

Subject Technical Sheet

- **Participant ID:** P-02 (Pseudonym: "Layla")
 - **Demographics:** 34 years old, Female, Syrian.
 - **Arrival:** 2014.
 - **Legal Status:** Full Refugee Status (Recognized).
 - **Housing:** Private Apartment (Rent).
 - **Family:** Married, living with husband and one child in Germany.
 - **Employment:** Employed (Part-time), but overqualified.
 - **Setting:** Interview conducted via video call (Zoom).
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Interview Transcript: Integration Experiences P-02

Interviewer: Good morning, Layla. Thank you for joining me. You mentioned you have been in Germany for quite a while now. How would you describe your current situation compared to when you arrived?

Layla: Good morning. It is night and day. When we arrived in 2014, it was chaos. But now? We are lucky. We have our full refugee status [Flüchtlingseigenschaft], so we have a 3-year residence permit. I don't wake up every morning afraid of the police anymore. That fear is gone.

Interviewer: That sounds like a huge relief. And how is your living situation?

Layla: We moved into our own apartment two years ago. It is small, but it is ours. No security guards, no shared bathrooms. Just having a key to my own door... it changed my mental health completely. In the camp, I was depressed, I didn't want to get out of bed. Now, I have my kingdom. I can cook what I want.

Interviewer: You seem to speak German very fluently. Has that helped you socially?

Layla: Yes, B2 level. It is essential. I have a few German acquaintances, neighbors mostly. We say hello, we talk about the weather. But to be honest... friendships here are different. In Syria, your neighbors are family. Here, people are polite but very private. Sometimes I feel a bit lonely even though I speak the language. It is a "cold" kindness, if you know what I mean. But I can navigate the city, I can go to the doctor alone. That gives me power.

Interviewer: Let's talk about work. You mentioned in the pre-survey that you are working?

Layla: Yes, I work 20 hours a week in an architectural firm.

Interviewer: That sounds fantastic. Is it fulfilling?

Layla: [Sighs] It is complicated. Look, I am grateful. I know many people are still sitting at home. But... in Damascus, I was a Senior Architect. I managed big projects. Here? I am a "technical draftsperson." I just draw what they tell me. My degree was recognized, but they say I lack "German experience." Sometimes, I sit at my desk and I feel... small. I feel like I lost who I was. I am "Layla the refugee who draws lines," not "Layla the Architect." It hurts my dignity a little bit, even though the money is okay.

Interviewer: I understand. It's a loss of professional identity. Aside from work, how do you manage your stress or mental health?

Layla: I started doing yoga. I found a group on Instagram. It helps me breathe. And I cook healthy food. But the thing that stresses me the most is still the paperwork. Even now! The "Ausländerbehörde" [Foreigners' Authority]... every letter is a nightmare. You never understand what they want. It is a jungle of paper. Even with good German, I get anxiety when I open the mailbox.

Interviewer: Do you feel accepted in German society generally?

Layla: Mostly, yes. But sometimes... for example, I don't wear a hijab, so people accept me easier. But my friend who wears one? She gets stared at. I feel that if I am "good" and "quiet" and "working," they want me. But if I make a mistake, I am just another migrant. It is a conditional acceptance.