German Higher Education: The Case of Berlin Institutions," *European Education*, vol. 49, no. 4 (2017): 236.

[22] Luciana Alexandra Ghica, "Discourse Analysis and the Production of Meaning in International Relations Research: a Brief Methodological Outline," *Annals of the University of Bucharest / Political Science Series*, vol. 15, no. 2 (2013): 4.

[23] Ole Wæver, "Securitization & Desecuritization," in *On Security*, ed. Ronnie D. Lipschutz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 51.

[24] Ghica, 5-6.

studies. Due to the breadth of the study at hand, however, this paper has opted for a more broad application of discourse analysis. Rather than be constrained by one of the methods summarized above, this thesis will instead be loosely guided by the assumption that discourse has a close connection with mutually constituted interaction.[25] In more specific terms, analysis will be shepherded by the notion that the regular interaction between refugees, higher education responses, and political/societal narratives has had a transformative effect on the discourse towards refugees and integration. In doing so this paper will be both flexible and focused; exploratory but grounded. It will also avoid a number of potential problems, including falling into the ideology-absorbed trap that can be common amongst narratives driven by discourse analysis.[26]

In addition to discourse analysis, it is equally important to discuss rationale behind comparative study and why the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region were chosen. John Stuart Mill outlined the importance of comparative study in his exploration of logic, arguing that inductive conclusions can be drawn from one of five methods of comparison. According to the *Direct Method of Agreement* outlined by Mill, "If two or more instances of the phenomenon under investigation have only one circumstance in common, the circumstance in which alone all the instances agree, is the cause (or effect) of the given phenomenon."[27] Mill's suggestion still holds true: comparative analysis can be an insightful tool for a number of reasons. Firstly, a two case comparison affords depth that broader surveys would not permit, especially when it comes to observing the role that discourse might play. Secondly, it acts as a function of control; having two cases of reference ensures one particular case does not receive exceptionality. Thirdly, the study of different examples in different cases establishes the opportunity to reach conclusions that are functional from both a positivist and normative perspective. In other words, its allows the opportunity to explore both the state of university responses and how they ought to be as well. Cumulatively, this rationale makes a strong case for why a comparative methodology was chosen.

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[25] Michael Hoey, *Textual Interaction: An Introduction to Written Discourse Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 4-5.

[26] Ghica, 6.

[27] John Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic* (London: John W. Parker, 1843), 454.

So why the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor (*figure 1.1*) and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region (*figure 1.2*)? In addition to the considerations mentioned earlier that discussed similarities in population, size, proximity to regional government centres, and the primacy of their response within their respective nations, there are several other important reasons these two regions were chosen. Firstly, the two nations which house these regions—Canada and Germany respectively—have long been considered countries defined by their hospitality and defence of injustice on the world stage. In response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, Germany has been declared a "land of migration"[28] and "Europe's Conscience,"[29] while Canada took in more refugees than any other country in 2018 and has been described by senior officials with the UN's resettlement agency as a "leader in welcoming refugees and giving them opportunities to thrive."[30] Thus, Canada and Germany can be considered highly active in the process of welcoming and resettling Syrian refugees, making them—and their cities—ideal case studies to compare.
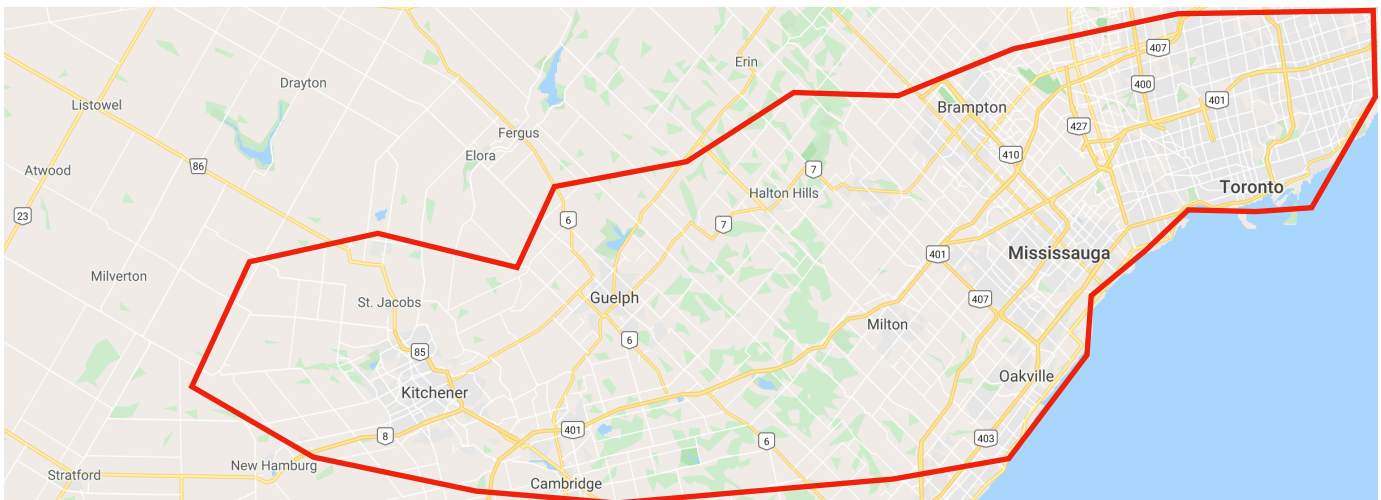
Figure 1.1: The approximate boundaries of the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor imposed on a small portion of southwestern Ontario.

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[28] Bernhard Streitwieser, Maria Anne Schmidt, Lukas Brück and Katharina Marlen Gläsener, "Not a Crisis But a Coping Challenge: How Berlin Universities Responded to the Refugee Influx," in *Higher Education Challenges for Migrant and Refugee Students in a Global World*, ed. Khalid Arar, Kussai Haj-Yehia, David Ross and Yasar Kondakci (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2019), 3.

[29] Volker M. Heins and Christine Unrau, "Refugees welcome: Arrival gifts, reciprocity, and the integration of forced migrants,"*Journal of International Political Theory*, vol. 14, no. 6 (2018): 2.

[30] Wright, web.

Figure 1.2: The approximate boundaries of the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region imposed over Berlin Stadtstaaten and parts of Brandenburg Flächenländer.

The Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region also both house regional capitals of their respecti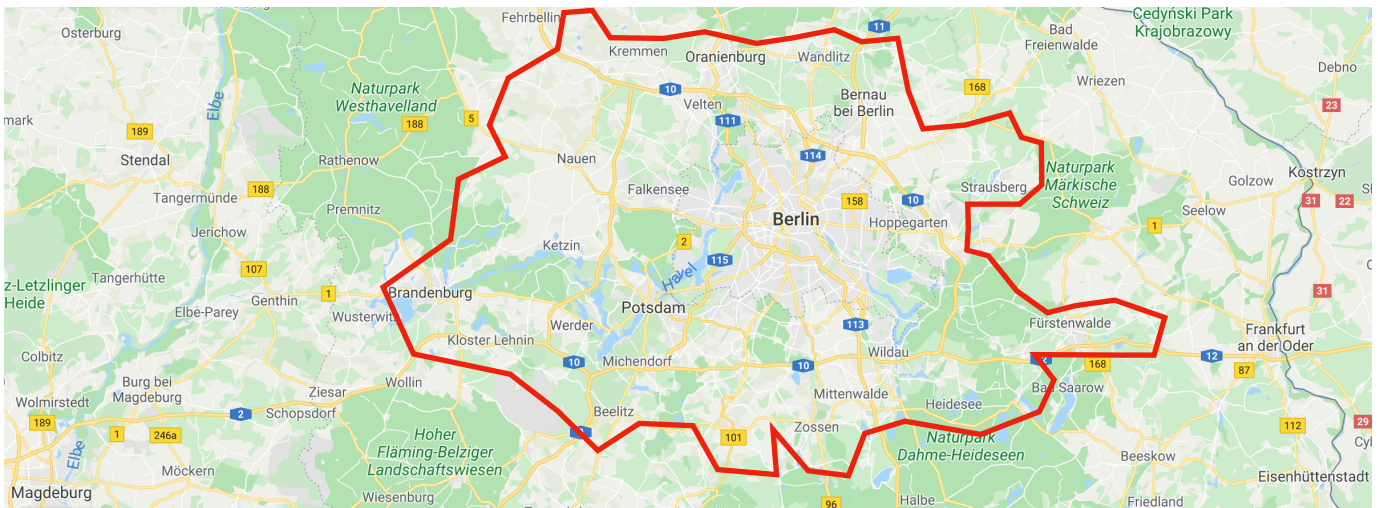ve nations' administrative divisions (provincial capital and state capital), making them closely tied to the policy process. This is a highly important consideration: educational policy can be both organically driven by institutions themselves or systematically devised by legislative mandarins. In this case, focusing on areas so close to regional decision making processes will allow for a more nuanced discussion on the origins of some integration programming.

Finally, the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region act as exemplary case studies because of some important differences between them. Divergences are equally as important as similarities in comparative studies, and the two metropolitan regions have some key characteristics that set them apart. These include the method in which their nations accept refugees (intensive screening vs. 'open-door' policy), the structure of their government (Westminster parliamentary constitutional monarchy vs. federal parliamentary representative democratic republic), the makeup of their political parties (no far-right political parties in government vs. a sizeable far-right minority in parliament), and important cultural differences, among others. Combined with a general lack of comparative study on metropolitan regions and their university-based response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, the similarities and differences between the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region make them truly ideal to form the basis of the succeeding study (*for specific details on each region, please see the appendix*).

Before analysis begins in chapter 2, it is worth briefly discussing source material. Due to the relatively little attention these university responses have received in the academic discourse, a large bulk of analysis relies on primary sources from institutions or organizations themselves: either small published documents, media coverage, website material, or similar mediums. This has been supplemented with related scholarly works, especially in sections that seek to establish history and context, as well as newspaper documentation. At the time of writing, the COVID-19 Pandemic had seriously limited the ability to conduct archival research or organize interviews. Although this source methodology would have been the preferred method of research at the time of conception, it simply was not possible at the time of writing. Any source shortcomings, therefore, can and should be attributed to the mandated government lockdowns that spanned the entirety of this process.

II

Canada, Germany, & Historical Refugee Crises

2.1 The Commissioner, the Convention, and the Protocol: Early Developments

Much of the history behind the policies, practices, and programs for refugee crises began their development in each respective nation in the 1950's, when the *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* was formed with a "mandate to protect refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people, and assist in their voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement to a third country."[31] In 1951, the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* came into being, providing a much needed international treaty aimed at refugee protection. This convention was later supported by the *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* in 1967, an important addition that revised some of the geographical and circumstantial considerations that had been more narrowly defined in the previous treaty. While Canada became party to both in 1969, Germany's participation came at different times: the Convention in 1953 and the Protocol

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[31] UNHCR, "About Us," *UNHCR*, 2020, web. https://www.unhcr.org/about-us.html.

in 1969.[32] In both cases, joining these international treaty regimes set key precedent that would help guide an important history of policy towards refugees.

By the late 1970's and over the course of the 1980's, West Germany in particular was seeing an influx in the development of refugee responses. Across the Bonn Republic during this period, the attitude and rhetoric of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt (1974-1982) was most certainly a guiding force. Known as an early globalist and a shrewd engineer of international institutions, Schmidt's written and spoken language translated into societal changes, most notably a greater focus on internationalizing Germany.[33] The strategy of *Ausländerpolitik* was developed under his administration, a policy that encouraged foreigners—many of whom were refugees—to come and work for a while or stay permanently and integrate into German society.[34] By 1980, Schmidt's rhetoric and policies had paid off: West Germany experienced 107,818 asylum applications, a peak year.[35]

Schmidt's changes to German society did not come without push back. In 1982, Schmidt was ousted from office; the same year that anti-immigrant sentiment topped 75 percent amongst West Germans and the fear of *Überfremdung*—over foreignization—became prominent amongst some media pundits and Christian Democrat Union-backed academics.[36] Schmidt's replacement, Helmut Kohl (1982-1998), tried to counter previous refugee influxes by developing financial packages that would encourage immigrants to willingly repatriate. Kohl's policies fell on deaf ears: asylum applications continued to grow, again reaching the 100,000 applicants a year mark by 1988.[37] Though the decade was marked by two different leaders, the 1980's were an important period in the history of German integration policy. Not only did it set precedent for chancellors themselves being highly active and altering the discourse on refugees, but the period highlighted

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[32] UNHCR, *States Parties to the 951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol* (Geneva: Publication Offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2015), 2-3.

[33] Kristina Spohr, *The Global Chancellor: Helmut Schmidt & the Reshaping of the International Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 2.

[34] Simon Green, "Immigration, Asylum and Citizenship in Germany: The Impact of Unification and the Berlin Republic," *West European Politics*, vol. 24, no. 4, (2001): 87.

[35] Wolfgang Bosswick, "Development of Asylum Policy in Germany," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2000): 46.

[36] Green, 90.

[37] *Ibid.*, 88.

the potential pushback that could come from German society if integration policies were not carefully calculated.

In Canada, important developments also transpired. During the course of the 1980's, Canada brought in close to 60,000 refugees from Africa alone, many of whom came from Ethiopia and surrounding nations in the horn of Africa.[38] The 'Mulroney Years,' as they were known, saw Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's Conservative government (1984-1993) enact a number of pro-refugee policies, among them stipends of $1,200 CAD for newly arrived asylum seekers.[39] Much of the pro-refugee behaviour stemmed from the 1978 implementation of the country's new *Immigration Act* which, among other components, designated refugees as a special class of immigrant and subsequently encouraged higher numbers and more diverse countries of origin.[40] In 1986, Canada's commitment to refugee resettlement resulted in them being awarded the Fridtjof Nansen Medal for prominence in asylum assistance, a gesture that supported Mulroney's claim that refugees constituted "an important source of immigrants."[41] As was the case in Germany during the same period, political leaders such as Mulroney—through an ongoing process of dialogue and interaction—were beginning to slowly alter the discourse towards refugees.

2.2 Case Study: 'The Boat People'

Southeast Asians fleeing violence in the lands of the former colony of Indochina were also a major target group for resettlement historically. Over a million individuals were forced to flee their homeland as a result of conflicts there, resulting in several major Western nations deciding to amplify their efforts. For its part, Canada agreed to admit 50,000 refugees from

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[38] Yohannes Gebresellasie, "Canada's Response to Black African Immigrants," *Refuge*, vol. 13, no. 1 (1993): 3.

[39] Hamida Ghafour, "When Canada welcomed refugees — and paid their way," *The Toronto Star*, September 14, 2015, web. https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2015/09/14/when-canada-welcomed-refugees-and-paid-their-way.html.

[40] Tanya Basok and Alan Simmons, "A Review of the Politics of Canada Refugee Selection," in *The International Refugee Crisis*, ed. Vaughn Robinson (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993), 132-133.

[41] *Ibid.*, 132.

Southeast Asia during a three year period from 1979-1981.[42] Many of these newcomers ended up in Toronto, prompting responses from institutions like Ryerson University, who—after a few transitions from earlier institutions—became the headquarters of a multi-decade longitudinal study on Southeast Asian refugees fleeing conflict and war.[43] Other responses to the colloquial named 'boat people' were markedly more hands on. The student led World University Service of Canada (WUSC), for example, quickly transformed itself into a more direct practitioner of refugee response. It joined the federally introduced *Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program* (PSRP) as a *Sponsorship Agreement Holder*, a position that allowed them to sponsor refugees from across Southeast Asia and provide them with new educational opportunities.[44] The primary driver was WUSC's *Student Refugee Program* (SRP), at the time the only known student to student refugee sponsor program.[45] Since a number of universities in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor had chapters of WUSC on their campuses—including Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo University, and the University of Toronto, among others—the region quickly became a centre for young refugees. Overall, the migratory problems produced by wars in Southeast Asia led to the development of hitherto uncommon precedent: universities were now actively involved in and expected to continue being involved in the handling of the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor's response to refugee crises.

In Germany, a number of university-based responses also developed as a result of ongoing violence in Southeast Asia. One such response from the German Democratic Republic was a program known as the *Solidarität Hilft Siegen* (Solidarity Brings Victory) which sought to educate Vietnamese pupils at East German institutions, most of which were centred around the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region.[46] Although a large number of these pupils did return home in later years, at the time these displaced peoples were considered by many in East

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[42] Morton Beiser, "Resettling Refugees and Safeguarding their Mental Health: Lessons Learned from the Canadian Refugee Resettlement Project," *Transcultural Psychiatry,* vol. 46, no. 4 (2009): 542.

[43] *Ibid.*, 543.

[44] Glen Petersen, "'Education Changes the World': The World University Service of Canada's Student Refugee Program," *Refuge*, vol. 27, no. 2 (2012): 112.

[45] Carolyn McKee, Lee-Anne Lavell, Michelle Manks and Ashley Korn, "Fostering Better Integration Through Youth-Led Refugee Sponsorship," *Refuge*, vol. 35, no. 2 (2019): 76.

[46] Ann-Julia Schaland, *The Vietnamese Diaspora in Germany* (Bonn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit Press, 2015), 8.

Germany to be refugees.[47] In West Berlin (nominally and in some cases politically a part of the Federal Republic of Germany) a number of Vietnamese refugees who arrived after the fall of Saigon found themselves part of the *German Federal Training Assistance Act* (BAföG), a federally funded program that allowed Vietnamese refugees to study at institutions in Berlin.[48]

2.3 The Turn of the Millenia

By the 1990's and 2000's, universities in both the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region saw an increased development to university-based programming aimed at facilitating the integration of refugee newcomers. Conflicts such as the First Gulf War (1990-1991), the Rwandan Civil War (1990-1994), The Somalian Civil War (1991- present), and the clashes that made up the Yugoslav Wars (1991-2001) in the lands of Former Yugoslavia garnered widespread international media attention, primarily for the undue suffering they were producing. This new wave of conflicts and new focuses by the media resulted in the average citizen in both Germany and Canada having a more direct interaction with refugees on a regular basis. Through such interaction, it became clear that their institutional responses were transforming as well as a result of changing discourses.

In the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor, a number of new initiatives were kickstarted, among them English as a second language programming specifically aimed at refugee students facilitated by the University of Toronto, York University, and Ryerson University.[49] WUSC expanded its SRP programming largely during this period, with students and their universities taking more active measures. Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo, for example, both led successful student election campaign referendums in the late 1990's and early 2000's that added financial levies on to each and every student's enrolment fees to facilitate more sponsorships.[50] Others, like the University of Waterloo's affiliate St. Paul's University College,

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[47] Schaland, 8-9.

[48] *Id.*

[49] Maria Yau, "Refugee Students in Toronto Schools," *Refuge*, vol. 15, no. 5 (1996): 13-14.

[50] Peter Madaka, "Donate to Refugees in WUSC Referendum," *The Cord Weekly,* vol. 44, no. 21 (2004): 9.

used their residence buildings as support structures and housing options for recently arrived SRP students.[51]

The universities of the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region were less active in responding to refugees during the same period for obvious reasons. The start of the 1990's brought about the fall of the Berlin Wall, the widespread collapse of international Communism, and the reunification of Germany, all three of which seriously impacted the state of affairs in Berlin and its surrounding communities. With Berlin reinstated as the capital of a once again united Germany on October 3rd, 1990, the city itself reformed as a single entity, at least in theory.[52] According to at least one prominent theorist on the topic, it would take many more years for the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region to culturally reintegrate as a single entity.[53] One constant was Chancellor Kohl, who retained his position when the county was reunited. Despite the changing situation, the more staunch policies towards refugees that Kohl had developed in the previous decade remained. In the first few years after reunification, more than 1.5 million individuals applied for asylum status in Germany, many of whom came from former Soviet territories.[54] Not wanting to encourage violence against refugees and seeking to prevent the growing rise of extremist parties, Kohl restricted the constitutional right to asylum in 1992 in the hopes of curtailing the surge for resettlement.[55] Naturally, refugee immigration rates plummeted.

In response to this unfolding crisis, German higher education institutions began championing a large portion of the refugee cause. A number of programs were formed, among them the *Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative* (DAFI), which was founded in 1992.[56] Pioneered by the Auswärtiges Amt (foreign office) and consulted on by several leading

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[51] St. Paul's University College, "Student Refugee Program," *University of Waterloo*, web. https://uwaterloo.ca/stpauls/shaping-world/student-refugee-program.

[52] Roland Freudenstein, "After the Wall: competing narratives of Germany's unification 20 years after the *Wende*," *European View*, vol. 8, no. 1 (2009): 264.

[53] *Ibid*., 268-269.

[54] Bernhard Streitwieser and Lukas Brück, "Competing Motivations in Germany's Higher Education Response to the 'Refugee Crisis,'" *Refuge*, vol. 34, no. 2 (2018): 38.

[55] Christin Hess and Simon Green, "Introduction: The Changing Politics and Policies of Migration in Germany," *German Politics*, vol. 25, no. 3 (2016): 318.

[56] Streitwieser, Brück, Moody and Taylor, 236.

academics—many of whom came from Berlin universities—the DAFI program has gone on to sponsor 15,000 refugee students, a number that would not be possible without the continued support of German university students.[57] This is at least according to the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees, Fillipo Grandi, who gave a recent keynote address on the topic at Berlin's Freie Universität.[58]

2.4 The New Crisis

All of these developments set two important precedents for the ensuing refugee crisis that began shortly after the onset of the Syrian Civil War in 2011. Firstly, these historical evolutions paved the way for universities in both regions having an increasingly important role in creating refugee responses and engaging with political and societal narratives related to newcomers. Secondly, this heightened and continuing interaction between higher education institutions, refugees, and the greater societies around them fuelled an ongoing transformation of discourse that encouraged more acute awareness to such global issues across university campuses.

Unlike some of the historical precedents, however, the new Syrian crisis is substantially different. For starters, the sheer volume of refugees created as a result of the Syrian Refugee Crisis is truly astronomical in comparison to previously cited cases. In the Southeast Asia example, roughly 1.5 million individuals were resettled as a consequence of conflict. In the case of Syria, the number of displaced individuals is nearly four times that amount, with numbers still predicted to rise.[59] That is to say nothing of the changing nature of conflict and response, which has undergone rapid change—both actual and perceived—since *9/11*. At no point in the 1980's were large swathes of the public concerned that newly arrived Vietnamese refugees might act as 'sleeper agents' or domestic terrorists. Since *9/11*, however, the notion that refugees might carry

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[57] UNHCR, *Annual Report on the DAFI Programme [Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative]* (Geneva: Publication Offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010), 4.

[58] Matthew Mpoke Bigg, "Students can play a vital role in advocating for refugees – UNHCR chief," *UNHCR*, web. https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2019/6/5d09683e4/students-play-vital-role-advocating-refugees-unhcr-chief.html.

[59] Justin Huynh, "Tales of the Boat People: Comparing Refugee Resettlement in the Vietnamese and Syrian Refugee Crises," *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, vol. 48, no. 2 (2017): 236.

out radical action upon arrival is a real concern. Whether or not that notion is grounded in truth or shaped by politicians and publics who believe it true, the outcome has resulted in a very different environment for the international community.

In consequence, policies from other periods have changed. In Canada, for example, the *Immigration Act* that facilitated refugees and asylum seekers in earlier years was replaced by the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* in 2002, mostly as a way to better reflect the post *9/11* world.[60] More broadly, collective responses have also decreased. Unlike refugees coming from Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam in the late 1970's and the early 1980's—when the *Comprehensive Plan of Action* or the *Orderly Departure Program* strategized the movement of refugees out of conflict zones—the Syrian crisis has seen no such united resettlement policy from the international community.[61]

Despite change, two major themes have remained from earlier precedents. The first is that discourse from leaders in both countries have continued to set the refugee agenda. In Germany, Chancellor Merkel's 'open-door policy' and unabashed support for migrants has meant that refugees have moved into Germany at an accelerated and much larger rate than in earlier crises.[62] Like Chancellor Schmidt, Merkel's work has encouraged heightened engagement with migrants. Yet like Chancellor Schmidt, Merkel's discourse has also inspired a growing wave of *Überfremdung* and nationalist sentiment. In Canada, similar consistency has remained too. Like Mulroney, Canada's Prime Minster Justin Trudeau has championed refugee resettlement: one of his first acts after assuming office in late 2015 was to drastically increase the number of asylum seekers from Syria that could be granted status into the country.[63] The second constant has been the role of universities in providing meaningful response. Despite the changing nature of integration, refugees, and migration crises, universities in both the Toronto-Waterloo Region

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[60] The Department of Justice, "Immigration and Refugee Protection Act," *Government of Canada*, November 1, 2001, web. https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-2.5/fulltext.html.

[61] Huynh, 235.

[62] Henry Chu, "Germany's open-door policy in migrant crisis casts nation in a new light," *The Los Angeles Times*, September 7, 2015, web. https://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-germany-migrant-help-20150907-story.html.

[63] Ian Austen, "In Canada, Justin Trudeau Says Refugees Are Welcome," *The New York Times*, January 28, 2017, web. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/28/world/canada/justin-trudeau-trump-refugee-ban.html.

Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region have continued to play an important role in the new Syrian Refugee Crisis. The question, therefore, is how.

III

Responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis

3.1 Institutions of the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region

Within the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor lies six public major universities, many of which have smaller university-colleges associated with them. The list of institutions includes the University of Guelph, Ryerson University, the University of Toronto, the University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University, and York University. In the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region, the number of major pubic universities is eight: Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Technische Universität Berlin, Universität der Künste Berlin, the University of Potsdam, Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft, Beuth Hochschule für Technik Berlin, and Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht (BSEL). Although each of these institutions vary in terms of size, academic culture, and endowment, all have demonstrated at least some form of meaningful engagement in response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, either in the past or through some form of ongoing process.

The framework for analyzing these various responses could follow a structure not too dissimilar from the following one. In the first step, university-based responses could be identified and arranged. Broad conclusions and assumptions would be made and more specific details of each program would be excluded for the sake of streamlining categorical organization that would make theoretical analysis simpler. In the second stage, the scholar could apply a theoretical framework to these simplified investigations—either Knight and De Wit's approach or Zdziarski, Dunkel, and Rollo's model—in an attempt to explain what a policy, practice, or program might say about a university or society on a more conceptual basis. Finally, the scholar could look at these theoretical findings to make generous assumptions about a region's perceived rationale for action, the position that universities might sit at on a hypothetical timeline of response, or some other imagined inference.

This approach would be flawed for a number of reasons. To begin with, most of these programs have received little to no scholarly attention prior to this investigation. As such, it is important to ensure details are brought to light and provided in one place so that scholars may use them as a basis for further investigation in the future. Secondly, theoretical frameworks such as Knight and De Wit's or Zdziarski, Dunkel, and Rollo's have been demonstrated in chapter 1 to be not only awkwardly suited for an investigation into efficacy, but somewhat fragile theories/ frameworks to begin with. Instead, this chapter will follow mostly a survey structure: each institution and its programs related to the Syrian Refugee Crisis will be thoroughly explored. Analyzing each university and its response(s) is critically important: it establishes a base of understanding for which a discussion on best policies and practices can be later developed and nuanced. It always sets the stage for understanding how public discourses might have shaped these responses.

3.2 The 'Middleman': The University of Guelph

The city of Guelph occupies a middle position within the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor (*figure 3.1*). Straddling the main highway between the urban centres of Toronto and the

Waterloo Region, Guelph is amongst the smaller major municipalities that make up the region. That said, it has not been idle. At the University of Guelph, much of the response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis has been channeled through their own institution's chapter of WUSC and its SRP programming. Through this program, the university and its associated WUSC team of student volunteers have facilitated the sponsorship of two Syrian refugees, both of whom arrived at the university in the winter of 2016.[64] The University of Guelph's SRP model provides coverage for tuition, food, and residence costs during the first year of a four year program, after which only tuition is covered.[65] To compensate, the model operates with the assumption that refugee students within the program will cover the remaining necessary costs for the duration of their studies, in addition to being bolstered by the university's waiving of international tuition fees and student referendums.[66]

Figure 3.1: The Location of Guelph and its university in between some of the major urban centres of the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor.

Other responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis from the University of Guelph are more scholarly in nature. One of these cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary projects looks mostly at how newly arrived Syrians engage with Canadian society and the labour market, establishing

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[64] University of Guelph News Service, "U of G to Sponsor Syrian Refugee Students," *University of Guelph*, October 21, 2015, web. https://news.uoguelph.ca/2015/10/u-of-g-to-sponsor-syrian-refugee-students/.

[65] *Id*.

[66] University of Guelph, "Student Refugee Resettlement," *University of Guelph*, web. http://uofg.convio.net/site/TR?fr_id=1973&pg=entry.

some core recommendations for how regional decision makers can improve integration services.[67] Another of these projects seeks to establish story-sharing groups in local communities in an effort to improve mental health, mitigate feelings of loneliness, and inspire inclusive practices.[68] Finally, University of Guelph academics have established a handbook for refugee sponsorship that details how local groups who sponsor refugees can successfully integrate newly arrived Syrians into the surrounding Guelph-Wellington County. Among the numerous tips in this detailed handbook are recommendations for how Syrian refugees might be integrated into local universities, including strategies for transferring credits, improving language test scores, and applying to institutions.[69]

3.3 Tri-City, Dual Responses: Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo

The *Tri-City* conglomerate of Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo contains two universities, both of which have their main campuses less than one kilometre away from one another in the bustling tech hub of Waterloo. Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Waterloo have both taken considerable action in light of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, employing some unique approaches that have garnered widespread support and attention (*figure 3.2*).

At Wilfrid Laurier University, action has come in several formats. One of the earliest projects established was a joint initiative with the locally based Mennonite Central Committee to sponsor three Syrian refugee families for resettlement in the surrounding community.[70] According to a press release from the university, more than 70 students, staff, and faculty were part of the program, providing a variety of support services necessary for integration.[71] Other

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[67] University of Guelph Office of Research, *Immigration and Diversity: Shaping Canada's Future* (Guelph: University of Guelph Press: 2017), 3.

[68] *Id*.

[69] Kevin De Leon and Caroline Duvieusart-Déry, *Handbook for Refugee Sponsoring Groups: Tips and local resources to support sponsors in Guelph-Wellington* (Guelph: Community Engagement Scholarship Institute, 2016), 24-25.

[70] Wilfrid Laurier University Department of Communications and Public Affairs, "Laurier to Sponsor Syrian Refugee Families," *Wilfrid Laurier University*, November 10, 2015, web. https://www.wlu.ca/news/news-releases/2015/nov/laurier-to-sponsor-syrian-refugee-families.html.

[71] *Id.*

assistance work has come from the Wilfrid Laurier University-based International Students Overcoming War Educational Initiative (ISOW), a unique student initiative that according to its website "seeks to meaningfully respond to the devastating impacts of war by providing full scholarships to students from conflict areas."[72] Since its inception in the classroom in 2013, the program has gone on to sponsor 14 students from Syria in various undergraduate and graduate programs, 4 of whom have thus far completed their studies.[73] What makes such programming unique in comparison to other university-based responses in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor is the structure of the organization. Unlike other university-based programs—which either come directly from the administration or rely on local branches of often larger organizations who dictate a large portion of the decision making—ISOW is independent. It is student-founded, student-funded, and student-led, with the majority of executive ruling decided upon by a student volunteer management team.[74] It also has widespread academic support: a number of specially designed courses at Wilfrid Laurier University have been developed to expand the abilities of the ISOW initiative and work towards greater integration of Syrian refugee communities.[75]

The University of Waterloo's comparably larger size has resulted in an even larger number of university-based responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. According to a 2015 press statement issued by the university's President and Vice-Chancellor Feridun Hamdullahpur, the university had or planned to encourage a number of campus initiatives, including: increased support for their WUSC chapter; a partnership with the locally based Waterloo Region Welcome Refugees Organization; student volunteer opportunities for working with newly arrived Syrian refugees; a donation drive led by the university's Society of Arab Students; 'refugee relief kits' designed, sponsored, and led by the Faculty of Arts; and a memorandum of understanding with

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[72] International Students Overcoming War Educational Initiative, "About Us," *ISOW*, 2019, web. https://www.isow.ca.

[73] Alexandra Burza, "Student-funded scholarship helps Syrian student graduate from Wilfrid Laurier," *CBC News*, June 11, 2019, web. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/students-overcoming-war-scholarship-1.5165349.

[74] Gavin Brockett, Faith Laverty and Areej Hussein, *ISOW Annual Report: 2017-2018* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2018), 2.

[75] Gavin Brockett and Stephanie Lee, *ISOW Strategic Plan: 2020-2025* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2019), 19.

then governor general David Johnston to ensure Syrian students coming from abroad would be eligible for the universities scholarships and international endowments. Furthermore, in 2016 Renison University College, an affiliate of the University of the Waterloo, received a generous donation that allowed the establishment of a Syrian refugee scholarship aimed at providing financial assistance for practical English language courses. According to the university's Student Services Coordinator, the establishment of the Syrian refugee scholarship and the subsequent interview process afforded university instructors tangible and valuable information on integration challenges that could be used to design future university policy for refugee students.[76]

Figure 3.2: The Location of Wilfrid Laurier University (1) and the University of Waterloo (2) within the Tri-City conglomerate. Their proximity to one another is particularly noticeable in a community of such geographical spread.

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[76] AJ Dixon, "Selection process for Syrian Refugee Scholarship proves an eye-opening experience for Renison instructors," *University of Waterloo*, August 8, 2016, web. https://uwaterloo.ca/renison/syrian-refugee-english-language-scholarship.

3.4 The Big Players: Ryerson University, the University of Toronto, and York University

The city of Toronto is by far the largest urban centre within the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor. So too are its universities. The University of Toronto, for example, has over 60,000 undergraduate students spread across eleven substantially autonomous colleges and two satellite campuses. Although not necessitated, such size often brings with it an increase in resources, services, and human capital that can be employed in any given scenario. In the case of the Syrian Refugee Crisis, this has almost certainly been true across the board for Ryerson University, the University of Toronto, and York University (*figure 3.3*).

One of the most major and unique examples of programming stemming from the city of Toronto's institutions is the *Lifeline Syria* project, launched in 2015. Committed to helping Syrian refugees settle in Canada, all of three Toronto's universities have since signed on as active partners in the project to varying degrees. Ryerson University, for example, became a pioneering partner in the project in mid-2015 with the goal of establishing 11 teams of university students, staff, and faculty that would privately sponsor Syrian refugees.[77] Its goals were quickly surpassed by September of that same year: 25 different teams were formed allowing some 100 Syrian refugees to be sponsored to Canada and integrated into the Greater Toronto Area.[78] With the addition of the University of Toronto and York University, the project was able to grow in size to 5,500 donors, over 1,000 volunteers, and a professional staff that facilitated the sponsor of over 500 Syrian refugees by 2017.[79] *Lifeline Syria* also expanded to include professional development for volunteers that would enhance their skills in providing integration services, including the creation of an 80 page handbook designed by a group of Ryerson University student researchers and academics from all three Toronto-based higher education institutions.[80] In comparison to other university-based responses in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor, *Lifeline Syria* is

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[77] Ryerson International, *Lifeline Syria: 2016 Year in Review* (Toronto: Ryerson University Office of the Vice-President, Research & Innovation, 2017), 1.

[78] *Id.*

[79] *Id.*

[80] Alexandra Kotyk, Olga Radchenko, Anna Lundkvist, Aaron Berhane, Teri Hoang and Giovanna Riccio, *Sponsorship Handbook* (Toronto: Lifeline Syria, 2016), 7.

unique due the cross-campus nature of its existence, which encourages active collaboration between the different universities and their sponsorship teams.
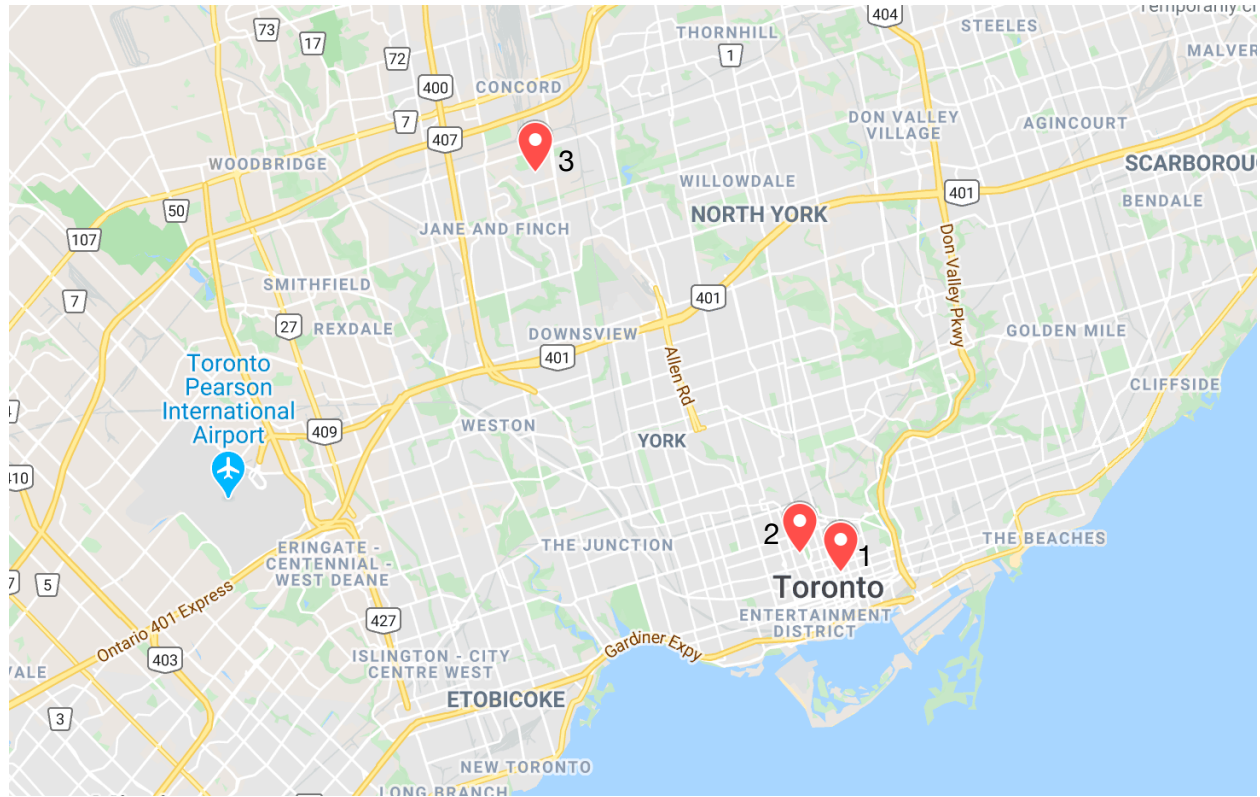

Figure 3.3: Ryerson University (1) and the University of Toronto (2) are considered part of Downtown Toronto. York University (3) is further north, nearer the outskirts of the city's limits. These three institutions make up around two thirds of the entire Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor's student population.

A large portion of the University of Toronto's response has been centred around the notion of bursaries. In response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, the university took active measures to expand its *Scholar-at-Risk* bursary, a monetary award that targets at risk students. The University of Toronto pledged to match donations up to a total of 500,000 dollars with the goal of establishing 100 bursaries of 10,000 dollars each for Syrian students in particular who have seen their access to education disrupted by conflict.[81]

York University approached the Syrian Refugee Crisis from an angle of particular expertise: the institution is home to the largest concentration of migration and refugee academics

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[81] Meric Gertler, "Students and Scholars at Risk," *University of Toronto*, 2017, web. https://www.president.utoronto.ca/students-and-scholars-at-risk.

anywhere in North America.[82] One example of action was its 2016 expansion of the WUSC program on its main campus. York University agreed to a number of provision that would allow its WUSC SRP program to expand, including a four year tuition waiver for refugee students, a residence fee waiver for the first year of study that includes a basic meal plan, and guaranteed access to work-study positions for the duration of their studies.[83] Several educational movements were also established. While the *Refugees Welcome Here* campaign sought to lobby the federal government into accepting more Syrian refugees, both the 2018 held International Refugee Rights Conference and the The National Youth Action Gathering sought to bring community stakeholders into the conversation about universities and Syrian refugees.[84] Student clubs on York University's campuses were a similarly important part of this process, namely the Centre for Refugee Studies Student Caucus, the Mosaic Institute's *UofMosaic Fellowship Program*, and Refugee Health Outreach, all of whom have established some form of programming aimed at integrating refugees in response to their university's heightened agenda regarding new Syrians in Canada.[85]

3.5 A Berlin Case Study: Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht

In 2017, Bernhard Streitwieser, Lukas Brück, Rachel Moody, and Margaret Taylor conducted a pioneering study into the Syrian Refugee Crisis response efforts being carried out by three rather important and prestigious institutions of higher education in Berlin. Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht were the primary focus of this study, particularly because the former two have an especially important

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[82] York University, "Syria Response and Refugee Initiative (2015-2019)," *York University*, web. https://refugees.info.yorku.ca.

[83] York University, "WUSC Refugee Sponsorship," *York University*, web. https://refugees.info.yorku.ca/wusc-refugee-sponsorship/.

[84] Y File, "Two prominent conferences on refugee rights and newcomer youth held at Keele Campus," *York University*, July 18, 2018, web. https://yfile.news.yorku.ca/2018/07/18/two-prominent-conferences-on-refugee-rights-and-newcomer-youth-held-at-keele-campus/.

[85] York University, "Student Initiatives/Groups," *York University*, web. https://refugees.info.yorku.ca/student-initiatives-groups/.

distinction among Berlin universities: in addition to being the two largest universities in the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region, they also are the only two in the region to be part of the elite German *Exzellenzinitiative*, a council of exceptional calibre German universities (*figure 3.4*).[86] The aim of the study was to examine how each of these Berlin-based universities has sought to address the Syrian Refugee Crisis through the application of Zdziarski, Dunkel, and Rollo's methodological framework.[87]

Figure 3.4: While Freie Universität Berlin (1) and Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht (2) lay on territory once part of West Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (3) occupies a location at the centre of what once was East Berlin. Despite their distinct histories, the universities now share a common cause in assisting refugees.

Streitwieser and his colleagues were particularly interested in understanding where the responses of these three Berlin-based fell within the Response and Recovery stages of Zdziarski, Dunkel, and Rollo's model. To do so, the authors of the study selected a number of common key components among each university and analyzed them in detail, ranging from broad institutional structures to more specific programs. Their list included assisted entry requirements, financing,

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[86] Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, "Excellence Initiative (2005-2017/19)," *DFG*, June 17, 2019, web. https://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes/excellence_initiative/.

[87] Streitwieser, Brück, Moody and Taylor, 236.

campus services, preparatory programming, peer mentoring and academic mentoring, psychological support, equitable admissions, and strategies for addressing xenophobia. Using the list, the authors then explored to what degree each university had services in place under each category and recorded the results.

The study yielded a number of important conclusions about how some universities in the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region are responding to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Firstly, their research suggests that Freie Universität Berlin has the most programming in place designed to respond to the influx of refugees. While Freie Universität Berlin had some form of service in place for each of the eight categories outlined, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin appeared to have the least: programming exists in only three of the stated classifications.[88] Secondly, the results of the study suggest that peer mentoring through 'buddy programming' is a widespread response. In essence, this 'buddy programming' is a set of student-led cultural excursions, social networking events, information generating sessions, and similar peer support activities that allow native-German volunteers to help in the transition and integration processes of Syrian refugee students at their respective institutions.[89] The Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin *Buddy Program*, for example, is designed—according to their website—for refugees and other international students to have an easier transition into university by "encourage[ing] them to meet, laugh, talk, listen, and participate in whatever clubs, teams or activities they wish. By doing this, an important information resource is created for both parties."[90]

The study also revealed that preparatory programming being offered by Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht is another important response common to all three institutions. The nature of these preparatory programs, however, is different at each institution. At the Freie Universität Berlin, for example, Streitwieser and his colleagues pointed out that the university is offering free introductory programs for newly arrived Syrian refugees that includes counselling in Arabic, academic advising, and

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[88] Streitwieser, Brück, Moody and Taylor, 244.

[89] *Ibid*., 242.

[90] Wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Fakultät, "Buddy Program," *Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*, June 17, 2016, web. https://www.wiwi.hu-berlin.de/de/international/buddy.

specially designed courses in German language, culture, and politics.[91] The Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht, on the other hand, operates a program called *Join Us and Study* where Syrian refugees are provided with instruction in fields such as economics, history, and most importantly language instruction over a semester-long period.[92] Although the study does not touch on preparatory activities at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin due to a lack of such programming in English, additional research does suggest that such a program indeed exists, albeit in German. The *HU4Refugees* program, beginning in every summer semester, allows refugees to attend courses and take exams without official enrolment; an immersive trial, so to speak, before a particular Syrian refugee might decide to become a full fledged student.[93]

Above all, the case study illustrates a core characteristic regarding the nature of the university response from some institutions in the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region. Unlike a number of responses in Canada—which saw campuses partner with exterior organizations or financially sponsor refugees—Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht appear to be more specifically focused with providing on-campus support mechanisms that are specifically designed to make transition and integration for Syrian refugee students less of an arduous process.

3.6 Responses From the Capital Region: Other Berlin/Brandenburg University Reactions

Other universities within the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region have shown similar commitment to providing measured response to the influx of refugees from Syria (*figure 3.5*). At the Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft, for example, university administrators have responded to the Syrian Refugee Crisis by adjusting the way in which they handle university admissions. This has involved a number of measures, including being more acutely aware of the struggles that Syrian refugee students might face as they apply to programs at the university.

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[91] Streitwieser, Brück, Moody and Taylor, 241.

[92] *Id*.

[93] Stabsstelle Career Center & Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung, "HU4Refugees," *Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*, February 14, 2020, web. https://www.hu-berlin.de/de/hu/verwaltung/ccww/angebote-fuer-gefluechtete/workshops/ HU4Refugees.

Among these challenges are translation difficulties, transferable credits, timing requirements, and similar hurdles. In response, Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft has amended its practices to approach the issue on a more case by case basis. In the words of a Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft administrator, "We work closely with uni-assist; we check credentials, they need to be correctly translated and proper, they need required signatures, but we look at every person on a case by case basis too, we try to go beyond bureaucracy as best we can."[94]
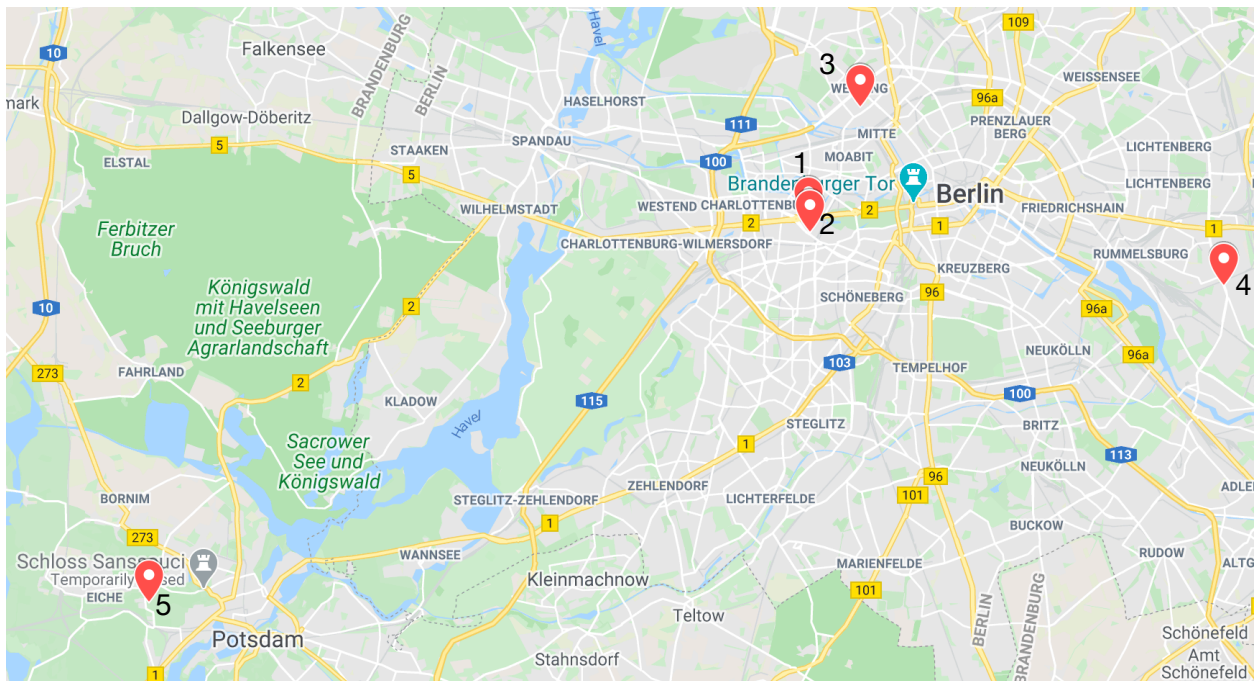

Figure 3.5: The other universities of the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region: Technische Universität Berlin (1), Universität der Künste Berlin (2), Beuth Hochschule für Technik Berlin (3), Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft (4), and the University of Potsdam (5). All of the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region public universities lie less than 40 kilometres from Berlin's city centre.

The *Deutscher Akademischer Austauchdienst* (DAAD), known in English as the *German Academic Exchange*, has played a considerable role in helping a number of Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region based public universities respond to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Beginning at the end of 2015, DAAD and the Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (Germany Federal Ministry of Education and Research) began funding the *Integra* program, an educational stimulus designed to respond to the needs of the growing Syrian refugee population. Regardless of their residence status, Syrian refugees based in Germany could join the program at a number

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[94] Streitwieser, Schmidt, Brück and Gläsener, 8.

of Berlin/Brandenburg institutions with the aim of having them prepared to enter a degree program as soon as possible with the proper requirements and strategies for success.[95] Broadly, the *Integra* program is designed to help "the institutions set up or expand their range of language and special courses, which are delivered as preparatory courses or as courses that run alongside degree programmes."[96] Of course, institutions themselves have some leeway in what these specialized courses and languages might look like. For administrators at Beuth Hochschule für Technik Berlin, such programming is particularly important to ensure that refugees do not get apprehensive about, tangled in, or unnoticed by the somewhat daunting bureaucratic structures that German higher education institutions are known for. As a student counselling officer at Beuth Hochschule für Technik Berlin put it, "bureaucracy does not create quality; it is hampering the individual."[97]

At the University of Potsdam, a rather unique response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis has manifested itself in the form of teacher training. Beginning in 2016, the university designed and implemented a qualification program for Syrian refugees with a professional teaching background. Overall, the objective of the program is to provide the necessary skills required for entry into the Brandenburg public education system. During the 18-month program, participants are provided with language training, pedagogical qualifications, cultural coaching, strategies for overcoming structural challenges in the education system, occupational consulting, introductory knowledge on Brandenburg lesson design, an acquaintance with a number of schools in the Brandenburg region, and overall professional development.[98] Upon completion of the program, participants are prepared to enter the Brandenburg education system for a two year period as either teaching assistants or pedagogical teaching help, positions which could ultimately lead to employment as full time teachers.[99] In the case of the University of Potsdam, mobilizing

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[95] Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, *The Integration of Refugees at German Higher Education Institutions: Findings from Higher Education Programmes for Refugees* (Bonn: DAAD, 2017), 10.

[96] *Id.*

[97] Streitwieser, Schmidt, Brück and Gläsener, 7.

[98] Diana González Olivo, "Objectives and target group," *Centre for Teacher Training and Research*, June 11, 2019, web. https://www.uni-potsdam.de/en/zelb/refugee-teachers-program/program-overview-refugee-teachers-program.html.

[99] *Id*.

previous qualifications into a proliferation of education is seen as one of the most effective policies towards enhancing the integration success among newly arrived Syrian refugees.

A final example of response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis can been at Universität der Künste Berlin. Europe's largest university of art, Universität der Künste Berlin has mobilized art as a form of meaningfully interacting with the Syrian refugee community. Through their *Common Ground* program, Universität der Künste Berlin has hosted a number of joint artistic-social projects aimed at fostering community engagement, understanding, and artistic expression. Although several smaller initiative make up the *Common Ground* program, arguably one of the most impactful is the *Common Ground Lab*, an artistic collective where artists—be they of a Syrian refugee background or otherwise—can establish collaborations or share work.[100] The *Common Ground Lab* has given particular focus to Syrian refugee artists over the past several years, allowing them to express their artistic work through art festivals such as the *Unframed Festival* in the Spring of 2019 and the *Flight of the Butterflies* festival in the summer of 2019.[101] These more artistic forms of engagement are buttressed by Universität der Künste Berlin's delivery of an ongoing preparatory program called *Fit für die Künste*, courses that allow Syrian refugee students to develop study skills, languages for special purposes, and intercultural competency.[102]

3.7 A Mixed Bag: A Summary of the Various Responses

As the above analysis suggests, the level of response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis among public universities in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and in the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region is quite staggering. That said, the method and scope of the response varies significantly. Some are entirely academic; others not necessarily academic at all. A few programs have seen funding provided by federal governments; others have produced their revenue streams

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[100] Universität der Künste Berlin, "Current Projects," *Universität der Künste Berlin*, web. https://www.udk-berlin.de/en/university/commitment-to-refugees/current-projects/.

[101] Universität der Künste Berlin, web.

[102] *Id.*

entirely through fundraising efforts. While some action has come directly from processes within the university administration, another set of projects have been inspired by student voices on campuses. As the above evidence suggests, there appears to be a higher sense of commonality among universities in major urban centres like Toronto or Berlin than with those in surrounding smaller urban centres. Proximity, shared city cultures, and the central role major urban centres play in the refugee response as a whole are likely major factors that explain this phenomenon.

Discourse concerning refugees has and does play a major role in how these responses are carried out. Take for example the various 'buddy programs' emanating from a large number of the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region institutions. The very use of the term 'buddy' suggests a public discourse that gives mutual constitution to both native and newcomer. This discourse could be inspired by the welcoming and positive language of Angela Merkel or by historical precedent at a particular higher education institution. Regardless, the employment of 'buddy' language is not random; such discourse has been both consciously and unconsciously constructed through an ongoing interaction between university refugee programs, political/ societal narratives, and refugees themselves. The same is true for virtually every other program described in this chapter.

Discourse and interaction, it would seem, plays a major role in how these policies, practices, and programs are designed and implemented. This statement is equally true when it comes to factors that limit response, which will be explored in the next chapter.

IV

Limitations of the University Response

4.1 A Limited Response? Addressing the Shortcomings of University Action

Chapter 3 outlined in detail a large swathe of the university-based responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis that have come out of universities in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region over recent years. As demonstrated and noted, the process of discourse and interaction has played an important role in shaping these policies, practices, and programs. This is true of not only positive meaning, but negative meaning as well. In a number of instances, higher education institutions in both regions have seen their ability to act strained by the very sets of discourses that allow programming for refugees to manifest itself in the first place. This is because discourse is a neutral conception; the meaning behind a particular entity or concept can be influenced in one direction or another depending on how language is used.[103]

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[103] Ghica, 4.

The previous chapter demonstrated some of the positive work that has come out of universities due to a discourse influenced by language and interaction that perceives refugees and their integration in a positive light. There is, however, another set of discourse in both sample regions that has come to give negative meaning to the notions of refugees. In light of this negative meaning, a number of constraints have manifested themselves. These constraints have had a major impact in limiting how universities can respond to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Some of these constraints are direct actions or products of negative discourse surrounding refugees. Others play an important role in the interaction process that can fuel negative discourse. This chapter will seek to highlight both and the significant role they have played in shaping response.

4.2 The Price of Education: Financial Constraints

Financial considerations have been a major factor limiting how universities can respond to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. This is especially true in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor where one of the primary methods of response—scholarship or other financial aid—is considerably expensive. Take one of the responses from Wilfrid Laurier University, the ISOW initiative, as a key example. The main piece of programming from ISOW is its scholarship program, one of the only forms of financial aid from the region that comes as a 'full scholarship' (i.e. covers tuition costs in addition to living costs for the duration of studies). According to the organization's published estimates, each scholarship is valued at approximately $47,410 CAD annually, a number that skyrockets to roughly $600,000 CAD a year total considering 13 individuals are currently receiving the scholarship.[104] Like other scholarships coming from the University of Guelph or the University of Waterloo, these numbers are offset by university tuition waivers and secondary partners.[105] That does not take away from the fact that scholarships to Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor universities are not cheap and require large revenue streams to fund. In Germany most public institutions do not charge tuition fee so this concern is less relevant.

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[104] Brockett and Lee, 5.

[105] University of Guelph News Service, web.

Refugee sponsorship is also highly expensive. Numbers vary based on the size of the family unit, but projections from the Canadian governments estimate the costs associated with sponsoring a Syrian refugee family of four for one year to be $28,700 CAD.[106] The estimates for just one individual is also rather high: $16,500 CAD annually as of the most recent calculations.[107] In the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region, refugee sponsorship from universities appears to be non-existence, likely influenced in large part by the cost that comes with doing so. As information from an International Catholic Migration Commission Europe report suggests, the costs associated with refugee sponsorship in Germany is approximately €900 per month per person, or €43,200 per annum for a family of four assuming all require the full stipend.[108] In both cases, funding for these programs usually comes from donations. The Toronto-based *Lifeline Syria*, for example, had raise $4.5 million CAD for the purposes of refugee sponsorship by 2017.[109] Yet donation-based funding is not necessarily the most reliable of revenue streams. According to a report on charitable practices, donations rates amongst Canadians has steadily declined since 2006; as much as 16 percent in some income categories.[110]

These financial constraints play an important role in the interaction that can lead to the creation of negative discourse. To suggest that the high monetary costs associated with refugees are somehow artificially inflated as consequence of negative discourse would be a rather bold claim. To argue, however, that these high costs might play into the creation of a set of meanings that associate refugees with notions of expensiveness or fiscally burdensome is fairly justifiable. In 2018, for example, a wave of newspaper headlines in Canada argued that Syrian refugees were "too costly."[111] This is an important consideration: although not intentionally negative, some

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[106] Government of Canada, "Guide for Groups of Five to privately sponsor refugees (IMM 2200)," *Government of Canada*, December 23, 2019, web. https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/application/application-forms-guides/guide-sponsor-refugee-groups-five.html#costtables.

[107] *Id.*

[108] ICMC Europe, *Private Sponsorship in Europe: Expanding Complementary Pathways for Refugee Resettlement* (Geneva: International Catholic Migration Commission, 2017), 29.

[109] Ryerson International, 4.

[110] Canada Helps Research Team, *The Giving Report 2018* (Toronto: Canada Helps, 2018), 6.

[111] Jean-Nicolas Beuze, "Rethinking the Cost of Welcoming Refugees," *Ipolitics*, December 21, 2018, web. https://ipolitics.ca/2018/12/21/rethinking-the-cost-of-welcoming-refugees/.

factors like finance have come to have at least some influence in the creation of negative meaning.

4.3 "There Could be Less Bureaucracy": Bureaucratic Constraints

Another barrier limiting the higher education response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis is—inadvertently—the university administrations themselves. Like many institutions of considerable size, universities are structured on models of bureaucracy. These bureaucratic structures allow university to effectively function, but they can also be daunting. In the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region, some universities administrators have blamed the complexity of their system on some of the shortcomings of their refugee integration programming. One administrator has blamed the lack of participation in their preparatory programming on contradictory and opaque features within the university's bureaucracy; another from Freie Universität Berlin complained that "some students have been through so much bureaucracy. They are in a way traumatized from where they came from, and also exhausted from the administration process here. There could be less bureaucracy."[112] One study has noted that the bureaucracies of Berlin/Brandenburg educational institutions are not noted for not having a 'welcoming culture,' a conclusion that suggests the large and cumbersome administrators are themselves off putting and potentially part of the problem.[113]

The structure of these administrations can also hamper the ability to effectively make decisions. The hindrance was summed up quite effectively by a working group of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) at a conference in the 1980's: ".... among the obstacles to improved [university] management were the extreme participatory decision-making structures inaugurated in the late 1960's . . . . which give small groups the power un-reasonably to block decisions that are in the interests of their institutions or

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[112] Streitwieser, Schmidt, Brück and Gläsener, 7.

[113] *Ibid.*, 11-12.

of the system as a whole."[114] Critiques have also been levelled at the sheer size of administrations. David Lawless, for example, noted in 1982 that a large number of Canadian universities employed administrative staffs of 3,000 or more; a number that has surely grown as universities have continually expanded their enrolment numbers.[115] More staff does not necessarily mean more focus. In fact, as staffs grow larger, their focuses expand from the micro to the macro. Meaningful projects that respond to global challenges can get lost in the process: they fizzle out or are only realized once the issues has disappeared from view.

These bureaucratic constraints shape and have been shaped by the process of interaction between refugees, universities, and their surrounding societies. Like financial constraints, these bureaucratic limitations have not necessarily been created for nefarious purposes. Yet there is potential that such structures have encouraged negative discourse towards the creation of university response. Take as an example a driven entrepreneurial student that might have a brilliant action plan that would allow their university to sponsor 25 Syrian refugees. Having seen and heard how complex their university's administration structure is, they might give up hope of their vision ever being implemented. Said student might then go tell friends (who volunteered to help) that implementing the project is simply not possible and that the university cannot help. Through this interaction, that student just inadvertently fuelled a discourse, one where the meaning behind university action and Syrian refugees is regarded as negative.

4.4 Whose Jurisdiction?: Political Constraints

Universities responding to challenges like the Syrian Refugee Crisis can also find themselves constrained by the political structures that bind them. Universities in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor have experienced this reality all to well in recent months. When the UN updated its Sustainable Development Goals to included "equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university,"

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[114] David J. Lawless, "The Process of Decision Making in Universities," *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 12, no. 3 (1982): 2.

[115] *Ibid*., 3.

Canada was fully onboard; such a shifting focus could allow Syrian refugees to become more thoroughly integrated through the process of university.[116] In response, Canada unveiled its *International Education Strategy*, a five year plan that spans three federal ministries and has among other mandates a desire to increase scholarships for those in need and attract high calibre international talent.[117] Syrian refugees would most certainly qualify to be part of this programming.

The problem, however, is the fact that universities in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor fall under the jurisdiction of provincial legislation. Through a series of Strategic Mandate Agreements, universities and the Ontario Legislature have agreed upon specific expectations of what universities should do and how they should act.[118] In contrast to the left-leaning, internationally driven federal government currently in power, the Ontario government is at present time controlled by an inward focused, fiscally conservative political party that possesses a rather pessimistic discourse towards refugees. In 2019, for example, their provincial budget decided to cut all financial support for refugees needing legal fees.[119] The region's universities thus face a predicament: they desire meaningful opportunities to invest their emergency response resources in line with a shifting focus on tertiary education but both fear and in many cases are unable to challenge provincial values, discourse, and decision making.

Germany has faced similar challenges. The Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region contains within its boundaries two *Bundesländer* (federated counties): the City State of Berlin and the Federal State of Brandenburg. It also houses two capitals, Germany's federal capital (Berlin) and Brandenburg's state capital (Potsdam). For universities, this overlap of jurisdiction has proved challenging in determining response. Nationally, the Federal Ministry of Education is

[116] Jack Grove, "UN Moves into Higher Education," *Inside Higher Ed*, November 14, 2019, web. https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/11/14/united-nations-moves-higher-education.

[117] Government of Canada, "Building on Success: International Education Strategy (2019-2024)," *International Education*, February 3, 2020, web. https://www.international.gc.ca/education/strategy-2019-2024-strategie.aspx?lang=eng.

[118] Ministry of College and Universities, "College and University Strategic Mandate Agreements, 2017-2020," *Government of Ontario*, October 21, 2019, web. https://www.ontario.ca/page/college-and-university-strategic-mandate-agreements-2017-2020#section-0.

[119] Fatima Syed and Declan Keogh, "Ford government cuts legal support for refugees and immigrants," *Canada's National Observer*, April 12, 2019, web. https://www.nationalobserver.com/2019/04/12/news/ford-government-cuts-legal-support-refugees-and-immigrants.

responsible for "funding, financial aid, and the regulation of vocational education and entry requirements in the professions," but aside from this, little else.[120] Other programming, therefore, is usually dictated by state ministries, many of whom have their own agendas for the Syrian Refugee Crisis. In 2018, for example, the Brandenburg city of Cottbus outright banned new Syrian refugees from entering it, a decision that appeared to be supported by the Brandenburg government. Speaking to press, Brandenburg's interior minister Karl-Heinz Schroeter noted that the ban would be in effect for at the bare minimum a few months, with new measures like plainclothes police officers and heightened digital surveillance implemented.[121] If Cottbus is any indicator, the state government's discourse on Syrian refugees is at the very least ambivalent. This is quite contradictory to the federal government: Chancellor Merkel's 2015 decision to enact an open door policy for Syrian refugees hailed her and her government as champions of migration and demonstrated an entirely different and positive discourse.[122] Like their Canadian counterparts, Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region institutions have found themselves at a crossroads. Do they follow suit with the federal government that provides their funding, or do they file rank with the state legislator that determines their policy? In such precarious environments—both in Canada and in Germany—universities are in many cases forced to reign in boldness in exchange for modesty in hopes of not overstepping jurisdictional and ideological discourses.

4.5 The Emerging Right: Societal Constraints

As is the case with other institutions, universities are made up of people. Like all people, the faculty, staff, and students of universities have diverse opinions and beliefs that come and go

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[120] Stefan Trines, "Education in Germany," *World Education News + Reviews*, November 8, 2016, web. https://wenr.wes.org/2016/11/education-in-germany.

[121] Barbara Woolsey, "German city bans new refugees as anti-migrant mood increases," *The Guardian*, January 20, 2018, web. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/01/20/german-city-bans-new-refugees-anti-migrant-mood-increases/.

[122] James McAuley and Rick Noack, "What you need to know about Germany's immigration crisis," *The Washington Post*, July 3, 2018, web. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/07/03/what-you-need-to-know-about-germanys-immigration-crisis/.

with the passing of time. It is true that many of these schools—particularly the more ancient ones—have institutionalized cultures that have endured generations. Nevertheless, public opinion from both institutional insiders and opportunistic outsiders can and does play an important role in how universities can respond to a particular issue.

Germany has proved more emblematic of this fact than Canada in wake of the Syrian Refugee Crisis. According to a recent report, 59 percent of the German population have taken a conflicted middle ground stance on refugees, while another 17 percent have firmly identified themselves as radical opponents to the prospect of migration and Syrian refugees.[123] Combined, the evidence suggests that at least three quarters of the German population possesses at least some reservations about Syrian refugees. The problem would appear to be more pronounced in the former East Germany, where the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region sits. A study of hate crimes in Germany revealed that asylum seekers were nearly 10 times more likely to be attacked in the eastern parts of the country than in the west, a major difference.[124] Politicians have not been ignorant of this fact; some have mobilized it. Since its 2012 founding, the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) Party has gained considerable traction, including its 2017 third-place finish in the federal elections that saw it claim 13 percent of the seats in the Bundestag.[125]

In addition to influencing public opinion in the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region, The AfD have used their political base to influence universities themselves. In 2018, for example, it was revealed that both Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and Freie Universität Berlin had come under intense pressure by the AfD to disclose the names of their student union leaders in hopes of revealing the "left extremists" who had "poisoned" those institutions.[126] Freie Universität Berlin resisted the advances but Humboldt capitulated, passing the names of its

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[123] Irina Mosel, Christopher Smart, Marta Foresti, Gemma Hennessy and Amy Leach, *Public Attitudes and Narratives Towards Refugees and Other Migrants: Germany Country Profile* (London: ODI, 2019), 7.

[124] Martin Lange, "Hate Crimes Against Asylum Seekers Occur Predominantly in Regions with Little Immigration Experience," *Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research*, February 25, 2019, web. https://www.zew.de/en/presse/pressearchiv/uebergriffe-auf-asylsuchende-treten-vor-allem-dort-auf-wo-es-wenig-erfahrung-mit-zuwanderung-gibt/.

[125] Charles Lees, "The 'Alternative for Germany': The rise of right-wing populism at the heart of Europe," J*ournal of Democracy*, vol. 27, no. 4 (2018): 37.

[126] David Matthews, "Far Right Turns Fire on German Universities," *Inside Higher Ed*, August 24, 2018, web. https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/08/24/germanys-far-right-attacks-german-universities.

student leaders over to the AfD.[127] Whether a scare tactic or something more nefarious, the reality of the situation demonstrates that at least one of the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region's universities is hesitant to be seen as acting against far-right popular discourse. In such a climate, there is every reason to believe that other higher education institutions in the metropolitan region could be hesitant to conduct bold responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis that catch the negative attention of the far-right.

Less data is readily available in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor. Recent legislative decision making, however, is indicative of at least some change in public opinion. In 2019, the new Ontario budget eliminated funding for all new programs deemed to have a refugee or immigration focus, a clear signal that the mood towards refugees is in part changing.[128] The changing mood can also be observed in popular political movements, most evident in the recently formed People's Party of Canada. Despite its dismal 1.6 percent performance in the national election at the end of 2019, some commentators have stated that their dismissal should not be done lightly: in its inaugural year the party was able to attract candidates for 94 percent of Canada's federal ridings and secure more than 300,000 votes, mostly through its anti-immigrant rhetoric that among other suggestions calls for physical boundaries to stop refugees and an end to "morally unjustified" international aid.[129] Like in the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region, Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor universities may increasingly see overt programming towards refugees toned back in hopes of not mobilizing right-wing populist opinion against them.

4.6 The Opportunity to Overcome

Whether or not the constraints are financial, bureaucratic, political, or societal, evidence suggests that universities in both regions of this study have seen their response to the Syrian

[127] Matthews, web.

[128] Peter Shawn Taylor, "How Syrian refugees to Canada have fared since 2015," *Maclean's*, May 21, 2019, web. https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/how-syrian-refugees-to-canada-have-fared-since-2015/.

[129] Jordan Stranger-Ross and Oliver Schmidtke, "Why the People's Party of Canada election result shouldn't be underestimated," *CBC News*, November 13, 2019, web. https://www.cbc.ca/news/opinion/opinion-peoples-party-of-canada-1.5351638.

Refugee Crisis shaped at least in part by discourse and factors that limit the ability to act. That does not mean that these challenges have not been mitigated or that they might be overcome in the future; it simply demonstrates an important consideration that policy makers could and should be mindful as they address migration and integration policy in the future. With the responses and their limitations established, the next step—and arguably most important step—is to make sense of the various policies, practices, and programs and determine which ones might be considered most compelling. After all, the purpose of this study to determine where university-based responses should be quantified and constituted within the larger program of integration; a major factor in doing so is attempting to establish effectiveness.

V

Best Policies, Practices, & Programs

5.1 Which Response is Best?

Cumulatively, the policies, practices, and programs that have come out of the universities in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region in response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis have proven to be remarkably varied. From scholarships to research programming and everything in between, university action has proven to be demonstrative of the ways in which discourse and interaction shape societal coping methods for complex international relations challenges such as integration. As seen in previous chapters, university responses in both regions of the case study have taken on different forms and have been constrained by factors both similar and different. The next question, therefore, is which type of policy, practice, or programming should be considered most effective? Furthermore, is such a conclusion justifiable?

5.2 Evaluating the Categories of Response

Classifying the university-based responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis is a challenge in itself. Nevertheless, research into institutions in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region in previous chapters have revealed that there are six broad categories under which response falls. These include: peer-to-peer scholarships, familial sponsorship, preparatory programming, research projects, student activist campaigns, and administrative modifications. Some of these categories of response are localized and small scale while others require multiple levels of government backing. Some have been kickstarted by the drive of one or a handful of individuals, others have been the collaborative efforts of NGO's, federal ministries, and overseas partners. The time frame of delivery of these policies, practices, and programs has also varied: some are ongoing while others have either died out or completed their established purpose.

There is strong evidence to suggest that peer-to-peer scholarship programs have been key in establishing long-term epistemic communities of humanitarians. Both ISOW at Wilfrid Laurier University and WUSC at the University of Waterloo, the University of Guelph, and several other Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor institutions are key examples of this. According to a recent study into the long term impact of such programming, a number of key stats point to the maintenance of humanitarian communities from the volunteers involved. Of the participants in the study who were volunteers in a peer-to-peer sponsorship program, 40 percent were encouraged to pursue further graduate study related to refugees, 77 percent remained in contact with the refugees in the program, 20 percent went on to continue private sponsorship work, and 98 percent indicated that inclusive policies towards refugees informed how they vote.[130] Other findings suggest that when integration success is measured along the lines of general health, employment, and language fluency, refugees tend to fare better in such peer-to-peer scholarship programs than if they were part of larger government initiatives.[131] In many instances, however, specific financial data is not readily available. Minus a few exceptions, most of these peer-to-

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[130]McKee et al., 81.

[131] Petersen, 115.

peer sponsorships do not have publicly published the size of their scholarship package, the secondary costs it covers, the duration of the funding, or similar monetary values.

Many of the higher education interventions reviewed collaborated with local initiatives and government ministries to sponsor families or groups of families to their respective areas. The *Lifeline Syria* case study in Toronto is arguably the most influential, based on size alone. Such programs are effective because they allow families—and in many cases communities—to relocate together, a societal constant that can make transition and integration an easier process.[132] Moreover, statistics from the government of Canada suggest a relatively fast integration into the job market of individuals brought over under these type of initiatives.[133] Despite Canada's claim that Syrians are integrating quickly as a result of these programs, the same numbers suggest employment rates are still well below the national average: only 24 percent of working age Syrian male refugees were gainfully employed when the statistics were published, compared with 39 percent of male refugees from other nations.[134] In some cases, research also reveals that familial sponsorship such as that demonstrated at Toronto's three major universities through the Lifeline Syria project can create a sense of obligation that is negative. Some evidence suggests that refugees who are part of these private sponsorship programs can face concerns over the ambiguity of their status: do they owe their sponsors, are they obligated to participate in certain activities or belief sets with their sponsors, and do they have to conform to a particular way of life?[135]

Preparatory programs appeared to be the most common response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis among the Berlin/Brandenburg Institutions that were surveyed. Most focus on introductions to German language and culture, but a few—like the *Join Us and Study* program at Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht—have also incorporated studies in economics, history, and law. At their core, these programs are designed to give refugees a basic toolkit that will allow

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[132] Michaela Hynie "Canada's Syrian Refugee Program, Intergroup Relationships, and Identities," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, vol. 50, no. 2 (2018): 2-3.

[133] Taylor, web.

[134] *Id*.

[135] Michael Lanphier, "Sponsorship: Organizational, Sponsor and Refugee Perspectives," *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2003): 244-245.

them to succeed as they transition into the higher education system.[136] Findings from this paper's case study suggests that these preparatory programs have both institutional support from the university as well as support from academic staff, students on campus, and political ministries. Many of the reviewed programs had a short term focus. Most usually manifested themselves as summer classes, while only a small few were classifiable as multi-term initiatives. Although valuable for the preliminary knowledge provided, one expert report suggests that such a limited time frame would not necessarily be adequate in creating conditions for Syrian refugees that would allow them to transition into the higher education system.[137]

Many of the universities in both regions surveyed appeared to respond to the Syrian Refugee Crisis by initiating research programs ultimately aimed at learning better integration techniques for the current wave of Syrian refugees and also potential crises in the future. At the University of Guelph, for example, a number of these projects were set up, as was an art-based research project at Universität der Künste Berlin. The findings demonstrate a diversity of approaches to these projects, usually guided by the interest and expertise of the scholar involved. Long term studies—which many of these are—have proven useful in past scenarios. Longitudinal studies often reveal characteristic markers or traits around which successful policies can be built. The head of Canada's longest longitudinal study into Vietnamese refugees, for example, argued that because the world will likely continue to produce refugees for the foreseeable future, establishing precedent and maintaining "research concerning resettlement and mental health will, therefore, continue to be intrinsically important."[138] Despite their value in their past, current research programs into Syrian refugees are in most cases still ongoing. Efficacy, therefore, is hard to evaluate in this particular context as the implications cannot yet be discerned.

There is ample documentation to suggest that in both regions, student activists campaigns on campus are a major method in which universities are responding to the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

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[136] Bernhard Streitwieser, Rachel Moody and Margaret Taylor, "Challenges and Innovations: Germany's Effort to Integrate Refugees into Higher Education," *International Education Research Foundation*, 2019, web. http://www.ierf.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Refugee-Crisis.pdf.

[137] Streitwieser, Loo, Ohorodnik and Jeong, 487.

[138] Beiser, 571.

In each case, the scope, involvement, focus, backing, and structure were highly varied. At York University, for example, the student led *Refugees Welcome Here* campaign sought to lobby the federal government into accepting more refugees, while Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin's *Buddy Program* was designed to pair domestic students with incoming refugees. There is evidence to suggest that student activism can have a long term impact in determining a university's culture towards a particular social justice issue.[139] If students at a particular university campus transform an issue like the Syrian Refugee Crisis into a major focal point, there is likelihood that issue's awareness both in the university and in the surrounding community will be heightened. Such heightened awareness, research suggests, can lead to stable long term programming that has the potential to adapt to other problems in the future.[140]

Finally the current review has revealed that every university that forms the basis of this study has in some form or another altered its administrative processes in light of the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Among others, changes have included: modifying practices at registrars' offices to allow easier access for refugees; reducing tuition and/or student fees for refugees; designing and implementing new courses to better train staff about inclusion and integration practices; redirecting funds to create scholarships or bursaries; and an expansion of mentorship programs. In most cases, research suggests that these altered practices are not the product of some coordinated program regional, nationally, or internationally, but rather ad hoc depending on the particular higher education institution's history, values, and capacity.[141] Research from some of the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region has also revealed that in many instances, responses from the university administration appear negligible in both theory and practice due to the complexity and cumbersome nature of their bureaucratic decision making.[142]

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[139] Katherine Cummings Mansfield, "How Listening to Student Voices Informs and Strengthens Social Justice Research and Practice," *Educational Administration Quarterly*, vol. 50, no. 3 (2013): 392.

[140] McKee et al., 81.

[141] Streitwieser, Loo, Ohorodnik and Jeong, 486-487.

[142] Streitwieser, Schmidt, Brück and Gläsener, 8.

5.3 Whose Success?

In chapter 1, this paper set out to establish how university-based responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis should be quantified and constituted within the larger program of integration. To do so, this thesis suggested three subquestions needed to be answered: what methods are universities employing in response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis? What limitations exist? What are the best policies and practices for responding? Chapters 3 and 4 answered question one and two respectively. The third subquestion is arguably the most important to answer, but arguably the most challenging. As this paper has highlighted, discourse and interaction has a very real and very consequential impact on how the realities of response are shaped. The same could also be said about the achievements of these programs. The notion of success is itself a discourse: truly objective success is exceptionally challenging to quantify. It also risks creating a definition that is inspired by ulterior motive.

So how should success be measured? This same survey could have been conducted using Zdziarski, Dunkel, and Rollo's Campus Crisis Management Matrix framework or the Internationalization Rationale theory developed by Knight and De Wit and come to wholly different conclusions. Moreover, the universities, cities, and countries that are part of this survey could also have different explanations for what constitutes success: an observer at Universität der Künste Berlin could probably argue that their art exhibitions showcasing Syrian artists are equally as important to the integration process and as successful as The University of Waterloo's WUSC program, despite the two having completely different focal points, variables, and scope. Can and should one definition of success hold primacy over another?

Probably not. Context and drive are major factors that need to be considered. In 2018, universities in the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region may have had the right people and the right conditions in place to enact a specific type of policy, practice, or program that would simply not be possible at a different time or in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor (or vice versa). These very same conditions may cease to exist in a year, a month, or even a week; timing is a factor to success not easily dismissed. That said, timing applies not only to success, but limitations and constraints too. In a few years, the world could see a reality where Germany cannot respond as meaningful to refugees due to the arrival of a far right government. In the

same way, Canada's legislator could go so radically leftwing that universities become a hold out against rampant and uncalculated refugee policy. The pressures that bind action are equally subject to modification.

The drive to want to help others in need is equally important a consideration. Yet like timing, it waxes and wanes; adapts and fluctuates. It is what Streitwieser, Loo, Ohorodnik, and Jeong call the humanistic rationale: a desire to act that stems from notions of civil rights, social justice, and human dignity, the desire—put bluntly by the authors—to "do the right thing."[143] Yet the humanistic rationale that determines the drive to act alters itself regularly. What might be the major issue of today could be the obscure footnote of tomorrow. The 'right place at the right time' figure of speech is particularly relevant when it comes to responding to complex challenges such as the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

Which policies, practices, and programs should be considered tenable long term? The answer has yet to reveal itself. The Syrian Refugee Crisis is still a relatively recent and continuing phenomenon whose scope and impact will take many more years to be truly revealed. The same is true of the university-based responses to this particular issue. In many cases, their actions are still ongoing, making quantifying their impact all the more challenging. Educational theorists or political scientists might look at the information from this survey and attempt to apply a theory that could predict future trends. Historians, alternatively, might analyze the evidence and try to construct a narrative that shows how and where these issues and responses came from. It falls on the scholars of international relations, therefore, to interpret what available data there is, consult both the past and theories, and look to the future in order to guide the hand of policy makers who will shape action now and in times to come. Rather than attempt to objectively determine success, scholars should be preoccupied with reaching conclusions that could prove valuable for further inquiry or consultation. After all, this survey is not just about university-based responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region. It is meant to produce important knowledge for integration issues as a whole. What then should be regarded as the most important findings of this comparative study?

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[143] Streitwieser, Loo, Ohorodnik and Jeong, 488-489.

5.4 Core Findings

Of all the findings from this study, perhaps the most important one solidifies the methodological hypothesis suggested in chapter 1. Throughout this study, there has been ample evidence to support to claim that the regular interaction between refugees, higher education responses, and political/societal narratives has produces a transformative effect on the discourse towards refugees and integration. As demonstrated, most of this discourse has been positive. Some has been negative. In any case, the discourse on refugees and interactions have shaped university response in both regions. There are, however, a plethora of other core findings that could prove useful to international policymakers in the future. The following ten core findings are deemed the most important and most relevant from the survey of responses. These core findings are drawn from evidence across all universities surveyed in both regions. Their order does not reflect importance.

Core Finding #1: Universities are conscious of global developments and keen to act. As the variety of response attests to, universities in both regions have come up with policies, practices, and programs that are in tune with the challenges that have proliferated as a result of the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Although their measures vary, each institution has demonstrated an understanding that a problem exists and have tried to mobilize action in response.

Core Finding #2: Students of universities are often the drivers of change and meaningful engagement. In most cases, the responses from higher education institutions have been driven by students who possess a humanistic rationale. From 'buddy programs' in Berlin to sponsorship initiatives in Guelph, students themselves are usually involved in the process in some capacity or another. Young minds are often full of creative energy, drive, and mobilization talent not found elsewhere within universities, making their involvement extra important.[144] When discussing her team made up of student volunteers, the head of Ryerson University's *Lifeline Syria* project argued that "they are self-motivated and goal-oriented, doing whatever it takes to get as many people as possible here safely and quickly."[145]

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[144] McKee et al., 81.

[145] Ryerson International, 2.

Core Finding #3: When students raise their voices, administrators listen. Similarly, student action can and does change how university administrations respond. In many cases, decision making in universities can be slow. Noble causes can be met with stiff opposition, bureaucratic processes can make proposals daunting, and the number of stake holders means decisions are often hard to come by. Yet when students act, administrators are inspired to take action themselves. Decisions that would otherwise be difficult to achieve become justified, due in large part to student passion and learning. The ISOW initiative at Wilfrid Laurier University, for example, was founded by students but encouraged institutional changes such as tuition waivers and agreements with NGO partners. As Katherine Cummings Mansfield's research has pointed out, student activism can have a long term impact in determining a university's culture towards a particular social justice issue.[146]

Core Finding #4: Universities are bastions of knowledge and their community; their consultation is important. Universities can and do form the centre of some communities. The cities of Waterloo and Guelph, for example, are known as university towns primarily for the central role their higher education institutions play in their respective city's municipal lives. They also act as knowledge centres, generating expert opinion on issue areas. Take for example Freie Universität Berlin's Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, part of the larger Otto-Suhr-Institut. Often regarded as one of the leading institutes in all of Germany with important knowledge on the plight of refugees, knowledge bases like this one are invaluable for both a community voice and expert opinion.[147]

Core Finding #5: Universities can and should learn from one another. As this survey has demonstrated, universities have some rather thoughtful and unique responses in times of crisis. Their action is often the product of ingenuity and creativity that comes from a collection of minds at a particular institution or in a particular community. These ideas should be shared among universities to learn ideas and precedent that could form the basis of new policies, practices, and programs.

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[146] Cummings Mansfield, 392.

[147] Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, "Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies," *Freie Universität Berlin*, web. https://www.polsoz.fu-berlin.de/en/polwiss/forschung/international/vorderer-orient/index.html.

Core Finding #6: Comparisons are a good basis for learning, but copying and pasting will likely not yield success. As noted earlier, context and timing are important variables. What works in Potsdam might not work in Waterloo in the same way that a program that worked in Berlin in 2016 might not do so in 2021. Most of the responses that were reviewed in this study were highly organic in nature: they formed as bottom-up solutions to a perceived problem and worked to gained momentum in the circumstance provided. The uniqueness of these varied actions is their strength and replicating them verbatim will likely prove to be unfavourable to success.

Core Finding #7: If universities are any indicator, responses to integration are multi-tiered. In a number of the cases surveyed, responses appear to be built upon a range of different actors and jurisdictions. In order to operate, these programs often need support from others outside the institution. The University of Waterloo's WUSC programming, for example, requires action from student groups, administrators, and academics at the university, community support networks in the surrounding city, provincial approval of strategic mandates that are inclusive of refugees, federal support that allows these refugee students to be granted visas, and international networks that allows refugees to be identified and vetted abroad.[148] This multi-tiered approach to integration is likely no anomaly; other approaches to refugee integration most likely do and need to operate on a similar model.

Core Finding #8: Refugees themselves need to be a greater part of the process. In nearly every case surveyed as part of the study, there was little evidence of direct involvement from Syrian refugees themselves. This can be problematic. When refugees are spoken for by more powerful actors, a conception of security and protection can develop that treats weaker actors such as refugees as powerless and derivate elements of a wider global political structure.[149] The Copenhagen School of Security Studies calls this the silence problem: those constrained to speak about their own security concerns do not fully materialize as an embodied subject and therefore have their issues created for them, even though said creations could fundamentally endanger

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[148] St. Paul's University College, web.

[149] Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, "The postcolonial moment in security studies," *Review of International Studies*, vol. 32, no. 1 (2006): 332.

them.[150] If university responses—and wider integration processes—fail to incorporate refugees into the process, they risk a reality where alienation or more nefarious feelings develop.

    Core Finding #9: Institutional memory is critically important. In order for integration programming to work, universities need to develop ideas and structures with longevity and purpose. Many of these institutions have done so; some have not. Institutional memory is critically important in universities where turnover is such a regular occurrence. Academics, students, and administrators are constantly coming and going. With them come wonderful ideas and initiatives, but there is also risk these same qualities can leave with the individual. To prevent this, higher education institutions need to ensure that any programming they develop takes on a structure that can be passed down to future leaders and continue to flourish.

    Core Finding #10: In times of precariousness, value needs to be reasserted. In every case surveyed as part of the study, universities themselves were responsible for providing at least some part of the funding. The monetary value varies, but a constant is the critical role that money plays in ensuring these projects thrive or collapse. In universities, access to funding is often dictated by the whim of administrators who can choose to increase or decrease financial streams on a quarterly basis. In times of strife, programs deemed non-essential or the least valuable are often cut. Unfortunately, a number of these unique responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis can and do fall under this category. This should not be the case. University-based responses have proven to have value to not only refugees, but the communities of humanitarians who allow these programs thrive. This value needs to be reasserted regularly—especially in times of financial hardships—to ensure that everyone within the higher education institution is on the same page in recognizing their potential.

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[150] Lene Hansen, "The Little Mermaid's Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 29, no. 2 (2000): 285.

VI

Conclusion: Of Campuses & Crises

6.1 Summary & Concluding Thoughts

From the outset, this paper set out to understand the following research question: how should university-based responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis be quantified and constituted within the larger program of integration? The paper posited that the best means of approaching this understanding was through the investigation of three subquestions: what methods are universities employing in response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis? What limitations exist? What are the best policies and practices for responding? A survey that conducted a comparative review of responses at public universities in Canada's Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor in Canada and those located in Germany's Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region was chosen as the chief method of inquiry. To support this method of inquiry, this paper relied loosely on an application of discourse analysis that assumed the regular interaction between refugees, higher education responses, and political/societal narratives has had a transformative effect on the discourse towards refugees and integration. To set the basis for this theoretical framework, it proved highly

important to review the historical context in which these universities were operating, including precedent in the past in dealing with refugees from Southeast Asia, East Africa, and the fallout from wars in the former Yugoslavia.

The survey of responses from each public university in both regions revealed a highly diverse and highly active set of responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. Broadly, these responses could be grouped into six categories: peer-to-peer scholarships, familial sponsorship, preparatory programming, research projects, student activist campaigns, and administrative modifications. Some universities employed multiple responses; others employed just a few types of policies, practices, and programs. What was clear was that each and every institution had responded in some way or another to the Syrian Refugee Crisis. It was also clear that major urban centres had more homogeneity among their university responses than the smaller centres outside.

The research noted the importance of contextualizing these responses within the limitations that might bind action and prevent certain programming from developing. Although the contexts differ in the Toronto-Waterloo Region Corridor and in the Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region, each area has a number of constraints in place that play a role in determining what action can be taken. These constraints fall under four categories: financial, bureaucratic, political, and societal. Overall, it was determined that quantifying each response on the basis of success proved to be too challenging. Instead, scholars of international relations and policymakers should use the case study to take away the important findings detailed and hopefully build successful programs now or in the future.

Throughout each stage of analysis, the notion of discourse proved highly important. Overall, it was determined that interactions between universities, refugees, and larger societal narratives can and does fuel discourses that shape how programs can be implemented. Not only do these discourses give meaning to the societies that they inhabit, but said discourses are also emblematic of the role that language and meaning can have on transforming a society or its perceptions.

At the time of writing, the world finds itself dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic, one of the most widespread and impactful diseases in centuries. Financial markets have collapsed, thousands have died, and institutions around the world have had to undergo remarkable changes

to keep operations running. Universities are part of this adaptation process: most have switched to online structures to facilitate their work. In light of this, it is unclear what the future holds for university-based responses to humanitarian problems such as the Syrian Refugee Crisis. What is clear, however, is that in times like these, working to make a difference is so crucially important. The world stands to learn a lot from universities and their response to crisis.

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All maps created by the author using **Google Maps, "My Maps."** *Please visit https://www.google.com/maps/about/mymaps/ for information.*

APPENDIX

Urban Centres

	The Toronto Waterloo Region Corridor	The Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region
Major Urban Centres (400,000 + inhabitants)	• Brampton • Mississauga • Toronto	• Berlin
Large Urban Centres (100,000 - 400,000 inhabitants)	• Cambridge • Guelph • Kitchener • Milton • Waterloo	• Potsdam
Small Urban Centres* (Less than 100,000 inhabitants)	• Georgetown • Halton Hills	• Bernau • Falkensee • Fürstenwalde • Königs Wusterhausen • Oranienburg

*Communities with less than 30,000 inhabitants have been excluded

Key Statistics

	The Toronto Waterloo Region Corridor	The Berlin/Brandenburg Metropolitan Region
Population	• ~ 6,011,000	• ~ 6,005,000
Population Density	• ~ 402/km²	• ~ 197/km²
Area	• ~ 14,950 km²	• 30,370 km²
Surrounding Administrative Division	• Province of Ontario	• Berlin Stadtstaaten • Brandenburg Flächenländer