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Irregular Migration in Germany since the turn of the millennium
– development, economic background and discourses

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Database on Irregular Migration (<http://irregular-migration.hwwi.net>)

This website aims at increasing transparency in the field of irregular migration. The database provides an inventory and a critical appraisal of data and estimates in the European Union. Quantitative information is accompanied by substantial background materials, both on issues of general concern and on the situation in individual countries.

The database was created in the context of "CLANDESTINO: Counting the uncountable – data and trends across Europe", a project funded by the European Commission, DG Research, Sixth Framework Programme (2007-2009) (<http://clandestino.eliamep.gr/>). The Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI) hosts the database and aims at expanding and updating it in the coming years.

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1 Introduction¹

Irregular migration exists since the foundation of the German federal republic (Karakayali 2008: 96). During the guest worker programmes, illegal entry of migrant workers was pragmatically perceived as a gain as migrant workers were contributing to the booming German economy. However, most migrants had an irregular residence status only for a short time as many of them were able to regularize their residence status after having found a job. In the period of restricted immigration possibilities after the recruitment ban in 1973, Germany continued facing inflows of migrants entering and staying illegally – particularly of family members of migrant workers and of asylum seekers.

Although irregular migration has been known in different forms for decades, its representation in policy, media and scientific documents was rather scarce until the 1990s. Only after that and particularly after the turn of the new millennium, irregular migration has been attracting more and more attention in political and public debates. Some developments testify to the increasing interest in the phenomenon by various actors: Irregular migration has been addressed continually in policy documents like the annual reports on migration in Germany since 1999; the special report of the Expert Panel on Migration in 2004 addressed the issue specifically (Sachverständigenrat 2004); academics have been conducting empirical studies particularly at a local level: for Leipzig (Alt 1999), Cologne (Bommes and Wilmes 2007), Munich (Anderson 2003), Frankfurt am Main (Krieger 2006), Berlin (Alt 2003), and Hamburg (Vogel et al. 2009). Charity organizations like Caritas and Diakonie and smaller more specialized NGOs have been making an effort to deal with the social consequences of irregularity. Journalists have been reporting on illegal entry and stay both in Germany and in the European Union. Thus irregular migration has become ‘continuously salient issue’ although not on the top of the political agenda (Cyrus and Kovacheva 2010: 139).

In Germany, the debates on irregular migration focus on foreign citizens coming, staying or working irregularly in Germany, while German nationals living in illegality abroad are hardly ever mentioned. Germany has been witnessing for decades much more inflows of foreign citizens being in irregular situation than outflows of own citizens residing without permission in other countries. Correspondingly, the issue of legal integration of German nationals in third countries has been rarely addressed in the research. There are also hardly any empirical indications considering Germany as a sending country of irregular immigrants. Although illegality of German citizens in other countries is probably not widely spread, there are indications that “not few Germans” are living abroad without registration in other countries,

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particularly in South European countries (Sachverständigenrat 2004: 70). However, the non-registration of a residence is a minor offence for EU citizens and does not mean illegal residence (Kovacheva and Vogel 2009: 8).

With regard to irregular migration to Germany, it covers all types of violations against the immigration law: illegal entry, stay and work. The law stipulates the conditions for legal entry, stay and work of foreign nationals in the country and the sanctions if a person is in breach of them. An entry is unlawful (*unerlaubte Einreise*) if a foreign national enters the German territory without required documents like passport or residence documents (§ 14 AufenthG, Residence Act). A foreign national is obliged to leave the country if not longer in the possession of the required residence documents, otherwise the residence becomes unlawful (§ 50 AufenthG). Both illegal entry and residence are punishable as crimes (§ 95 AufenthG). A foreign national might work irregularly in possession of or without a residence permit. If a migrant lacks both residence and work permit, he or she is in “double illegality” (Sinn 2005: 15). According to an estimate of illegal work in private companies, no more than 300 000 foreign nationals are both working and residing without the required permit, while at most 1.3 million work without a work permit (Cyrus 2008: 53). Thus employment of foreign nationals without a work permit proves to be much more important than of those without a residence status (Cyrus and Kovacheva 2010: 8). Employing undocumented workers is punishable with a prison sentence of up to one year (§ 11 SchwarzArbG, Law to combat illegal work).

Looking at the terms used in the German legal framework, one can find ‘unlawful’ or ‘unauthorized’ entry and stay but not ‘illegal’. However, the term ‘illegal’ has been used in many official documents for decades, for instance in the Police Criminal Statistic (*Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik*, PKS) since 1971. As a result, illegal entry and illegal stay prove to be the most widely spread terms in Germany, which are broadly used in policy documents, academic publications, media articles and in everyday usage. Debates on this terminology have started in recent years mainly in the research community and in charity organisations (Karakayli 2008: 24). Arguing that “no human being is illegal”, the term ‘irregular migration’ has been preferred as a more appropriate by charity organisations to denote “the fact that irregular migrants are not criminals” (Duvell et al. 2008: 3).

Using the term ‘illegal’, state actors have pointed to the threats posed by irregular migration to the state and society and have mainly introduced measures for combating the phenomenon. Some researchers promote a so-called “dual perspective” that aims at combating irregular migration *by protecting irregular migrants*, so far without limited success (Cyrus 2004: 42). Nevertheless, the need for solutions of humanitarian problems like access to education or health care has been gradually acknowledged also by German policy makers. This shift in the political discourse became visible in the “Yearly conference on illegality” organized by the Catholic Forum in Berlin since 2005.

The public discourse on irregular migration is two-sided. On the one hand, debates are often borne by indignation in the society, on the other hand, the phenomenon has been largely accepted in the everyday life of the German society which directly or indirectly makes use of the services of irregular migrants (Sachverständigenrat 2004: 109-110). The current public attitude towards irregular migration may be influenced by the economic performance of the country and may change as a result of new economic developments. Researchers argue that the association of irregular migration with security issues is slackened during economic upturns (Schroever et al. 2008: 25). The German migration history confirms this link: the almost positive association of irregular migrant workers contributing to the German economic growth in 1950s and 1960s was replaced by a more negative perception as a result of the oil crisis in 1973 which heavily hit the German economy. Particularly in times of high unemployment illegal residence and work might become a controversial issue (Sachverständigenrat 2004: 350). Thus the recent economic downturn may probably trigger negative attitudes towards the phenomenon in the German society.

The aim of this paper is to give an overview of irregular migration in Germany since the turn of the millennium and to explore its coverage in the German media. Looking at the German economic development since 2000, the probable link between irregular migration and the economic development of the country has been addressed in chapter 2. In chapter 3, main developments of regular and irregular migration are summarized. Chapter 4 presents the results of a pilot media study which shows the coverage of the topic in an established German newspaper. For this study, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* was chosen and searched for articles on the topic from 2000 to 2009. For each year, a major article was analysed in detail in order to show main views about the phenomenon in general and the nexus between economic development and irregular migration in particular.

2 Economic background

The German social-market economy combines free enterprise and competition with a high level of social services. Using GDP in purchasing power parity (PPP), the German economy is the largest in the European Union and the fifth largest in the world (CIA World Fact Book 2010). Since the early 1990s services add up to 70 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and manufacturing and construction have been robust in accounting for 30% of GDP (Eurofound 2010). Exports account for 39 per cent of GDP, and approximately 9 million jobs depend directly on the export market (DIHK 2010). The country is a leading exporter of automotive, machinery, chemicals and household equipment and benefits from a highly skilled labour force.

1990 was the year of reunification of the two German states – a landmark in German history. After 1990 the German economy has been facing three major challenges: the German reunification which was a severe drag on economic performance owing to the specific conditions under which it took place, the global market liberalisation which exposed the German economy to intensified international competition, and the integration into the European Monetary Union (EMU) which set constraints to its economic policy (European Commission 2007: 1). In the beginning of the new millennium, the economy has been facing new challenges. The international economic downturn owing to the burst of the bubble in the information and communication technology sector (so-called ICT bubble) affected the German economy by holding it back in quasi-stagnation that was to last for five years (European Commission 2007: 1). Looking at GDP as a measure for the economic activity, after 2000 the real GDP growth showed a downward trend over time and reached its lowest level under 0.2 per cent in 2003 (see Table 1). Along with the negative GDP development, the labour market stagnated as well. Unemployment rates rose above the EU average and reached a peak in 2005 with almost 11 per cent of the labour force (4.5 million unemployed, see Table 1).

In 2003, in response to the weak economic performance, the German government introduced important reforms, particularly related to the functioning of the labour market which aimed at mitigating the causes of low labour force participation and high unemployment. Furthermore, being highly export-oriented, the German economy benefited from the global market liberalisation and the booming global economy in that period. As a result of internal and external factors, a recovery of the German economy took hold in 2006 when the real GDP growth increased to 3.2 per cent. Unemployment showed a firm downward trend from 10.7 per cent in 2005 to 7.3 per cent in 2008 (see Table 1).

Table 1 Macroeconomic and labour market indicators

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total GDP (in billion euro)	2 062	2 113	2 143	2 163	2 110	2 243	2 231	2 422	2 492
GDP per inhabitant (in euro)	25 095	25 664	25 984	26 222	26 798	27 202	28 185	29 453	30 342
Total GDP at market prices (in millions of PPS)	1 855	1 899	1 945	1 994	2 078	2 166	2 262	2 372	2 380
GDP at market prices per inhabitant (in PPS)	22 600	23 100	23 600	24 200	25 200	26 300	27 500	28 800	29 000
Real GDP growth (%)	3.2	1.2	0	-0.2	1.2	0.8	3.2	2.5	1.3
GDP per capita in PPS, indexed ²	118.5	116.6	115.2	116.5	116.5	116.9	116.1	115.8	115.6
Total employment (000)	39 145	39 315	39 092	38 724	38 883	38 850	39 097	39 768	40 331
Employment rate ³ (%)	65.6	65.8	65.4	65	65	66	67.5	69.4	70.7
Total unemployment (000)	3 137	3 193	3 523	3 918	4 160	4 601	4 227	3 602	3 141
Unemployment rate ⁴ (%)	7.5	7.6	8.4	9.3	9.8	10.7	9.8	8.4	7.3

Source: Total GDP and GDP per inhabitant (Federal Statistical Office 2009: 643); other data from European Commission (2009) and Eurostat, own compilation.

From 2008, Germany was hit hard by the global economic crisis owing to its strong dependence on exports. The economic growth showed a slight decrease in 2008 compared with the preceding years and then rapidly declined to -5.4 per cent in 2009. Despite the downturn in the economic activity, the employment level in Germany has remained relatively stable. The negative impact of the economic crisis is mitigated mainly by the internal adjustment measures. Instead of reducing the workforce, German companies reacted to the economic downturn in applying short-time working arrangements subsidized by the state (European Commission 2009:26-27). Thus around 1.5 million workers were in short-time working schemes by May 2009 (European Commission 2009: 32). As historical experiences have shown, the major challenge for the German labour market is expected with a certain lag (European Commission 2009: 11).

In sum, the main macroeconomic and labour market indicators for the development of the economy indicate that the German economy has been gathering pace over the decade (see

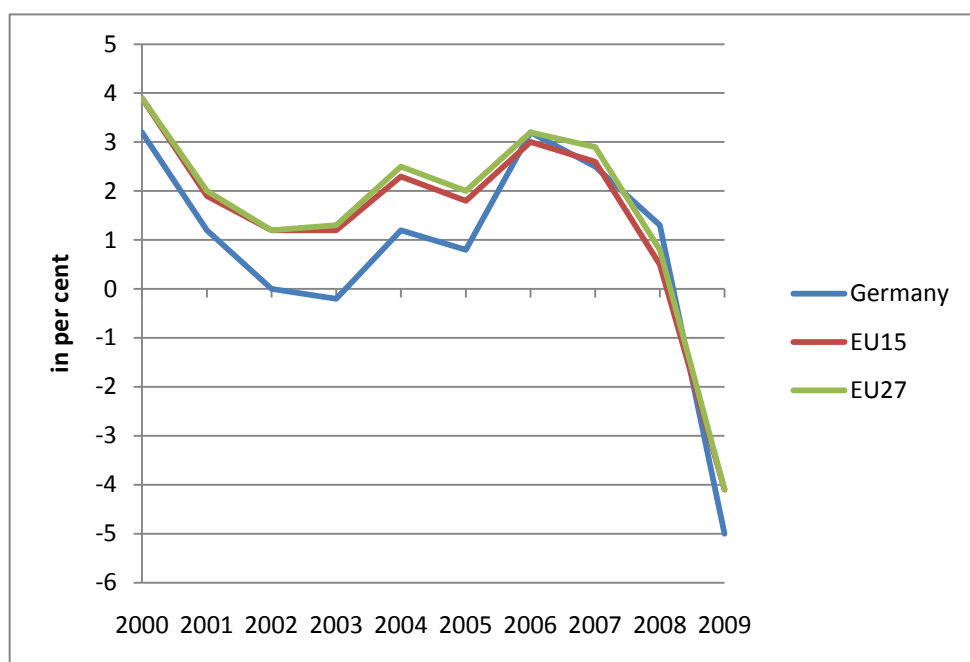
² The index is in relation to the EU27 average set to equal 100.

³ Employment rate: the share of the population aged 15-64 years (the working-age population) in employment (Eurostat Labour Force Survey definition).

⁴ Unemployment rate: the unemployed as a share of the labour force (employed and unemployed persons) aged 15-64 years (working-age population) (Eurostat Labour Force Survey definition).

main macroeconomic indicators in Table 1). The rise in the economic development was driven mainly by high exports. Taking the real GDP growth in the last decade into consideration, it showed rather a downward trend and was under the average level for EU15 and EU27 (see Figure 1). However, looking at the gross domestic product in a cross-country perspective in absolute terms, the performance of the German economy proves to be higher than the EU27 average with an average index of 116 (see GDP per capita in PPS in Table 1).

Figure 1 Growth rate of GDP volume - percentage change on previous year

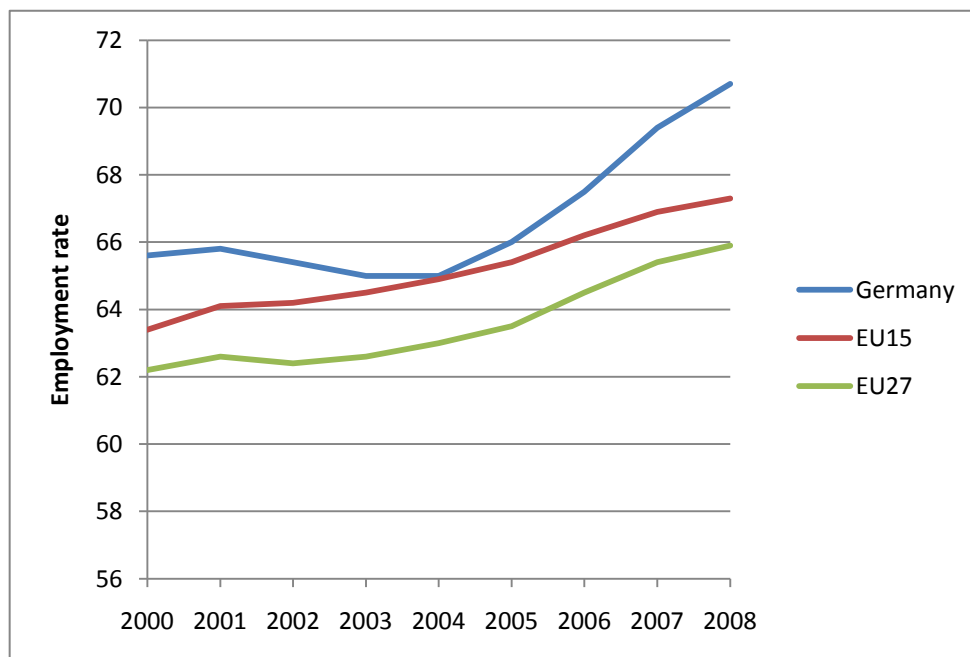


Source: Eurostat, own compilation.

With regard to employment, the number of people in employment expanded by more than 1 million people between 2000 and 2008 and the employment rate increased by 5.1 per cent from 65.6 per cent in 2000 to 70.7 per cent in 2008⁵. In a comparative perspective, the employment rates are higher than those in the EU15 and EU27 over time (see Figure 2).

⁵ Thus the German economy reached the target of 70 per cent employment rate set by the EU in the Lisbon Strategy in the beginning of the new millennium.

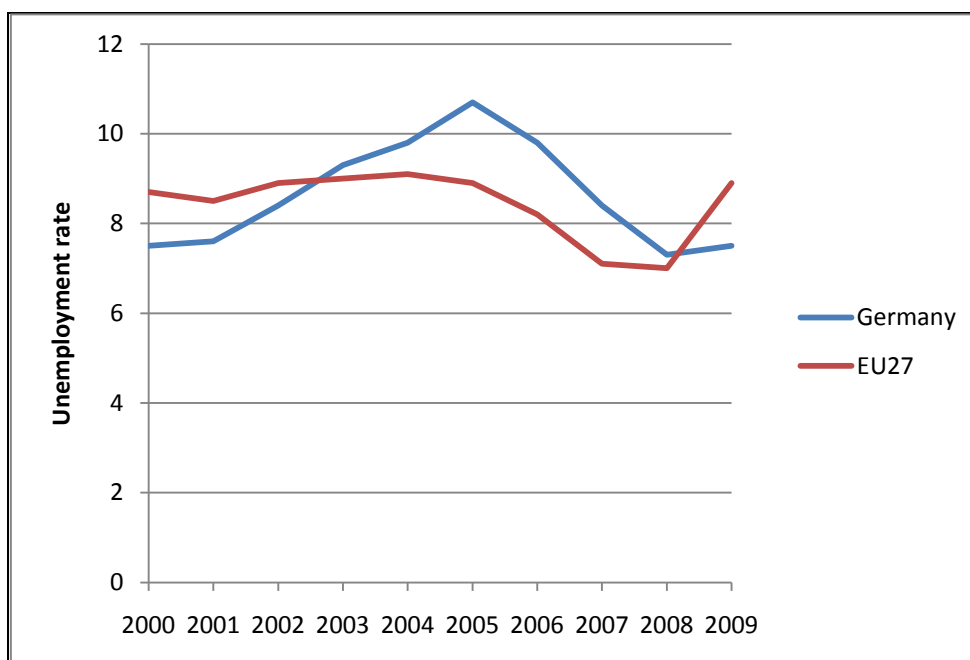
Figure 2 Employment rates in Germany, EU15 and EU27



Source: Eurostat; own compilation.

Considering unemployment rate, the level of unemployment remained relatively stable in the time frame from 2000 to 2008. Although it was ranging between 7.3 per cent and 10.7 per cent, it mostly remained above the average for the EU27 (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 Unemployment rates in Germany and EU27



Source: Eurostat; own compilation.

In spite of the fluctuations during the decade and although the German economy has clearly suffered from the ongoing global economic downturn, the longer term picture of the German economy presents enormous progress after the turn of the new millennium. The positive

image of the German economy is mirrored in the forecasts of the OECD and the EU which predicted an improved outlook for the German economy (European Commission 2009: 44).

Against this economic background and assuming that migration decisions are strongly linked to economic opportunities, it is not surprising that the country has been attracting both regular and irregular immigrants. Irregular migrants resort mainly to the informal economy occupying jobs which are “relatively unattractive for the indigenous workforce, are tied to one place and are difficult to monitor” (Vogel and Cyrus 2008). Main sectors concerned are agriculture, construction, domestic service, and the hotel and catering industry. Some of these sectors (construction, hotel and catering) are particularly sensitive to economic fluctuations.

The economic crisis may have different impact on the flows and stocks of irregular migration in Germany. In the future, taking for granted that the unemployment is going to increase, a greater impact on the arrivals of new irregular migrants is possible as potential migrants are likely to postpone their migration decisions due to declined employment opportunities in the country. Irregular migrants already residing in Germany should probably put up with changed prospects and livelihoods but they are likely to ‘weather the crisis there’ (FRONTEX 2009: 4). As migrant workers tend to be among the workers hit most hardly by economic downturns, particularly migrants with temporary permits run the risk of slipping into an irregular status after losing their job during the economic crisis. In 2008 one third of all third country nationals have a temporary residence permit (BAMF 2010: 232).

3 Development of migration

3.1 Regular migration: data and development since 2000

In spite of its long migration history Germany “resisted seeing itself as a country of immigration until earlier this decade” (Zambonini 2009: 169). Only since the turn of the new millennium, there seems to be a wide acceptance that Germany is an immigration country. In 2008 there are 6.7 million foreign nationals living in the country which accounts for 8.8 per cent of the German population. This figure originates from the Central Register of Foreigners (*Ausländerzentralregister*, AZR) which includes data on all foreign nationals residing in Germany for more than three months. The data is transmitted by the local foreigners’ authorities (*Ausländerbehörde*) responsible for residence permits. In addition, each person – whether a foreign national or a German citizen – is obliged to register with the local registration authorities one week after arrival in the country or after changing the place of residence, and before departure, to deregister from the local municipality. The Central Register of Foreigners and the local population registers mainly serve for local administration and allocation of financial resources from state or national level, but they also provide important data on the number of migrants and main socio-demographic characteristics.

Besides the Central Register of Foreigners and the local population registration, information about the migrant population in Germany is provided by an annual household survey, the Microcensus. In the beginning of the new millennium, the only indicator for immigration captured in the survey was the citizenship (Cyrus and Kovacheva 2010: 125). As it delivered an incomplete picture of the immigrant population in the country (Sachverständigenrat 2004: 68), a reform of the statistical accounting was launched in 2005 which introduced a new category for registration of the immigrant population – ‘persons of immigrant origin’⁶. The new category allows for a differentiation by country of birth and country of birth of the parents, so that it is possible to identify ethnic Germans (*Spätaussiedler*), naturalized immigrants (German nationals), and the offspring of immigrants (second generation). As the category of persons of immigrant origin has been introduced only recently, German statistics still continue using mainly the category of foreign nationals for more detailed analysis particularly in time perspective.

Looking at data from the Microcensus, it is noticeable that the number of persons of immigrant origin is twice as high as the number of foreign citizens. In 2007 15.4 million out of 82.3 million

⁶ Person with migration background is everybody who had immigrated after 1949 to the current territory of Germany, and also every foreign national born in Germany, and also everybody who is born as a German in Germany but has at least one parent immigrated or born in Germany as a foreign national (quoted according to BAMF 2010: 235).

persons were of immigrant origin and 7.3 million had a foreign citizenship⁷. Considering developments from 2005 to 2007, both the total and the foreign population has declined and only the number of persons of immigrant origin has increased by about 400 000 persons (see Table 2). The current picture of 15 million persons of immigrant origin (or almost 19 per cent of the total population) is a result of the migration history of the country and different migration patterns: guest workers coming mainly between 1955 and 1973; family members of guest workers and asylum seekers characterizing the time after 1973; the large immigration of asylum seekers and civil war refugees in the 1990s and nowadays, EU citizens and selected categories of temporary migrants and family migrants. In 2008 the main categories with regard to new entries of foreign nationals were temporary workers (258 000), EU citizens from the old member states EU14 (96 000) and students (58 000) (BAMF 2010: 39). In a time perspective, only seasonal workers and students remained a relative stable number (BAMF 2010: 39). All other categories EU14 citizens, migration in the frame of family reunification, asylum seekers, ethnic Germans and Jewish refugees showed a declining trend over the decade.

Table 2 Population according to migration status 2005-2007, in thousand

	2005	2006	2007
Total population	82 465	82 369	82 257
German nationals without migration background	67 132	67 225	66 846
Persons with migration background	15 013	15 143	15 411
<i>Persons with own migration experience (foreign born)</i>	10 399	10 431	10 543
- of those foreign nationals	5 571	5 584	5 592
- of those German nationals	4 828	4 847	4 942
<i>Persons without own migration experiences (born in Germany)</i>	4 614	4 713	4 877
- of those foreign nationals	1 749	1 716	1 688
- of those German nationals	2 865	2 997	3 189

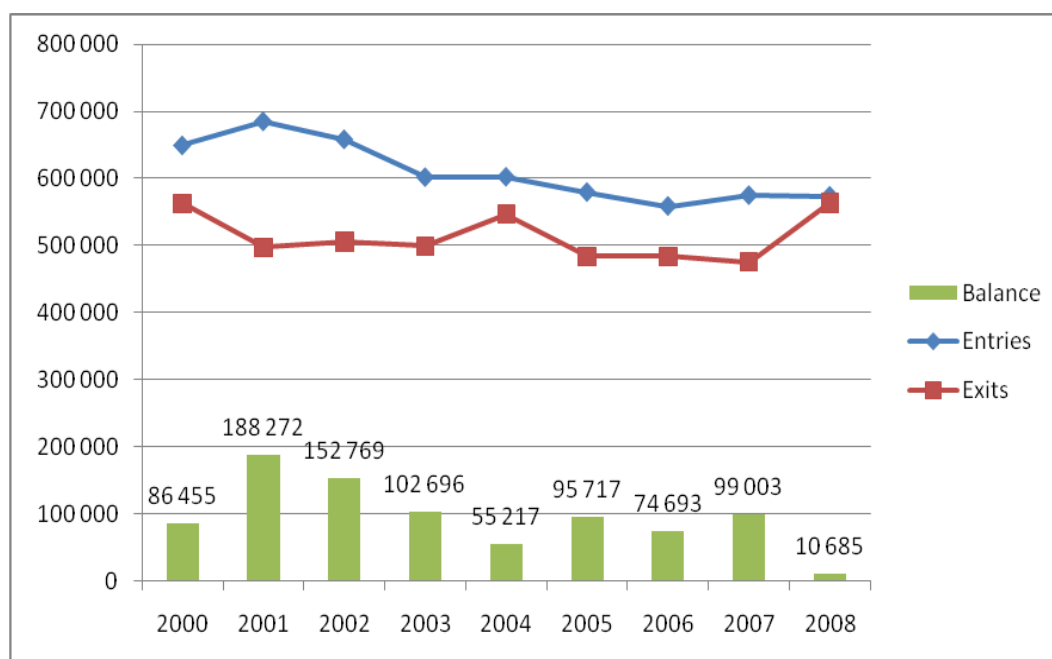
Source: Data from Microcensus (BAMF 2010: 236).

It is important to note that information on entries and exits of foreign citizens is based on declarations at local registration offices. At the German borders, no data are collected. As Germany is part of the Schengen area, there are no regular controls at land borders, but all issued visa are recorded in the Central Register of Foreigners. Having a look at data on entries and exits of foreign nationals between 2000 and 2008, one can observe continually decreasing inflows and a steady trend of outflows. Thus the total immigration balance has been reduced

⁷ There are diverging figures on the foreign population in Germany in 2008 based on two different data sources: 6.7 million according to the AZR and 7.2 million according to the annual update of the population from the 1987 census (*Bevölkerungsfortschreibung*). Data from the AZR refer to foreign nationals residing in Germany more than three months and is considered more accurate.

since 2001 from 188 000 to 10 000 persons in 2008 (see Figure 4). However, the substantially higher figure on exits in 2008 should be considered with caution as it influenced by technical adjustment of the statistics⁸. In spite of the positive immigration balance in the last decade, the number of foreign nationals has remained relatively stable and amounts to 6.7 million persons. This development might be explained by temporary circular migration, return, hidden immigration, mortality, naturalization and statistical reform (Cyrus and Kovacheva 2010: 128)⁹.

Figure 4 In- and outflows of foreign nationals and migration balance (2000-2008)



Source: Aggregated data from local population registers (BAMF 2010: 166).

With regard to their origin, most of the immigrants are nationals of another European country: Every third comes from another EU member state and every second from a non-EU European country. The number of foreign nationals originating from other continents is rather modest: 12 per cent from Asia, 4 per cent from Africa and 3 per cent from America, Australia and Oceania (BAMF 2010: 261-262). With regard to citizenship, a few European countries of origin dominate: Turkey, Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The largest immigrant group is that of Turkish immigrants: there are 2.5 million persons of Turkish origin, 1.69 million of them are Turkish nationals and 40 per cent have been born in Germany (BAMF 2010: 239). A similar picture as regards main nationalities

⁸ Data on entries and exits of foreign nationals stem from the local population registers where each person is obliged to register one week after arrival in the country and to deregister before departure. In 2008 a personal Tax Identification Number (*Steuer-Identifikationsnummer*) was introduced which led to lots of deregistrations from the local population registers which may not necessarily correspond to a real departure from the country. Consequently, the real number of exits of foreign nationals in 2008 was unclear (BAMF 2010: 166).

⁹ Naturalizations were at high levels as a result of the liberalized naturalization law and led to naturalization of 1.24 million foreign nationals from 2000 to 2008 (BAMF 2010: 252). The statistical reform launched in the beginning of the 2000s led to a technical reduction of the number of foreign nationals from 7.3 to 6.7 in 2004.

can be identified in the data on migration inflows. Most immigrants come to Germany from Europe. Looking at developing countries, the statistics indicate as main sending countries from Africa Morocco, Tunisia, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon and Egypt. From Asia immigrants come mainly from Vietnam, China, Iraq, Iran, Thailand, Afghanistan and India.

Table 3 Migration from main developing countries in 2008

	Entries	Exits	Balance	Total foreign nationals	Share in % of total foreign nationals
Europe:	531 060	599 492	-68 432	5 362 629	79.7
Ukraine	6 869	6 337	+532	126 233	1.9
Kosovo	2 615	337	+2 278	12 214	0.5
Moldova	699	521	+178	32 183	0.2
Africa	22 087	19 764	+2 323	268 116	4.0
Morocco	3 374	2 765	+609	66.189	1.0
Tunisia	1 868	1 600	+268	23.142	0.3
Ghana	976	995	-19	20 447	0.3
Nigeria	1 796	1 560	+236	17 186	0.3
Asia	86 373	75 736	+10 637	811 369	12.1
Vietnam	4 045	4 313	-268	83 606	1.2
China	14 293	13 647	+646	78 960	1.2
Iraq	8 923	3 945	+4 978	74 481	1.1
Total	682 146	737 889	-55 743	6 727 619	100

Source: Aggregated data from local population registers (BAMF 2010: 261-262).

Considering the residential rights of the foreign nationals, two-thirds live with a secure status as they are in possession of a permanent residence status. Among those with an insecure status, there are two categories with special relevance for the topic of irregular migration: 103 000 with a so-called 'toleration', meaning that they are obliged to leave but cannot be deported and 25 000 who are in an asylum procedure (BAMF 2010: 230-231). Mainly nationals of countries affected by civil wars like Serbia, Montenegro and Iraq, and others like Turkey and Syria are in possession of toleration. They are at the risk of slipping into irregularity owing to expiration of the insecure status or after having remained in the country in spite of the obligation to leave.

3.2 Irregular migration: data, estimates and development since 2000

Measuring the scope of irregular migration is of interest for various actors: for journalists who are keen to frame their articles with numbers; for both public authorities and charity

organisations in discussions about regularizations and in discussions about the inclusion of irregular migrants in public services (Vogel et al. forthcoming: 1). However, until now there are very few attempts to estimate the size of irregular migration in Germany (for an overview of existing estimates, see Table 4). Mainly qualitative studies addressing the life situation of irregular migrants have been published until now.

Interpreting quantitative traces of irregular migration in combination with qualitative information, it can be concluded that the most common way into irregular status in Germany is visa overstaying (Vogel et al. 2010: 1). Another way is staying in the country after withdrawal of a status, e.g. after rejection of asylum application. Main ways out of irregularity are through a temporary individual regularization in cases in which a removal is not possible for humanitarian or practical reasons (toleration) or through an asylum application mainly after an illegal entry. Collective regularizations have not been launched and this is unlikely to change in the future as German officials strictly oppose the introduction of such programmes (Cyrus and Kovacheva 2010: 135). Although there is no data on demographic inflows (birth of children without documents) and outflows (death of irregular migrants), but their quantitative relevance is considered to be comparatively low.

For Germany, estimates on the total stock of irregular migration indicate a considerable reduction in the number of migrants without a regular residence status in the last decade. One reason is the EU enlargement which led to a de-facto legalisation of migrants from the new EU member states who had been previously irregular residents. Correspondingly, since 2007 it is likely that illegal residence has been partly substituted by illegal work (Vogel et al. forthcoming: 10). This development is mirrored in the estimates on irregular foreign work (see Table 4). According to Cyrus, there were more than four times as many migrants working rather than residing in breach of the law in 2006 (Cyrus 2008: 53).

With regard to gender, indicative data from police criminal statistics and health care centres point to gender balanced irregular migrant population (Kovacheva 2010). Looking at the age composition, there is a clear quantitative dominance of youths and adults and not negligible relevance of children and elderly people (Kovacheva 2010). The number of children between 6 and 15 years living in irregularity are estimated to be between 1 000 and 30 000 in 2008 (Vogel and Assner 2010: 22). Children are usually left by their parents in the country of origin (Alt 2003: 215-219).

Apart from estimates on the stock of irregular migration, there are statistical data which may serve as an indicator for development of the phenomenon. Generally, it is statistically difficult to capture irregular migration as migrants without regular residence status try to avoid contacts with public authorities. However, the prosecution of illegal residence is a task for every police person on patrol in Germany (McDonald et al. 2009: 212). Thus irregular migrants might

be identified by the police in standard situations like traffic controls or labour market controls, if they become victims or witnesses of a crime or during an identity check without suspicion¹⁰. If detected by the police in Germany, illegally present migrants are registered in the Police Criminal Statistics as a residence without required documents is considered to be a criminal offence. Although these data are not able to provide for a fully comprehensive picture of irregular migration, they deliver some insight into the phenomenon.

Table 4 Selected estimates of irregular migration in Germany and German cities

Area	Year	Estimate			Source
		minimum	central	Maximum	
Estimates for Germany – irregular foreign residents (IFR)					
IFR	2003	1 000 000		1 500 000	Alt 2001
IFR	2004	500 000		1 000 000	Alt 2004
IFR	2005	280 000		680 000	Vogel 2009
IFR	2006	239 000		562 000	Vogel 2009
IFR	2007	196 000		457 000	Vogel 2009
Estimates for Germany – irregular foreign workers (IFW)					
IFW	2005		1 002 000		Enste and Schneider 2006
IFW without regular status	2006			300 000	Cyrus 2008
IFW with regular status	2006			1 260 000	Cyrus 2008
Estimates for cities – irregular foreign residents (IFR)					
Leipzig – IFR	1998	8 000		15 000	Alt 2004
Munich – IFR	2003	40 000		50 000	Alt 2003
Berlin – IFR	2003	100 000		250 000	Alt 2004
Bonn – IFR	2003		4 000		Alt 2004
Cologne – IFR	2003	20 000			Alt 2004
Frankfurt am Main – IFR	2005	25 000		50 000	Krieger 2006
Hamburg – IFR	2008	6 000		22 000	Vogel and Assner 2009

Source: based on HWWI 2009, table with estimates for Germany, available at: http://irregular-migration.hwwi.net/Germany_Database.6165.0.html.

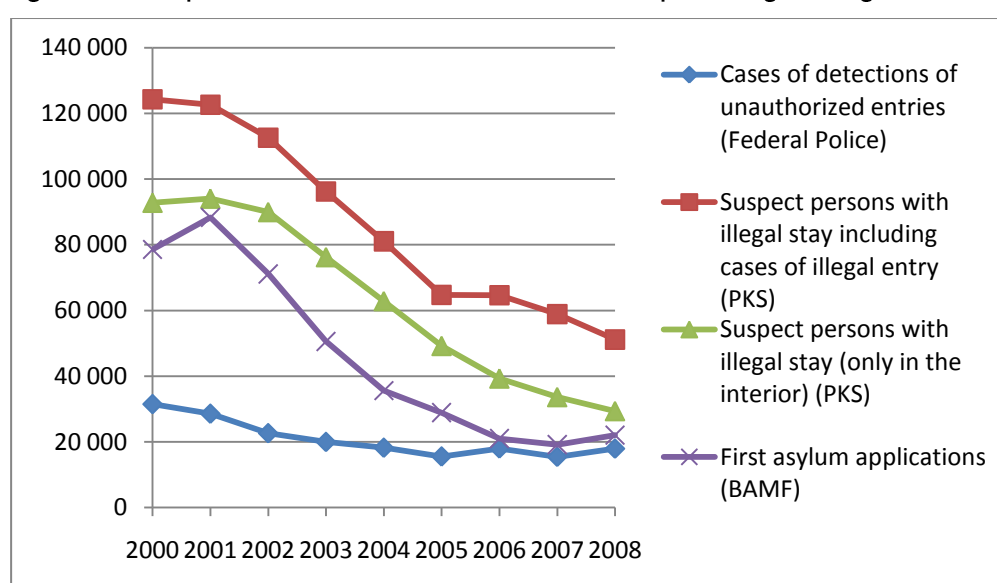
*The colour indicates the quality of the estimates. Estimates marked in yellow are of medium quality while those marked in orange are of low quality. See more about quality of estimates in Vogel and Kovacheva 2008.

Among various statistical indicators for flows, apprehensions on the border and first asylum applications are considered as the most appropriate for concluding on development of irregular migration (Vogel et al. 2010). Both indicators point to a decreasing trend since 2000. The same trend is shown by data on apprehensions within the country which is considered as the most

¹⁰Police laws differ between the 16 German federal states. They specify the conditions under which police persons may ask for the identification documents. To summarize the general line, there are always plausible reasons to ask any individuals for identification, but in some states the conditions for asking a larger number of people in public settings are more restrictive than in others.

appropriate stock indicator. All indicators point to a sharp decrease since the turn of the millennium (see Figure 5). Since the estimates by Vogel are based on data on apprehended persons who are categorized as ‘illegally present’ by the police, it is hardly surprising that they indicate the same declining trend. However, as the illegal residence applies only to third-country nationals, the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007 led automatically to a decrease in the stock of irregularly residing migrants as many were de facto legalized. Looking at main nationalities among apprehended irregular migrants, the top five countries that are represented in three statistical indicators of irregular migration (unauthorized entry, illegal residence and asylum applications) are third countries – Serbia, Turkey, Vietnam, the Russian Federation and Iraq.

Figure 5 Development of statistical indicators for the scope of irregular migration



Source: Based on Cyrus and Kovacheva 2010; complemented with figures for 2008 from BAMF 2009 and BAMF 2010.

Looking at these main statistical indicators and the economic development, it is remarkable that in the course of the improved economic situation in Germany since 2005, statistical indicators point to decreasing inflows and stocks of illegally resident migrants, but it has to be noted that this is not necessarily the case for illegally working foreign nationals who have no problem with their residence status (EU citizens). More recent developments after the economic downturn since 2008 are still not available but certainly, both regular and irregular migrants will face new challenges in the course of the economic downturn which might impact on the scope of the phenomenon in the near future.

4 Public discourse on irregular migration: results from a pilot media study

Analysis of the public discourses on irregular migration can be based on various sources: public opinion surveys, official documents and media coverage. Using public opinion surveys conducted by the *Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach*, Abali analysed the German public opinion on immigration and integration in the last two decades (Abali 2009: 29-51). Illegal immigration was a major concern for the German society in the 1990s which was also mirrored in the media coverage in that period (Abali 2009: 33). The German media talked about the “boat being full” emphasizing the increasing flows of asylum seekers in the beginning of the 1990s. Abali criticized public opinion polls conducted in Germany as they have been targeting mainly German nationals and even naturalized immigrants and ethnic Germans have not correspondingly been included which led to a representation mainly of the views of the non-immigrant population (Abali 2009: 47-48).

Scientific studies exploring the media coverage of irregular migration are rather scarce and focus mainly on illegal entry to Europe. Fohn (2009) explored the media coverage of African irregular inflows to Europe in Italy and Germany in 2006. Results showed that the illegal arrival of African asylum seekers by boats is more often and more emotionally discussed in Italy than in Germany. Based on that, the author concluded that in spite of the open borders in the EU, illegal entry remains a national problem for the media (Fohn 2009: 106). Mbappou-Gleiß comparatively investigated the media representation of illegal entry from Africa to Europe based on articles published in September and October 2005. In the three countries under investigation – Germany, France and Spain, irregular migration from Africa is discussed as a threat. Particularly in the German media articles using a positive language are rare (Mbappou-Gleiß 2008: 2). Unlike Spanish articles, German articles can be classified in the so-called distance framing which creates an emotional distance between readers and irregular migrants using terms like invaders (*Eindringlinge*) and illegals (*Illegale*) (Mbappou-Gleiß 2008: 3). With regard to the terms used, neutral notions are an exception in the German media discourse. However, the German media coverage of irregular migration from Africa proves to be the most critical compared to those in France and Spain (Mbappou-Gleiß 2008: 10). The six newspapers showed to which extent an “Europeanization” of national media has occurred. The German media indicated the highest level of Europeanization of media coverage which is pointed up by a central role of the EU institutions and EU politics (Mbappou-Gleiß 2008: 10).

Media coverage from a historical perspective may give another insight into the public discourses on immigration and irregular migration. Zambonini argued that different periods of the migration history are dominated by different images of immigrants portrayed in the German mainstream media: the tolerated guests in the 1950s and 1960s, the unwelcome

aliens in the 1970s and 1980s, and the illegitimate refugees in the 1990s (Zambonini 2009). Nowadays, the image of illegal immigrants took root in Germany (Sachverständigenrat 2004: 347). For the German society, illegal entry under dangerous and perilous circumstances is of greater importance than other types of irregularity although the number of illegal entries is comparatively lower (Sachverständigenrat 2004: 349).

Looking at the role of media for public discourse, Zambonini found out that until 2000, the media reflected and even amplified the negative attitudes towards immigration in political debates (Zambonini 2009: 181). The media not only mirrored but also constructed and influenced policy and society. For instance, media reports on refugees who sought asylum under false pretences in the beginning of the 1990s were able to shape policy debates on the reform of the German asylum law in that period (Zambonini 2009: 175). Since the turn of the new millennium, a shift in public discourse took place as a result of the shift of migration discourse which has been focusing increasingly on social and integration policies towards immigrants (Zambonini 2009: 172). Assuming that this shift in the public and media discourse took place, it is interesting to look at the representation of irregular migration in the German media since 2000.

For this paper, a pilot media study was conducted which aims at tracing the development of newspaper discourse about irregular migration across time in Germany. There are five major national quality newspapers which are delivered daily to subscribers. Concerning the support of political positions, they can be ordered on a scale from right to left as follows: *Die Welt*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Frankfurter Rundschau* and the *Tageszeitung* (taz). The largest boulevard newspaper is the *Bild Zeitung* (BILD) but boulevard or regional newspapers are not considered for the media study. The German national subscription daily newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (translated as "South German Newspaper") was chosen for the media pilot study. It is considered a reputable newspaper (Bauder 2008) and is the largest German newspaper with a circulation of 442 000 copies, reaching over 1.1 million readers daily. The editorial stance alignment of the newspaper is liberal.

The archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* was electronically searched through the search engine of the University Library in Hamburg¹¹. The search engine allows for download of the full texts of articles. Due to technical reasons the download turned out as a very time-consuming process. The time frame covers articles published during the last decade: from 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2009. A combination of standardized key words was used in order to account for the widest possible range of articles concerned with irregular migration. As the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* is a German newspaper, German equivalents for the English key words were identified

¹¹ <http://www.sub.uni-hamburg.de/emedien/ezeitschriften.html>.

(see annex 6.1). A differentiation whether a key word was found in the headline or anywhere in the article was made.

4.1 Quantitative findings

The first search was separately conducted for each of the four terms – ‘irregular’, ‘illegal’, ‘undocumented’ and ‘bogus’. The initial search produced a total number of 2160 articles (see Table 5). In order to capture the true number of relevant articles, certain criteria were applied during a second more precise screening of the articles’ content. The main criteria applied during the second screening refer to the topic of the article which has to deal with irregular migration and not only marginally mention it. One example for an article that has been declared irrelevant dealt with drug smuggling across the Mexican-American border and another one was concerned with tax fraud in Liechtenstein. As the term ‘illegal’ was used in those articles but they do not address the topic irregular migration, they were excluded from the list of relevant articles. Furthermore, the article had to be published either directly in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* or in the national supplements *SZ Magazin* (supplement to the Friday edition) or *SZ prime time*. Any articles that had been published in the regional editions (*Landeskreisausgaben*) were excluded. In the end, after having applied those criteria, the total number of relevant articles from the year 2000 until 2009 was 531 (see second screening in Table 5). The reasons for excluding articles have not been documented separately but it is interesting to note that most articles with a migration-related search term in the headline survived the second screening, while only 21 per cent of article with the search terms in the rest of the article were kept in the final selection.

Table 5 Number of articles generated by search terms (2000-2009)

Search terms: Immigrants/ Migrants/ Migration/ Visa (Migration/ Zuwanderung/ Einwanderung/ Visa) combined with:	In the headline	Anywhere in the rest of the article	Total
Results of the initial search			
Irregular (irregulär)	1	38	39
Illegal (illegal)	124	1957	2081
Undocumented (undokumentiert)	0	7	7
Bogus (Scheinasyll, Scheinehe)	0	33	33
Total number of all articles	125	2035	2160
Results of the second screening			
Total number of relevant articles	109	422	531
in % of all articles	87%	21%	25%
in % of relevant articles	21%	79%	100%

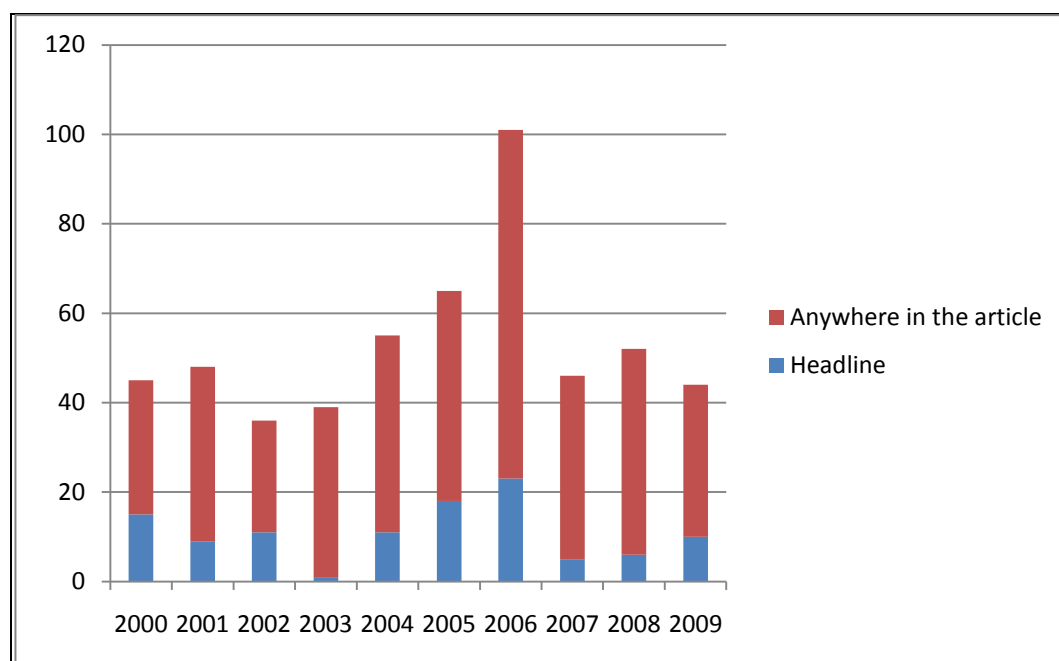
Source: Archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, own compilation.

A rough overview of the articles showed that the vast majority of the publications are brief news or short articles. Long articles accompanied by images and background information are not dominant but there are present in the newspaper every year. In a few cases, a whole

newspaper page was devoted to irregular migration and the topic was discussed in three to four articles in the same edition. For instance, in November 2009 articles on page 1, 4 and 8 were devoted to planned measures against undocumented work in France.

The coverage of irregular migration in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* from 2000 to 2009 shows constant media awareness towards the topic. The articles are more or less evenly distributed over time except for the year 2006 with 101 articles (see Figure 6). This peak can be attributed to an increased number of articles that have been published on irregular immigrants arriving at the Spanish shores and the European Union's approach to tackle the issue of irregular migration. The total number of relevant articles from the year 2000 until 2009 was 531 – a quarter of the initial search. Only one fifth of the relevant articles (109 articles) contain the search terms in the headline and the vast majority (422 articles) in the rest of the article. With regard to terms used, the media analysis shows that 'illegal' is the most often used notion. The term 'illegal' gave the most hits in the electronic search which was confirmed in the screening of the articles' content. In most of the articles, 'irregular', 'illegal' and 'undocumented' could be found as synonyms whereas the last one only popped up in very few cases.

Figure 6 Key word found in headline or article



Source: Archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, own compilation.

With regard to the geographical focus of news coverage, it is noticeable that there are no articles dealing with irregular migration of German citizens into other countries. Many articles (190) have been written about irregular migration of foreign nationals into Germany and policy developments on the European level impacting on migration to Germany. Most articles (341) on irregular migration are unrelated to Germany or German citizens. Those articles mainly dealt with irregular migration to other EU member states in the South (Italy and Spain) or in the North (France, Belgium and the UK) and OECD countries such as the USA and Australia.

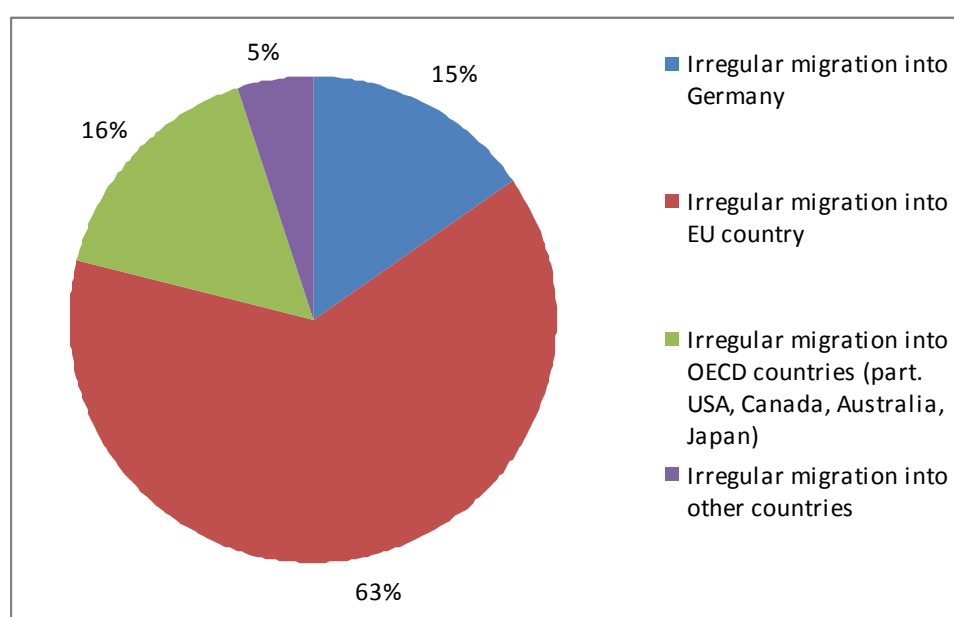
Table 6 Geographical focus of news coverage in Germany (2000-2009)

	Verbal/ numerical indication of relevance
Irregular migration of own citizens into other countries	0. No articles found on irregular migration of German citizens to other countries.
Irregular migration into the own country	190 articles either about Germany or with impact on Germany (e.g. European policy developments); 81 articles address irregular migration to Germany, mostly concerning the living conditions of irregular migrants.
Irregular migration unrelated to own citizens or own country	341 articles are mostly relating to other European or OECD countries, particularly Spain, Italy, Greece, the UK and the USA.

Source: Archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, own compilation.

Looking at the geographical scope of the articles (see Figure 7), it is noticeable that two thirds of the articles deal with EU events (335 articles): the arrival of boat people in the Southern EU countries Italy, Spain and Greece, mobility of irregular migrants across the internal EU borders, legal changes, related to the phenomenon in some EU member states and regularisation programmes launched. Apart from national aspects in individual member states, EU-related topics have been addressed, for instance, in reports on new EU policy developments or reactions of the EU institutions to extraordinary events in the Union. It is even more interesting that there are constantly articles reporting on irregular migration in countries outside Europe: in other OECD countries like the USA and Australia (86 articles). Only 81 articles or 15 per cent of the articles address irregular migration in Germany which almost equal the number of articles devoted to the phenomenon in other OECD countries. Thus, comparatively, irregular migration in Germany seems to be not widely covered in the newspaper.

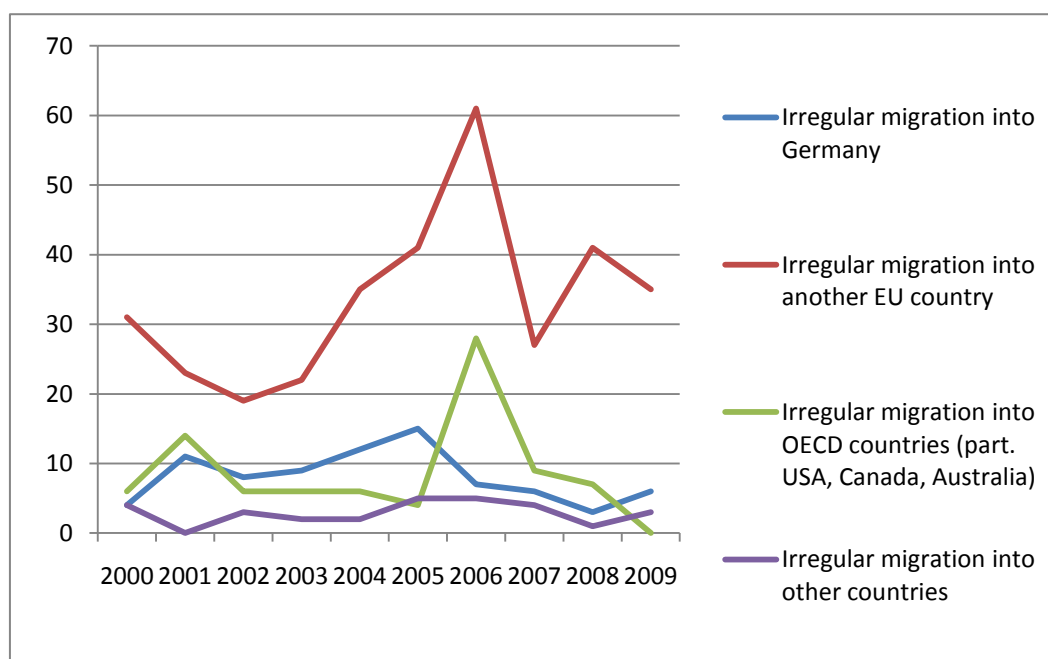
Figure 7 Articles by geographical scope of news coverage (2000-2009)



Source: Archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, own compilation.

Over time, the geographical scope of news coverage has remained similar. Most of the articles addressed irregular migration in other EU member states while internal events in Germany have drawn much less attention. For articles addressing the phenomenon in Germany, both developments at a local and a national level are discussed. This might be attributed to the particularities of the German federal state in which local authorities play an important role in the political discourse on irregular migration. For instance, the school attendance of children without documents exemplifies this particularity: as each federal state has responsibility for the regulation of the school system, policy and public discussions about the access to education for irregular children have taken place predominantly at a state or local level, for instance currently in Hamburg. Thus scientific studies on the life situation of irregular migrants in Munich and in Berlin were presented in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* showing the main discussions in both cities (for Berlin in February 2001 and for Munich in May 2003). Munich, capital of the Bavarian state, was the first city for which a major study on the situation of irregular migrants was conducted. The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* has a local edition in Munich.

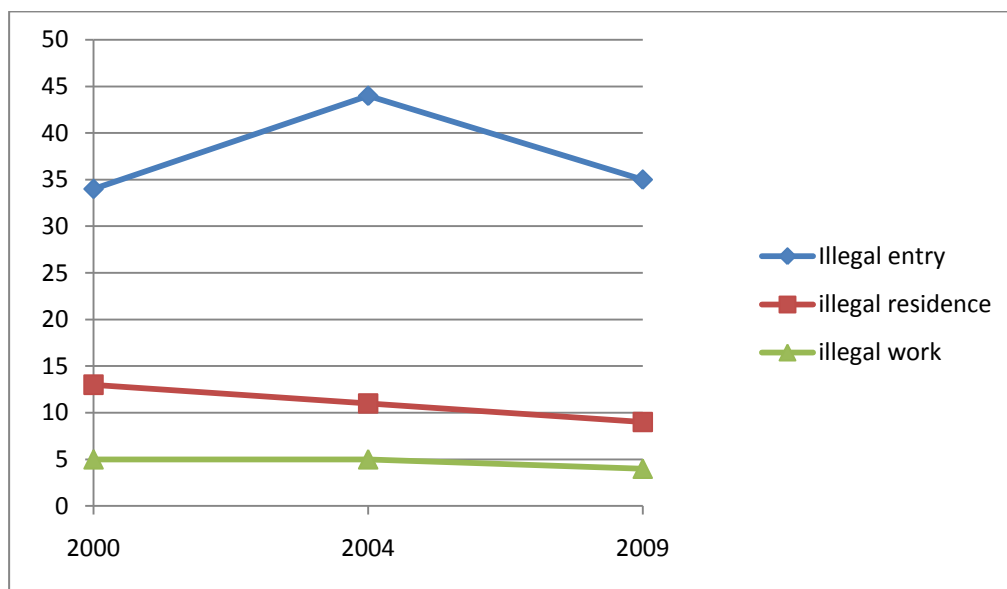
Figure 8 Geographical scope of news coverage over time



Source: Archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, own compilation.

For more in-depth analysis of the thematic aspects, relevant articles published in 2000, 2004 and 2009 were considered (144 articles). The articles show that illegal entry across borders is the major type of irregularity covered over time (more than 30 articles per year). Surprisingly, undeclared work is marginally addressed in approximately 5 articles per year. Apprehensions of undocumented workers are often a topic in short news in the regional issues of the newspaper which were not taken into consideration in the pilot study.

Figure 9 Type of irregularity addressed in 144 articles published in 2000, 2004 and 2009



Source: Archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, own compilation.

Looking at main thematic categories covered in the articles published in 2000, 2004 and 2009 (see Table 7) one can find that political and legal developments are the most frequent topics addressed in every second article.

Table 7 Thematic categories identified in 144 articles published 2000, 2004 and 2009

Thematic categories	2000 (45 articles)	2004 (55 articles)	2009 (44 articles)	Total (144 articles)	%
Humanitarian concerns	23	33	18	74	24%
Security concerns	10	14	6	30	10%
Economic aspects	8	16	7	31	10%
Political and legal aspects	15	33	31	79	25%
Trafficking, smuggling	22	18	13	53	17%
Migration control, enforcement	5	26	15	46	15%
Total	83	140	90	313	100%

Source: Archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, own compilation. Note: some articles address more than one thematic category. Consequently, the total number of categories does not correspond to the number of articles analyzed.

The prominence of these topics might be explained by the increasing Europeanization of migration policies at the EU level since 1999 which are reflected in the German media. Migration control and enforcement measures, as well as trafficking and smuggling are also broadly covered. Humanitarian concerns like access to health care and education are in the spotlight of the media addressed in every second article. Comparatively, humanitarian

concerns about the life situation of irregular migration are more often discussed than security concerns relating to the threats posed by irregular migration. This finding is in line with the intensified discussions about life situation of irregular migrants in Germany in the last decade.

Regardless of the thematic aspects of the articles, the representation of irregular migration is rather reactive to certain events than proactive. Different events may trigger publications in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. In 2000, the tragic death of 58 Chinese irregular immigrants during their journey from the Netherlands to the United Kingdom fuelled the public and political debates and led to many articles in the next months. Personal stories of irregular migrants have been also reported in that period. In many cases, they are used for opening debates on the life situation of the irregular migrants. Two main topics have been addressed over the decade: access to health care and access to education. Due to the restrictive German legal framework both are hardly possible for irregular migrants and are correspondingly addressed in the media. Thus the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* has been constantly reporting on developments in areas where need for action exists.

4.2 In-depth analysis of ten major articles

For the qualitative analysis, the full texts of long articles were screened and ten major articles (one for each year) for an in-depth review were identified and downloaded. The articles were selected on the basis of the following criteria: type and length of article, page of publication and topic. Articles of greater importance were preferred: at best, it is a long article published as a lead story on the first page which deals comprehensively with irregular migration and focuses on internal aspects of the phenomenon. However, as the coverage of irregular migration in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* appeared to address particularly external events (e.g. illegal entry to southern European countries) some of the analysed articles are devoted to the phenomenon outside the country (see annex 6.2).

Main qualitative aspects of the ten selected articles are summarized in Table 8 and indicate the following findings:

- *Dominant views of opinion leaders quoted*

With regard to views of opinion leaders quoted in the articles, politicians seem to be the largest presented group. However, opinions of German officials are quantitatively less frequently quoted than EU officials or representatives of international organisations. One reason could be the thematic coverage of the articles on external events. Looking at articles dealing with irregular migration in Germany, NGOs activists and researchers tend to dominate the media landscape over governmental and local officials.

Different fears related to irregular migration can be found in the quoted statements. Leading officials are worried about the increasing numbers of illegal migrants coming to Europe by sea

(European Commission, Article 9). The UNHCR fears that “because of the world economic downturn, much more people will try to come to Europe” (Article 10). A local Italian politician perceives the problem of illegal entrants to Italy as a European problem and not an Italian one (Article 9). This appears to be in contradiction with the view of the native population which considers irregular migration as a local problem: a bar keeper in Lampedusa is worried that due to the negative image of Lampedusa the number of tourists coming to the island declined by 50 per cent compared with 2007 (Article 9). Personal stories giving an insight into the life situation of irregular migrants are constantly presented over the decade and the fear to be detected and deported by the police is identified as the main fear of irregular migrants (Articles 4, 5 and 7). The uncertainty of irregular migrants is discussed constantly over the decade. It is noticeable that with regard to the life situation of irregular migrants, positions vary among the federal states: while politicians in Munich seem to acknowledge the need for action at a local level (Article 4), church representatives call for greater engagement of local politicians in Berlin (Article 1).

- *Are any theories uncovered on the development of irregular migration?*

The development of irregular migration is mainly linked to the economic development and the situation in the countries of origin. The lack of economic opportunities is featured as main cause of irregular migrants (Article 5, 6). The story of a Ukrainian man who came to Germany in the 1990s in the pursuit of a better life and new economic possibilities is “a typical fate of an illegal immigrant in Germany” (Article 8). Civil wars, natural disasters and tyranny are identified as other push factors (Article 4). “In my country there is no freedom”, an asylum seeker in Italy is quoted (Article 9). Correspondingly, improvement of the life situation in the countries of origin is perceived as a main way to reduce the scope of the phenomenon (Article 10).

Particularities of the receiving countries are identified as causes for irregular migration: e.g. labour market shortages in certain sectors or restrictive legal framework. According to the migration researcher Klaus Bade, irregular migrants have become an economic factor in Germany (Article 7). Irregular migrants work in sectors which are not attractive for Germans and labour supply by foreign workers matches this labour demand. Irregular foreign residents put up with the fear of being detected by the police emphasizing that “there, we come from, one earns not a quarter as good as here” (Article 7). The need for cheap construction workers and seasonal workers is not a German phenomenon but exists in the whole EU (Article 6). In Italy, irregular migrants are often forced to accept lower wages due to their uncertain residence status (Article 10). Therefore, articles forwarded the call for improvements particularly in three areas: legal security for irregular migrants claiming labour right in courts, access to health care and access to education (Articles 2, 4, 7).

A restrictive legal framework is also indicated as a cause of irregularity. Rejected asylum seekers, students or au-pairs are driven to an irregular residence due to lack of legal opportunities (Article 4). Due to the restrictive asylum law, persons fleeing persecution do not see a chance to apply for asylum and thus work undocumented or travel to other European countries (Article 8). People get into irregularity after their asylum has been rejected and the sending countries are reluctant to accept them back (Article 9). The article features the view that a restrictive legal framework is not able to stop irregular migrants that are persecuted by pangs of hunger or dictators (Article 9). Correspondingly, public leaders like researchers or politicians call for more legal possibilities for coming to and staying in Germany.

Some articles point to the role of transit countries like Maghreb countries and consider them as facilitators of irregular migration as they do not undertake enough efforts to combat the outflows of asylum seekers (Article 6). For instance, the Libyan leader Muammar el Gaddafi is held responsible for allowing boats with asylum seekers to depart from the Libyan harbours (Article 9). Correspondingly, the EU hopes to reduce the number of illegal entrants through more border controls and cooperation between the transit countries and the EU (Article 10). It is noticeable that the increasingly cheap travel possibilities as a result of the globalisation are emphasized as a facilitator of illegal entry to Europe (Article 8). Globalisation also makes communication between by irregular migrants and their networks easier (Article 8).

Looking particularly at economic developments and their relation to irregular migration, the Europeanization of the phenomenon is remarkable. Article 8 forwards the position that migrants seek for better economic opportunities within the whole EU, but that Germany is not among the most attractive in the European Union: "There are not so many who want to stay". Italy and Spain offer better legal and economic opportunities, for example well developed street sale opportunities. Improved employment possibilities and conditions in the new EU member states may lead to a decreasing importance of illegal work by legally resident new EU citizens: "it is better to work for Skoda than at the asparagus fields in Germany" (Article 8).

- *Which quantified developments are quoted to frame and support arguments?*

In most of the articles quantitative developments are quoted. It is remarkable that numbers often open discussions in the beginning of the articles (Article 1, 2, 4). Articles refer to both stocks and flows of irregular migration and two types of quantitative information: official statistics and estimates of the stock or flow of irregular migrants obtained by researchers or international organisations. On the one hand, statistics are used to underline the need for action in the Mediterranean basin and to legitimise border controls. The front-page story of *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in 2009 is devoted to the death of several hundreds of Africans asylum seekers in the Mediterranean Sea and highlights the large number of potential irregular migrants from Africa on their way to Europe. On the other hand, official statistics are used as

an argument against the fear of overwhelming numbers of asylum seekers. Declining numbers of asylum seekers over the last 17 years are quoted to testify to an exaggeration of the problem of illegal entries to Europe (Article 6).

Table 8 Qualitative aspects identified in the ten selected articles

Article	Main topic and type of irregularity addressed	Perspective (internal or external) Level (local, national, EU, international)	Dominant views of opinion leaders (politicians, civil society activists)	Theories on the development of irregular migration and links to economic developments	Quantified developments quoted to frame and support arguments (statistics or estimates)
2000 (Article 1)	Presentation of a publication "Illegal in Berlin" at the Catholic Forum Illegality in Berlin Illegal residence and illegal work	Internal National level (Germany)	The archiepiscopal commissioner for migration issues Cornelia Bührle: many people gain from work by irregular migrants but do not consider their life situation: "go to eat cheap and look who is working in the kitchen". A local official from the labour market control unit of foreigners' authority Stephan Felisiak: There is undocumented work as there are employers who employ migrants without documents.	The labour market creates irregularity as there is a need for a cheap labour force. Illegal work is an economic gain for Germany. Employers' willingness to employ illegally creates irregular migration. Rejected asylum seekers who do not want or are not able to go back to the home country are a relevant source of irregular migration.	Up to 500,000 irregular migrants in Germany; Up to 100,000 irregular migrants in Berlin.
2001 (Article 2)	Presentation of a scientific study on irregular migration in Berlin Illegality in Berlin Illegal residence and illegal work	Internal Local (state) level (Berlin)	Migration researcher Jörg Alt, the archiepiscopal commissioner for migration issues in Berlin Cornelia Bührle: state authorities should accept responsibility for irregular migrants; legalisation is not a solution.	Lack of legal possibilities is a reason for illegality: e.g. difficult obtainment of work permits or family reunification. Cheap labour of irregular migrants, e.g. cleaners or construction workers, presents an economic gain for private households and other employers.	500 000 to 1 million irregular migrants in Germany; Up to 100 000 irregular migrants in Berlin.
2002 (Article 3)	EU legal framework on immigration and asylum	External EU	-	Economic situation in the countries of origin triggers irregular migration; Lack of legal possibilities to claim asylum as a reason for illegal entry Better economic situation in the countries of origin as a chance to reduce irregular migration, e.g. financial aid for Afghanistan	3.5 million Afghans seeking asylum in Europe were returned back to the country since March 2000; 51 000 asylum seekers come from Afghanistan.
2003 (Article 4)	Presentation of a scientific study on irregular migration in	Internal Local level (Munich)	Migration researcher Philip Anderson: push factors play an important role for irregular migration. Local politician Siegfried Benker	Situation in countries of origin are important: wars, natural disasters and economic emergencies trigger irregular migration	30 000-50 000 irregular migrants in Munich; 4 000 irregular migrants apprehended by the police

	Munich		(Green Party); Head of the Office for Intercultural Cooperation Margret Spohn: Policy makers are interested why irregular migrants come and how they live in Munich. Regularization is a national competence.		in Munich annually.
2004 (Article 5)	A personal story of irregular migrants in Munich Illegal work	Internal Local level (Munich)	The financial minister Hans Eichel (SPD): the law draft for intensified controls in private households seeks to combat mainly illegal work in small trade and handicraft. NGO activist Claus Fussek: the more expensive the care, the more attractive the black economy.	Lack of economic opportunities is a main reason for irregular migration. Legal regulations make registered care workers expensive which is a main reason for illegal work in the sector. Restrictive legal framework, e.g. difficult access to work permit for care workers as a trigger for irregularity.	Hundreds of thousands irregular workers in private households in Germany.
2005 (Article 6)	General article on African irregular migrants coming to Europe and their routes Illegal entry	External International; transit countries and EU	Politicians: Jacques Chirac in 1984: in the future it will be difficult to stop people from the South coming to Europe. Former Algerian president Houari Boumediene in 1984: Millions of people will leave the poor southern parts of Africa in order to survive. President of Senegal Abou Diouf 1990: Europeans live in risk of masses of Africans steaming to Europe.	If transit countries like Morocco would undertake more efforts and institute better border controls, irregular migration would be curbed. The EU needs cheap construction workers and seasonal workers.	In Morocco, more than 25 000 irregular migrants were apprehended in 2004; 1 million irregular migrants in Algeria; 18 million Africans on their way to Europe.
2006 (Article 7)	Stories of three irregular migrants in Berlin; Illegal residence and work	Internal Local level (Berlin)	Migration researcher Klaus Bade: irregular migrants have become an economic factor in certain economic sectors in Germany.	There is a "need" for cheap labour force in certain German sectors, e.g. domestic work, construction and catering industry. Irregular migrants' work leads to economic gains for the receiving society.	-
2007 (Article 8)	A story of an irregular migrant in Germany + general considerations on illegal residence	Internal National level; Germany	Official from the Local Criminal Office in Bayern: Irregular migrants use various communications means even in the home country in order to gather as much as possible information about the opportunities in the receiving country.	The globalisation makes illegal entry easier due to the increased cheap travel possibilities. A main reason for emigration is the pursuit of better life and new economic possibilities. Regularization possibilities in other EU states have a call effect for irregular migrants, e.g. recognition of asylum seekers in Sweden or	27 000 irregular foreign entrants apprehended in 2006 on German borders.

				<p>regularisation programmes in Spain.</p> <p>The absence of street sales like in Italy and Spain makes Germany less attractive. Extensive police controls make Germany an uncomfortable environment.</p>	
2008 (Article 9)	<p>Illegal entry by sea of asylum seekers to Lampedusa</p> <p>Illegal entry</p>	External EU; Italy	<p>NGOs activist: restrictive migration law will be not able to stop irregular migration until people are fleeing from dictators and poverty.</p> <p>Local politician: “We have to support people in their home countries. It is not only an Italian but also a European problem”.</p>	<p>Civil wars, tyranny, hunger and desperateness drive the people to Europe (examples Somalia, Eritrea and Sudan), but also lack of economic opportunities.</p> <p>People get into irregularity after their asylum is rejected and the sending countries are reluctant to accept them back.</p> <p>Negative impact of irregularity on tourism in receiving countries, e.g. Lampedusa.</p>	12 200 illegal migrants arrived in Lampedusa in 2007.
2009 (Article 10)	<p>Drowned African asylum seekers in the Mediterranean sea</p> <p>Illegal entry</p>	External EU; Italy	<p>UN High Commissioner for Refugees: because of the world economic downturn, much more people will try to come to Europe.</p> <p>European Commission: the EU has to prepare for increasing irregular migration.</p>	<p>In the course of the world economic downturn much more people will try to come to Europe.</p> <p>Irregular migrants as cheap labour force are preferred by many employers as they “cannot defend themselves” against the low wages because of the uncertainty of the status.</p>	<p>Hundreds of people died on their journey to Europe;</p> <p>1 to 1.5 million illegal migrants in Libya;</p> <p>36 000 refugees came to Italy 2008.</p>

Source: archive of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, own compilation.

5 Conclusion

In relation to irregular migration, Germany is exclusively considered to be a country receiving and not a sending country. German nationals living in irregularity abroad are not a topic at all. Compared to previous periods, migration of foreign nationals coming, staying and working in breach of the law has been attracting much more attention in Germany since 2000. The first decade of the new millennium is characterised by a slightly positive migration balance and a relatively stable number of foreign population. Both estimates and statistical indicators indicate a decline of the number of migrants residing irregularly in the country. The relevance of illegal work has increased as a result of a legal change which turned EU citizens from the new member states from former irregular residents to potential current irregular worker. The shift towards illegal work is accompanied by an improved economic situation in the country but it cannot be concluded that it is caused by it.

A pilot media study of the national newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* from 2000 to 2009 shed light on the media coverage of irregular migration in that period. The large number of articles on the topic (531 articles) provides a rich source for both reflecting on the public discourse about irregular migration. Quantitative results indicate that irregular migration has been mainly portrayed in the German mainstream media as an external phenomenon occurring outside Germany while domestic issues have been discussed less frequently. On the one hand, the dominance of external events and aspects can be considered an expression of the reluctance of German media to deal with internal events concerning the phenomenon within the country. On the other hand, it can be interpreted as a sign for Europeanization of irregular migration. In articles with an external focus, illegal entry is the topic most frequently discussed which looking from a security perspective and emphasizing the threat posed by irregular migration at the EU level. In articles with an internal focus, the life situation of irregular migrants in Germany seems to dominate the media discourse highlighting the need for action at the national level.

6 Annex

6.1 Key words used for the electronic search of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* archive

English	German
Irreg* + (Immigr*/ Migr*/ Migra*/ Foreign*/ Visa*)	Irreg* + (Migr*/ Zuwand*/ Einwand*/ Visa*)
Illeg* + (Immigr*/Migr*/Migra*/Foreign*/Visa*)	Illeg* + (Migr*/ Zuwand*/ Einwand*/ Visa*)
Undocumented + Immigr*/Migr*/Migra*/Foreign*/Visa*	Undokum* + (Migr*/ Zuwand*/ Einwand*/ Visa*)
Bogus + (Immigr*/ Migr*/ Migra*/ Foreign*/ Visa*)	(Scheinasyl*/ Scheinehe*) + (Migr*/ Zuwand*/ Einwand*/ Visa*)

* truncation + AND / OR

6.2 Ten selected articles on irregular migration

Year	Date, quoted as	Title	Author, Page of publication
2000	25/01/2000 (Article 1)	Without illegals the kitchen remains cold – The Catholic Church demands judicial and social improvements for illegal immigrants in the capital <i>(Ohne Illegale bleibt die Küche kalt – Die katholische Kirche fordert rechtliche und soziale Verbesserungen für illegale Einwanderer in der Hauptstadt)</i>	Bettina Markmeyer; p.12
2001	19/02/2001 (Article 2)	In school and at work – A Berlin study: Illegals have more rights than they think – they are just afraid of exercising them <i>(In Schule und Beruf – Berliner Studie: Illegale haben mehr Rechte, als sie denken – sie fürchten nur sie wahrzunehmen)</i>	Kerstin Scheidecker; p.10
2002	20/06/2002 (Article 3)	Fortress Europe also needs to be a refuge – Instead of closing the gates, EU states should adapt their laws so that refugees also find shelter <i>(Die Festung Europa muss auch Fluchtburg sein – Statt sich abzuschotten, sollten EU-Staaten ihre</i>	Ruud Lubbers; p.9

		<i>Gesetze so fassen, dass Hilfesuchende auch künftig Schutz finden)</i>	
2003	26/05/2003 (Article 4)	Invisible in the big city – more than 30 000 immigrants live irregularly in Munich – a study investigates how they cope with the daily life <i>(Unsichtbar in der Großstadt – Mehr als 30 000 Menschen leben illegal in München – eine Studie untersucht, wie sie den Alltag bewältigen)</i>	Andrea Schlaier; p.34
2004	17/01/2004 (Article 5)	The daily fear of being discovered – Hundreds of thousands home helpers rely on their job – and their private employer on them <i>(Die tägliche Angst, entdeckt zu werden – Hunderttausende Haushaltshilfen sind auf ihren Job angewiesen – und ihre privaten Arbeitgeber auf sie)</i>	Cathrin Kahlweit; p.2
2005	05/11/2005 (Article 6)	The long march - 18 millions of Africans based on estimates of the United Nations are on the way up north, but many of them strand at the coast of the Mediterranean Sea <i>(Der lange Marsch - 18 Millionen Afrikaner sind nach Schätzungen der Vereinten Nationen auf dem Weg nach Norden, aber viele von ihnen stranden an der Küste des Mittelmeeres)</i>	Rudolph Chimelli and Peter Burghardt; p.2
2006	20/10/2006 (Article 7)	The fear of red lights – Emilia, Carmen and Pedro live in the underground, they follow strict rules and work hard – all for a life full of moments of shock/ fearful seconds <i>(Die Angst vor roten Ampeln – Emilia, Carmen und Pedro leben im Untergrund, sie folgen strengen Regeln und arbeiten hart – all das für ein Leben voller Schrecksekunden)</i>	Stefan Klein; p.3
2007	15/06/2007 (Article 8)	On the journey through: Other countries become more attractive for illegal immigrants <i>(Auf der Durchreise. Für illegale Einwanderer werden andere Länder viel attraktiver)</i>	Roland Preuß; p.8
2008	19/08/2008 (Article 9)	Behind the hell lies the beach. Someone who reached Lampedusa survived the sea: The Italian tourist' island has become a place to go for thousands of refugees. They are called "the unfortunates", but also the natives are unfortunate as the tourists keep away <i>(Hinter der Hölle liegt der Strand. Wer Lampedusa erreicht, hat das Meer überlebt: Die italienische Urlaubsinsel ist zur Anlaufstelle für Tausende Flüchtlinge geworden. „Die Unglücklichen“ werden sie genannt, aber unglücklich sind auch die Einheimischen, weil die Touristen wegbleiben)</i>	Stefan Ulrich; p.3
2009	01/04/2009 (Article 10)	Hundreds of refugees drowned – At least three overcrowded boats capsized during storm in the Mediterranean/ Destination was the Italian island Lampedusa <i>(Hunderte Flüchtlinge ertrunken – Mindestens drei überfüllte Boote bei Sturm im Mittelmeer gekentert/ Ziel war die italienische Insel Lampedusa)</i>	Stefan Ulrich; p.1,2

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