Clara Wobbe

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Personal: born 15th December 1996, Haltern, Germany

Research Interests

Economics of Migration/Integration, Labor Economics, Public Economics, Political Economy

Education

Ph.D. Candidate since 10/2022
Ruhr University Bochum
Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Zohal Hessami

M.Sc. in Economic Policy 09/2020 - 09/2022
University Siegen

LL.B. International Business Law and Business Management 08/2016 - 11/2019
Westfälische Hochschule Gelsenkirchen, Bocholt, Recklinghausen
(University Applied Science)

Stays Abroad

Universidad Carlos III de Madrid 04/2026 - 05/2026
Hosted by Prof. Dr. Jan Stuhler

Internship 10/2018 - 03/2019
SKODA AUTO a.s., Business Development After Sales
Mlada Boleslav, Czech Republic

Internship 03/2015 - 04/2015
O'Hara Solicitors
Waterlooville, Hampshire, United Kingdom

Publications

Hessami, Z., Schirner, S., Wobbe, C. (2025) Asylum seekers, new businesses, and job creation, Journal of Population Economics, 38(87), 1-30. DOI: 10.1007/s00148-025-01143-x

Abstract: How do asylum seekers affect host-country economies from a supply and demand perspective? What share of such immigration shocks is absorbed by existing vs. new businesses? To study these questions, we combine exclusive business registration and asylum seeker data for the universe of German districts over 2007-2021. We address endogeneity in asylum seeker allocation by exploiting rule-based allocation quotas as an instrument. A one standard deviation treatment (10 asylum seekers/1000 inhabitants) leads to 0.7 new businesses (7.9% increase), including 2.7 full-time jobs per 1000 inhabitants. A sector-level analysis suggests that the founding of new businesses is both supply- (additional workforce) and demand-driven (need for basic goods/services), while the demand effect kicks in first. District-level employment data shows that total job creation is about four times larger, suggesting that 75% of the immigration shock is absorbed by existing businesses.

Work-In-Progress

The (Ir)Relevance of Institutional Proliferation: Evidence from Foreginers' Advisory Councils (joint work with Sebastian Blesse and Zohal Hessami)

Abstract: We analyze whether foreigners' advisory councils (FACs) contribute to the integration of foreign residents. FACs, elected by and consisting of foreign residents, are supposed to advise local councils on all matters concerning foreign residents. We use exclusive data on the staggered rule-based adoption of FACs in the German states of Hesse and NRW and data on integration-relevant outcomes for 2005-2023. According to state-specific law, Hessian municipalities with $\geq$ 1,000 foreign residents must set up an FAC, while NRW municipalities with $\geq$ 2,000 foreign residents may set up an FAC. Within a fuzzy RD framework, we find that FACs have no impact on integration-related outcomes (provision and take-up of integration courses, % foreigners' children in public childcare, % foreigners employed). A text analysis of hand-collected local council meeting minutes shows that FACs are mainly mentioned in the context of administrative tasks and hardly affect the content of council deliberations. Our results are in line with pessimistic expectations on FAC effectiveness based on a survey among local policy makers which also attributed our null results to low legislative power, political legitimacy and commitment of FACs.

Integration Courses and Immigrants' Integration Success: Evidence from a Large-Scale National Program in Germany (single-authored)

Abstract: I study whether integration courses impact the integration of foreigners. They consist of a language course and an orientation course. I use exclusive data on numbers of integration courses in Germany. I exploit the fact that integration courses were introduced 2005. However, the courses are mainly introduced in municipalities with a high population density and high share of foreigners. To overcome possible selection bias, I combine matching with a staggered difference-in-differences design with absorbing and non-absorbing treatment. My preliminary results show that the employment rate of foreigners increases while the vote share of right-wing parties decreases.

Teaching Experience

Economics of Migration (BSc, Seminar, English) Summer 2023, 2024, 2025
Ruhr University Bochum

Gender Economics (BSc, Seminar, German) Winter 2023, 2024, 2025
Ruhr University Bochum

Conferences & Workshop

2026
Meeting of the European Public Choice Society (Madrid), Doctoral Workshop in Public Economics of the German Universities in the North-West (Bochum), 19th Doctoral Conference - Ruhr Graduate School (Dortmund), Ludwig Erhard ifo Conference on Institutional Economics (Fürth)

2025
VfS Jahrestagung (Cologne), Meeting of the European Public Choice Society (Riga), 18th Doctoral Conference - Ruhr Graduate School (Dortmund)

2024
ZEW 3rd Workshop on Immigration, Integration and Attitudes (Mannheim), Annual Congress of the IIPF (Prague), 2nd ZEW-ifo Young Scholar Political Economy Workshop (Fürth), Meeting of the European Public Choice Society (Vienna), 17th Doctoral Conference - Ruhr Graduate School (Essen)

2023
16th Doctoral Conference - Ruhr Graduate School (Bochum), Meeting of the European Public Choice Society (Hannover)

Policy Writing

Albrecht, C., Bayram, A., Hessami, Z., Schirner, S., Wobbe, C. (2025). ifo Migrationsmonitor - Migrantische Unternehmensgründungen, ifo Schnelldienst, 78, No. 12.

Other Information

Refereeing: European Journal of Political Economy
Language: German (native), English (fluent), Spanish (beginner)
Software: Stata, R, LaTex, Python

References

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