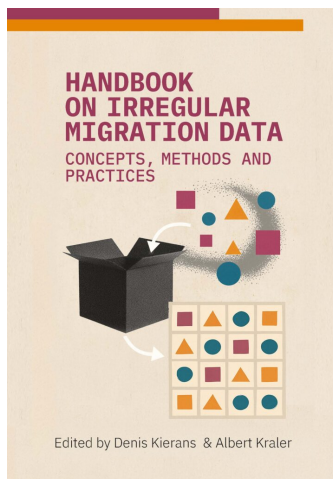




Textbox taken from D.Kierans & A.Kraler (eds),
Handbook on Irregular Migration Data. Concepts,
Methods and Practices. Krems: University of Krems Press

ISBN: 978-3-903470-24-8

Box 7.3 Using AZR data to analyse pathways out of irregularity: An application example

Laura Peitz

To cite: Peitz, L. (2025). Using AZR data to analyse pathways out of irregularity: An application example. In D. Kierans and A. Kraler (eds), *Handbook on Irregular Migration Data. Concepts, Methods and Practices*. Krems: University of Krems Press. <https://doi.org/10.48341/g31s-vq79-box7.3>

Keywords: Central Register of Foreigners, Germany, survival analysis

Box 7.3: Using AZR data to analyse pathways out of irregularity: An application example

Laura Peitz

A recent analysis of pathways out of an obligation to leave presents a compelling case for using longitudinal administrative data to understand temporal dynamics in irregular migration (Peitz, 2025). Drawing on data from the German Central Register of Foreigners (AZR) between 2013 and 2022, the study examines the trajectories of over 400,000 individuals whose asylum claims were finally rejected. This rich dataset allows for a nuanced temporal analysis of how individuals exit irregularity – through voluntary departure, deportation, or regularization.

By applying event history analysis within a competing risk framework, the study shows that temporal dynamics significantly shape outcomes. Voluntary departures are most likely in the first two years following a final rejection, while regularizations increase in likelihood with the length of stay. In contrast, deportations remain relatively rare and largely concentrated in the early years following a final rejection.

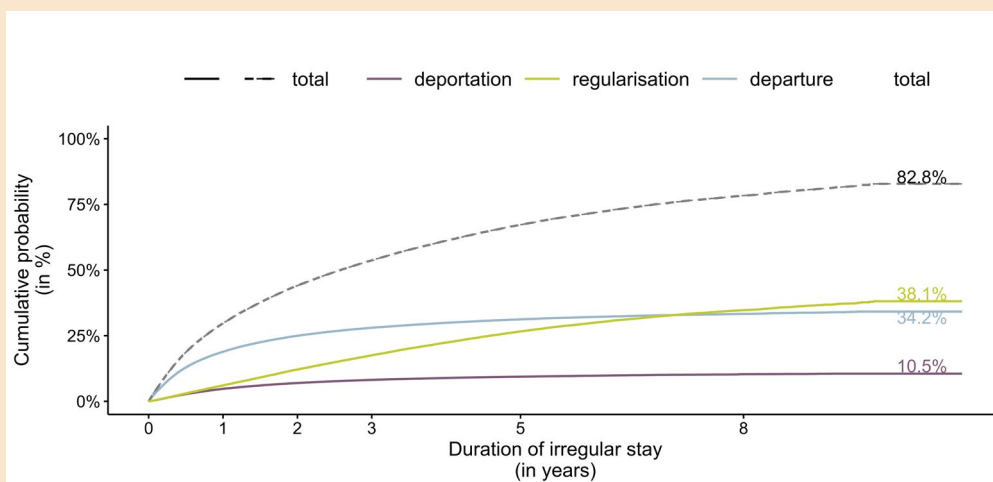


Figure 7.1: Cumulative incidence of competing pathways out of irregular status (Source: Peitz 2025, p. 19)

The analysis also reveals how policy instruments interact with time. For instance, the impact of different types of Duldung is distinctly time-sensitive: the restrictive ‘Duldung light’ for individuals with unclear identity tends to prolong irregularity, while employment and training-related types of Duldung facilitate regularization – but only after years of legal limbo. The study also shows that while designating countries of origin as “safe” aims to accelerate return, the actual timing of exits varies more by structural factors than by policy labels alone.

In sum, administrative longitudinal data unlocks critical insights into when and how irregular migrants transition out of legal limbo. Such data enables the evaluation of migration policies over time, offers evidence for reforming regularization schemes, and underscores the importance of integrating temporal dimensions into migration research and governance.

References:

Peitz, L. (2025). Return or regularization? A temporal analysis of rejected asylum seekers in Germany (RSC Working Paper 2025/06). <https://hdl.handle.net/1814/78047>