

The Vietnamese diaspora in Germany



The study was carried out by the Migration for Development programme on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Around the world, societies are changing and individuals are on the move: around 250 million people currently live outside their country of origin. This evolving situation presents opportunities for all concerned: diversity and exchange across national borders provide impetus for economic, political and social progress – both in host countries and in countries of origin.

Migrants themselves play an important role in building bridges between countries. Through their expertise, ideas, experience and contacts, they stimulate sustainable change. In a variety of ways, they help their countries of origin to remain competitive, while simultaneously shaping society in their host countries. This interaction offers great potential for development. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), we support the activities of migrants from emerging and developing countries and advise our partner countries on how to use migration to advance sustainable development.

The Migration for Development programme focuses on four areas of activity:

- Knowledge transfer through returning experts
- Cooperation with diaspora organisations
- Migrants as entrepreneurs
- Migration policy advice

Migration background, structure, organisation and transnational activities

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List of acronyms

BAMF	German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees
BMWi	German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy
BVD	Federal Union of Vietnamese in Germany
CIM	Centre for International Migration and Development
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
GDR	German Democratic Republic
DZHW	German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies
EU	European Union
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
IT	Information technology
MO	Migrant organisation(s)
MOET	Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training
MoLISA	Vietnamese Ministry of Labour – Invalids and Social Affairs
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SRV	Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
TNCG	Thanh Niên Công Giáo Việt Nam tại Đức, Vietnamese Catholic youth association in Germany
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USA	United States of America
VDFG	Vietnam–Germany Friendship Association
VGU	Vietnamese–German University
WUS	World University Service

1 Introduction

Viet Nam and Germany are connected by facts, a related history and, most of all, people. The two countries have a similar geographical area and population size, and, though the circumstances were different in each case, they have both undergone reunification after decades of division. Their mutual relationship is strengthened by the transnational networks of Vietnamese/Germans with Vietnamese roots who live in Germany and maintain contact with Viet Nam (Weiss 2005). There are currently 163,000 individuals with a Vietnamese migrant background living in Germany¹ (German Federal Statistical Office 2014b). At the same time, there are many Vietnamese living in Viet Nam who spent an extended period of time studying and/or working in Germany before returning to Viet Nam after completing their training or employment period. Based in Viet Nam, the Vietnam-Germany Friendship Association alone has 7,000 members with experience of studying, training and working in Germany (cf. expert interview with E5)². There are many returning migrants who still keep in touch with Germany today, speak German, are familiar with cultural practices in Germany and Viet Nam, and, based on their own background, feel connected to both countries (Nguyen and Canham 2011). With this unique knowledge and understanding, they play a key role in building bridges between Viet Nam and Germany and often work in international companies and foundations in Viet Nam. Others return home as entrepreneurs, bringing with them innovative business models from abroad (Schaland 2008, 2012). Take, for example, the Vietnamese businessman from the Frankfurt area who intends to promote the development of renewable energies in Viet Nam through his subsidiary in the country³.

It is becoming evident that people leaving their home country to emigrate elsewhere does not automatically have a negative effect on that country, the so-called ‘brain drain’ phenomenon that has been the subject of research since the 1970s (Bhagwati 1975). In fact, emigration can even have a positive impact on the country of origin, something that has been discussed under

the combined heading of ‘migration and development’ since the 1990s (Geiger and Steinbrink 2012). Research in this area focuses in particular on remittances and the return flow of upgraded human capital as a result of return or circular migration. Terms such as ‘brain gain’, ‘reverse brain drain’ and ‘brain circulation/exchange’ are used to describe this transnational transfer of knowledge as a result of migration

Transnational networks connecting the diaspora⁴ in the destination country and actors in the former country of origin also play a key role when it comes to generating momentum for economic, social and political developments in developing countries and emerging economies (Kuznetsov 2006). The formal and informal migrant organisations (MOs)⁵ that are set up in the destination country merit particular attention. As well as having an important role in shaping integration policy in the destination country (Schulze and Thränhard 2013), MOs are frequently involved in projects with development relevance in the country of origin (De Haas 2006, Sørensen et al. 2002). Information about Vietnamese MOs in Germany is limited⁶ and no research has yet been conducted into the integration of these MOs in development-related activities in Viet Nam. There has been little examination of the cross-border activities of MOs in Germany generally (Pries 2012: 45).

1.1 Goals of the study

Against this backdrop, this study pursues two goals. Firstly, it seeks to examine in more detail the structure of the Vietnamese diaspora in Germany. The focus is on how it came into being, which involves examining past and current forms of immigration and emigration, socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of individuals with a Vietnamese migrant back-

1 Persons with a Vietnamese migrant background include individuals who have immigrated to Germany from Viet Nam, all individuals with Vietnamese nationality born in Germany and all German nationals born in Germany with at least one parent of Vietnamese nationality who was born in Germany or who immigrated there from Viet Nam.

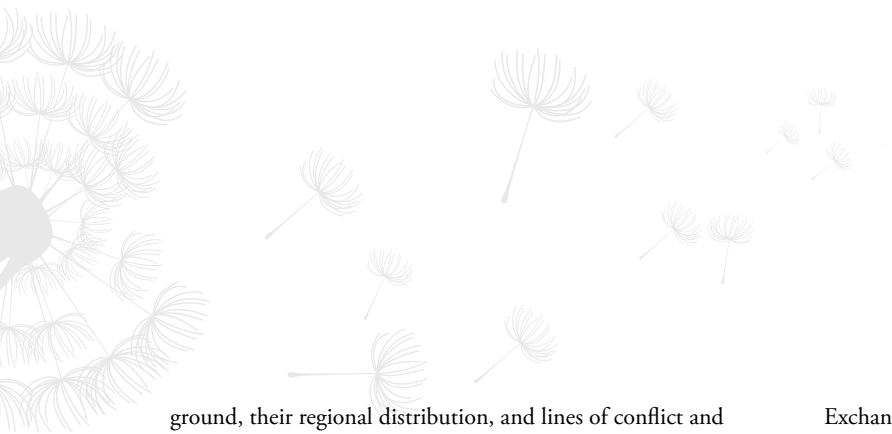
2 <http://www.hoivietnamduc.vn/>, last accessed: 3 July 2015

3 <http://vietnamnews.vn/economy/208451/viet-kieu-increase-investments.html>, last accessed: 14 May 2015

4 In this study, we use the term ‘diaspora’ far more broadly than it was used in its original definition (see Mayer 2005, Vertovec 2009). In our definition, it refers to migrants who have left their country of origin for a range of reasons, who are staying in a destination country long-term or for an extended period of time, and who maintain contact with individuals from the same background as them in the destination country.

5 In accordance with Pries and Sezgin (2010: 16), we define migrant organisations for the purposes of this study as formal and informal associations of migrants from the same background.

6 cf. Beuchling (2013) on the Vietnamese Buddhist community in Hamburg, Schimiz (2011) on Vietnamese associations in Berlin, and Le (2010) on the Vietnamese community in Munich.



ground, their regional distribution, and lines of conflict and division within the diaspora itself. Additionally, it will briefly consider Vietnamese policy towards the diaspora on the part of the responsible institutions in Viet Nam and Germany.

Secondly, it seeks to take a closer look at the formal and informal Vietnamese MOs in Germany. While research has already been conducted into the associations of other migrant groups (Pries and Sezgin 2012), there is little information currently available on Vietnamese MOs. The aim is to gain an overview of the approximate number of associations and loose networks in Germany, along with their regional distribution and areas of activity. Furthermore, local, national and transnational partnerships will be examined in greater detail, with more in-depth analysis of potential areas of conflict between the associations and their transnational initiatives in Viet Nam.

1.2 Methodology

The study has been conducted using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. A comprehensive selection of secondary literature and a range of statistics from the German Federal Statistical Office were already available for the first part of the study, the analysis of the Vietnamese diaspora. The migration background of different groups of Vietnamese in Germany is particularly well documented (Beuchling 2003, 2013, Hillmann 2005, Rändchen 2000, Schmiz 2011, Weiss 2005). Current numbers, socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics and the regional distribution of Vietnamese migrants were obtained by consulting the primary and secondary statistics of the German Federal Statistical Office (results of the 2013 microcensus, 2014 Central Register of Foreigners, naturalisation and migration statistics). Additionally, the employment statistics of the German Federal Employment Agency, which include information on employees subject to social security contributions and those in marginal employment, were evaluated⁷. Student data from the German Academic

Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Federal Statistical Office, evaluated by the German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies (DZHW), was also used. Statements by Vietnamese migrants on labour market integration include findings for the situation in Berlin which were gathered over several years of research (Schmiz 2011). Analysis of dividing lines within the Vietnamese diaspora is based on findings from the aforementioned secondary literature, media reports and empirical evidence from 27 guided interviews (Lamnek 2005) conducted with a range of actors (MO founders, active members of MOs and associations with Vietnamese links, Viet Nam experts, academic advisors of foreign students; see interview list in Annex I).

A multi-stage process was chosen for recording information on the Vietnamese associations and networks. In a first step, the central register of associations for all German federal states, containing all registered associations (*eingetragene Vereine*), was evaluated.⁸ Subsequently, conventional online search engines were used to research other associations and loose networks. The next step involved developing a brief questionnaire using partially standardised questions to record facts and figures for the association (year of inception, details of members and activities) (cf. brief questionnaire in Annex II). Given the low response rate (6%) during the first phase of the survey (as part of which 40 questionnaires were sent out), the decision was made to switch to a telephone survey in order to obtain the aforementioned data. Information is available on a total of 56 associations and has been deepened with the findings of 25 qualitative interviews (cf. interview guidelines in Annex II). There were no guidelines available for the expert survey. The goal of the interviews, which were conducted in an exploratory fashion without a pre-defined structure, was to obtain fresh insights.

⁷ The advantage of using the German Federal Employment Agency's employment statistics rather than the microcensus results is that the former contain more accurate information on individuals in marginal employment. The microcensus figures are based on an estimate.

⁸ We were unable to access the German Federal Office of Administration (BVA)'s Central Register of Foreign Associations, as it is not a public register. However, as the register is updated with information provided by the responsible local courts, its content should be no different from that recorded by those courts.

2 The Vietnamese diaspora in Germany

The current situation with regard to Vietnamese migrants in Germany is characterised by many different reasons for migration and residence titles, a high degree of transnational mobility and close contacts between Viet Nam and Germany. This complex and increasingly diverse diaspora is best described using Vertovec's term 'super diversity' (Vertovec 2010: 86). Although it always represents a simplified version of reality, the aim here is to summarise and characterise the key groups of Vietnamese migrants past and present.

2.1 Past migration flows

2.1.1 The 'Moritzburgers'

The history of migration between Viet Nam and Germany begins with the 'Moritzburgers', a group of 348 school students aged between 10 and 14 who were received in Moritzburg near Dresden in 1955/56 as part of a solidarity initiative for school education and vocational training in the former East Germany (German Democratic Republic - GDR). After finishing school, many of the Moritzburgers completed a training programme or a degree in the GDR, returning to Viet Nam as adults (Weiss 2005: 25), where the majority of them took up high-ranking positions. They also maintained their close social network back in Viet Nam through regular meetings (Freytag 1998).

2.1.2 Students

The first Vietnamese migrants to arrive in the former West Germany (Federal Republic of Germany - FRG) were students who had been coming to the country since the 1960s, primarily from the privileged social classes of the former Republic of South Viet Nam⁹ (Wolf 2007:5). There were already some 400 Vietnamese students living in the FRG in 1969 (Der Spiegel 1969). Around half of them came on a state scholarship from the Republic of South Viet Nam (cf. interview with V16).

Before the end of the Viet Nam War¹⁰ (1975), a total of 2,055 Vietnamese migrants, primarily students, were living in the FRG (Beuchling 2013: 46). To this day, these migrants represent a unique community in Germany, as most of them have remained in the former FRG due to the difficult circumstances in the aftermath of the Viet Nam war. Many worked in highly skilled jobs in fields such as medicine and the natural sciences. A notable feature of this group is that a large number of its members have binational marriages and have obtained German citizenship (Beuchling 2013, 2003). The majority of those in this migrant group are now retired, and a large proportion are involved in voluntary work within associations (cf. Section 3).

Parallel to these developments, an increasing number of students arrived in the GDR in the 1960s and 1970s from the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam in the north and, from 1976 onwards, from the reunified Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. The 'Solidarität hilft siegen' ('Solidarity brings victory') initiative saw Vietnamese students, school pupils, trainees and interns travel to the GDR. In total, some 42,000 Vietnamese students had come to the country by 1988. Additionally, 2,639 Vietnamese interns and 9,400 Vietnamese trainees came to the GDR between 1966 and 1972 (Elsner and Elsner 1992: 16-18). Another source puts the number of Vietnamese who studied in the GDR at 50,000 (Waldherr 2004). Most of this group returned to Viet Nam after completing their training (Weiss 2005: 25), something which distinguishes them from the students who lived in the FRG.

⁹ During the First Indo-China War (1946-1954), the Viet Nam Independence League ('Viet Minh') fought against the then colonial power France. As a result of this war, the French colony was dissolved and the decision taken to divide Viet Nam along the 17th parallel. This gave rise to the independent Democratic Republic of Viet Nam in the north, led by Ho Chi Minh, and the Republic of Viet Nam in the south, led by Ngo Dinh Diem.

¹⁰ The Viet Nam War (1955-1975) immediately followed the First Indo-China War (1946-1954) and is also referred to as the Second Indo-China War. In 1960, the communist 'Viet Minh' became the National Front for the Liberation of the South (NLF), or Viet Cong, and attempted to topple the South Viet Nam Government in an effort to reunite the country. Communist-ruled North Viet Nam backed the NLF, while the United States supported South Viet Nam. The Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China subsequently pledged support to North Viet Nam, while other states got behind the United States and South Viet Nam. In 1975, North Vietnamese troops took full control of South Viet Nam and ended the war. The unified Socialist Republic of Viet Nam was established one year later in 1976. The direct and indirect involvement of the superpowers in the fighting meant that the Viet Nam War was regarded as a proxy conflict in the context of the Cold War.



2.1.3 Boat people

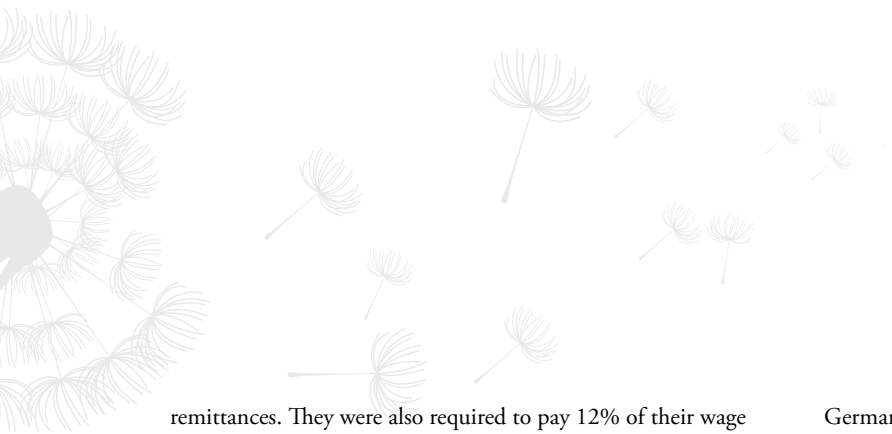
Following the end of the Viet Nam War, the majority of Vietnamese migrants came to the FRG as political refugees. The first wave of those to emigrate from Viet Nam were primarily high-ranking members of the military and officials of the South Viet Nam Government (Beuchling 2003: 49). However, most of the refugees living in Germany arrived during the second wave that began in 1978. The migrants in this wave were wide-ranging in social background (Chinese minorities, religious groups, members of the South Vietnamese elite, non-partisan individuals, highly qualified persons, farmers etc.) and came to Germany for many different reasons. Political repression (in the form of re-education camps, labour camps and expropriation measures), restructuring of the education and economic systems, and a massive economic crisis drove Vietnamese citizens to attempt to leave the country in boats. Many fell victim to the forces of nature or piracy, while others were fortunate enough to be rescued on the high seas by merchant vessels and ships such as the *Cap Anamur* sent to the area by humanitarian aid organisations (Beuchling 2003). In July 1979 alone, 200,000 refugees were registered in refugee camps in neighbouring countries (Beuchling 2013: 47), illustrating the scale of the mass exodus. Estimates put the number of refugees at half a million (cf. interview with V7), with many of them highly-qualified¹¹. They were brought to third countries from the refugee camps as part of a UNHCR aid programme, as a result of which some of them came to the FRG. Under then Minister President Ernst Albrecht, Lower Saxony was the first German federal state to receive boat people, welcoming 1,000 of them to Hanover in 1978. The FRG received some 38,000 boat people in total (Wolf 2007: 6). Initially, they were taken in as quota refugees under the Geneva Refugee Convention before being accepted from 1979 onwards as part of the family reunification process. They were issued with a work permit and a residence permit and given funding for language courses. They also received financial support to complete initial/further training and/or retraining, were provided with financial assistance under the German Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG), and were offered social support and advisory services. The high rate of economic growth at the time in the FRG meant that the Vietnamese migrants were able to integrate well into the labour

market. Their social integration into West German society was also relatively rapid; as political refugees, the boat people did not expect to return to Viet Nam and so they showed a high level of willingness to integrate (Hillmann 2005: 86).

2.1.4 Contract workers

Contract workers account for the largest group of Vietnamese in Germany. Having been recruited by the GDR from 1980 onwards, a large number of them have remained in Germany (Rändchen 2000). They have a completely different background to the boat people. The GDR began to recruit these 70,000 or so Vietnamese workers in 1980 under a bilateral government agreement between the GDR State Secretariat for Labour and Wages and the Vietnamese Ministry of Labour (Government agreement 1980). Promoted as a 'solidarity initiative', the programme did ease the burden on the labour market, but failed to deliver the agreed professional training and facilitate the expected acquisition of the German language, organisational skills and a 'European mentality and way of working' (Rändchen 2000: 6). Essentially, there were two recruitment periods, the first from 1980 to 1984, and the second from 1987 to 1989. The first period primarily saw the rotating recruitment and employment of experienced, skilled workers, as well as engineers, former soldiers close to the regime or their widows, and the children of former resistance fighters. The high point of the GDR's recruitment activities came in 1987 and 1988, with the hiring of 20,446 and 30,552 Vietnamese workers respectively (Spennemann 1997: 10). Around 75% of workers actually underwent professional training on the job and completed the 200 hours of German lessons at work provided for in the agreement during the first recruitment period (ibid.: 10), while 85% of workers in the second recruitment period worked in industry with virtually no training and language qualifications (Weiss 2005: 26). Even in the GDR, informal social networks played a key role in the lives of contract workers, proving useful when they wished to protest their rigid working conditions. Contract workers were strictly prohibited from organising themselves formally (Weiss 2008: 146 ff.). Even at that time, the key reason for labour migration was to secure the livelihoods of workers' extended families in Viet Nam. The temporary rotation system meant that workers maintained close ties with their relatives back home, regularly sending them goods and

11 The World Bank estimates that 506,449 highly-qualified individuals emigrated from Viet Nam between 1990 and 2000 (Docquier and Marfouk 2006).



remittances. They were also required to pay 12% of their wage to the Vietnamese Government for the 'development and protection of the homeland' (Rändchen 2000: 6). The recruitment of primarily highly-qualified, skilled workers meant that Viet Nam lost human capital, resulting in a brain drain. Although the training programme ran on a rotational basis and Viet Nam hoped this would soon lead to a brain gain, few of the contract workers returned to Viet Nam with additional qualifications following German reunification. In all, around half (34,000) of the workers returned to Viet Nam on a voluntary basis, receiving DM 3,000 in severance pay at the time (Wolf 2007: 8). A number of them attempted to migrate to Germany once again in subsequent years by submitting asylum applications. Those who remained in the eastern German states also hoped to find new jobs under the new conditions, though circumstances were extremely poor. As a result of unification, the residency status of the former contract workers was uncertain¹² and their accommodation was closed. They also had to compete with the German population on a strained labour market while xenophobia was on the rise (with riots in Hoyerswerda in 1991 and Rostock's Lichtenhagen district in 1992). Against this backdrop, close-knit support networks were set up and the first associations established, some in cooperation with German members, to represent the interests of former contract workers. One such association is 'Dien Hong - Gemeinsam unter einem Dach e.V.', which was established in Rostock back in 1992. Many former contract workers set up their own retail and gastronomy businesses out of the necessity of earning a livelihood and retaining their residence permits. The *Wende* (turnaround) and the associated restructuring measures can be considered as the reason for the former contract workers becoming self-employed (Hillmann 2005).

2.1.5 Family reunification, asylum seekers and irregular migration

After German unification in 1990, contract workers and boat people were recorded together in German Government statistics, causing figures for the number of Vietnamese to double from 46,000 in 1991 to 97,000 in 1994 (Hillmann 2005: 84). An increasing number of Vietnamese arrived in the unified

Germany from the former Eastern Bloc states. However, their applications for asylum in Germany were frequently rejected. As Viet Nam refused to take them back, they were granted tolerated status. At the same time, unification led to a rise in internal migration from Germany's eastern states to economically prosperous regions in western Germany.

Overall, most of the Vietnamese who have arrived in Germany since 1990 came as part of family reunification measures (which involved relatives of former contract workers and boat people) or the asylum process. From 1998 to 2009, Viet Nam was listed as one of the ten main countries of origin for asylum seekers (BAMF 2015). Today, fewer and fewer Vietnamese are being granted asylum. The latest disclosed figure is for 2009 and shows that 1,115 first-time applications were submitted by Vietnamese citizens that year (BAMF 2015: 17). One migration strategy used specifically by women is to obtain a residence permit and work permit on account of a (bogus) marriage or a child, where the mother and the child are allowed to remain in Germany because the child's father¹³ has a German passport or an unlimited residence permit. A common strategy for bringing family members to Germany is to obtain entry to the country as a specialist chef. In order for this to be permitted, Vietnamese restaurateurs must demonstrate that they are unable to find the relevant staff member in Germany. They can then use this method to bring relatives to Germany if the recruited individual can provide evidence of at least two years' training or six years' professional experience. Entry is only granted if the restaurant in question specialises in Vietnamese cuisine, which means that the conversion of Asian restaurants to specialist Vietnamese establishments can be interpreted as a migration strategy (Schmiz 2011: 97 ff.). Figures for irregular migrants vary. It is known that some 4,000 individuals were deported to Viet Nam from Berlin in the space of four years¹⁴. However, many Vietnamese who are residing in Germany on an irregular basis are passing through on their way to Scandinavia or the United Kingdom (Ataman 2009).

12 It was not until the adoption of the regulation of the right of abode in 1993 that the residency status of the former contract workers was settled. They were granted a limited-term residence permit or temporary tolerated status with a work permit. They were not given legal certainty until 1997, when the Immigration Act was revised and they were issued with an unlimited residence permit.

13 Currently, it is known that German men are taking large sums of money in return for posing as the fathers of the newborn children of Vietnamese women (Strauss 2010).

14 According to police estimates, the number of Vietnamese actually living in Berlin is two to three times that of those legally residing in the city (Schmiz 2011: 101).

2.2 Current migration situation, with a particular focus on students as a group

The latest statistics for migration between Germany and Viet Nam show positive net migration of 1,591 individuals in 2013. Most migrants come to Germany as part of family reunification measures or for training purposes. The statistics show that migration is especially high among young adults, with a very positive net migration rate for women in particular (+1,196). The rate in the male benchmark group is far lower

(+395). This could be an indicator of the migration strategy used by women of childbearing age who attempt to obtain residency status in Germany through having a child (cf. Section 2.1.6). It could also be an indicator of family reunification (primarily marriages), which is subject to gender bias. Net migration for the over-50s group is slightly negative, which can be traced back to retirement migration (German Federal Statistical Office 2015b: 81 ff.).

Table 1: Migratory movements of Vietnamese nationals between Germany and Viet Nam by age/gender

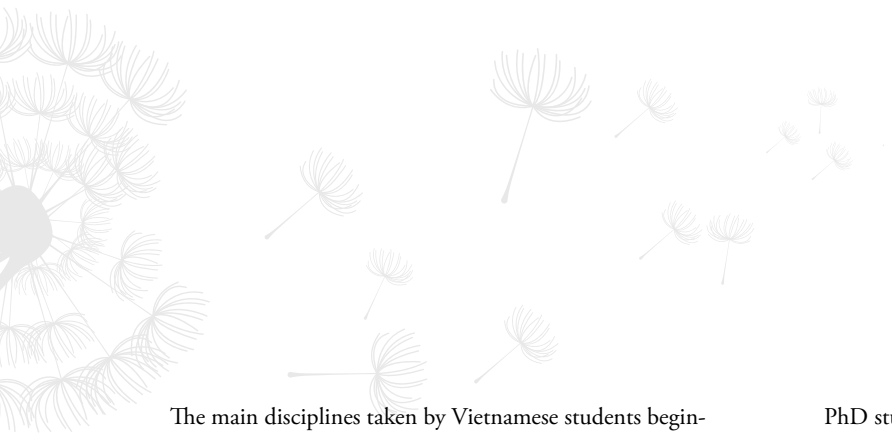
Migratory movements		Total	under 18	18 to 25	25 to 50	50 to 65	65 and above
Arrivals	total	4,126	349	1,348	2,179	208	42
	male	1,954	191	553	1,104	92	14
	female	2,172	158	795	1,075	116	28
Departures	total	2,535	139	485	1,609	246	56
	male	1,559	77	272	1,039	149	22
	female	976	62	213	570	97	34
Net	total	+ 1,591	+ 210	+ 863	+ 570	- 38	- 14
	male	+ 395	+ 114	+ 281	+ 65	- 57	- 8
	female	+ 1,196	+ 96	+ 582	+ 505	+ 19	- 6

Source: German Federal Statistical Office 2015b, Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit. Wanderungen, Fachserie 1, Reihe 2.2, p. 81ff (German only).

One large group of Vietnamese arrivals are Vietnamese who come to Germany to undertake training. Of the Vietnamese living in Germany in 2014, 3,611 had been granted a temporary residence permit for the purpose of completing training in the country (German Federal Statistical Office 2015a: 138). Most of them come to Germany to study. Residence permits can also be issued for initial and further training courses or internships, although this is subject to approval by the German Federal Employment Agency. Those working in professions in which there is already a shortage of skilled workers in Germany or in which demand is expected to be high in future have the best prospects of gaining entry to Germany for training purposes. For example, some 100 young Vietnamese have already completed training in elderly care in Germany as part of the pilot project 'Training nurses from Viet Nam to become geriatric nurses in Germany'. Beginning in mid-2015, a further 100 Vietnamese will complete elderly care training in Germany as part of the

programme (German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy 2014).

Vietnamese students represent a much larger migrant group. 670 Vietnamese nationals who began their studies in Germany in 2012 had obtained their higher education entrance qualifications abroad (German Federal Statistical Office 2014c; calculations by DZHW). A total of 2,717 Vietnamese students enrolled at German universities in 2013 had completed their secondary education abroad, with a broadly equal balance of men and women (1,485 men to 1,232 women, *ibid.*). By contrast, 2,438 Vietnamese students enrolled at German universities in the same year had completed their secondary education in Germany, yielding a total of 5,155 Vietnamese students registered at German higher education institutions. They accounted for 1.8% of all international students in Germany (*ibid.*).



The main disciplines taken by Vietnamese students beginning their first degree are economics (491), computer science (216), electrical engineering (185) and other engineering subjects (ibid.). The most popular subjects chosen for master's degrees are civil engineering (47) and other engineering courses (58) (ibid.). There is also a notable increase in the number of Vietnamese doctoral candidates currently studying at German universities, with the most common fields of study being mechanical/process engineering (44), computer science (32), electrical engineering (29) and economics (24, ibid.). Interestingly, with 471 graduates who completed their secondary education outside of Germany, Viet Nam currently ranks 18th on the list of countries of origin with the largest number of university graduates in Germany.

Table 2: Trend in the number of graduates who completed their secondary education abroad, for the period 2000 to 2012

Year	Number	2000=100
2000	73	100.0
2001	61	83.6
2002	92	126.0
2003	98	134.2
2004	94	128.8
2005	106	145.2
2006	163	223.3
2007	207	283.6
2008	228	312.3
2009	332	454.8
2010	319	437.0
2011	421	576.7
2012	471	645.2

Source: German Federal Statistical Office 2014c, DZHW calculations

Most of the Vietnamese students come to Germany on a government scholarship from Viet Nam or a DAAD scholarship. In 2015 alone, the World University Service (WUS) supported 100 students on government scholarships from the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), primarily

PhD students, followed by bachelor and master's students. The number of students has been increasing each year since the WUS programme began in 2010. These holders of government scholarships usually return to their former positions in Viet Nam after their stay in Germany (cf. interview with E4). At 126, Vietnamese doctoral candidates account for more than half of the 226 individually funded Vietnamese DAAD scholarship holders, too. Around 2.5% of the total 5,053 international doctoral candidates funded by the DAAD came from Viet Nam (DAAD 2013: 96). A further 76 master's students and 10 bachelor's students had their degree programmes funded by the DAAD. 88% of the funded individuals received long-term funding for a period of over six months. The DAAD responded to the low number of 14 individuals who were funded as university teachers or post-doctoral researchers by working with MOET to develop a new programme designed to enable suitably qualified university teachers to undertake their doctoral studies in Germany (DAAD 2013: 80, 95).

It is notable that an increasing number of students are studying in English only, coming to Germany with little knowledge of the German language (cf. interview with E3 and E4). Language barriers make it more difficult for students to navigate the German university system and hinder social integration outside of the Vietnamese and English-speaking student community. There are also reports of problems with the learning culture (cf. interview with E4). Additionally, Vietnamese students rarely take advantage of advisory services, with language barriers making it hard for them to establish contact with the relevant services. Moreover, their first port of call when seeking assistance is the Vietnamese community. The group of free movers, who come to Germany without a scholarship, have also been observed to experience major difficulties with funding their own studies in Germany. It is known that relatives of female students employ them as nannies, which results in them neglecting their studies (cf. interview with E2).



2.3 Structure of the Vietnamese diaspora

There were 84,455 Vietnamese nationals living in Germany on 31 December 2014 (German Federal Statistical Office 2015a: 39), a figure that has remained stable over the past decade. There are also roughly the same number of German nationals with Vietnamese roots living in Germany, yielding a total of 165,000 individuals with a Vietnamese migrant background living in the country (German Federal Statistical Office 2014b, results of the 2013 microcensus). Of this total, 104,000 are first-generation migrants, with first-hand experience of migration¹⁵. The remaining 61,000 have no personal experience of migration and can be counted as second and third-generation migrants (ibid.).

Most first-generation migrants (74,000, or 71%) still retain their Vietnamese nationality to this day, while the remaining 30,000 have obtained German nationality¹⁶. There are 16,000 Vietnamese nationals and 46,000 German nationals in the second and third generation group (ibid.). Relatively little information is available on the second generation (Beuchling 2003, Beth and Tuckermann 2008, Luong and Nieke 2014). The only information available about socio-demographic, socio-economic and regional distribution in Germany relates to Vietnamese nationals and is presented in greater detail below.

2.3.1 Socio-demographic characteristics

Just over half of the 84,455 Vietnamese nationals living in Germany are female (45,205 women to 39,250 men, German Federal Statistical Office 2015a). It can be seen from Table 3 that women outnumber men to a particularly high degree in the 25-45 age group, with the 25-35 age group made up of 59% women and the 35-45 age group consisting of 64% women.

The average age of both the male and female Vietnamese nationals in Germany is 37.1. Just 15% of them were born in Germany, which means most of them have first-hand migration experience. The proportion of married individuals is significantly higher among the women than among the men (46% to 37%, cf. German Federal Statistical Office 2015a: 155). On average, they stay for a period of 15.5 years (ibid.). A more differentiated look at the length of stay (cf. Figure 1) reveals the long migration history between Germany and Viet Nam: some 700 individuals have been living in Germany for 35 years or more. Almost 70% of the Vietnamese have been living in Germany for ten years or more, and 40% for 20 years or more. Most of them are boat people, former contract workers and their family members who were brought from Viet Nam, as well as asylum seekers. There are 27,000 newcomers (those who have been in the country for less than 10 years), accounting for 30%. Fifteen per cent of the Vietnamese have been living in Germany for less than five years. Many of these individuals are students.

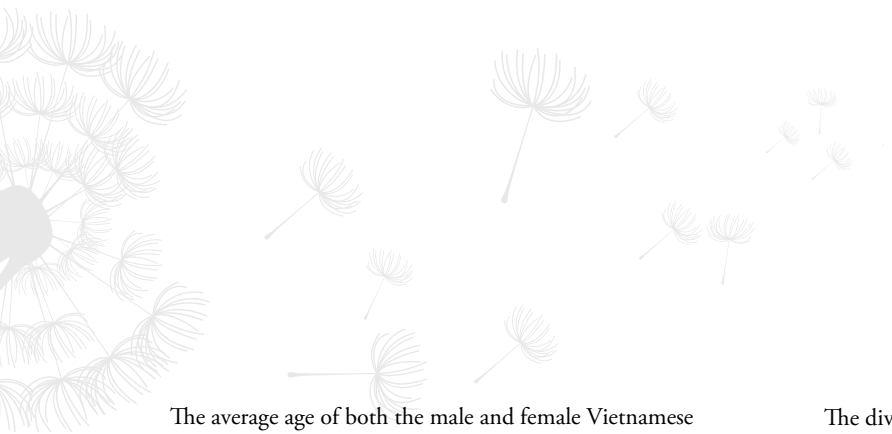
Table 3: Vietnamese nationals in Germany by age group and gender

	Total	Of which aged between ... and under ...										
		under 5	5 - 10	10 - 15	15 - 20	20 - 25	25 - 35	35 - 45	45 - 55	55 - 65	65 - 75	75 - 85
Male	39,250	1,324	1,533	1,781	2,466	3,821	6,450	5,619	11,589	4,002	374	291
Female	45,205	1,219	1,446	1,627	2,124	3,717	9,209	9,985	11,062	3,733	544	439
Total	84,455	2,543	2,979	3,408	4,590	7,538	15,659	15,604	22,651	7,735	918	730

Source: German Federal Statistical Office 2015a, Ergebnisse des Ausländerzentralregisters, p. 57 ff (German only).

¹⁵ The group of young Vietnamese who came to Germany after 1990 as part of the family reunification process often refer to themselves as the 'first and a half' generation, being distinct from the second generation born in Germany due to their migration experience and social integration as young children (cf. interview with V11).

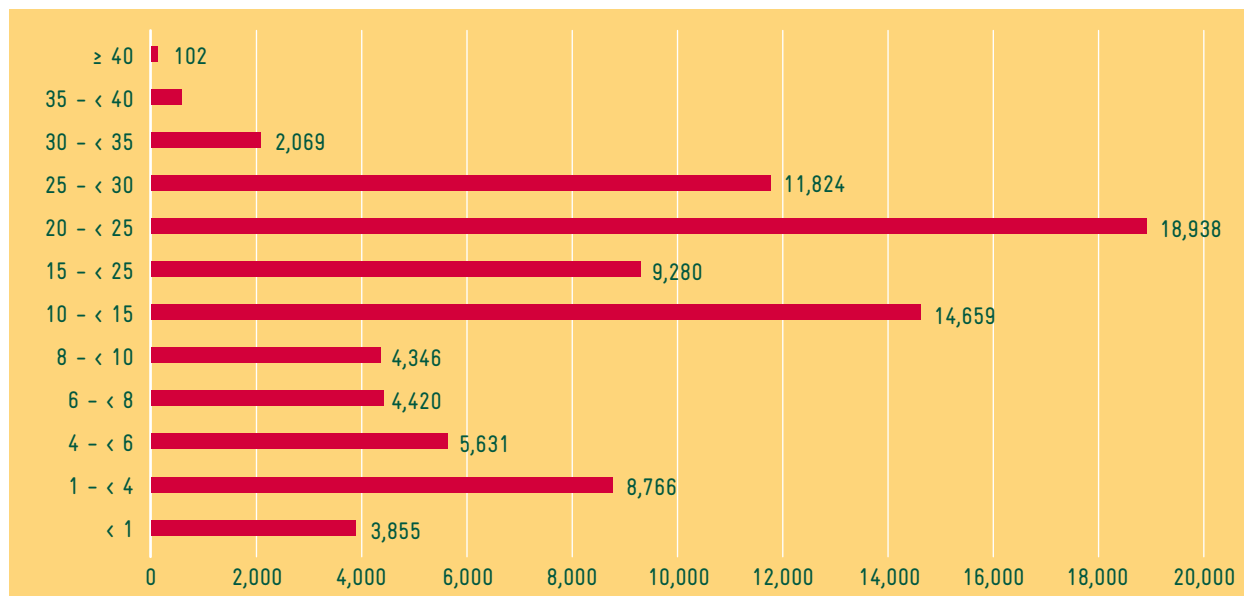
¹⁶ It is to be assumed that a large proportion of those who have obtained German citizenship live in the western German states, as it is known that many of the first generation of students and boat people in the FRG became naturalised. However, no verified figures are available for these individuals.



The average age of both the male and female Vietnamese nationals in Germany is 37.1. Just 15% of them were born in Germany, which means most of them have first-hand migration experience. The proportion of married individuals is significantly higher among the women than among the men (46% to 37%, cf. German Federal Statistical Office 2015a: 155). On average, they stay for a period of 15.5 years (ibid.). A more differentiated look at the length of stay (cf. Figure 1) reveals the long migration history between Germany and Viet Nam: some 700 individuals have been living in Germany for 35 years or more. Almost 70% of the Vietnamese have been living in Germany for ten years or more, and 40% for 20 years or more. Most of them are boat people, former contract workers and their family members who were brought from Viet Nam, as well as asylum seekers. There are 27,000 newcomers (those who have been in the country for less than 10 years), accounting for 30%. Fifteen per cent of the Vietnamese have been living in Germany for less than five years. Many of these individuals are students.

The diversity among the Vietnamese nationals is also reflected in their different residence permits. Most of them (55%) have an unlimited settlement permit (46,059 individuals). There are also 28,639 individuals in Germany with a temporary residence title (34%). There are various reasons for this: 19,385 Vietnamese have a temporary residence title for family reasons, 3,611 for training purposes, 2,492 for international-law, humanitarian and political reasons, and 643 for employment reasons, while 2,041 persons have special residence rights. The remaining 10% either have applied for a residence title (2,249), were granted tolerated status (1,512), possess an EU freedom of movement certificate (294) or are subject to other special arrangements (for example, 22 individuals are exempted from the requirement to have a residence title or are homeless, cf. German Federal Statistical Office 2015a: 139 ff.).

Figure 1: Number of Vietnamese nationals in Germany by length of time in country



Source: German Federal Statistical Office 2015a, Ergebnisse des Ausländerzentralregisters 2014, p. 95 ff (Germany only).

2.3.2 Regional distribution

Figure 2 shows the regional distribution of Vietnamese nationals in Germany by federal state. There is a striking east-west divide and a strong concentration in Berlin. There are 17,350 Vietnamese living in the German capital, accounting for 20.5% of the total number in Germany. The next largest proportions are found in the following states: Bavaria (15.6%), Lower Saxony (9.5%), Saxony (9.1%), North Rhine-Westphalia (8.6%), Baden-Württemberg (8.0%) and Hesse (5.4%). Even discounting Berlin, more Vietnamese are living in the western German states (around 50,000).

The concentration of Vietnamese nationals in particular federal states is linked to migration background and to trends in the regional labour markets. To this day high concentrations of Vietnamese exist in Berlin's Lichtenberg and Marzahn-Hellersdorf districts, as it was here that the accommodation for the former contract workers was located. Lichtenberg is now home to the Dong Xuan Center, a retail complex attracting customers from several regions of Germany. Saxony was also home to key industrial production sites in the past, with large numbers of

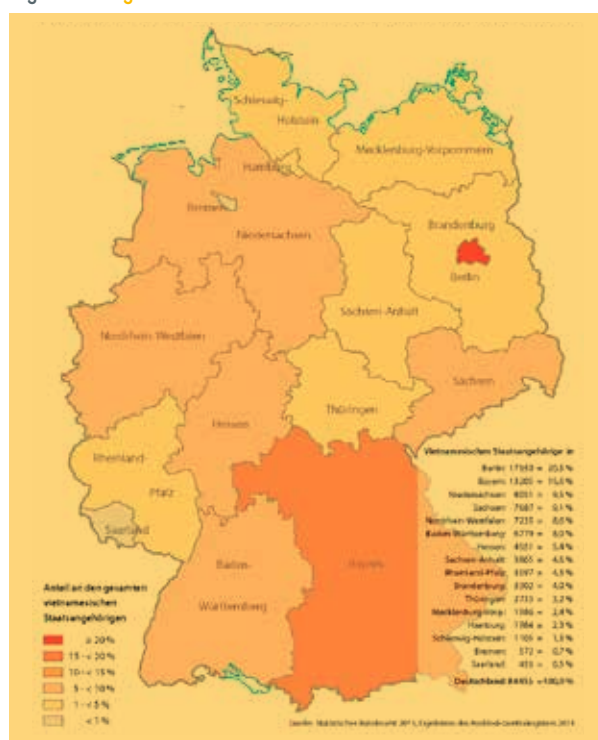
contract workers based there. The 690 Vietnamese in Zwickau still represent the largest migrant group in the state (German Federal Statistical Office 2015a, Ergebnisse des Ausländerzentralregisters 2014 (German only)). Due to the special status of Berlin (Vietnamese represent the largest migrant group from third countries in the city, and a high concentration of Vietnamese with a range of migrant backgrounds also live here), we will devote particular attention in this study to the situation in the city. This also applies to the subsequent analysis of the MOs in Section 3.

2.3.3 Socio-economic characteristics

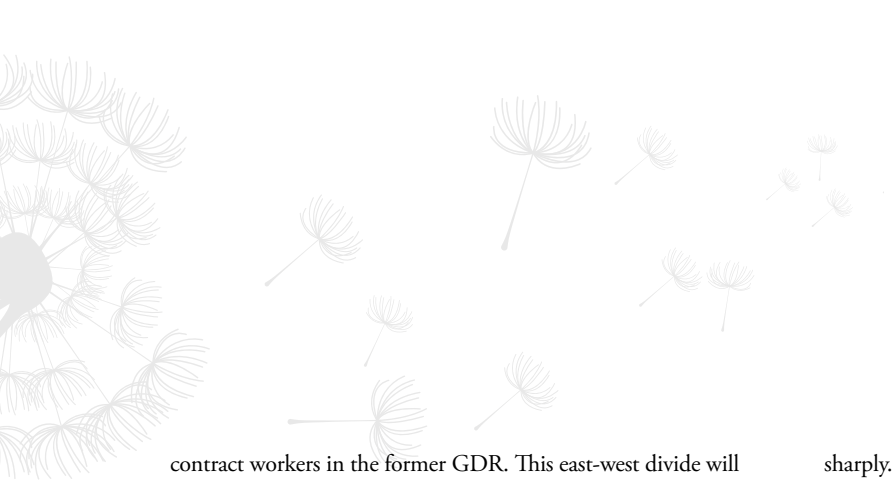
The high employment levels for Vietnamese in Germany are above average. There were 104,000 individuals with a Vietnamese migrant background and first-hand experience of migration (first-generation migrants) in Germany in 2013. Of the 74,000 or so able to work, 90% were actually in employment. Their professional status is broken down as follows: 28,000 salaried employees (42%), 20,000 workers (30%), 16,000 self-employed individuals (24%), 3,000 trainees and family members in assistant roles (4%, German Federal Statistical Office 2014b, results of the microcensus). Broken down by industrial sector, the largest proportion (63%) worked in retail, hospitality and transport, followed by 19% in other service sectors and 18% in manufacturing (ibid.). If the figures for German nationals with Vietnamese roots are viewed separately, the proportion of this group working as salaried employees (51%) is significantly higher than that of the benchmark group of Vietnamese nationals (34%, ibid.). It can be assumed that most German nationals with Vietnamese roots live in the western German states, as many of the Vietnamese living in these states obtained German nationality (cf. Section 2.1). Ninety-two per cent of the second generation are not in employment, as only a small proportion of this group has reached working age, with most still in training.

According to the German Federal Employment Agency's employment statistics dated 30 June 2014, 25,542 Vietnamese were in employment subject to social security contributions in Germany (German Federal Employment Agency 2015). This figure is very high relative to other migrant groups (cf. interview with E7), with a broadly equal split of women and men (11,468 and 14,077 respectively). The 18,175 Vietnamese in the western German states (excluding Berlin) are overrepresented (compared with 7,333 in the former GDR [including Berlin]), even taking into account their population distribution. One explanation may be that self-employment is more prominent among the former

Figure 2: Regional distribution of Vietnamese nationals



Source: German Federal Statistical Office 2015a, own calculations, cartography: C. Carstens, University of Hamburg



contract workers in the former GDR. This east-west divide will be examined in greater detail in the final part of this Section. On the aforementioned date, 12,454 Vietnamese nationals were in marginal employment with 60% of these individuals located in western Germany (excluding Berlin) and 40% in eastern German (including Berlin). There were 7,436 Vietnamese registered as unemployed in March 2015. There is a marked gender divide within this group, with 4,825 women registered as unemployed compared with 2,521 men.

It is not possible to find a great deal of information on the educational qualifications of the Vietnamese living in Germany due to too few cases in the microcensus. Notably, educational qualifications are particularly rare among Vietnamese women. Of the 123,700 persons surveyed, just 34% had a vocational qualification, due in part to the difficulties associated with gaining recognition for qualifications obtained abroad (German Federal Statistical Office 2005, results of the microcensus). Although the school performance of Vietnamese students has been frequently highlighted in the media in recent years (cf. Mai 2008; Mohr 2008; Spiewak 2009), precise analysis reveals a polarised situation among these school students (Becker 2014).

Closer examination of the local labour markets of the Vietnamese reveals that the former division of Germany into a western and eastern migration system is still clearly visible. Boat people who came to western Germany in the 1970s and 1980s received support from special inclusion programmes to help them enter the labour market quickly. Family members of the boat people, some of whom did not come to Germany until the 1990s, had greater difficulty finding a job against the backdrop of the situation on the German labour market, which was already more strained (Schmiz 2011: 238). While business start-ups tend to come and go quickly in Berlin and the eastern German states, the situation in the western German states is more stable. Roughly 55% of Vietnamese individuals over 18 years of age in Berlin are self-employed. Around 15% are unemployed and approximately 30% are in employment, with the start-up trend continuing to increase

sharply. Individuals who came to Germany as part of family reunification are more frequently in employment than former contract workers. Individuals without a valid residence permit often perform poorly-paid, unskilled work within Vietnamese businesses. They are frequently dependent on their employers, as they must pay off the debt they incurred as part of being smuggled into Germany. They are often employed as cigarette vendors, primarily in underground and suburban train stations and busy squares in the east of Berlin (Schmiz 2011: 241). First-generation Vietnamese migrants in the former GDR were forced into self-employment as a result of the political situation. For example, contract workers have only been permitted to work on a self-employed basis outside of the acceding territory of the former GDR since the adoption of the 1997 regulation of the right of abode. This means that Vietnamese were still subject to an east-west divide in Germany until 1997. They were unable to obtain a right of abode without an income, and, without a right of abode, it was difficult to find a regular job. Given the limited opportunities to gain employment on the strained labour market of the former GDR after the *Wende*, self-employment may be interpreted as the only chance to earn money (Schmiz 2011: 245).

2.4 Policy of Vietnamese authorities towards 'Viet kieu'

Many developing countries and emerging economies respond to the challenges of globalisation by re-evaluating the status of their emigrant population (Sohler 2007: 387). Viet Nam is no different. Many Vietnamese living abroad ('Viet kieu'¹⁷) were not permitted to travel to Viet Nam until the country liberalised its foreign policy. This was especially true of the boat people at the time. Regardless of their reasons for emigrating, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam has now recognised the significance of the 'Viet kieu' to the country's economic development. And not only in terms of remittances, but also with regard to knowledge and technology transfer, and direct investments made by returning Vietnamese. According to the

17 The term is frequently used, though it has slightly negative connotations.



World Bank, remittances by ‘Viet kieu’ totalled over USD 8 billion in 2011 (around 6% of GDP), making them a key and reliable pillar of the Vietnamese economy¹⁸. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs established the HCMC Committee for Overseas Vietnamese, a sub-division for matters pertaining to ‘Viet kieu’. It was set up in HCMC, as the city is the destination for most returning migrants (Schaland 2008). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs offers reintegration assistance to returning migrants (including support for finding work and accommodation). It also organises events for ‘Viet kieu’ who travel to the country each year for the Vietnamese New Year celebrations. During their stay, these individuals are offered tours of central investment projects in HCMC in order to make them aware of the city’s economic achievements¹⁹. Successful business models of returning migrants are also presented by different media in order to attract more ‘Viet kieu’. However, this culture of welcome should not be taken as a sign that there are no problems with the reintegration of returning migrants in Viet Nam (for example, reintegrating into family structures or returning to an old place of work, GIZ 2013:67, Schimiz 2011, Schaland 2008). The Vietnamese Government is in favour of Vietnamese emigrating on a temporary basis, something it promoted on a large scale in the 1980s, as seen with the example of the contract workers in the former GDR (Section 2.1.5). To this day, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam seeks to ease pressure on its domestic labour market and promote remittances and know-

ledge transfer from overseas by ‘exporting’ workers. Until the early 1990s, workers were placed exclusively by the Department of Overseas Labour Affairs; nowadays, this task is largely performed by private-sector agencies, which makes it difficult to monitor and gain a transparent overview of the process (GIZ 2013: 66). It is estimated that over 85,000 Vietnamese were placed in overseas jobs in 2010. The legal framework for this initiative was created through bilateral labour agreements concluded primarily with Asian and Arab countries (ibid.: 65). The German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) and the Vietnamese Ministry of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) are running a joint pilot project that aims to provide further training and subsequent temporary employment for Vietnamese nurses in Germany (German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, cf. also Section 2.2). The project is being implemented by GIZ. There are also private-sector agencies and associations that place nurses from Viet Nam in jobs in Germany²⁰. University sponsorships and a range of scholarships are also offered (for example, by German foundations, the Vietnamese Government and the DAAD) to encourage students and research staff to emigrate. Additionally, the Vietnamese-German University in HCMC is facilitating labour migration and migration for further training purposes between Germany and Viet Nam by simplifying the process for recognising qualifications gained abroad²¹.

18 <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&country=VNM&series=&period=>, last accessed: 14 May 2015

19 <http://vietnamnews.vn/economy/208451/viet-kieu-increase-investments.html>. HCM CITY, last accessed: 14 May 2015

20 <http://vietduc.care/>, last accessed: 3 July 2015

21 Established in 2008, the Vietnamese-German University (VGU) is structured according to the German model. As such, it is engaged in both teaching and research, with a focus on engineering, economics and health sciences. Students are taught in English, with German taught alongside degree programmes. The VGU is funded by the federal state of Hesse and the German Government, and receives support from over 30 German universities.

3 Migrant organisations and their transnational activities

As has already been indicated, information on Vietnamese MOs in Germany is scarce (see Beuchling 2013, Schmiz 2011, Le 2010). No data are yet available on the cross-border activities of Vietnamese MOs. This study seeks to obtain an overview of the situation for Germany as a whole, identify any differences in agenda with regard to the diverse migrant groups, and explore local, national and transnational forms of cooperation in greater detail.

3.1 Overview

Analysis of the Vietnamese diaspora in Germany shows that, regardless of origin and reason for migration, they are actively involved in informal networks as well as formal institutions such as registered associations (e.V.). By compiling data from different sources (cf. Methodology in Section 1), it can be seen that there are 133 registered Vietnamese associations in total throughout Germany. It should be pointed out that it was not possible to record all active Vietnamese MOs in Germany. While some of the associations listed are not or no longer active, they still appear in the Commercial Register. Many others do not appear in the list at all, as they are unregistered MOs. 'Home associations'²², which seek to promote social and economic development in their region of origin (cf. Section 3.2.6), play a major role in this context. A large number of informal associations also exist within the Vietnamese student community in German university towns and cities (cf. Section 3.2.4). Against this backdrop, it is estimated that there are between 200 and 700 Vietnamese MOs in Germany. This is simply a reference value intended to illustrate how the Vietnamese tend to organise themselves and their activities to a greater extent than other migrant groups²³.

Of the 133 registered associations recorded, just 21 are active in Berlin and its surrounding region. Even other federal states with a high proportion of Vietnamese residents, such as North Rhine-Westphalia, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, only have around 10 associations each. Despite Saxony having a comparatively high proportion of Vietnamese, only three associations were identified there.

There is a notable east-west divide in Germany, with 90% of the identified associations located in western Germany, not counting Berlin. Many associations in the western German states were established by the first generation of students, who came to the country from 1960 onwards, or the community of boat people. With common experiences of displacement and of leaving South Viet Nam behind, these individuals were especially motivated to set up networks among themselves. Refugees who were rescued by one of the Cap Anamur ships, in particular, maintain close contact with one another (Beuchling 2003: 52). The majority of Buddhist and Christian religious associations are also found in the western German states (cf. Section 3.2.2). Most associations in the eastern states were set up by the first generation of contract workers. As a reaction to growing xenophobia and the unclear legal situation following German reunification, a number of Vietnamese-German initiatives were established to promote the interests of the former contract workers. The 'home associations' are very prominent in eastern Germany, from where they work closely with the Vietnamese Embassy and local authorities in Viet Nam (cf. Section 3.2.6).

At an overall level, figures show that registered associations seldom have more than 30 registered members. However, there are frequently many more visitors (often up to 1,000 individuals) who come for special festivals, such as the New Year celebrations. It is rare to find more than five people who are actively involved in the work of a given association. The difficulties faced by registered associations when it comes to recruiting younger members has been addressed on several occasions. It is mainly first-generation migrants who are actively involved in associations, and they are either retired or approaching retirement age. Survey respondents were divided in their opinions on this point, with some pointing out that this group has a great deal of time to get involved in associations and to set up projects in Viet Nam while on their travels, and others highlighting the lack of young people (cf. interview with V1). A common feature for all associations is that the second generation on the whole plays a less active role in associations. As children and young people, they are still closely integrated in the associa-

²² There are some similarities here with 'hometown associations' (Orozco 2005).

²³ For example, the Poles, the largest migrant group in Germany, show very little propensity to self-organise by comparison (Thranhardt 2013).



tions' activities, attending Vietnamese language classes and dance lessons, and taking part in festivities. But they gradually lose contact over time, often when they start university. One exception to the rule are associations set up by the Vietnamese Catholic youth association; these are frequently established by second-generation migrants. Associations also play a greater role on digital social networks (such as Facebook). Second-generation migrants are particularly concerned about dialogue within the family, lifestyle in Germany and dialogue between the different Vietnamese migrant groups in Germany. Two conferences ('Ronneburg meetings') have already been held on the aforementioned issue, attended by many children of former boat people, but less so by children of former contract workers. Vietnam-Zentrum-Hannover e.V.²⁴ and VIEW e.V.²⁵ are also engaging in this dialogue.

3.2 Topic areas

As already mentioned, the associations have a wide variety of goals and topic areas. Categorising MOs is always difficult, as they perform multidimensional tasks and are rarely confined to one goal or function (Pries and Sezgin 2010). It is also rarely possible to draw a clear distinction between associations focused on their country of origin and those focused on their destination country. Additionally, they never fit neatly into conventional economic, political, social, cultural, sports-related, religious, national/ethnic and educational categories (Schulze and Thränhardt 2013). Even in the case of the associations examined in this study, their activities frequently overlap and their activity areas often change over time (Vermeulen 2006: 156 ff.). Nonetheless, six categories were created in order to provide a better overview of the many associations and their activities: (1) cultural and social, (2) religious, (3) political, (4) student, (5) professional, and (6) loose networks and home associations. These are presented in greater detail below.

3.2.1 Cultural and social associations

Cultural and social associations are organisations that place emphasis on cultural exchange, education and integration assistance. A total of 39 such associations were identified. Their primary target groups are: (1) subsequent generations in Germany, (2) newcomers, (3) the ageing first generation in Germany, and (4) those in need in Viet Nam (e.g. school students from disadvantaged families, flood victims, and direct and indirect victims of the Viet Nam War).

Spiewak (2009) points out that Vietnamese MOs are characterised by a special emphasis on education. For subsequent generations, efforts are being made to offer pathways for successful education careers in Germany and to provide tutoring for school students within associations. It is also the intention that school students do not lose contact with Viet Nam, its cultural practices and the Vietnamese language. Vietnamese language courses and traditional dance classes are often offered in this context. Other associations focus primarily on the newcomers group, offering integration assistance (such as integration courses, advice on legal matters pertaining to residency, information about the German school and training system, and other support for day-to-day life). The needs of the older generation are also addressed, with issues of health and, in particular, psychosocial illness, playing a major role.

Most cultural and social associations are also involved in transnational activities. Many associations raise money for aid projects in Viet Nam during festivals or on well-known donation platforms such as 'better place'. Often, donations are also taken directly to Viet Nam by private individuals. Frequently mentioned target groups are victims of flooding and Agent Orange, as well as poor and disadvantaged groups. Donations are made for a number of causes, including wheelchairs, well-building projects, cataract operations and special meal deliveries. Respondents indicated that there is a great willingness to make donations (cf. interview with V11). It is a common practice of individual associations to hand over the money raised to the Vietnamese Embassy to be used in projects in Viet Nam (cf. interview with V7).

24 Event title: 'Living together in Germany's immigration society: intergenerational dialogue between North and South Vietnamese and eastern and western Germans', in cooperation with the Heinrich Böll Foundation, cf. <http://calendar.boell.de/de/event/zusammenleben-der-einwanderungsgesellschaft-deutschland-nord-sued-vietnamesen-und-ost-west>, last accessed: 29 May 2015

25 <http://view-ev.com/ueber-uns/unsere-ziele/>



One notable feature of social and cultural associations is that their goals and priority areas of activity change over time. Associations in western Germany, many of which were set up by first-generation students, were observed to have undergone a transformation from providing aid to suffering people in Viet Nam to promoting education for the second generation in Germany, and finally to promoting education for young Vietnamese in Viet Nam. Their transnational activities thus went from providing vital humanitarian aid to offering educational services (e.g. the Deutsch Vietnamesischer Freundeskreis e.V. association in Aachen). Associations in regions of the former GDR, especially those in the former East Berlin, initially focused on providing assistance to contract workers, whose residence status was uncertain (e.g. the Reistrommel e.V. association). Today, many different forms of integration assistance play a greater role among this target group (such as the provision of advice on health, family and educational matters). They also concentrate more often on newcomers and offer language and integration courses. At an overall level, integration and integration assistance play a more prominent role in the work of these associations than in that of the associations surveyed in western Germany. The former are also more often the recipients of funding from local authorities or the German Government.

3.2.2 Religious associations

It is also interesting to note the large number of associations of Vietnamese Buddhists, Catholics and Protestants, most of which are found in western Germany. Religious associations are those organisations in which religious affiliation is a structural element. These associations also fulfil the role of social and cultural centres that uphold Vietnamese traditions while also providing integration assistance. Additionally, they also carry out youth work and maintain contact with Vietnamese in Germany and abroad. A total of 35 such associations were identified in Germany, with Catholic associations greatly over-represented.

While the community that has grown up around the pagodas and churches in western Germany is primarily composed of boat people, its associations have traditionally been open to all. In fact, these associations are becoming increasingly mixed, as seen, for example, in the fact that contract workers from the former East Berlin attend the Linh Thuu Pagoda in the Spandau district of the west of the city (Malter 2014, cf. interview with V5). The same is true in Hamburg, where new student arrivals attend the Pagoda, despite the fact that they are not familiar with Buddhism (cf. interview with V10). In addition to Berlin and Hamburg, there are also a number of highly active Buddhist communities in Munich and Frankfurt am Main, for example, that work closely with the Vietnamese Buddhist congregation at Hanover's Vien Giac Pagoda, the largest pagoda outside of Viet Nam. Bao Quang Pagoda in Hamburg has several thousand members, most of them individuals of Vietnamese origin from Hamburg and the surrounding region (cf. interview with V5). Religious activities include daily recitation and meditation, the organisation of Buddhist celebrations (Vietnamese New Year, Vesak²⁶ and the full moon festival), memorial services for the dead, wedding ceremonies, and pilgrimages. The pagodas are financed through contributions from members and visitors. It is apparent that the pagodas in Germany are engaged in a number of transnational initiatives. For example, they fund wheelchair projects in Viet Nam, help serve warm meals outside a pagoda in Viet Nam and outside hospitals, and support school students in Viet Nam. The Christian associations are also involved in social action in addition to their religious activities (such as pastoral care) and are well connected with each other. It should be noted that there is a national association of Vietnamese Catholics²⁷ and a Vietnamese Catholic youth association in Germany²⁸.

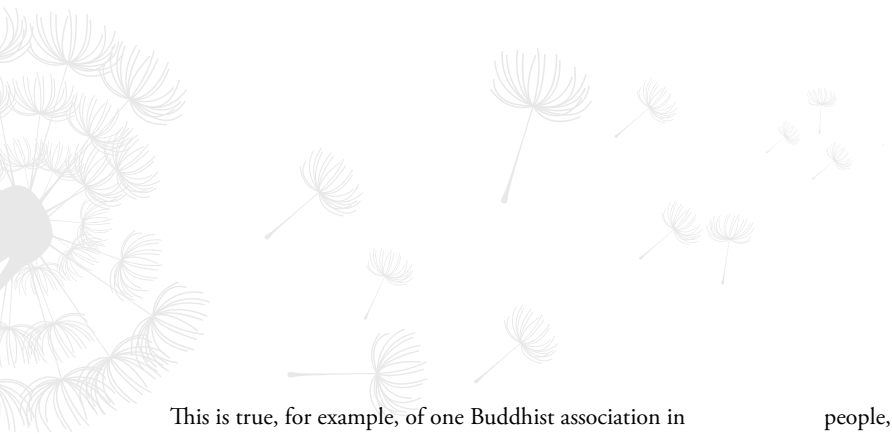
In some instances, it is difficult to distinguish religious associations from political organisations, as they work to promote the free exercise of religion without state control in Viet Nam²⁹.

26 Buddha's birthday

27 <http://ldcg.de/index.php>, last accessed: 3 July 2015

28 <http://www.tnecg.de/>, last accessed: 3 July 2015

29 http://vn-buddhist.blogspot.de/2012/08/thich-nhat-hanh-ein-kp-agent-im_28.html, last accessed: 14 May 2015



This is true, for example, of one Buddhist association in Germany that belongs to the Unified Buddhist Church of Viet Nam, an umbrella organisation that was banned in Viet Nam in the 1970s. Many monks and members of the organisation fled Viet Nam from 1975 onwards due to repression in the country (Menge 2011: 168). Since then, this group has been campaigning from abroad for the free exercise of religion in Viet Nam. It should be pointed out that Buddhist organisations have been allowed to exist again in Viet Nam since the 1980s, with the Vietnamese Government alternating between policies of liberalisation and repression (Beuchling 2013: 37). Many associations of Vietnamese Catholics and Protestants also work to raise awareness of human rights violations committed during religious conflicts in Viet Nam (cf. Menge 2011: 170 ff.) and campaign for the release of imprisoned Christian bloggers.

3.2.3 Political associations

The third category, political associations, comprises formal and informal organisations that explicitly back political change in Viet Nam and are developing relevant ideas. Around 400 South Vietnamese students were already living in western Germany in 1969, some of whom organised themselves in student associations (e.g. the Union vietnamesischer Studenten in der Bundesrepublik, despite the fact that they were forbidden from engaging in political activities by the South Vietnamese Government. These intellectuals were divided, with some supporting and others opposing the South Vietnamese republic. Opponents were motivated by the left-wing '68 generation' in Germany, which voiced opposition to the Viet Nam War and support for Ho Chi Minh, and with whom they held joint demonstrations (Spiegel 31/1969³⁰). To this day, other intellectuals are very well connected throughout the country and view themselves as a kind of political think-tank, publishing books, journals and online magazines to inform people about the current situation in Viet Nam (see, for example, Gesellschaft für Demokratie und Entwicklung in Vietnam e.V.). They follow developments in Viet Nam closely, hoping for a move towards democracy one small step at a time. Other associations within the intellectual scene still keep abreast of the human rights situation in Viet Nam (including the Organisation zur Wahrung der Menschenrechte in Vietnam von Vietnamesen im Ausland e.V.). There are also many associations in Germany that intentionally distance themselves from the current communist Viet Nam. Most comprise first-generation students and boat

people, but they also include second-generation members. Their websites frequently feature the flag of the former Empire of Viet Nam and South Viet Nam (yellow background with three horizontal red stripes, still used as a political symbol)³¹. All who identify with this flag consider it a symbol of freedom and independence. There is also a national network of Vietnamese refugees in Germany, the Bundesverband der vietnamesischen Flüchtlinge in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e.V., which has around 20 active member associations (cf. interview with V20). Many political activists in Germany are prohibited from travelling to Viet Nam on account of their political views. Others do not appear in public, fearing repercussions for their family members in Viet Nam.

3.2.4 Student associations

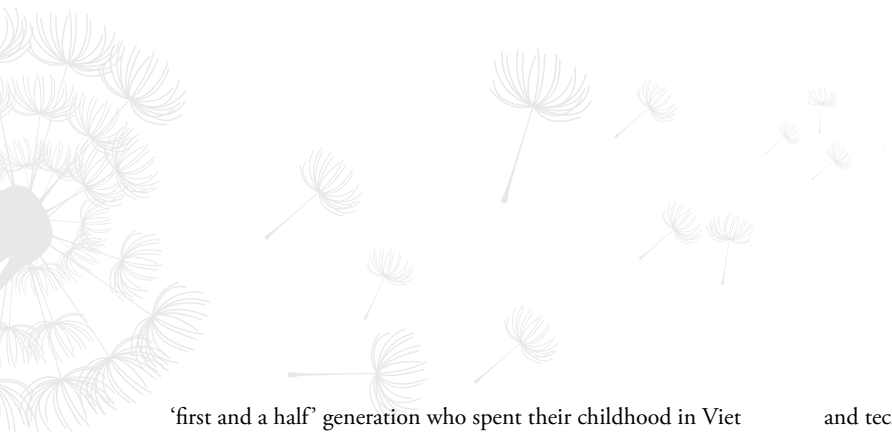
Student associations comprise informal groupings of students, most of whom have a Vietnamese migrant background. There are loose networks, such as the Munich forum, as well as an association in Darmstadt, Hamburg, Stuttgart³² and Bochum. These provide platforms where prospective and enrolled students at universities in Munich and other German cities and in Viet Nam can discuss a range of issues, such as finding accommodation and work, and other experiences (cf. interview with V21, Le 2010). The student associations in each city also celebrate traditional Vietnamese festivals and other events together. Most of their websites are in Vietnamese and aimed at newcomers. The formally organised, registered association 'sivi e.V.' (formerly AVIS) in Berlin was an exception to the rule. Established by first-generation students at the Technische Universität (TU) Berlin in 1999, it was subsequently taken on by the 'community of contract workers' children' (cf. interview with V11). It was engaged in networking, organising celebrations and meetings, running cultural exchanges and sports events, and providing assistance to newcomers. The association no longer exists, as it was not possible to pass on its ideology to its successors (ibid).

It should be noted that Vietnamese students are now very diverse as a group, in some cases pursuing different interests. On the one hand, you have the second generation, which has grown up in Germany and been through the country's education system. This group sees university education as an 'opportunity for personal development' and distances itself from the Vietnamese community (ibid.). On the other hand, you have the so-called

30 <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-45789117.html>, last accessed: 3 July 2015

31 <http://www.unser-vietnam.de>, last accessed: 14 May 2015

32 https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/lhsvn_stuttgart/info, last accessed: 3 July 2015



'first and a half' generation who spent their childhood in Viet Nam and came to Germany to be reunited with their families. This group maintains contact with the Vietnamese community and is fluent in both German and Vietnamese. And then there are also the new student arrivals, who have been coming to Germany primarily since 2000 as Viet Nam has relaxed its foreign policy. This group tends to be very well connected, studying in English and intending to return to Viet Nam. But distinctions can also be drawn within this group. It includes scholarship holders loyal to the government, who are financed by Vietnamese ministries. This group is keen to be actively involved in associations in Germany, as returning migrants have better prospects in Viet Nam if they can demonstrate such involvement (ibid. interview with V11). It also attracts students who come to Germany without state funding, some of them making their own arrangements and paying their own way with temporary jobs. Against this backdrop, only a small number of groups can be included under the umbrella organisation 'Dachverband der vietnamesischen Studenten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e.V.'³³, which was established by the Vietnamese Embassy and has been operating for two years.

3.2.5 Professional associations

The number of professional networks geared to specific occupational groups is far smaller. We were only able to identify one employers' association (Thang Long Arbeitsgemeinschaft vietnamesischer Unternehmen e.V.), which is focused on the community of self-employed Vietnamese in Berlin and Brandenburg and, as such, on the community of self-employed former contract workers. This association offers coaching to companies and helps set up contact between Vietnamese and German enterprises.

We also identified an association that has its origins in an initiative set up by a Vietnamese doctor living in Germany. Its goal is to provide humanitarian and medical aid to Vietnamese patients with congenital facial abnormalities (such as cleft lips and palates, which are disproportionately common in Viet Nam as a result of the Viet Nam War). It also seeks to improve the quality of care by offering support in the areas of logistics, equipment

and technology, and to promote training for Vietnamese doctors by enabling them to spend time enhancing their professional experience in Germany. The association facilitates cooperation arrangements between oral and maxillofacial surgeons, anaesthetists, ear, nose and throat specialists, paediatricians, nurses and care workers from Viet Nam and Germany. Between 1995 and 2005, operations were performed on over 1,500 children and young adults at several different locations (Hanoi, Dong Hoi, Hue and Da Nang)³⁴.

3.2.6 Informal networks, home associations

Home associations play a particularly important role among the informal networks. Migrants from a given town or province meet once or twice a year for specific occasions, such as New Year celebrations. It is interesting to note that, for certain causes (such as fundraising appeals for flood victims in Viet Nam), they are able to mobilise a large number of members who are highly motivated to make donations. In this way, they can often raise sums of around EUR 15,000 overnight (cf. interview with E2). The home associations also have close transnational links to local authorities in Viet Nam. However, it is difficult to identify contacts who see themselves in this role. One interviewee estimated that there was one home association from each town and province in Viet Nam, giving a rough total of 500 (cf. interview with V11). These associations compete with one another to some degree (who organises the best festivities? Who is better connected with the embassy?' Cf. ibid.).

It was also reported that graduates of one of the former South Viet Nam's elite schools organise annual meetings in Rothenburg ob der Tauber (cf. interview with V17). Interviewees also mentioned several loose networks of women (e.g. in Berlin and Munich) committed to promoting the interests of Vietnamese women in Germany and upholding Vietnamese traditions. For instance, one women's group in Munich holds German classes and shares information about their children's school and vocational education (Le 2010: 49).

33 <http://sividuc.org/>, last accessed: 3 July 2015

34 <http://www.deviemed.de/zielsetzung>, last accessed: 3 July 2015



3.3 Local, national and transnational partnerships

To this day, the migrant background of members of associations represents a structural element of the Vietnamese association landscape in Germany (Spiewak 2009). The strong connections between the refugee organisations of the former boat people can be seen, for example, when demonstrations are called³⁵. Religious associations, which also consist primarily of former refugees, are well connected as well. The Vien Giac Pagoda and the United Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Hanover play a key role as an umbrella organisation of sorts that maintains transnational contacts in Europe and the United States.

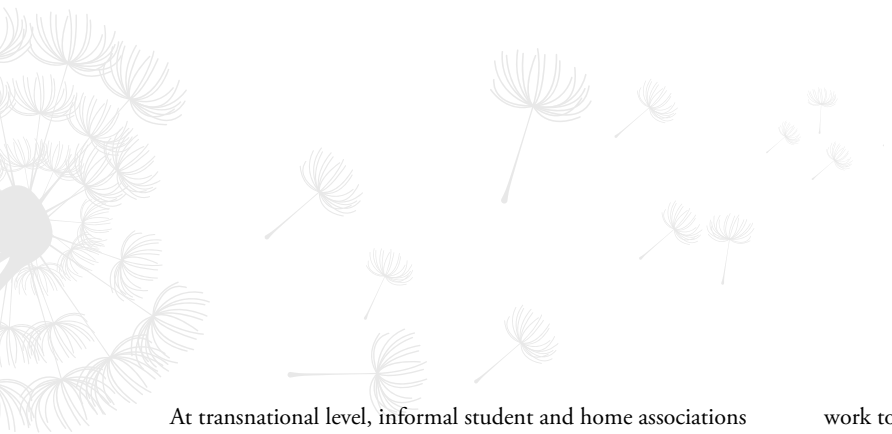
There is far less networking among associations focused on providing cultural and social activities for Vietnamese migrants in Germany (the same applies to all associations in this category). According to experts who advise and are well acquainted with Vietnamese associations in Berlin/Brandenburg, 'cooperation is something that has to be learned' (cf. interview with E2). Many associations work on similar issues, which means they have to fight to raise their profile and secure finance. This places them in competition with one another. In the case of Berlin, however, we also identified initiatives for greater cooperation between Vietnamese associations, such as the MSO AktIV project funded by VIA-Regionalverband Berlin/Brandenburg e.V.³⁶, which sought to bring together Vietnamese associations in Berlin that are involved in integration work. The project saw nine Vietnamese associations (eight from the former East Berlin and one from the former West Berlin) come together to discuss particular issues related to Viet Nam, with associations of former contract workers and boat people joining forces in this context.

The Bundesverband der Vietnamesen in Deutschland e.V. (BVD), an umbrella organisation established in 2013, is difficult to assess. It claims an official membership of 35 MOs. As it was set up by the Vietnamese Embassy, it has member organisations that maintain close contact with the embassy. This is true of associations in both western and eastern Germany. A notably high number of these associations ignore the umbrella organisation and/or view it critically/claim to have no knowledge of it. One respondent indicated that the BVD was established to monitor Vietnamese in Germany. Its work is not focused on the integration of Vietnamese (or at least it has little involvement and expertise in this area). Another interviewee said that, while there is a need for an umbrella organisation, this one was established too soon. Interestingly, a number of informal networks (including a women's association in Berlin) have been given formal status as part of the creation of the BVD to enable them to join the umbrella organisation and to make them more visible to the embassy (cf. interview with E2). It should be noted that the BVD definitely does not speak for the entire Vietnamese community in Germany. Despite the many unresolved issues surrounding the umbrella organisation, it is able to reach a large group of Vietnamese in Germany, something that is reflected, for example, in its calls for demonstrations against China regarding the islands dispute³⁷. Opposition to China's stance on this dispute is an issue with the potential to unite the community of boat people and contract workers. While in many German towns and cities, such as Berlin, the different associations took to the streets separately, in Frankfurt am Main, for example, they held their first joint demonstration (Schmiz 2014). The communities in the eastern Berlin and western Berlin are also increasingly coming together on the issue of the exercise of religion. The yellow flag has now disappeared from the pagoda in Spandau, with only multi-coloured Buddhist flags remaining (Malter 2014).

35 <http://www.unser-vietnam.de/index.php/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungen/veranstaltung/10443-40-jahre-unter-vie-t-co-ng-diktatur-termine-zu-ngay-qu-c-h-n>, last accessed: 14 May 2015

36 VIA, the association for intercultural work, is an umbrella organisation of associations and projects working with migrants and refugees in the field of social and intercultural work. The association has a not-for-profit regional association, the VIA-Regionalverband Berlin/Brandenburg e.V., which has existed since 1992 and in 2012 had 31 member associations working on intercultural, migration, anti-discrimination and development issues, most of them in Berlin.

37 For centuries, China and Viet Nam have been engaged in a dispute over islands in the South China Sea, which are believed to contain large raw materials deposits. A key shipping lane is also at the heart of the island conflict.



At transnational level, informal student and home associations work together with alumni networks³⁸ and local authorities in Viet Nam. Associations which arose from within the boat people community work with individuals and specialist institutions (schools, hospitals) in Viet Nam to support existing aid projects and initiate programmes of their own. They keep their cooperation activities with the Vietnamese Government to a bare minimum. As already shown, religious associations in Germany

work together with the respective communities in Viet Nam. Political associations are also frequently engaged in transnational partnerships, but this primarily concerns the politically active community in the United States and other EU countries. Nonetheless, a number of them also have good contacts in Viet Nam and work to improve the situation of vulnerable people locally.

38 <https://www.alumniportal-deutschland.org/alumni-weltweit/alumniportal-vor-ort/apd-weltweit-asien/vietnam.html>, last accessed: 3 July 2015

4 Conclusion and recommendations for German development cooperation

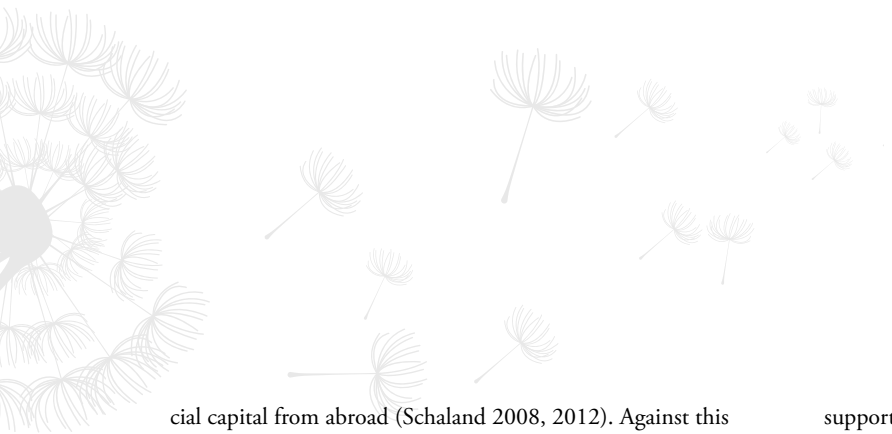
The 'super diversity' (Vertovec 2010) of the Vietnamese diaspora in Germany results from their different migration and socialisation backgrounds in Viet Nam and Germany, and became evident in several areas. Relevant groups include former students who came to Germany before the end of the Viet Nam War, the former boat people and the family members that subsequently joined them, former contract workers from the GDR and other Eastern European countries and the family members that subsequently joined them, asylum seekers, students, and irregular migrants, some of whom are passing through on their way to another EU country. These groups are unevenly distributed throughout Germany. Almost all the first-generation students and the boat people, along with the family members who subsequently joined them, live in the western German states. The former contract workers and their children are found in eastern Germany, though they have increasingly relocated to economically prosperous western German regions following German reunification. The newcomers, especially those in the student group, are spread throughout Germany. It is important to note that all groups show a high level of interest and involvement in Vietnamese social networks. Celebrating shared traditional festivals, gathering socially for meals, sharing experiences, practising religion, promoting education, and maintaining the Vietnamese language and cultural practices and passing them on to the second generation are of great importance on an overall level. This is reflected in the large number of associations and loose networks in Germany with links to Viet Nam. In numerical terms, the main MOs are: social and cultural associations, home associations, political and student associations, and religious communities. Overarching distinctions can be made (1) between the boat people and the contract workers, and (2) between the first and second generation with and without first-hand experience of migration. The situation of the Vietnamese in Berlin, where these diverse groups live in closest proximity to one another, illustrates well the invisible divisions, which are also structured spatially. The boat people community lives and gathers in the districts of the former West Berlin, while most of the former contract workers are found in the former East Berlin. There is little interaction between these two groups (Malter 2014).

Regardless of migration background, the first generation is organised in Vietnamese networks and is far more frequently involved in transnational projects in Viet Nam than the second generation. Consequently, the first generation with first-hand experience of migration plays a key role in building bridges between Germany and Viet Nam, and is the relevant target

group when it comes to development policy. It is important to highlight the transnational activities of doctors who operate on children in Viet Nam during their own time, a hearing care professional who provides hearing aids to children and teaches them how to use the devices, actors who launch a range of aid projects for Viet Nam, and visiting lecturers who teach classes in Viet Nam free of charge. There were a large number of individual initiatives that we were unable to gather data on, but we assume that these organisations are involved in many other activities of which we are not aware. Empirical evidence shows that most actors engage in their transnational activities during their annual leave, and that the small amount of time they have available limits their ability to participate in other voluntary activities in Germany and/or Viet Nam, as illustrated by the following quote:

I visited my home country of Viet Nam after 34 years. I wanted to make active use of my long five-week holiday, so I [...] delivered a two-week [...] compact course. [...] The university [...] is keen to have me back again. I'd like to deliver another lecture or course, but my time is limited (interview with E6).

While this issue cannot be resolved through German development cooperation, it would be feasible to promote voluntary activities, for example, by compensating individuals for lost salary or covering travel expenses. There is particularly great potential among the first generation of migrants, who came to Germany back in the 1960s/1970s, studied here and integrated effectively into the labour market, with some still working in it today. Many of them have a range of resources, including strong ties to Viet Nam, expertise and leadership skills acquired in Germany, intercultural skills, an interest in return migration, and a growing amount of spare time, as some are approaching retirement age, their children having grown up. Empirical studies on the impact of the return migration of highly-qualified individuals from the United States to Viet Nam have shown that highly-qualified persons with long-standing professional experience abroad are especially effective as key development agents. In addition to specialist knowledge, they also have implicit knowledge, which can only be gained through practical experience. Organisational knowledge (for example, regarding how to establish universities, associations and enterprises) and management skills (for example, for leading a team) play a particularly key role in this context. Moreover, many returning migrants bring with them relevant business contacts and finan-



cial capital from abroad (Schaland 2008, 2012). Against this backdrop, the first generation of students could be integrated to a greater extent in development cooperation activities. Retired experts could be placed in temporary expert roles in Viet Nam, for example, at universities, in companies and within government authorities. Actors who have lived in Germany for over 35 years more often lack transnational contacts and, by extension, information about potential needs and areas for activity in Viet Nam. There could be links in this context between efforts to promote the short-term assignment of skilled workers from the diaspora as part of the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM)'s³⁹ migration for development programme⁴⁰ and the work of the Senior Expert Service⁴¹ (SES) of the Foundation of German Industry for International Cooperation. Many Vietnamese who spend long periods of time in Germany develop a great longing for 'home'. They could use offers of temporary return migration to prepare for and test out an actual move back home, so it can be assumed that a need for this exists.

In addition to promoting (temporary) return migration, work can also be undertaken to support the transnational activities of MOs. The first priority would be to do more to publicise the funding options for MOs under the migration for development programme. While people tend to be more familiar with the

support services for returning experts, funding options for MOs are largely unknown (one exception is an association that has already worked with GIZ/CIM). Existing projects or project ideas of MOs could also continue to receive design and implementation support. Such support is needed in the areas of financial assistance and advice provision (for example, when putting together project applications). There is little need for support for establishing contact with cooperation partners in Viet Nam. Associations generally already have their own contacts (for instance, with NGOs, government authorities and individual actors) or they seek support from the Vietnamese Embassy or other Vietnamese MOs in Germany. A number of associations explicitly state that they do not wish to raise the profile of their activities in Viet Nam, as they do not want to encourage greed in the country (see interview with V8). Given the diverse nature of the groups, it does not seem advisable to promote greater networking between MOs. One helpful strategy is to bring different MOs together to address specific specialist issues, as experience has shown when working with Vietnamese associations in Berlin (see Section 3.3).

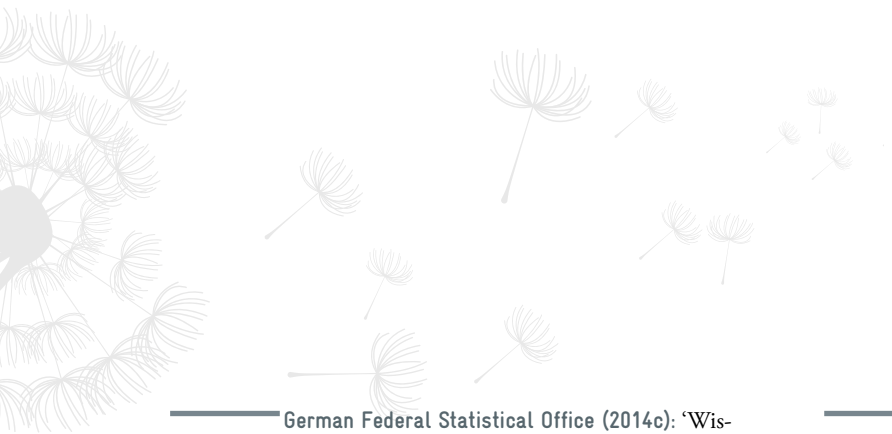
39 <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/18715.html>, last accessed: 3 July 2015

40 A joint operation of GIZ and the Federal Employment Agency.

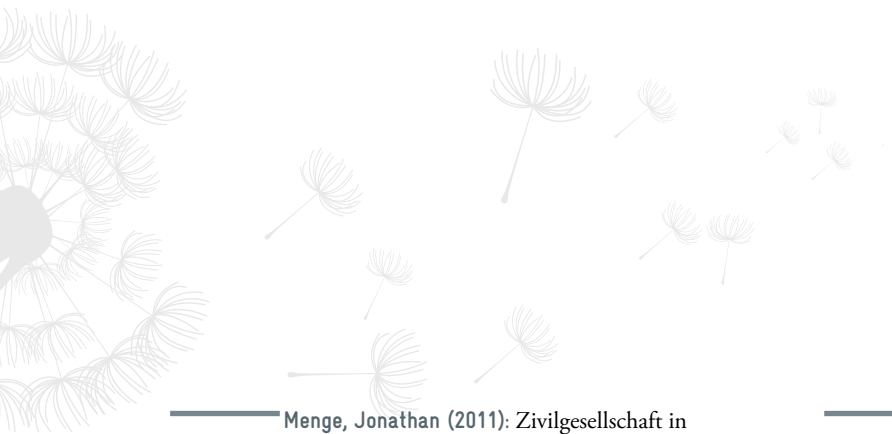
41 <http://www.ses-bonn.de/en/about-us.html>, last accessed: 3 July 2015

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Annex I: Interviewees

Name	m/f	Personal information	Category/topic
V1	f	Active member of MO	Vietnamese cultural and social association
V2	f	Active member of MO	Vietnamese umbrella organisation
V3	f	Active member of MO	Vietnamese cultural and social association
V4	m	Active member of MO	Vietnamese employers' association
V5	f	Active member of MO	Vietnamese religious association
V6	f	Active member of MO	Vietnamese cultural and social association
V7	m	Active member of MO	Vietnamese cultural and social association
V8	m	Active member of MO	Vietnamese cultural and social association
V9	m	Active member of MO	Vietnamese political association
V10	m	Active member of MO	Vietnamese religious association
V11	f	Formerly active member of MO	Vietnamese student association
V12	m	Active member of MO	Vietnamese political association
V13	m	Active member of MO	Vietnamese political association
V14	m	Active member of MO	Vietnamese cultural and social association
V15	f	Active member of MO	Vietnamese cultural and social association
V16	f	Active member of MO	Vietnamese cultural and social association
V17	m	Active member of association with links to Viet Nam	Network of doctors in Germany and Viet Nam
V18	m	Active member of association with links to Viet Nam	Network of university teachers in Germany and Viet Nam
V19	m	Active member of association with links to Viet Nam	Vietnamese-German relations (focus: private sector)
V20	f	Active member of MO	Vietnamese political association
V21	m	Active member of MO	Vietnamese student association
E1	m	Active member of regional umbrella organisation	Expert on MOs
E2	f	Active member of regional umbrella organisation	Expert on MOs
E3	f	Academic advisor	Expert on international students
E4	m	Academic advisor	Expert on international students
E5	m	Viet Nam expert	Expert on Vietnamese-German relations
E6	m	(Visiting) lecturer at university in Viet Nam and Germany	Expert on knowledge transfer between Viet Nam and Germany

Annex II: Brief questionnaire

Survey on Vietnamese community and their associations in Germany

1. Contact data

Name of organisation:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Website (if available):

Contact:

2. Information on association and members

Year established:

Number of association members:

Background of association members:

3. The association's main area of activity is ...

(Check as appropriate. Several boxes may be checked.)

Culture

Education

Business

Integration

Academia/research

Religion

Health

Other

Please briefly describe the activities of your organisation in more detail.

4. Is your organisation involved in projects and/or developments in Viet Nam?

Yes

No

If so, what activities are you engaged in in Viet Nam?

If not, are there any particular reasons for this?



Annex III: In-depth interview

1 Association and its background:

Possible questions:

- How did this organisation/initiative come into existence? In what year was it established?
- What are the organisation's goals? Have there been changes over time?
- How many members do you have? How many of them are active members?
- How many individuals attend the different events? Where do they come from (the region, all over Germany, other countries)?
- Given the wide variety of migrant backgrounds, how did your members end up in Germany?

2 Activities and partnerships in Viet Nam and/or Germany:

Possible questions:

- What specific activities are you involved in in Viet Nam and/or Germany?
- Does your association work with other associations and institutions in Germany? Does it also collaborate with other Vietnamese associations, groups and institutions (such as the embassy)?
- Are you aware of an umbrella organisation for Vietnamese in Germany? Are you engaged in cooperation with such a body?

3 If activities are in Viet Nam:

Possible questions:

- What exactly are you doing locally?
- With which organisations do you collaborate in Viet Nam (state and/or non-state)? How do you choose these organisations?
- If engaged in projects: please specify term, financing method, any issues with activities in Viet Nam and, if so, the specific issues.
- Are you planning any projects in future? If so, in what area?

4 Establishing contacts

Possible questions:

- Do you know any (other) associations which support projects (e.g. aid programmes) in Viet Nam? Do you know any individuals engaged in activities in Viet Nam, such as doctors, or researchers who teach at universities, for example?

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