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You Say Hello and I Say Goodbye?  
Natives' Reactions to Openings of  
Asylum Centers

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Natives' Reactions to Openings of Asylum Centers <sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract**

We study the sentiments of local residents towards asylum seekers by analyzing location choices in the proximity of asylum centers. We address the key endogeneity issue of immigrant sorting by exploiting the random distribution key that assigns asylum seekers to municipalities in Switzerland. Using individual-level data from the universe of the Swiss population, we find that relative to the overall probability of moving at least once per year, those living within a 500m radius to an open asylum center are 7.96% more likely to move away than those living further away. The effect is driven by renters and highly educated individuals and is larger in right-wing voting municipalities for moves within the same canton. Our results are robust to alternative treatment definitions, sample variation and placebo tests.

**Keywords**

Asylum seekers, sentiments, regional migration

**JEL Classification**

D91, J15, R23



# 1 Introduction

Over recent years Switzerland, and Europe in general, experienced an influx of refugees from culturally diverse countries as a result of various conflicts in the Middle East and Africa. The peak was reached in 2015, when for every 1,000 residents there were 4.9 asylum seekers in Switzerland, which is decidedly above the average of 3 between 2013 and 2018 (SEM, 2020).<sup>1</sup> The negative displacement effects of climate change in the Global South as well as continued violent conflicts are expected to lead to a permanent increase in the number of persons seeking refuge in Europe in the coming years. This makes it all the more important to understand the behavioral impact a large number of asylum seekers has on the host country and its inhabitants.

With this development of immigration, residential segregation patterns and neighborhood compositions are expected to change over time. We analyze how natives<sup>2</sup> respond to an increase in the number of asylum seekers in close proximity in Switzerland. Specifically, we want to know whether natives who reside close to asylum centers are more likely to change their residential location than those living further away. Switzerland is an interesting case to study because of its large share of foreigners and generous social security system. The propensity to move away as a means to express sentiments towards asylum seekers is an important behavioral economic aspect to consider, especially due to its regional impact on land values and city growth. Depending on the characteristics of individuals who are inclined to move away when an asylum center opens, it may have important implications for the composition of a neighborhood. By focusing on moves, rather than house prices, we additionally observe the high share of renters in Switzerland.<sup>3</sup>

Negative attitudes towards immigrants in general appear to be related to labor market concerns, security and cultural considerations as well as individual feelings towards political refugees and illegal immigration (Mayda, 2006). Especially among lower-educated individ-

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<sup>1</sup> We define an asylum seeker as a person who enters Switzerland with the purpose of requesting asylum, irrespective of eligibility.

<sup>2</sup> In the following, we refer to natives as being local residents, both Swiss nationals and foreigners.

<sup>3</sup> Switzerland's home ownership rate of 41.3% ranks low compared to an average rate of 69.3% in the European Union (EU) in 2017 (Eurostat, 2019). The main reasons include relatively high house prices due to land scarcity in high density urban areas, but also a relatively attractive rental market in terms of costs and supply (Wüest Partner, 2014).

uals such negative sentiments towards immigrants are prevalent due to higher labor market competition (Dustmann & Preston, 2007; Hainmueller & Hiscox, 2007, 2010; Mayda, 2006; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001). Particularly focusing on refugees and asylum seekers, research on the impact of immigration on vote shares for anti-migration parties as a means to express sentiments towards immigrants shows mixed results. Dustmann et al. (2019) find that a rise in refugees and asylum seekers only leads to an increase in the vote shares for anti-immigration parties in non-urban areas. Contrarily, Steinmayr (2020) concludes that communities hosting refugees were less likely to vote for the anti-immigration party during the 2015 state elections in Upper Austria, but the effect was opposite for communities where refugees simply passed through in the previous months.

We avoid the usual endogeneity issue of immigrant sorting<sup>4</sup> by exploiting the fact that in Switzerland asylum seekers do not have a choice in their residential location. They are randomly assigned to a canton or municipality based on the population density and are initially placed in asylum centers. We observe 293 openings of such asylum centers between 2011 and 2017. If asylum seekers are perceived as a negative shock to local public amenities, or if local residents dislike cultural diversity, then an inflow of asylum seekers can result in higher propensities to move away from such areas. We employ a difference-in-differences design to compare residents living within close proximity to the asylum centers to those living further away. Using individual-level data from the universe of the Swiss population, we find that, relative to those living further away, the natives' propensity to move away when living within 500 meters of an open asylum center increases by 7.96% compared to the general propensity to move at least once per year in Switzerland of 0.378%. In terms of mechanisms, our analysis shows that the impact is stronger for those who exhibit more flexibility to move, such as renters and highly educated individuals. Additionally, we find that especially individuals residing in German-speaking municipalities have a higher increase in the propensity to move away, and residents in right-wing voting municipalities drive the effect observed for moves within the canton. The salience of the asylum seekers also plays a

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<sup>4</sup> Immigrant sorting is based on the idea that immigrants take into account the same factors as local residents when choosing their residential location, such as occupational opportunities, living costs, or local amenities and public goods. They therefore tend to move into — and out of — the same regions as natives, thus creating endogeneity when trying to disentangle their impact on natives' residential location choices from other factors.

non-negligible role.

Our paper is most closely related to the studies by van Vuuren et al. (2019) and Hennig (2019). Van Vuuren et al. (2019) exploit an unpredicted announcement of temporary refugee housing and report a significant price decline of around 4% of apartments within 5-minutes walking distance in Gothenburg, Sweden. Unlike them, our data allows us to include renters as well, which is especially important for Switzerland due to its large share of renters. Hennig (2019) analyzes real estate listings as a proxy for moves, to estimate the impact of new refugee shelters on the perception of the neighborhood quality in Berlin, Germany. He finds that when a shelter is established, rental prices and the probability of positive ratings for existing places decline in the immediate vicinity by 3% and 20%, respectively. However, in contrast to quantifying the sentiments of local residents based on real estate prices and ratings, we directly observe the individuals who move along with their socio-demographic characteristics.

The paper proceeds as follows. In Section 2 we provide an overview on the institutional setting: the federal, cantonal and municipal asylum procedure. Section 3 describes the data, while Section 4 outlines the research design. We present the main results and robustness checks in Section 5 and extensions that shed light on the mechanisms at play in Section 6. Section 7 concludes.

## 2 Asylum Seekers in Switzerland: Institutional Setting

Switzerland is culturally diverse with its four official national languages<sup>5</sup> and 25% share of foreigners (FSO, 2019). This diversity is high compared to international standards: Whereas the EU average reports 4.7 immigrants per 1,000 inhabitants in 2017, Switzerland's immigration rate was more than three times as high in the same year with 17 immigrants per 1,000 inhabitants (Eurostat, 2020). This relatively high immigration into Switzerland is also evident in the number of asylum requests. By *asylum* we mean the protection granted by the government to foreign refugees who are currently exposed to serious disadvantages (or have a well-founded fear of being so in the near future), who are being persecuted for a

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<sup>5</sup> German, French, Italian and Romansh.

specific reason, and who do not receive the protection of their own country or are unable to find refuge in their own country (SEM, 2019). Compared to Europe’s average of 1.4‰ asylum requests relative to population size in 2017, there were 2.2‰ asylum requests relative to Switzerland’s population in the same year (SEM, 2018a). Of these asylum applicants, 42.1% were either granted asylum, or provisionally admitted between 2010–2017, although this share varied largely between 19.1% in 2012 and 58.3% in 2014 (SEM, 2020).

Switzerland has a long tradition of federalism: Any matter that is not explicitly entrusted to the federal state is regulated on a cantonal (sub-national) level. Therefore, much variation exists across the 26 cantons in matters such as health, education, police and asylum concerns (SEM, 2017). In the following, we classify the Swiss asylum procedure according to responsibility: the federal asylum procedure in Section 2.1 and the cantonal and municipal asylum procedure in Section 2.2.

## 2.1 Federal Asylum Procedure

The granting of asylum is a federal matter (Art. 121 (1) Bundesverfassung (BV)), with the implementation regulated in the asylum act (Asylgesetz (AsylG)) and the asylum regulation 1 (Asylverordnung 1 (AsylV1)). Upon application, Switzerland grants asylum to refugees if they meet certain conditions.<sup>6</sup> Asylum seekers can request asylum at the Swiss border control, or, once they are inside of Switzerland, at one of six federal reception and procedure centers<sup>7</sup> run by the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM).<sup>8</sup>

At these federal centers, official identity papers of applicants are registered. It is further clarified whether Switzerland is responsible for the asylum request. If Switzerland is responsible for the asylum request, the maximum stay at the federal centers is 90 days. After that, the applicant is allocated to a canton, unless the asylum has been declined with a deportation or a non-admission decision. From the moment of the request until the final decision,

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<sup>6</sup> Table A1 provides an overview and description of the different residence status.

<sup>7</sup> These are located in Altstätten, Basel, Chiasso, Kreuzlingen, Vallorbe, and Bern.

<sup>8</sup> Until September 2012, applications for asylum could also be made at Swiss embassies abroad (“Botschaftsasy!”). However, in the course of the Arab Spring, Switzerland was the last European country to abolish this option.

the asylum process tends to take 300–400 days.<sup>9</sup>

## 2.2 Cantonal and Municipal Asylum Procedure

Admitted asylum seekers and those whose request has not been fully processed yet in the federal centers are allocated to cantons according to a random allocation key. It is based on the cantonal population share relative to the total population in Switzerland.<sup>10</sup> Asylum seekers hosted in a federal center within a canton are subtracted from the quota in the cantonal structures.

Importantly for the exogeneity in distribution, asylum seekers have no say in the allocation to a specific canton. The SEM only adjusts an allocation to respect the unity of family or in cases needing special attention. The cantonal compliance with the allocation key is relatively high, which is also evident in the geographic distribution of openings of asylum centers.<sup>11</sup> In Figure 1, we show the locations of all openings of asylum centers between 2011 and 2017 (cf. Figure B2 for the location of openings of asylum centers separately by year). We observe a strong concentration of asylum centers in cantons with relatively large populations, such as Zurich, Bern or Vaud, which are also the three cantons with the highest asylum seeker allocation shares according to the allocation key, with 17.0%, 13.5% and 8.4% of the population, respectively (cf. Table A2).

Upon allocation by the federal government, the cantonal authorities are responsible for accommodation and residence.<sup>12</sup> While the AsylG and the Foreign Nationals Act (“Ausländer- und Integrationsgesetz”; AIG) govern the broad requirements for accommodation for all

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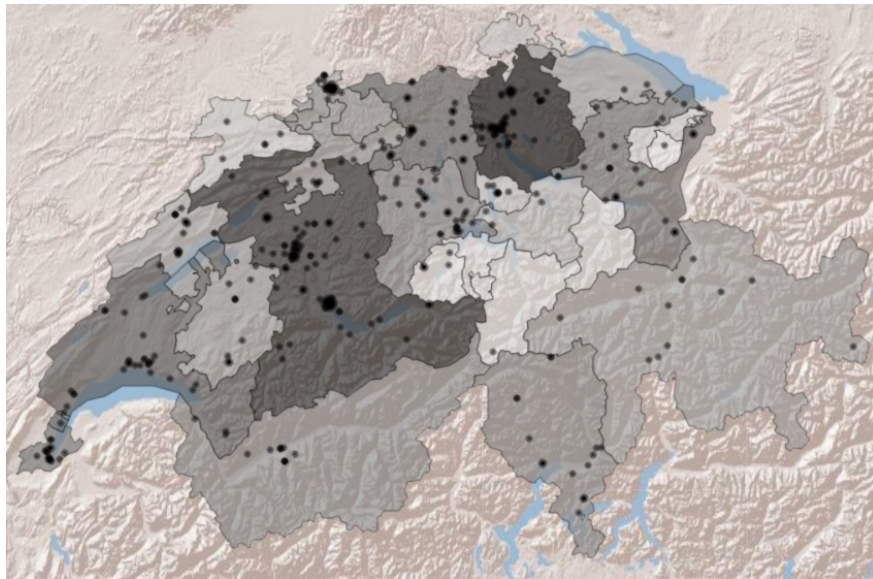
<sup>9</sup> The asylum law was reformed in September 2015 to speed up the process. As the new law only turned effective on March 1, 2019, it does not concern our sample period. During our sample period, a faster asylum procedure was tested in the canton of Zurich (beginning in January 2014) in an already existing asylum center (SEM, 2018b).

<sup>10</sup> The exact percentages of the allocation key valid between October 1, 1999 and March 1, 2017 are shown in Table A2.

<sup>11</sup> In Figure B1, we show the relative compliance of each canton with the applied allocation key for the year 2016. The relatively large deviation from the effective allocation key for the canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden may be explained by the fact that this effective key is computed retrospectively. Appenzell Ausserrhoden was compensated for opening two federal civil shelters in Heiden and Herisau with capacities of 150 and 100 beds, respectively.

<sup>12</sup> The cantons are additionally obliged to guarantee social assistance and to enforce the federal government’s dismissal decision.

FIG. 1: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ASYLUM CENTERS 2011–2017



NOTE: The locations of asylum centers which opened between 2011 and 2017 with a capacity of at least 20 sleeping beds are depicted with a dot. The size of the dot reflects the capacity of the asylum center. The shading is in line with the intensity of the cantonal allocation key (cf. Table A2). Data stem from the cantons and newspaper coverage.

cantons, the 26 cantons differ in their specific implementation regarding the assistance, organization of accommodation, social aid and integration (SEM, 2016). In some cantons, these services are provided by the cantonal authorities themselves, while in others, they are outsourced to independent associations.

Generally, cantonal accommodation is divided into two phases. The phases depend on the status and type of the asylum seeker as well as the time since the asylum request has been made (ORS, 2020). In the first phase, newly assigned asylum seekers are initially accommodated in collective housing, where they stay for 2–6 months (depending on the canton and the capacity). The cantons can decide on how to assign asylum seekers to collective housing accommodations, and, if necessary, maintain accommodations that are reserved for vulnerable groups, such as non-accompanied minors, families or women travelling alone.<sup>13</sup> Usually, collective housing accommodations are located in buildings with small rooms and large common areas, such as old hotels, camp houses, or in rare cases, buildings

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<sup>13</sup>Rejected asylum seekers who have to leave the country can also be assigned to a canton, and are usually accommodated in collective housing. Some cantons maintain separate shelters for these, in which there is usually only a minimum amount of assistance provided and no integration efforts taken (ORS, 2020).

specifically built to house asylum seekers. In case of supply shortages in collective housing, asylum seekers may temporarily be accommodated in emergency shelters. These are often provided in underground civil defense systems and are generally reserved for adult, male applicants travelling alone (Schweizerisches Kompetenzzentrum für Menschenrechte, 2013). The goal of this initial phase is to introduce asylum seekers to life in Switzerland and to help with their integration, such as through language classes (ORS, 2020).

During the second phase, asylum seekers live independently in apartments. The transition into the second phase usually follows after a certain length of stay in collective housing, or when the asylum request has been approved.<sup>14</sup> Most cantons randomly allocate asylum seekers across municipalities similarly to the cantonal allocation key. In line with the practice for cantonal allocation, most cantons subtract asylum seekers potentially hosted in first phase collective housing in a municipality from its municipal quota. To ensure compliance, cantons may incentivize municipalities to provide appropriate housing by collecting a daily fee for each assigned asylum seeker that is not hosted.

### 3 Data

We derive our data from three main data sources: the cantonal asylum organizations, newspaper articles and the Federal Statistical Office (FSO).

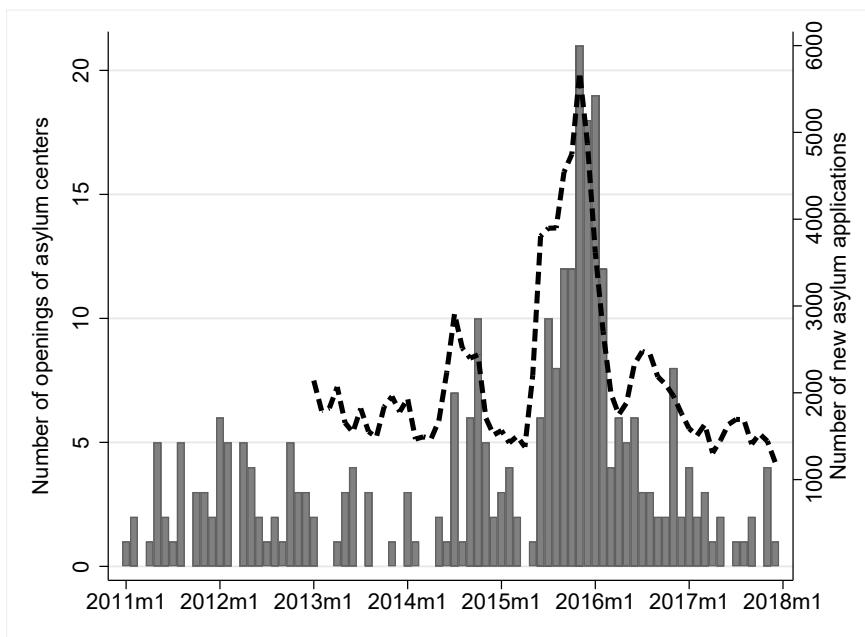
**Data on Asylum Centers** We observe the asylum centers that were open or have opened in Switzerland between 2011 and 2017. We have information on the asylum center (type, capacity, address), the asylum seekers (gender and age group, i.e., adults or minors), initial opening announcement, the opening date and the date of closure. To observe these events, we first draw from newspaper coverage.<sup>15</sup> For 12 of the 26 Swiss cantons we have additionally received information on their cantonal asylum centers and the municipal accommodations. We use this data to cross-check our findings with the entries from our newspaper search. For the other cantons, we rely on an extensive newspaper coverage. We restrict our

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<sup>14</sup>Some cantons list certain requirements that need to be met to move to the second phase, such as knowledge of local customs or basic language skills (cf. Asyl Berner Oberland, 2019 for the example of the canton of Bern).

<sup>15</sup>The newspaper search is documented in Appendix C.

FIG. 2: NUMBER OF OPENINGS OF ASYLUM CENTERS PER MONTH



NOTE: Number of openings of asylum centers per month in Switzerland between January 2011 and December 2017 shown in a bar graph. Data stem from the cantons and newspaper coverage. Number of new asylum applications per month between January 2013 and December 2017 shown in a dashed line graph. Data stem from the Asylum Statistics of the SEM.

sample to asylum centers which have a capacity of at least 20 persons.<sup>16</sup> As shown in Figure 2, the opening of new asylum centers co-moves with the new asylum applications per month.

In Table A3, we present descriptive statistics of asylum centers by year of opening. We observe 293 openings of asylum centers between 2011 and 2017. The peak opening years are 2015 and 2016, with 90 and 72 openings, respectively. The average capacity is 88 sleeping places, conditional on having at least 20 sleeping places. Moreover, 44% of all observed openings within the sample period are of underground asylum centers. This corresponds to the temporary use of underground civil shelters to cope with an increased demand for accommodation on short notice. However, the share of underground openings of asylum centers drops to zero in 2017. Although legal<sup>17</sup>, the discontinued use of underground centers is possibly in response to public opposition and negative publicity, and the recent

<sup>16</sup>We require a certain capacity of asylum centers for the salience to natives living within close proximity and also for it to be covered in the media. Given this minimum capacity, we mainly look at collective housing.

<sup>17</sup>The Federal Supreme Court ruled the practice as reasonable in 2013, as long as certain conditions are met (Schweizerisches Kompetenzzentrum für Menschenrechte, 2013).



construction of temporary overground container shelters serving as a substitute.

One concern may be that the location of asylum centers within a municipality is not random, or that they are consistently placed in areas of a municipality that is correlated with a higher propensity to move. On average, the asylum centers are located 1047.6m (median: 775.4m) from the municipality’s geographic center, with a substantial variation between 0m and 14,253m. Asylum centers tend to be closer to the municipal center in moderately populated areas, and further away in sparsely populated areas. Similarly, the distance to the municipal center is smaller in the French-speaking part, while it is greatest in the Italian and Romansh speaking parts. The average distance does not differ much between centers hosting only men and those hosting men, women and families. Large centers are on average closer to the center of a municipality than small or medium capacity centers, however, the median large center is further away. Finally, we observe a similar pattern in the share of underground centers, with the French speaking areas showing the highest share of such centers.

**Buildings and Dwellings Statistics (BDS)** This dataset from the FSO covers the whole stock of buildings and dwellings in Switzerland as well as the population’s living conditions (e.g., occupation density, floor space per person). We observe annual data for each building (geo-coordinates, type, number of floors, number of dwellings, number of inhabitants, period of construction) and dwelling (number of rooms, living area, number of inhabitants, socio-demographic household composition) between 2010 and 2017 in Switzerland.

**Population and Household Statistics (STATPOP)** For information on the resident population, we draw from the STATPOP dataset from the FSO. We observe individual-level data (date of birth, place of birth, gender, marital status, citizenship, place of residence, place of previous residence), including relevant characteristics for foreign nationals (residence permit, duration of stay) as well as household-level data on the household composition between 2010 and 2017.<sup>18</sup> In addition, STATPOP records which building and dwelling each individual resides in over the years, which allows us to geo-locate the residence of each person.

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<sup>18</sup>The household-level STATPOP data is only available since 2012. However, since we conduct our analyses at an individual level, this is of no concern.

All building and dwelling states as well as individual- and household-level characteristics are measured on January 1 of the respective calendar year.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, STATPOP allows us to track movements (births, deaths, arrivals, departures, regional migrations, acquisitions of the Swiss citizenship) of individuals through data on population changes during the same year from 2011 onwards.

**Structural Survey of the Federal Population Census** In the Structural Survey of the Federal Population Census from the FSO, we observe more detailed socio-economic and -demographic characteristics for a random sample of persons aged 15 and over, living in a private household in Switzerland between 2010 and 2017. For this random sample of around 240,000 observations per year ( $\sim 3\%$  of the Swiss population), we additionally have information on their education, languages spoken, migration background, religion, and mode and duration of transportation to work/school.<sup>20</sup>

**Municipal Data** We obtain administrative data at the municipal level from the FSO on the population (density, share of foreigners), social security (social benefit rate), construction and housing (vacancy rate), vote shares by political party<sup>21</sup>, urbanity level, and the main language spoken. Moreover, we link our data with the income tax burden relative to the net income at the municipal level from the Federal Tax Administration.<sup>22</sup> The municipal data is measured on January 1 of the respective calendar year.

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<sup>19</sup>We recode the STATPOP data available at the end of one calendar year to be the same as the data on January 1 of the following year.

<sup>20</sup>Most individuals are only observed in one year. We extrapolate their information to the other years to enlarge the dataset, i.e., we assume that this additional information remains constant over our sample period.

<sup>21</sup>We consider a municipality to be right-wing voting, if the parties with right-wing ideologies in matters of immigration have the biggest vote share in this municipality, and accordingly for center and left-wing. The numbers are therefore not in line with the overall vote share of these parties across the country. See Section 6.1 for a detailed description of the parties and their grouping.

<sup>22</sup>We calculate the income tax burden as the sum of the cantonal tax, the municipal tax, the catholic church tax and the personnel tax for a single individual with the approximate median annual net income of CHF 70,000 (State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, 2018).

## 4 Research Design

### 4.1 Empirical Strategy

To estimate the impact of the opening of asylum centers on residential location choices of natives, we compare individuals living close to open asylum centers (the treated) with those living further away (the control group). We apply a difference-in-differences design and estimate the following panel regression:

$$y_{it} = \alpha_i + \Phi_1 D_j^{open} + \Phi_2 D_k^{within} + \Phi_3 D_k^{within} \times D_j^{open} + \gamma X'_{mit} + \mu Z'_{it} + \xi_t + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

where  $y_{it}$  is the binary outcome variable of interest of individual  $i$  at time  $t$ , i.e., the propensity to move residential location. Given that a move purely motivated by the opening of an asylum center is more likely to be of short distance, we are further interested in whether the observed move is within a canton (i.e., an intra-cantonal move) or across cantons (i.e., an inter-cantonal move).<sup>23</sup> The variable  $D_j^{open}$  is a binary indicator for the opening status of the closest asylum center  $j$ :

$$D_j^{open} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } \textit{closest} \text{ asylum center is open} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

For each building  $k$  in the BDS we compute the geographic distance,  $distance_{kj}$ , to the *closest* asylum center  $j$ , based on the Haversine distance formula<sup>24</sup> to account for the Earth's curvature. We then assign a binary indicator equal to one for as long as this *closest* asylum center is open, conditional on the center opening between 2011 and 2017 and having a capacity of at least 20 sleeping places.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> We expect a move across cantons to be motivated by other factors, such as a change in job or uptake of a degree course. A move within canton, however, is more likely to be possible even when keeping the same job, considering the comparatively small commuting distances in Switzerland.

<sup>24</sup>  $distance_{kj} = 2r * \arcsin \sqrt{\sin^2 \left( \frac{\phi_k - \phi_j}{2} \right) + \cos(\phi_k) \cos(\phi_j) \sin^2 \left( \frac{\lambda_k - \lambda_j}{2} \right)}$ , where  $\phi$  and  $\lambda$  are the geographic latitude and longitude coordinates in radians, respectively, and  $r$  is the radius of the Earth.

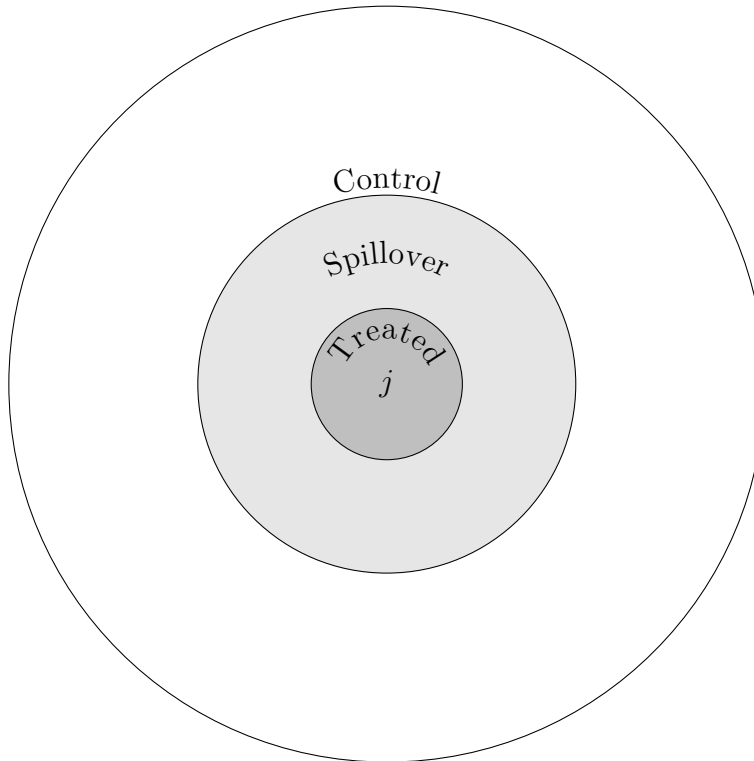
<sup>25</sup> The *closest* asylum center could open before 2011 and (partly) remain open during our observation period. However, asylum centers which are open between 2011–2017, but have opened prior to 2011 will not be

Moreover,  $D_k^{within}$  is a binary indicator for a building  $k$  to be located within the defined treatment radius  $\delta$ . The treatment group consists of all individuals  $i$  that reside in a building  $k$  within a radius  $\delta$  of the *closest* asylum center  $j$  at time  $t$ . Accordingly, the control group consists of all individuals  $i$  that reside in a building  $k$  outside a radius  $\theta$  of open asylum center  $j$  at time  $t$ . To prevent treatment spillovers from the treatment to the control group, we define a spillover region outside the treatment radius  $\delta$ , but within a radius of  $\theta$ , where  $\delta \leq \theta$ . Hence, we define the binary indicator  $D_k^{within}$  as follows:

$$D_k^{within} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } distance_{kj} \leq \delta \\ 0 & \text{if } \theta < distance_{kj} \end{cases} \quad (3)$$

Figure 3 presents a visual illustration of the treatment, spillover, and control regions

FIG. 3: TREATMENT, SPILLOVER AND CONTROL DEFINITION



NOTE: Visual illustration of the treatment, spillover and control regions. In the baseline analysis, the treatment radius around asylum center  $j$  is 500m. The spillover radius is 1,500m. The control radius is defined as being outside each spillover radius of every asylum center  $j$ .

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considered as *open*.

surrounding an asylum center  $j$ . In our baseline analysis, we use a treatment radius of  $\delta=500\text{m}$ <sup>26</sup> and a spillover radius of  $\theta=1,500\text{m}$ . A building  $k$  that is within 500m of an asylum center  $j$  belongs to the group of potentially treated buildings ( $n=97,971$ ), so  $D_k^{within}=1$ . We neglect the spillover group in the analysis, which consists of all buildings that are outside the treatment region of an asylum center, i.e., outside a 500m radius, but within the spillover radius  $\theta$  of 1,500m ( $n=337,232$ ). Individuals living in a building within this spillover region neither belong to the treatment group, nor the control group. Therefore there should be no treatment spillovers from the treatment group to the control group.<sup>27</sup> The control group consists of all buildings that are outside the spillover region of an asylum center, i.e., outside a 1,500m radius ( $n=1,340,509$ ), so  $D_k^{within}=0$ .

Clearly, the definition of our treatment radius  $\delta$  decisively affects which observed individuals are in the treatment and control groups. To check the sensitivity of our results to our treatment definition, we vary the treatment radius in Section 5.2.

Our coefficient of interest is  $\Phi_\delta$ , which is the interaction term between  $D_j^{open}$  and  $D_k^{within}$ . In the baseline specification it shows the propensity to move of individuals residing within 500m of an open asylum center, relative to the control group residing outside a 1,500m radius of an open asylum center. Additionally, we include a set of time-varying regional characteristics,  $X_{m_i t}$ : the population density per  $\text{km}^2$ , the share of foreigners, the social benefit rate, the vacancy rate of apartments and houses, and the income tax rate for the median income. These variables are measured at the municipal level in the year in which the individual moves, with  $m_i$  indicating the municipality of individual  $i$ . If the individual moves in the same year as the opening of the asylum center, municipal controls are measured pre-treatment. However, the timing of the measurement should also not be problematic for moves in a year after the opening of the asylum center, as the included municipal controls should be independent of treatment. Since the measurement of the population density, the share of foreigners and the social benefit rate are based on the permanent resident population<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup>For a treatment radius of 500m, only 0.413% of the buildings are located within proximity to more than one asylum center.

<sup>27</sup>A related concern may be that the higher propensities to move away in treated regions could lead to a fall in real estate prices in the surrounding area. However, given the overall low propensity to move in Switzerland of 0.378% (cf. Table 1), we expect no such effect.

<sup>28</sup>The measurements are based on the permanent resident population on December 31 of the prior year.

in Switzerland, these controls are independent of the allocation of asylum seekers. Further, the vacancy rate is unaffected by the allocation of asylum seekers, as the observed asylum centers in our dataset are not placed in residential buildings. In addition, municipalities do not carry the cost burden of the large cantonal asylum centers. As such, we expect a negligible effect of openings of asylum centers on the income tax for a median income.  $\alpha_i$  are individual-level fixed effects.  $Z_{it}$  is a vector of individual controls, which may change over time: age, and indicators for being male, married and holding a Swiss passport.  $\xi_t$  are monthly fixed effects and  $\varepsilon_{it}$  denotes the error term.

Our analysis crucially depends on the exogeneity of the treatment. Since asylum seekers are randomly allocated to the cantons based on a fixed allocation key, treatment is exogenous. Moreover, the opening of an asylum center should not have any effect on the residential location choice in the periods leading up to the opening. One possible concern may be if asylum centers are established in apartment buildings that are torn down in the following months, thus leading to individuals moving out due to the demolition and not due to the asylum center. This should not be an issue, however: Most asylum centers are not located in apartment buildings, but in separate buildings specifically built for this purpose, or in old hotels or camp houses.<sup>29</sup> Even if an asylum center would open in an old apartment building, this would only undermine our estimated effect, as these individuals would have to move out before the asylum center is opened.

A related concern may be that natives start moving away prior to the opening of the asylum center based on its announcement. If the propensity to move residence rises in the periods leading up to the opening of an asylum center, estimates from the generalized differences would reflect unobserved regional trends and risk including an upward bias. Given that most asylum centers opened on relatively short notice, where half of the openings between 2011 and 2017 were within 31 days after the announcement, anticipation effects should not pose a problem (cf. Figure B3).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Of the 293 observed openings of asylum centers between 2011 and 2017, only 4.45% were opened in new buildings — most of which were containers.

<sup>30</sup>In addition, we observe 13 asylum centers that were announced but never opened between 2011 and 2017, either due to procedural obstacles or because they were not needed anymore. We proxy openings and closings of these centers by their respective announcement and cancellation dates and run the same analysis on a subsample including individuals residing within 5,000m of these centers (excluding the individuals living in the spillover regions). We find no anticipation effects.

## 4.2 Sample Selection

We consider the universe of individuals residing in Switzerland between 2011 and 2017. We restrict our sample to individuals with main residence and to private households.

We further neglect individuals with the following resident permits: N (asylum seekers), L (short-term resident), and G (cross-border commute). Since we only observe the exact residential location needed for the treatment definition at the beginning of every year, we

Table 1: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	Mean	Std. Dev.
<i>Propensity to move at least once per year</i>		
Total (%)	0.378	(6.138)
Inter-cantonal (%)	0.108	(3.289)
Intra-cantonal (%)	0.270	(5.188)
<i>Individual characteristics</i>		
Age	41.979	(21.521)
Male (%)	49.309	(49.995)
Married (%)	46.994	(49.910)
Widowed (%)	4.243	(20.158)
Divorced (%)	7.982	(27.101)
Single (%)	40.780	(49.143)
Swiss (%)	82.849	(37.696)
<i>Municipality characteristics</i>		
Population density per km <sup>2</sup>	1016.777	(1 497.103)
Share of foreigners (%)	21.358	(10.193)
Social benefit rate (%)	2.773	(2.122)
Vacancy rate (%)	1.226	(1.328)
Income tax at median (%)	11.261	(2.237)
German (%)	73.697	(44.028)
French (%)	20.918	(40.672)
Italian (%)	5.016	(21.828)
Romansh (%)	0.369	(6.064)
Right-wing voting (%)	28.204	(44.999)
Center-voting (%)	54.821	(49.767)
Left-wing voting (%)	16.983	(37.548)
Observations	390,566,076	

NOTE: Total number of monthly observations is 390,566,076 for the sample period 2011–2017. Individuals are observed over the entire sample period. Data stem from the STATPOP.

restrict our analysis to the first move per year.<sup>31</sup> Finally, we only include individuals whom we observe over the entire sample period. Based on the treatment definition in Equation (3), our final sample of 539,501,340 observations (6,422,635 individuals) is split into 351,620,280 observations in the control ( $\sim 65.18\%$ ) and 46,638,108 observations in the treatment group ( $\sim 8.64\%$ ) (cf. Table A4).<sup>32</sup> Given that we observe the entire universe of the Swiss population, there should not be any issues with common support.

In Table 1, we provide descriptive statistics of our studied balanced sample. 0.378% of individuals move at least once per year between 2011 and 2017. By excluding emigrants and immigrants, this figure only accounts for moves within Switzerland. Of these moves, more than two thirds are moves within the canton. Almost half of our sample is male with an average age of 42 years and 47% of the sample is married. The share of Swiss is slightly above the actual average with 83% of the sample holding a Swiss passport, which may be a consequence of disregarding immigrations and emigrations due to the balanced sample. There is large variation in population density across the municipalities in which the sample resides. Additionally, almost three quarters of the individuals live in German-speaking municipalities, and more than half in municipalities where the majority votes for the center parties.

A comparison of means of selected variables for the treated and control groups is presented in Table 2. The difference in the propensity to move at least once per year is negligible in magnitude. If anything, the treated group moves relatively more often across cantons, whereas the control group has a higher propensity to move within cantons. Similarly, most differences in individual characteristics between the treated and control groups are negligible in magnitude. Nevertheless, we observe that relative to the control sample, treated individuals are significantly less likely to be married by 4.76 percentage points and to be Swiss by 9.76 percentage points. Differences between the treated and control groups seem to be mainly driven by municipal characteristics. As asylum seekers are distributed according to the random allocation key based on the relative cantonal population size, buildings in urban areas are more likely to be treated than those on the country-side. As illustrated in Table 2,

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<sup>31</sup>The move dataset only records the municipality of arrival and not the exact residential location within that municipality. 97.93% of the observed movers in our sample move only once per year.

<sup>32</sup>The other 26.18% comprise the spillover region.



the treated sample is more likely to live in municipalities with a relatively high population density, a higher share of foreigners, French as the main language, and a left-wing political view.

To make our groups comparable, we control for individual-level and municipal characteristics in our estimations. As asylum seekers are randomly allocated across cantons and municipalities according to population density (cf. Figure 1), the control variables should be independent of treatment. One concern may be that the municipal controls of the treated group develop differently over time than those of the control group. However, Figure B4 shows that the municipal controls of the two groups exhibit a common time trend. Moreover, as part of a heterogeneity analysis, we also interact our coefficient of interest with different variables indicating urbanity levels, political affiliations and language regions, respectively (cf. Section 6).

## 5 Results

### 5.1 Propensity to Move

We provide evidence for the probability to move away when an asylum center opens for individuals residing close to the new asylum center, relative to those living further away. All moves considered are of individuals moving away. A positive coefficient implies an increase in the propensity to move away.

Table 3 shows regression results for the overall propensity to move. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Coefficients in all regression tables are multiplied by a factor of 1,000 for readability. Columns (1)–(4) are based on a balanced sample with individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017. Column (1) presents a “raw” regression without any control variables. In column (2) we control for individual covariates and in column (3) for individual and municipal covariates. Column (4) presents the baseline, where we control for individual and municipal covariates as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect of the opening of an asylum center for individuals living within a 500m radius of the asylum center is statistically

Table 2: BALANCE TEST OF SELECTED VARIABLES

	Control	Treated	Difference	SE	p-value
<i>Propensity to move at least once per year</i>					
Total (%)	0.379	0.370	0.010***	0.001	0.000
Inter-cantonal (%)	0.108	0.110	-0.002***	0.001	0.000
Intra-cantonal (%)	0.271	0.260	0.012***	0.001	0.000
<i>Individual characteristics</i>					
Age	41.999	41.835	0.164***	0.003	0.000
Male (%)	49.402	48.619	0.783***	0.008	0.000
Married (%)	47.561	42.799	4.762***	0.008	0.000
Swiss (%)	84.012	74.238	9.775***	0.006	0.000
<i>Municipality characteristics</i>					
Population density per km <sup>2</sup>	786.554	2720.913	-1934.359 ***	0.212	0.000
Share of foreigners (%)	20.317	29.066	-8.748***	0.002	0.000
Social benefit rate (%)	2.519	4.651	-2.132***	0.000	0.000
Vacancy rate (%)	1.266	0.931	0.334***	0.000	0.000
Income tax at median (%)	11.247	11.365	-0.118***	0.000	0.000
German (%)	74.223	69.808	4.414***	0.007	0.000
French (%)	19.994	27.757	-7.763***	0.006	0.000
Italian (%)	5.391	2.243	3.148***	0.003	0.000
Romansh (%)	0.393	0.192	0.201***	0.001	0.000
Right-wing voting (%)	29.999	14.920	15.079***	0.007	0.000
Left-wing voting (%)	12.864	47.467	-34.602 ***	0.006	0.000
Center voting (%)	57.146	37.613	19.532***	0.008	0.000
Observations	351,620,280	46,638,108			

NOTE: Total number of monthly observations conditional on non-missing individual and municipal controls is 539,501,340 for the sample period 2011–2017. This is split into 351,620,280 observations in the control and 46,638,108 observations in the treatment group. Data stem from the STATPOP.

significant across all specifications. Control variables, both individual and municipal, do not affect the coefficient of interest significantly. Across all specifications, the propensity to move away increases by 3.01 to 3.44 basis points (bps). Considering a propensity to move of 0.378% across the studied sample (cf. Table 1), this increase is sizable in economic terms and corresponds to an increase of the propensity to move away by 7.96%. This means that: On average for every 10,000 natives, 37.8 move at least once a year. When an asylum center is open within 500m, the number of movers increases to 40.81.

The propensity to move is related to a number of individual and municipal factors. There is a positive correlation between the probability of moving away and age, yet this relationship

Table 3: REGRESSION RESULTS: MOVES

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Raw	Individual	Individual & Regional	Baseline
$D_j^{open}$	0.171*** (0.010)	-0.153*** (0.011)	-0.159*** (0.011)	-0.101*** (0.011)
$D_k^{within}$	0.612*** (0.080)	0.594*** (0.080)	-0.680*** (0.085)	-0.676*** (0.085)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.325*** (0.029)	0.344*** (0.029)	0.319*** (0.029)	0.301*** (0.029)
Age		0.352*** (0.004)	0.327*** (0.004)	0.311*** (0.067)
Age <sup>2</sup>		-0.003*** (0.000)	-0.003*** (0.000)	-0.003*** (0.000)
Male		-0.071 (0.346)	-0.001 (0.349)	-0.003 (0.349)
Married		-1.758*** (0.032)	-1.654*** (0.032)	-1.655*** (0.032)
Swiss		1.468*** (0.042)	1.474*** (0.042)	1.477*** (0.042)
Population density per km <sup>2</sup>			0.001*** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)
Share of foreigners			0.083*** (0.004)	0.083*** (0.004)
Social benefit rate			0.008 (0.011)	0.004 (0.011)
Vacancy rate			-0.023*** (0.005)	-0.020*** (0.005)
Income tax at median			-0.110*** (0.011)	-0.100*** (0.011)
Constant	3.672*** (0.009)	-5.778*** (0.195)	-5.790*** (0.228)	-5.236** (2.602)
Time-fixed effects	no	no	no	yes
Observations	398,258,388	398,258,388	390,566,076	390,566,076
Number of individuals	5,083,602	5,083,602	5,081,194	5,081,194

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(4) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017. Column (1) presents a “raw” regression. In column (2) we control for individual covariates and in column (3) we control for individual and municipal covariates. Column (4) presents the baseline, where we control for individual and municipal covariates as well as for time-fixed effects.

is non-linear. The probability of moving away is not significantly related to gender, but negatively related to being married, and positively correlated with being Swiss. The higher probability to move for younger and single individuals may indicate heterogeneity related to the flexibility to move, which we further exploit in Section 6. As for municipal factors,

Table 4: REGRESSION RESULTS: INTRA-CANTONAL MOVES

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Raw	Individual	Individual & Regional	Baseline
$D_j^{open}$	0.143*** (0.009)	-0.074*** (0.009)	-0.080*** (0.010)	-0.039*** (0.010)
$D_k^{within}$	0.423*** (0.069)	0.415*** (0.069)	-0.327*** (0.074)	-0.324*** (0.074)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.193*** (0.025)	0.207*** (0.025)	0.192*** (0.025)	0.178*** (0.025)
Age		0.232*** (0.003)	0.216*** (0.003)	0.234*** (0.058)
Age <sup>2</sup>		-0.002*** (0.000)	-0.002*** (0.000)	-0.002*** (0.000)
Male		-0.001 (0.299)	0.020 (0.301)	0.019 (0.301)
Married		-0.929*** (0.027)	-0.854*** (0.028)	-0.854*** (0.028)
Swiss		0.940*** (0.035)	0.950*** (0.036)	0.952*** (0.036)
Population density per km <sup>2</sup>			0.000*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)
Share of foreigners			0.053*** (0.003)	0.053*** (0.003)
Social benefit rate			-0.058*** (0.009)	-0.062*** (0.009)
Vacancy rate			-0.010** (0.004)	-0.007* (0.004)
Income tax at median			0.009 (0.007)	0.019*** (0.007)
Constant	2.622*** (0.008)	-3.739*** (0.168)	-4.486*** (0.185)	-5.467** (2.257)
Time-fixed effects	no	no	no	yes
Observations	398,258,388	398,258,388	390,566,076	390,566,076
Number of individuals	5,083,602	5,083,602	5,081,194	5,081,194

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(4) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017. Column (1) presents a “raw” regression. In column (2) we control for individual covariates and in column (3) we control for individual and municipal covariates. Column (4) presents the baseline, where we control for individual and municipall covariates as well as for time-fixed effects.

the likelihood to move away is positively related to the population density and the share of foreigners, but significantly negatively correlated with the vacancy rate and the income tax. One associated potential explanation for the latter may be real estate prices: In Switzerland, low tax burdens tend to be correlated with relatively high real estate prices (Eidgenössische

Finanzverwaltung, 2013).

As mentioned in Section 4, we expect individuals moving away purely because of the opening of an asylum center more likely to stay within the same canton. In Tables 4 and 5, we run the same regression but focus separately on intra- and intercantonal moves, respectively. Again, regardless of whether it is an intra- or inter-cantonal move, we find that the effect of the opening of an asylum center for individuals living within a 500m radius is positive and significant across all specifications.

The estimated effects differ based on whether it is an intra- or inter-cantonal move. Across all specifications, the propensity to move away within the canton increases by 1.78 to 2.07 bps, whereas the propensity to move away across cantons increases by 1.23 to 1.38 bps. However, relative to the general propensities to move in the studied sample (as shown in Table 1), the estimated impact is surprisingly larger for inter-cantonal moves: In the baseline, we observe a relative increase of 6.59% for intra-cantonal moves, while that for inter-cantonal moves amounts to 11.39%. Nevertheless, the relative magnitude may be driven largely by a base effect, with the general propensity to move across cantons being so low.

For individuals who only move once per year, we can determine their treatment status after their move. Of these, 63.47% live in the treatment region before their move. Only 11.66% of individuals moving away from a treated region of an open asylum center again move within a treated region of an asylum center — this share is slightly smaller if the closest asylum center in the new residential location is open as well.

While the previous results show the aggregated effect on the propensity to move of local residents over the duration of an open asylum center, we are further interested in how the effect evolves over time. Given that most openings of asylum centers were announced on short notice (cf. Figure B3) and that the period of notice for rental contracts is usually three months in Switzerland, we expect no immediate impact on the propensity to move. As shown in Figure 4, there is indeed no statistically significant effect on the propensity to move away of local residents in the first three months after the opening of an asylum center (Panel (a)). Regardless of the type of move, i.e., a move within the (Panel (b)), or a move across cantons (Panel (c)), the positive effect on the propensity to move away only becomes statistically significant within four months after the opening of the asylum center. Also, for both types

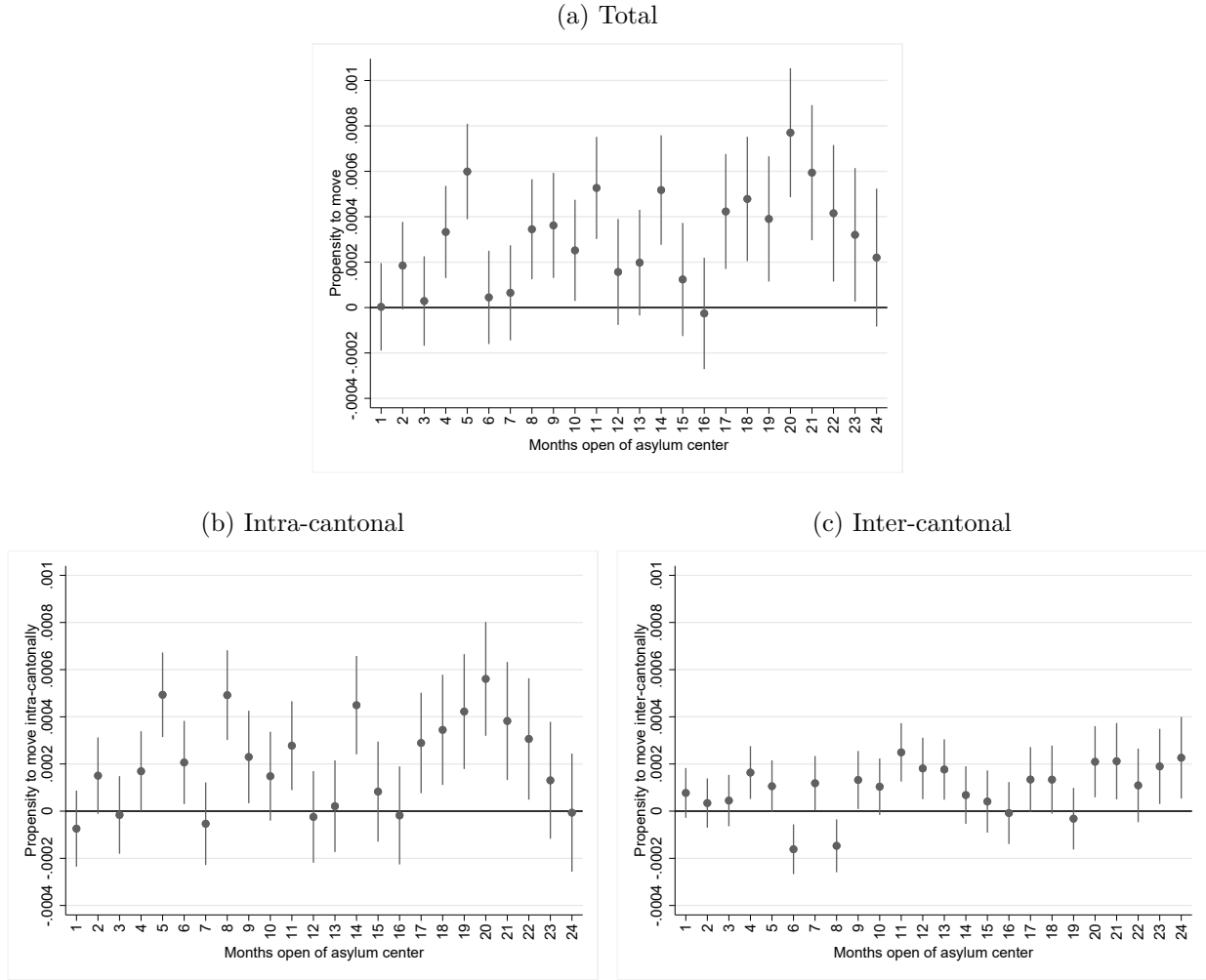
Table 5: REGRESSION RESULTS: INTER-CANTONAL MOVES

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Raw	Individual	Individual & Regional	Baseline
$D_j^{open}$	0.028*** (0.006)	-0.079*** (0.006)	-0.079*** (0.006)	-0.062*** (0.006)
$D_k^{within}$	0.188*** (0.048)	0.179*** (0.048)	-0.353*** (0.049)	-0.352*** (0.049)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.131*** (0.016)	0.138*** (0.016)	0.127*** (0.016)	0.123*** (0.016)
Age		0.120*** (0.002)	0.111*** (0.002)	0.077*** (0.029)
Age <sup>2</sup>		-0.001*** (0.000)	-0.001*** (0.000)	-0.001*** (0.000)
Male		-0.070 (0.190)	-0.021 (0.191)	-0.021 (0.191)
Married		-0.829*** (0.018)	-0.800*** (0.018)	-0.800*** (0.018)
Swiss		0.528*** (0.023)	0.524*** (0.023)	0.525*** (0.023)
Population density per km <sup>2</sup>			0.000*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)
Share of foreigners			0.030*** (0.002)	0.030*** (0.002)
Social benefit rate			0.066*** (0.007)	0.066*** (0.007)
Vacancy rate			-0.014*** (0.003)	-0.013*** (0.003)
Income tax at median			-0.119*** (0.010)	-0.119*** (0.010)
Constant	1.050*** (0.006)	-2.039*** (0.107)	-1.303*** (0.145)	0.231 (1.149)
Time-fixed effects	no	no	no	yes
Observations	398,258,388	398,258,388	390,566,076	390,566,076
Number of individuals	5,083,602	5,083,602	5,081,194	5,081,194

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(4) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017. Column (1) presents a “raw” regression. In column (2) we control for individual covariates and in column (3) we control for individual and municipal covariates. Column (4) presents the baseline, where we control for individual and municipall covariates as well as for time-fixed effects.

of moves we find that the estimated effect varies cyclically within the 24 months after the opening of an asylum center. However, since the reference date of the respective openings vary between the observed centers, we can rule out a seasonal pattern. The observed pattern

FIG. 4: PROPENSITY TO MOVE OVER TIME



NOTE: Monthly propensity to move of local residents for the first 24 months the asylum center is open. The coefficient of interest is the interaction between month since first opening and  $D_k^{within}$ . The vertical lines present 95% confidence intervals. The linear regressions are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017, where we control for individual and municipal covariates as well as for time-fixed effects. Panel (a) presents the effects for the general propensity to move; consisting of intra-cantonal moves (Panel (b)) and inter-cantonal moves (Panel (c)).

is more likely to be related to rental contracts.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup>In Figures B5, B6 and B7, we further show the propensity to move over time by month of opening for total moves, moves within the canton, and across cantons, respectively. Again, we find no seasonal pattern.

## 5.2 Robustness Checks

**Placebo Tests** We conduct placebo tests where we shift the opening time of the asylum centers by 12, 24, and 36 months into the past, respectively. If the differential impact of the open asylum center on those that live closer to it is true, then the placebo tests should show no effect for our coefficient of interest. Table A5 presents the results for the full dataset. Although our coefficient of interest is also statistically significant in the placebo tests, the coefficient is negative and decreasing in magnitude when we increase the months that are shifted (cf. columns (2)–(4)). The negative coefficients in the placebo tests seem to pick up a time-effect. Compared to the baseline result (column (1)), we see that the coefficient on  $D_k^{within}$  is relatively similar, which is to be expected, as we do not vary the individuals who live close to an asylum center. The coefficient on  $D_j^{open}$  is much larger in absolute terms in the placebo tests (columns (2)–(4)), as this is the variable we change by shifting the true opening date back in time. It seems to pick up a time effect, which in turn, is driving the negative coefficient of the interaction term  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ .

One concern might be that due to the large number of observations in our dataset, simply all regression coefficients are statistically significant. We therefore additionally present results for the baseline regression and placebo tests on a random subsample of individuals in Table A6.<sup>34</sup> The baseline results (column (1)) for this random subsample are slightly larger, but in line with the results from Section 5.1 and highly significant. Only the placebo test for a 12 months shift is statistically significant for this subsample, which confirms that some of the significance found in the placebo tests of Table A5 might simply be due to the large number of observations. Considering the high significance of the baseline results on the random subsample (cf. column (1) in Table A6), the placebo tests validate the results of Table 3.

**Treatment Regions** Our estimated effects clearly depend on the treatment definition. We would expect the propensity to move away of individuals residing within closer distance to the asylum center to be more affected by its opening than that of individuals living

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<sup>34</sup>The random subsample of approximately 400,000 individuals is not stratified, and therefore not as representative as the sample from the Structural Survey. We draw our own subsample, as the Structural Survey subsample is still too large with almost 1 million individuals ( $\sim 75$  million observations) to give an answer to the question of whether the size of the dataset leads to statistical significance in itself.



further away. As a result, the treatment radius can be thought of as the treatment intensity. Tables A7 and A8 present results when using two alternative definitions of living within close proximity to an open asylum center. The first new treatment definition is based on a smaller treatment radius  $\delta$  of 300m (cf. Table A7), while the second alternative treatment region is defined by a larger treatment radius  $\delta$  of 1,000m (cf. Table A8). Compared to the baseline effect of +3.01 bps on the propensity to move, where we applied a treatment radius  $\delta$  of 500m (cf. Table 3), it comes as no surprise that the overall impact on moves is larger for a smaller treatment region of 300m (+3.55 bps), while the effect is smaller for a larger treatment radius  $\delta$  of 1,000m (+2.73 bps). While the magnitude of impact on inter-cantonal moves is largely robust to the alternative treatment definitions, the observed differences according to treatment intensity seem to be driven by intra-cantonal moves. Intuitively, individuals adjusting their residential location purely based on the opening of an asylum center are more likely to move within the same canton. Especially for these individuals, we would expect larger changes in residential location preferences with decreasing distance to an open asylum center.

**Adults Only** To account for the fact that minors may have no decision-making power in their residential location and may be dependent on the residential choice of their parents or guardian, Table A9 illustrates results when restricting the sample to individuals who are at least 18 years old. Considering adults only, our estimated impact on the propensity to move is somewhat larger with +3.20 bps (cf. column (1) of Table A9), than the observed effect of +3.01 bps in the main analysis (cf. Table 3). However, this minor deviation stems from intra-cantonal moves, as especially the results for inter-cantonal moves remain robust (cf. columns (2) and (3) of Table A9, respectively).

**Additional Individual Characteristics** To test the sensitivity of our main results to controlling for more detailed individual characteristics, we draw on the random subsample of individuals aged 15 years and above with their main residence in Switzerland from the Structural Survey of the Federal Population Census (cf. Section 3). This dataset provides us with additional individual characteristics including information on the individual's highest completed education, the employment status, home ownership, religion as well as commuting type and time to work or school.

As shown in Table A10, our main results in the baseline remain largely robust when including additional individual controls for the random subsample in the estimation of Equation (1). The effect on the propensity to move is +2.97 bps for total moves and +2.51 bps for intra-cantonal moves (cf. columns (1) and (2), respectively). Relative to the total and intra-cantonal propensities to move in this subsample, this amounts to an increase of 7.94% and 9.26%, respectively. However, interestingly, the effect for inter-cantonal moves becomes statistically insignificant and reduces to around a fifth in magnitude compared to the main analysis (cf. column (3)). Moreover, the propensity to move is highly positively correlated with being a renter and with having a completed tertiary education. This points towards heterogeneity regarding the flexibility to move, which we exploit in Section 6.3.

## 6 Heterogeneous Effects and Mechanisms

Our results show that the propensity to move increases for individuals living within close proximity to an asylum center after its opening. While the opening of an asylum center has a decisive impact on the natives' propensity to move, we cannot discern the reasons behind these moves, such as security or cultural concerns. To better understand the incentives to move away when a new asylum center opens, we investigate underlying mechanisms related to political views and cultural effects, the salience of asylum seekers as well as the flexibility to move of natives.

### 6.1 Political Views and Cultural Effects

Possibly, the residential location preference close to asylum centers depends on the dominant political party or cultural differences across municipalities. Switzerland is politically and culturally quite diverse, reflected by its four official languages and the 12 parties represented in the national parliament. The political landscape is dominated by four parties, ideologically ordered from left to right: the Social-Democratic Party (SP), the Christian People's Party (CVP), the Liberal-Democratic Party (FDP), and the Swiss People's Party (SVP). To test

the effect of the political preferences on the propensity to move, we interact our coefficients of interest with binary variables indicating right-wing, center and left-wing municipalities, based on the vote shares per political party in Table A11.<sup>35</sup> We further analyze cultural differences by taking into account the main language spoken in a municipality (German, French, Italian and Romansh) in Table A12.

The overall propensity to move clearly differs along political lines. The impact of an open asylum center is highest in left-wing municipalities, which is driven by the large increase in inter-cantonal moves in these municipalities (cf. columns (1) and (3) of Table A11). To some extent, this can be explained by the nature of these municipalities: Left-wing parties tend to have their stronghold in cities, while the center and right-wing parties are more dominant in the countryside. At the same time, there are more renters in cities than in the countryside, for whom it is easier to move away in response to the opening of an asylum center. Relative to right-wing voting municipalities, the effect is smaller in center voting municipalities. Column (2) of Table A11 further shows that this result is mainly driven by moves within the canton, which are the moves we would expect to more likely be motivated by the opening of an asylum center. Right-wing parties in Switzerland, as in most countries, follow a more pronounced anti-immigration agenda than the rest of the political landscape, and have a higher vote share outside of the big cities, where cultural diversity is smaller. A higher impact of an open asylum center on the propensity to move in municipalities that predominantly vote for the right-wing party could therefore be partly explained by animosity towards asylum seekers.

Considering the multi-lingual nature of Switzerland, it is important to control for the main official language spoken in a municipality to see if there are differences across language-areas.<sup>36</sup> The different language regions in Switzerland differ substantially both in their nature and culture. The French-speaking part tends to be more urban and left-wing politically than the German-speaking part. At the same time, it tends to have a relatively higher share of

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<sup>35</sup>The vote share is based on the 2011 and 2015 National Council elections. We group the vote shares per party according to ideology: right-wing (Swiss People’s Party, SVP; small Parties such as Ticino League, LEGA; Federal Democratic Union, EDU, etc.), left-wing (Social-Democratic Party, SP; Green Party, GPS; Labour Party, PDA) and center (Liberal-Democratic Party, FDP; Christian People’s Party, CVP; Green-liberal Party, GLP; Conservative Democratic Party, BDP; Evangelical People’s Party, EVP).

<sup>36</sup>We combine Italian- and Romansh-speaking municipalities in our analysis, as there are very few Romansh-speaking municipalities and they often are geographically close to other Italian-speaking municipalities.

foreigners, which could imply more open-mindedness.

As shown in Table A12, the impact of an open asylum center varies across the different language regions. The positive impact found in our baseline results in Section 5.1 is mainly driven by individuals living in the German-speaking part of Switzerland with the effect being larger for moves within the canton than across cantons. Relative to those living in German-speaking municipalities, individuals living in French-, Italian- or Romansh-speaking municipalities are less likely to move away in response to an open asylum center. In fact, individuals living close to an open asylum center in the latter two areas are even less likely to move away than those living further away. One explanation could be that there is only one Italian-speaking canton and only five Romansh-speaking valleys in all of Switzerland. Hence, individuals from Italian- and Romansh-speaking regions might simply not have many options for moving.

Political views and cultural differences are important mechanisms to explain attitudes towards asylum seekers. The effect of an open asylum center on the propensity to move is driven by individuals residing in right-wing voting municipalities for moves within the canton as well as by individuals in German-speaking municipalities for moves in general. Nevertheless, political views and the language regions are related to a certain degree: The share of right-wing voting municipalities in the German-speaking part is 35.7%, which is six times that of the French-speaking part and almost three times that of the Italian- and Romansh-speaking part.

## 6.2 Salience of Asylum Seekers

One way to examine the importance of the salience of the opening of an asylum center is to look at asylum center characteristics. If an asylum seeker is more visible in the community or perceived in a negative way, then the accommodating asylum center might have a larger effect on the propensity to move of natives. Unfortunately, we do not observe the characteristics of the residents of a specific asylum center, such as their nationality, age, and reasons for applying for asylum. However, we observe the capacity of the asylum center, its duration of opening, whether it is underground or overground, and whether it is intended to only

host men or men, women and families. We can therefore compare the impact that different types of asylum centers have on the propensity to move. As underground shelters are mostly restricted to single men, the results for these indicators almost coincide and we only analyze one.<sup>37</sup> In Table A13 we present results when taking into account the gender of the residents hosted in an asylum center. For overall moves, there is no significant difference between asylum centers hosting only men and those hosting men, women and families (cf. column(1)). However, this changes when taking into account the type of move: For moves within the canton, the impact is larger for centers that host only men, whereas it is lower for moves across cantons. This is particularly interesting, as we expect a move purely motivated by the opening of an asylum center to more likely be an intra-cantonal one. A higher propensity to move within the canton around centers hosting only men could point to security concerns as a motivating factor.

Table A14 shows the differences in the effect across different sizes of asylum centers. We group the asylum centers according to three categories: low (20–74 sleeping places), medium (75–149 sleeping places), and high (150 and more sleeping places) capacity. Relative to low capacity centers, the impact is smaller in larger centers. This effect is mainly driven by moves across cantons, while the differences across capacities are not significant for moves within the canton. The fact that the overall impact is larger for small centers might be due to the placement of these centers: A large share of low capacity centers was established in civil defense systems, which tend to be easily accessible and in the center of a municipality, where asylum seekers are more visible.

Beyond asylum center characteristics, another way to investigate the impact of the salience of asylum seekers on the propensity to move away of local residents, is to analyze the role of the duration of opening of the asylum center. The average duration of opening in our sample period is 22.7 months, yet it may vary between less than a month and an opening that spans over the entire period of observation between January 2011 and December 2018 (cf. Table A3). We take these differences in duration into account in Table A15, where we split the durations of openings into three groups: short (0–6 months), medium

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<sup>37</sup>Results for underground asylum centers are slightly smaller, but in line with the results for asylum centers accommodating only men (cf. Table A13). The minor deviation in magnitude may be explained by the fact that most, but not all, underground asylum centers accommodate men exclusively.

(7–12 months), and long (over 1 year). The impact is not significantly different across the three specifications. This is not surprising, as the duration of opening is mostly only known ex-post and should therefore not play a role in the decision to move away.

Furthermore, for a given size of the asylum center, its opening should be more salient in sparsely populated regions. Hence, we would expect a larger effect of an opening of an asylum center on the propensity to move away in such areas. However, since asylum seekers are distributed randomly based on the relative population size, asylum centers with a larger capacity tend to be opened in more densely populated regions. To investigate the role of the population density, we estimate the effect by the degree of urbanity of the individuals' residence surrounding the asylum center. We obtain the degree of urbanity for each municipality on a three-point scale, where an urbanity factor of 1 corresponds to a densely populated, 2 moderately populated, and 3 sparsely populated municipality, respectively.<sup>38</sup>

As shown in Table A16, despite the relatively constant share of asylum seekers across differently populated regions, the absolute number of asylum seekers plays a decisive role: The more densely populated an area is, the more likely are individuals living within close proximity to an open asylum center to move away, compared to those living further away. Whereas relative to densely populated areas the effect is lower in moderately populated areas for moves across cantons, the impact is not significantly different between densely and moderately populated areas for moves within the canton (cf. column(2)) — which are the moves we would expect to be motivated by the presence of asylum seekers. At the same time, we find a negative effect in sparsely populated areas. One potential reason is the low absolute number of asylum seekers allocated to such regions. Another reason may be that in sparsely populated areas, residents are more likely to be home owners than in densely populated areas, which gives them less flexibility to move (cf. Section 6.3).

Overall, we find that the salience of asylum seekers can explain some of the effect we observe in Section 5.1: The impact of an open asylum center on the propensity to move within the canton of those living close to such a center is greater in densely and moderately

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<sup>38</sup>The classification of the degree of urbanity is “based on a combination of geographical contiguity and population density, measured by minimum population thresholds applied to 1 km<sup>2</sup> population grid cells” (Eurostat, 2018).

populated areas, where asylum centers might also be more centrally located than in sparsely populated areas. While low capacity centers have a higher impact for moves across cantons, potentially due to their placement within a municipality, the impact on moves within a canton is higher for asylum centers hosting only men than those hosting both genders as well as families. Not surprisingly, the duration of opening does not play a role.

### 6.3 Flexibility to Move

A final mechanism explaining an increase in the propensity to move after an asylum center opens in close proximity is the flexibility to move of individuals. Table A10 shows that the propensity to move is in general higher for renters and for those with a higher education — presumably due to more financial means. Therefore, we expect those individuals to also be driving the effect we see in Section 5.1. Tables A17 and A18 interact our coefficient of interest with home ownership status and education level using the Structural Survey dataset. Indeed, the additional flexibility in changing residence for renters compared to home owners is also reflected in their behavior when living within 500m from an open asylum center, relative to renters living further than 1,500m away: Across all specifications renters are more likely to move away than home owners, and this effect is mainly driven by moves within the canton (cf. column(2)). In line with our expectations, we observe almost no impact on the propensity to move within the canton for owners, as the negative coefficient of the interaction offsets the positive effect found for renters.

Moreover, Table A18 confirms that the impact of an open asylum center when living within 500m to it is highest for individuals with a tertiary education. While for all three groups there is no impact on the propensity to move across cantons (cf. column(3)), the higher propensity to move for individuals with both secondary and tertiary education is driven by moves within the canton (cf. column(2)).

An individual's flexibility to move is an important driver of the effect we observe in Section 5.1: Those who presumably are more flexible to move at short notice, such as renters and those with more financial means (proxied by their education status), are also the ones who show the strongest reaction when an asylum center opens in close proximity.

## 7 Concluding Remarks

Changing residential location preferences in response to the opening of an asylum center is one way to express sentiments towards asylum seekers. Our results show that compared to the propensity to move at least once per year in Switzerland, individuals living within 500m to an open asylum center are 7.96% more likely to move away than those living further away. The effect increases when the distance to the asylum center decreases. Underlying mechanisms are political and cultural effects, the salience of asylum seekers and the flexibility to move.

The more difficult question to answer relates to the consequences of compositional changes resulting from individuals who are inclined to move away when a new asylum center opens. From a policy perspective, the understanding of mobility and the socio-economic as well as the urban-economic consequences of such mobility are a concern. Although we cannot deduce the impact of movers in response to an open asylum center within close proximity, we show that those natives who respond with the greatest increase in the propensity to move away when an asylum center opens, renters and highly educated individuals, are also the ones who generally move relatively often. Further research should address the compositional impact of these movers on the land valuation and development of city structure.



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# Appendix

## A Tables

Table A1: OVERVIEW BY RESIDENCE STATUS

Status	Definition	Duration	Living / accommodation
N Asylum seeker	The SEM has not yet decided on the person's asylum application.	Until decision of the SEM.	Allocation to a canton by the SEM. Stay in accommodation allocated by the cantonal authority. Cantonal change only possible in the case of entitlement to family unity, in the event of serious danger or with the consent of both cantons.
Permit F Provisionally admitted foreigner	Asylum application of the person was refused, but the person's expulsion is not possible, not allowed or unreasonable.	1 year, renewable. Application for permit B (hardship case) possible, eligible for in-depth examination after 5 years of residence in Switzerland.	Allocation to a canton by the SEM. In case of economic independence: free choice of residence in the canton, otherwise stay in accommodation allocated by cantonal authority. Cantonal change only possible in the case of entitlement to family unity, in the event of serious danger or with the consent of both cantons. Decision by the SEM.
Permit F Provisionally admitted refugee	Person is recognized as a refugee, but asylum is unworthy because the refugee status was only obtained by exit of the country or the person has committed reprehensible acts.	1 year, renewable. Application for permit B (hardship case) possible, eligible for in-depth examination after 5 years of residence in Switzerland.	Allocation to a canton by the SEM. Free choice of residence in the canton. Cantonal change same as for provisionally admitted foreigners, but in addition, there is a right to change canton, if there are no grounds for revocation under Article 63 AIG.
Permit B Recognized refugee	Person is recognized as a refugee and granted asylum.	1 year, renewable.	Residence permit is valid for the canton that issued it. Entitlement to change of canton, provided there are no grounds for revocation. Canton of destination must grant cantonal change.
Those obliged to leave the country.	Asylum application of the person was rejected; the person is obliged to leave Switzerland.	-	Stay in assigned accommodation for persons leaving the country.

NOTE: Definition and duration of residence status and living / accommodation by residence status. Source: Kanton Aargau (2019)

Table A2: CANTONAL ALLOCATION  
KEY

Canton	in percent	Canton	in percent
ZH	17.0	SH	1.1
BE	13.5	AR	0.8
LU	4.9	AI	0.2
UR	0.5	SG	6.0
SZ	1.8	GR	2.7
OW	0.5	AG	7.7
NW	0.5	TG	2.8
GL	0.6	TI	3.9
ZG	1.4	VD	8.4
FR	3.3	VS	3.9
SO	3.5	NE	2.4
BS	2.3	GE	5.6
BL	3.7	JU	1.0

NOTE: Cantonal allocation key for asylum seeker allocation valid between October 1, 1999 and March 1, 2017 (Art. 21 AsylV1).

Table A3: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: OPENINGS OF ASYLUM CENTERS 2011–2017

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
2011 ( $n=24$ )				
Capacity	70.83	31.59	29	170
Duration of opening in months	41.08	32.12	3	95
Underground	0.58	0.50	0	1
Only men	0.58	0.50	0	1
Unaccompanied minors	0.04	0.20	0	1
2012 ( $n=36$ )				
Capacity	73.33	40.23	25	160
Duration of opening in months	32.03	27.23	1	79
Underground	0.53	0.51	0	1
Only men	0.50	0.51	0	1
Unaccompanied minors	0.00	0.00	0	0
2013 ( $n=14$ )				
Capacity	93.79	44.86	45	186
Duration of opening in months	29.57	24.17	2	60
Underground	0.57	0.51	0	1
Only men	0.57	0.51	0	1
Unaccompanied minors	0.00	0.00	0	0
2014 ( $n=37$ )				
Capacity	100.35	67.63	30	348
Duration of opening in months	26.51	16.73	0	55
Underground	0.43	0.50	0	1
Only men	0.49	0.51	0	1
Unaccompanied minors	0.03	0.16	0	1
2015 ( $n=90$ )				
Capacity	85.21	69.31	30	600
Duration of opening in months	17.84	10.43	2	45
Underground	0.53	0.50	0	1
Only men	0.46	0.50	0	1
Unaccompanied minors	0.09	0.29	0	1
2016 ( $n=72$ )				
Capacity	91.96	75.12	20	500
Duration of opening in months	17.97	11.85	1	91
Underground	0.33	0.47	0	1
Only men	0.32	0.47	0	1
Unaccompanied minors	0.10	0.30	0	1
2017 ( $n=20$ )				
Capacity	108.55	74.11	25	300
Duration of opening in months	10.95	8.90	1	35
Underground	0.00	0.00	0	0
Only men	0.15	0.37	0	1
Unaccompanied minors	0.15	0.37	0	1
Total ( $N=293$ )				
Capacity	88.15	65.01	20	600
Duration of opening in months	22.71	19.18	0	95
Underground	0.44	0.50	0	1
Only men	0.43	0.50	0	1
Unaccompanied minors	0.07	0.25	0	1

NOTE: Descriptive statistics of openings of asylum centers by year of opening (2011–2017). The sample is unbalanced and the total sample size is 293 openings of asylum centers with a capacity of at least 20 sleeping places. Data are from the cantons and newspaper coverage. Federal center is a binary indicator equal to one when the asylum center falls under the competence of the federation, and zero if it falls under cantonal competence. Capacity indicates the number of total places to sleep.

Table A4: SAMPLE SELECTION: TREATMENT RADIUS 500M

Step	Remaining no. of observations
Individuals living in Switzerland (2011–2017)	660,542,508
Living in main residence	649,356,996
Private households only	642,627,552
Drop resident permits:	
N (asylum seeker)	641,354,136
L (short-term resident)	634,280,112
G (cross-border commute)	634,280,112
Observable over the entire sample period (2011–2017)	<b>539,501,340</b>
Final sample by treatment group:	
Treated	<b>46,638,108</b>
Control	<b>351,620,280</b>
Spillover	<b>141,242,952</b>

NOTE: Step-by-step sample selection. For a treatment radius of 500m and a control radius of 1,500m, the balanced sample is split into 46,638,108 monthly treated, 351,620,280 monthly control, and 141,242,952 monthly spillover observations.

Table A5: ROBUSTNESS CHECK: PLACEBO TEST ON FULL SAMPLE

VARIABLES	(1) Baseline	(2) Shift: 12m	(3) Shift: 24m	(4) Shift: 36m
<i>Panel A: Move</i>				
$D_j^{open}$	-0.101*** (0.011)	-1.125*** (0.011)	-0.482*** (0.012)	-0.268*** (0.013)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.676*** (0.085)	-0.542*** (0.102)	-0.600*** (0.126)	-0.579*** (0.164)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.301*** (0.029)	-0.337*** (0.030)	-0.244*** (0.032)	-0.039 (0.037)
Constant	-5.236** (2.602)	-7.460*** (2.608)	-7.726*** (2.674)	-7.016** (2.811)
<i>Panel B: Intra-cantonal move</i>				
$D_j^{open}$	-0.039*** (0.010)	-0.797*** (0.010)	-0.357*** (0.010)	-0.191*** (0.011)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.324*** (0.074)	-0.234*** (0.088)	-0.279** (0.109)	-0.244* (0.142)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.178*** (0.025)	-0.239*** (0.025)	-0.182*** (0.027)	-0.065** (0.031)
Constant	-5.467** (2.257)	-7.971*** (2.255)	-8.726*** (2.314)	-7.997*** (2.485)
<i>Panel C: Inter-cantonal move</i>				
$D_j^{open}$	-0.062*** (0.006)	-0.328*** (0.006)	-0.125*** (0.006)	-0.077*** (0.007)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.352*** (0.049)	-0.307*** (0.059)	-0.321*** (0.072)	-0.335*** (0.094)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.123*** (0.016)	-0.098*** (0.017)	-0.062*** (0.018)	0.025 (0.020)
Constant	0.231 (1.149)	0.511 (1.203)	1.000 (1.241)	0.981 (1.304)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	390,566,076	336,568,644	282,567,468	226,024,248
Number of individuals	5,081,194	5,038,549	4,992,970	4,941,819

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(4) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in Section 5.1 as well as for time-fixed effects. Column (1) presents the baseline results from Section 5.1 and columns (2)–(4) show the results if opening is shifted forward by 12, 24, and 36 months, respectively.



Table A6: ROBUSTNESS CHECK: PLACEBO TEST ON A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE

VARIABLES	(1) Baseline	(2) Shift: 12m	(3) Shift: 24m	(4) Shift: 36m
<i>Panel A: Move</i>				
$D_j^{open}$	-0.030 (0.041)	-1.094*** (0.041)	-0.554*** (0.043)	-0.265*** (0.047)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.552* (0.302)	-0.650* (0.360)	-0.635 (0.447)	-0.542 (0.584)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.381*** (0.104)	-0.450*** (0.105)	-0.101 (0.113)	-0.032 (0.130)
Constant	-16.242 * (8.575)	-20.271 ** (10.242)	-18.458 ** (9.144)	-15.765 * (8.398)
<i>Panel B: Intra-cantonal move</i>				
$D_j^{open}$	0.011 (0.035)	-0.798*** (0.035)	-0.426*** (0.037)	-0.164*** (0.041)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.203 (0.263)	-0.291 (0.314)	-0.321 (0.388)	-0.472 (0.507)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.271*** (0.089)	-0.303*** (0.089)	-0.029 (0.096)	-0.073 (0.112)
Constant	-10.725 * (5.608)	-14.078 * (7.226)	-11.579 ** (5.313)	-9.335** (4.181)
<i>Panel C: Inter-cantonal move</i>				
$D_j^{open}$	-0.040* (0.022)	-0.296*** (0.022)	-0.128*** (0.023)	-0.100*** (0.025)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.349** (0.176)	-0.358* (0.210)	-0.314 (0.259)	-0.070 (0.336)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.110* (0.058)	-0.147** (0.059)	-0.072 (0.063)	0.041 (0.071)
Constant	-5.517 (5.182)	-6.193 (5.506)	-6.878 (5.936)	-6.429 (6.202)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes	yes
Observations	30,739,956	26,488,848	22,236,564	17,786,604
Number of individuals	399,805	396,450	392,861	388,873

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(4) are based on a balanced random sample of the full dataset including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in Section 5.1 as well as for time-fixed effects. Column (1) presents the baseline for the random subsample and columns (2)–(4) show the results if opening is shifted forward by 12, 24, and 36 months, respectively.

Table A7: ROBUSTNESS CHECK: 300M TREATMENT RADIUS

VARIABLES	(1) Move	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
$D_j^{open}$	-0.082*** (0.011)	-0.026*** (0.010)	-0.056*** (0.006)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.557*** (0.129)	-0.194* (0.112)	-0.364*** (0.075)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.355*** (0.044)	0.229*** (0.037)	0.126*** (0.024)
Age	0.367*** (0.066)	0.279*** (0.060)	0.088*** (0.021)
Age <sup>2</sup>	-0.003*** (0.000)	-0.002*** (0.000)	-0.001*** (0.000)
Male	-0.026 (0.366)	0.040 (0.315)	-0.066 (0.203)
Married	-1.636*** (0.034)	-0.870*** (0.029)	-0.766*** (0.019)
Swiss	1.447*** (0.045)	0.934*** (0.038)	0.513*** (0.025)
Population density	0.001*** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)
Share of foreigners	0.081*** (0.004)	0.050*** (0.003)	0.031*** (0.002)
Social benefit rate	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.066*** (0.009)	0.061*** (0.007)
Vacancy rate	-0.024*** (0.005)	-0.011*** (0.004)	-0.013*** (0.003)
Income tax at median	-0.104*** (0.012)	0.029*** (0.008)	-0.133*** (0.010)
Constant	-6.688*** (2.572)	-6.868*** (2.353)	0.180 (0.840)
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	363,384,816	363,384,816	363,384,816
Number of individuals	4,765,952	4,765,952	4,765,952

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)).

Table A8: ROBUSTNESS CHECK: 1000M TREATMENT RADIUS

VARIABLES	(1) Move	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
$D_j^{open}$	-0.126*** (0.011)	-0.051*** (0.010)	-0.075*** (0.006)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.379*** (0.054)	-0.192*** (0.047)	-0.187*** (0.032)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.273*** (0.020)	0.142*** (0.017)	0.131*** (0.011)
Age	0.262*** (0.088)	0.202** (0.083)	0.060** (0.024)
Age <sup>2</sup>	-0.002*** (0.000)	-0.001*** (0.000)	-0.001*** (0.000)
Male	0.125 (0.322)	0.036 (0.273)	0.089 (0.182)
Married	-1.681*** (0.029)	-0.834*** (0.025)	-0.847*** (0.017)
Swiss	1.533*** (0.037)	0.975*** (0.031)	0.558*** (0.021)
Population density	0.001*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)
Share of foreigners	0.085*** (0.003)	0.056*** (0.003)	0.029*** (0.002)
Social benefit rate	0.008 (0.010)	-0.061*** (0.008)	0.070*** (0.006)
Vacancy rate	-0.032*** (0.004)	-0.017*** (0.004)	-0.015*** (0.002)
Income tax at median	-0.074*** (0.010)	0.010 (0.006)	-0.083*** (0.009)
Constant	-5.369 (3.431)	-5.250 (3.228)	-0.119 (0.963)
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	466,406,604	466,406,604	466,406,604
Number of individuals	5,856,593	5,856,593	5,856,593

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)).

Table A9: ROBUSTNESS CHECK: ADULTS ONLY

VARIABLES	(1) Move	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
$D_j^{open}$	-0.125*** (0.013)	-0.051*** (0.011)	-0.074*** (0.007)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.918*** (0.091)	-0.459*** (0.079)	-0.459*** (0.053)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.320*** (0.033)	0.193*** (0.028)	0.127*** (0.018)
Age	0.560*** (0.074)	0.357*** (0.066)	0.203*** (0.024)
Age <sup>2</sup>	-0.006*** (0.000)	-0.003*** (0.000)	-0.002*** (0.000)
Male	0.441 (0.579)	0.369 (0.495)	0.072 (0.331)
Married	-1.953*** (0.032)	-1.030*** (0.028)	-0.922*** (0.019)
Swiss	1.416*** (0.053)	0.889*** (0.045)	0.526*** (0.030)
Population density	0.000*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)
Share of foreigners	0.071*** (0.004)	0.044*** (0.003)	0.027*** (0.002)
Social benefit rate	-0.008 (0.012)	-0.073*** (0.010)	0.065*** (0.008)
Vacancy rate	-0.023*** (0.005)	-0.009** (0.004)	-0.013*** (0.003)
Income tax at median	-0.073*** (0.013)	0.009 (0.008)	-0.082*** (0.011)
Constant	-9.688*** (3.364)	-7.032** (2.978)	-2.656** (1.106)
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	324,972,000	324,972,000	324,972,000
Number of individuals	4,413,301	4,413,301	4,413,301

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)).

Table A10: ROBUSTNESS CHECK: ADDITIONAL INDIVIDUAL CONTROLS

VARIABLES	(1) Move	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
$D_j^{open}$	-0.108*** (0.025)	-0.052** (0.022)	-0.056*** (0.013)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.339* (0.193)	-0.045 (0.168)	-0.295*** (0.111)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.297*** (0.065)	0.251*** (0.056)	0.045 (0.035)
Baseline individual controls	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes
<i>Additional individual controls</i>			
Renter	3.740*** (0.309)	2.816*** (0.271)	0.924*** (0.160)
Education: secondary	1.082*** (0.193)	0.762*** (0.168)	0.319*** (0.104)
Education: tertiary	3.007*** (0.332)	2.038*** (0.286)	0.969*** (0.183)
Employed	0.404* (0.230)	0.457** (0.197)	-0.053 (0.126)
Religion: Muslim	1.024 (0.857)	0.713 (0.738)	0.312 (0.491)
Religion: other	1.959** (0.947)	1.791** (0.874)	0.168 (0.389)
Religion: none	0.912*** (0.331)	0.302 (0.283)	0.610*** (0.184)
Commuting type: private transport	-0.247 (0.214)	-0.218 (0.189)	-0.030 (0.112)
Commuting type: public transport	-0.389 (0.274)	-0.194 (0.235)	-0.195 (0.150)
Commuting time: 31-60 mins	-0.168 (0.218)	-0.127 (0.189)	-0.041 (0.122)
Commuting time: 61+ mins	-0.074 (0.301)	-0.314 (0.257)	0.239 (0.174)
Constant	-3.644 (5.572)	-5.591 (4.569)	1.948 (2.973)
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	75,335,076	75,335,076	75,335,076
Number of individuals	979,635	979,635	979,635

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficient of interest is  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$ . Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)). The reference groups are mandatory education, Christian religion, walking commuting type and 0–30 min commuting time.

Table A11: MECHANISMS: POLITICAL PREFERENCE

	(1) Moving	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
Left	0.048 (0.037)	-0.134*** (0.031)	0.182*** (0.022)
Center	-0.023 (0.026)	-0.045** (0.021)	0.022 (0.016)
$D_j^{open}$	-0.204*** (0.021)	-0.122*** (0.018)	-0.081*** (0.011)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Left}$	0.226*** (0.036)	0.184*** (0.031)	0.042** (0.019)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Center}$	0.123*** (0.025)	0.103*** (0.021)	0.020 (0.014)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.118 (0.120)	0.060 (0.105)	-0.178*** (0.068)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Left}$	-1.010*** (0.121)	-0.676*** (0.105)	-0.334*** (0.070)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Center}$	-0.430*** (0.096)	-0.289*** (0.084)	-0.140*** (0.054)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.174** (0.079)	0.212*** (0.069)	-0.038 (0.041)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Left}$	0.188** (0.091)	-0.061 (0.079)	0.248*** (0.049)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Center}$	-0.064 (0.092)	-0.135* (0.080)	0.071 (0.048)
Constant	-5.239** (2.602)	-5.469** (2.257)	0.230 (1.149)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	390,566,076	390,566,076	390,566,076
Number of individuals	5,081,194	5,081,194	5,081,194

NOTE: \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ . Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficients of interest are  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$  and its interactions. The reference group is right-wing voting municipalities. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)).

Table A12: MECHANISMS: LANGUAGE REGION

	(1) Moving	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
French	1.148*** (0.284)	-0.290 (0.178)	1.439*** (0.244)
Italian/Romansh	1.358*** (0.346)	0.834*** (0.205)	0.524* (0.307)
$D_j^{open}$	-0.131*** (0.014)	-0.056*** (0.012)	-0.075*** (0.008)
$D_j^{open} * \text{French}$	0.103*** (0.026)	0.098*** (0.023)	0.006 (0.013)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Italian/Romansh}$	0.080** (0.037)	-0.076** (0.033)	0.156*** (0.016)
$D_k^{within}$	-1.063*** (0.097)	-0.583*** (0.082)	-0.481*** (0.059)
$D_k^{within} * \text{French}$	1.725*** (0.195)	1.173*** (0.173)	0.552*** (0.106)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Italian/Romansh}$	1.191** (0.498)	0.403 (0.470)	0.788*** (0.196)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.386*** (0.035)	0.209*** (0.029)	0.178*** (0.021)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{French}$	-0.244*** (0.066)	-0.093 (0.059)	-0.151*** (0.033)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Italian/Romansh}$	-0.953*** (0.159)	-0.638*** (0.146)	-0.315*** (0.065)
Constant	-5.476** (2.601)	-5.493** (2.256)	0.017 (1.150)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	390,566,076	390,566,076	390,566,076
Number of individuals	5,081,194	5,081,194	5,081,194

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficients of interest are  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$  and its interactions. The reference group is German-speaking municipalities. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)).

Table A13: MECHANISMS: ASYLUM CENTER CHARACTERISTICS — RESIDENT TYPE

	(1) Moving	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
Only men	0.028 (0.065)	-0.013 (0.055)	0.042 (0.041)
$D_j^{open}$	-0.171*** (0.015)	-0.078*** (0.013)	-0.093*** (0.008)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Only men}$	0.169*** (0.023)	0.094*** (0.020)	0.075*** (0.013)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.690*** (0.099)	-0.331*** (0.085)	-0.359*** (0.058)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Only men}$	0.052 (0.157)	0.027 (0.136)	0.025 (0.090)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.298*** (0.038)	0.131*** (0.032)	0.166*** (0.022)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Only men}$	0.001 (0.059)	0.110** (0.051)	-0.108*** (0.032)
Constant	-5.252** (2.603)	-5.471** (2.257)	0.219 (1.149)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	390,566,076	390,566,076	390,566,076
Number of individuals	5,081,194	5,081,194	5,081,194

NOTE: \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ . Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficients of interest are  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$  and its interactions. The reference group is asylum centers hosting men, women and families. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)).



Table A14: MECHANISMS: ASYLUM CENTER CHARACTERISTICS — CAPACITY

	(1) Moving	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
Medium capacity	0.322*** (0.069)	0.099* (0.057)	0.223*** (0.044)
High capacity	-0.022 (0.092)	0.273*** (0.081)	-0.294*** (0.053)
$D_j^{open}$	-0.047*** (0.016)	-0.012 (0.013)	-0.035*** (0.008)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Medium}$	-0.163*** (0.025)	-0.039* (0.021)	-0.123*** (0.014)
$D_j^{open} * \text{High}$	0.012 (0.034)	-0.098*** (0.030)	0.110*** (0.017)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.368*** (0.111)	-0.108 (0.096)	-0.260*** (0.064)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Medium}$	-0.337** (0.165)	-0.168 (0.142)	-0.169* (0.098)
$D_k^{within} * \text{High}$	-1.525*** (0.233)	-1.275*** (0.203)	-0.250* (0.133)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.369*** (0.039)	0.184*** (0.033)	0.185*** (0.021)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Medium}$	-0.169*** (0.065)	-0.075 (0.055)	-0.094*** (0.036)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{High}$	-0.180* (0.092)	0.116 (0.080)	-0.296*** (0.049)
Constant	-5.329** (2.601)	-5.524** (2.256)	0.195 (1.149)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	390,566,076	390,566,076	390,566,076
Number of individuals	5,081,194	5,081,194	5,081,194

NOTE: \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ . Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficients of interest are  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$  and its interactions. The reference group is low capacity asylum centers (20–74 beds). Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)). Medium capacity is defined as 75–149 beds, high capacity as 150+ beds.

Table A15: MECHANISMS: ASYLUM CENTER CHARACTERISTICS — DURATION OF OPENING

	(1) Moving	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
Medium	0.239** (0.116)	-0.009 (0.096)	0.248*** (0.076)
Long	-0.384*** (0.068)	-0.127** (0.057)	-0.256*** (0.043)
$D_j^{open}$	-3.229*** (0.038)	-1.930*** (0.032)	-1.298*** (0.023)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Medium}$	3.072*** (0.049)	1.861*** (0.042)	1.210*** (0.029)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Long}$	3.663*** (0.040)	2.213*** (0.034)	1.450*** (0.024)
$D_k^{within}$	-0.430*** (0.120)	-0.120 (0.103)	-0.310*** (0.072)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Medium}$	-0.288 (0.273)	-0.401* (0.232)	0.113 (0.167)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Long}$	-0.401*** (0.153)	-0.319** (0.132)	-0.083 (0.090)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.163 (0.111)	0.045 (0.092)	0.118* (0.069)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Medium}$	0.046 (0.142)	0.133 (0.118)	-0.087 (0.085)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Long}$	0.033 (0.115)	0.072 (0.095)	-0.038 (0.070)
Constant	-5.044* (2.599)	-5.406** (2.256)	0.362 (1.146)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	390,566,076	390,566,076	390,566,076
Number of individuals	5,081,194	5,081,194	5,081,194

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficients of interest are  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$  and its interactions. The reference group is a short duration of opening (up to 6 months). Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)). Medium duration of opening is defined as 7–12 months, long duration of opening as 12+ months.

Table A16: MECHANISMS: DEGREE OF URBANITY

	(1) Moving	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
Moderately	-1.350*** (0.113)	-1.635*** (0.096)	0.284*** (0.069)
Sparsely	-1.027*** (0.134)	-1.395*** (0.115)	0.368*** (0.080)
$D_j^{open}$	0.127*** (0.028)	0.150*** (0.024)	-0.023 (0.015)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Moderately}$	-0.253*** (0.032)	-0.215*** (0.027)	-0.037** (0.017)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Sparsely}$	-0.310*** (0.035)	-0.250*** (0.031)	-0.061*** (0.019)
$D_k^{within}$	-1.722*** (0.132)	-1.181*** (0.112)	-0.541*** (0.081)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Moderately}$	1.672*** (0.175)	1.319*** (0.151)	0.354*** (0.104)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Sparsely}$	1.194*** (0.335)	0.717** (0.297)	0.477*** (0.185)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.307*** (0.045)	0.139*** (0.038)	0.168*** (0.026)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Moderately}$	-0.174*** (0.065)	-0.051 (0.056)	-0.123*** (0.035)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Sparsely}$	-0.831*** (0.139)	-0.481*** (0.123)	-0.350*** (0.072)
Constant	-4.075 (2.601)	-3.992* (2.253)	-0.083 (1.147)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	390,566,076	390,566,076	390,566,076
Number of individuals	5,081,194	5,081,194	5,081,194

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficients of interest are  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$  and its interactions. The reference group is densely populated areas. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)).

Table A17: MECHANISMS: HOME OWNERSHIP STATUS

	(1) Moving	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
Owner	-4.584*** (0.313)	-3.369*** (0.275)	-1.215*** (0.164)
$D_j^{open}$	-0.169*** (0.042)	-0.071* (0.037)	-0.098*** (0.022)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Owner}$	0.119** (0.047)	0.037 (0.041)	0.082*** (0.025)
$D_k^{within}$	-2.038*** (0.211)	-1.189*** (0.184)	-0.849*** (0.123)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Owner}$	7.974*** (0.444)	5.377*** (0.382)	2.597*** (0.255)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	0.492*** (0.089)	0.382*** (0.077)	0.110** (0.048)
$D_j^{open} * D_j^{within} * \text{Owner}$	-0.531*** (0.127)	-0.383*** (0.110)	-0.149** (0.068)
Constant	0.384 (5.573)	-2.582 (4.568)	2.967 (2.974)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	75,335,076	75,335,076	75,335,076
Number of individuals	979,635	979,635	979,635

NOTE: \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ . Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficients of interest are  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$  and its interactions. The reference group is renters. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results, for the additional individual controls presented in the robustness checks as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)).

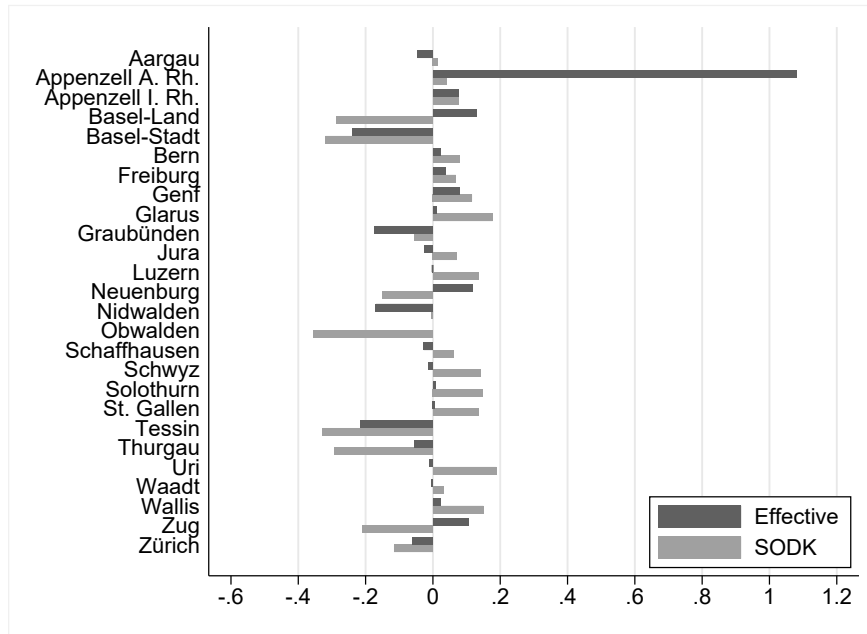
Table A18: MECHANISMS: HIGHEST COMPLETED EDUCATION

	(1) Moving	(2) Intra-cantonal	(3) Inter-cantonal
Secondary	1.177*** (0.205)	0.843*** (0.178)	0.334*** (0.111)
Tertiary	3.257*** (0.340)	2.203*** (0.293)	1.054*** (0.188)
$D_j^{open}$	0.200*** (0.042)	0.195*** (0.037)	0.005 (0.020)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Secondary}$	-0.271*** (0.053)	-0.231*** (0.047)	-0.040 (0.026)
$D_j^{open} * \text{Tertiary}$	-0.653*** (0.064)	-0.498*** (0.056)	-0.155*** (0.034)
$D_k^{within}$	0.048 (0.415)	0.208 (0.365)	-0.160 (0.227)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Secondary}$	-0.258 (0.462)	-0.242 (0.407)	-0.017 (0.256)
$D_k^{within} * \text{Tertiary}$	-0.765 (0.504)	-0.412 (0.436)	-0.353 (0.290)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$	-0.050 (0.104)	-0.062 (0.093)	0.012 (0.051)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Secondary}$	0.305** (0.143)	0.286** (0.127)	0.019 (0.072)
$D_j^{open} * D_k^{within} * \text{Tertiary}$	0.732*** (0.170)	0.636*** (0.146)	0.096 (0.093)
Constant	-0.203 (5.618)	-3.257 (4.624)	3.055 (2.977)
Individual controls	yes	yes	yes
Regional controls	yes	yes	yes
Time-fixed effects	yes	yes	yes
Observations	75,335,076	75,335,076	75,335,076
Number of individuals	979,635	979,635	979,635

NOTE: \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1. Linear regressions. All coefficients are multiplied by a factor 1,000 for readability. The coefficients of interest are  $D_j^{open} * D_k^{within}$  and its interactions. The reference group is individuals with mandatory completed education of 9 years. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Columns (1)–(3) are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017 and control for the baseline individual and municipal covariates presented in the main results, for the additional individual controls presented in the robustness checks as well as for time-fixed effects. The effect on the propensity to move is presented separately for total moves (column (1)), intra-cantonal moves (column (2)), and inter-cantonal moves (column (3)).

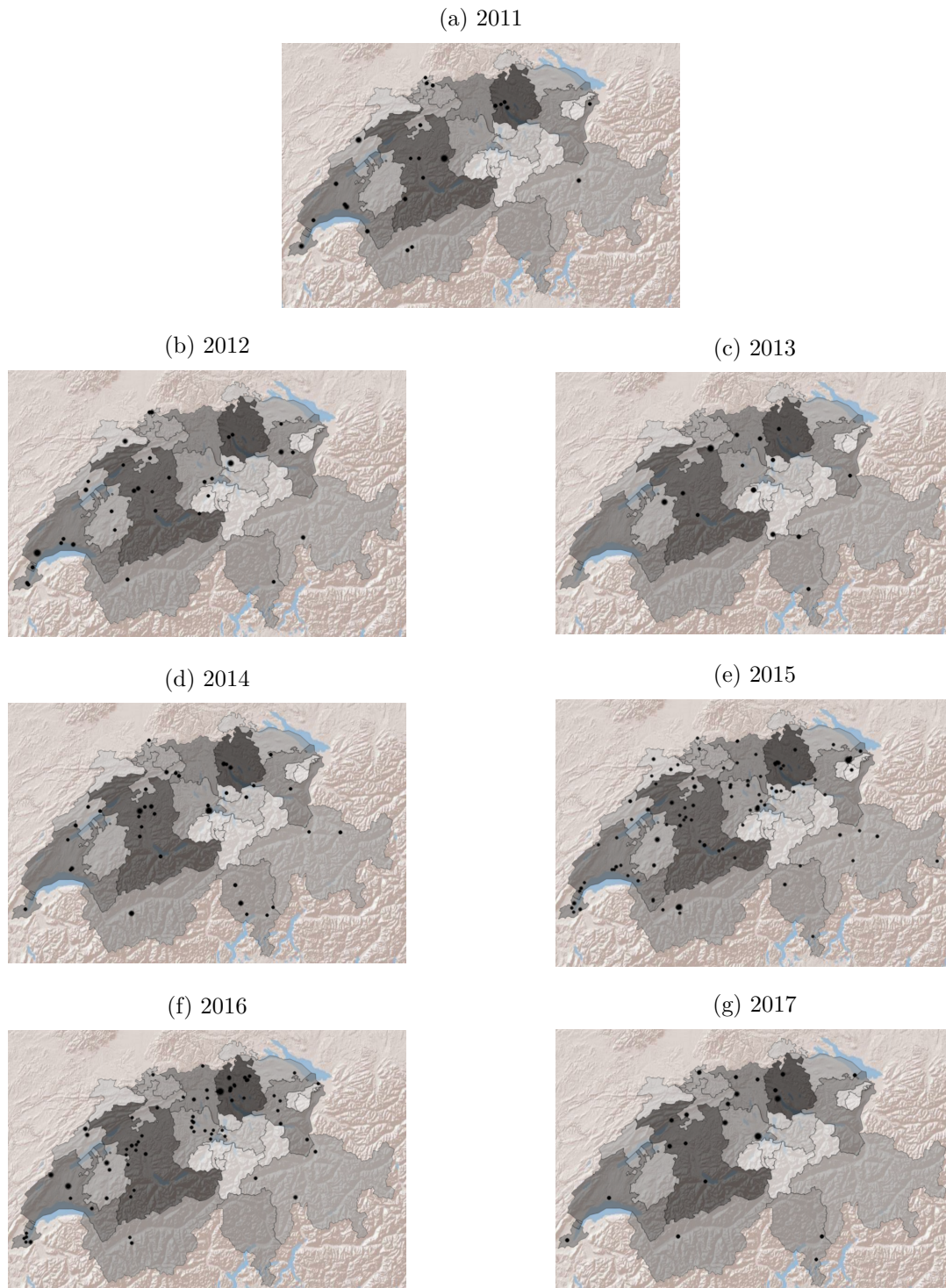
## B Figures

FIG. B1: RELATIVE DEVIATION FROM CANTONAL ALLOCATION KEY IN 2016



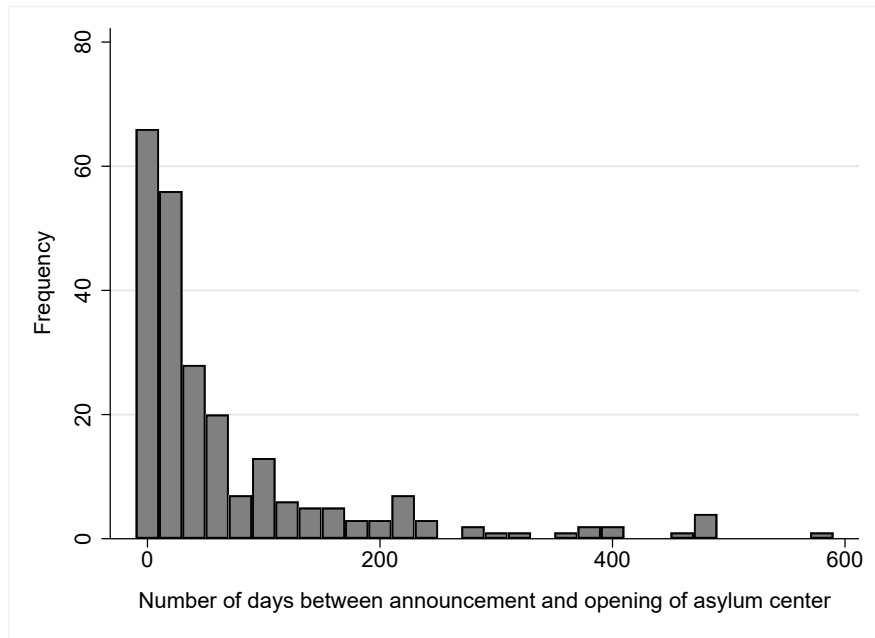
NOTE: Relative deviation from effective and SODK allocation key in 2016. The “SODK” (cantonal social directors) allocation key is based on the adjustment effective since October 1, 2012, that compensates cantons which host a federal reception and procedure center. The “effective” allocation key additionally compensates the available space in federal centers, and the implementation of the deportation via the airport. It is an adjusted version of the “SODK” allocation key and is recalculated each year, compensating cantons for potentially hosting too many or too few asylum seekers in the previous year. Data stem from the SEM.

FIG. B2: LOCATION OF OPENINGS OF ASYLUM CENTERS BY YEAR OF OPENING



NOTE: Location of openings of asylum centers by year of opening between 2011 and 2017 with a capacity of at least 20 sleeping beds depicted with a dot. The size of the dot reflects the capacity of the asylum center. The shading is in line with the intensity of the cantonal allocation key (cf. Table A2). Data stem from the cantons and newspaper coverage.

FIG. B3: HISTOGRAM OF NUMBER OF DAYS BETWEEN ANNOUNCEMENT AND OPENING OF ASYLUM CENTER

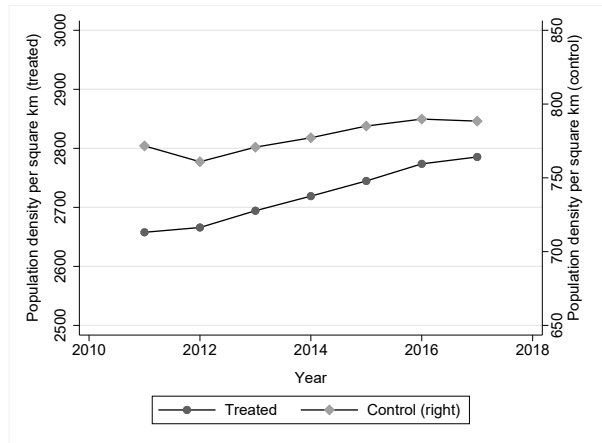


NOTE: Histogram of number of days between announcement and opening of asylum center for openings between 2011 and 2017 capped at 600 days. Data stem from the cantons and newspaper coverage.

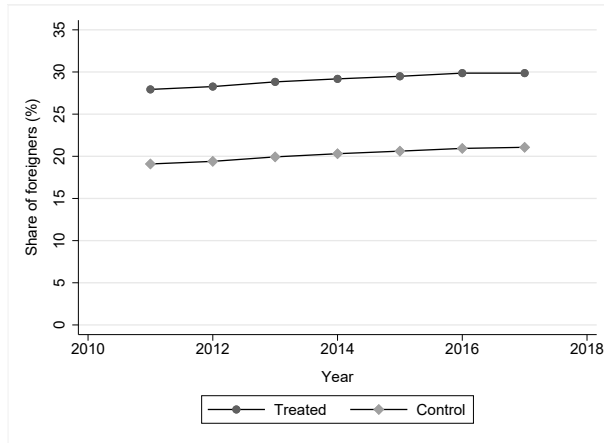


FIG. B4: MUNICIPAL CHARACTERISTICS PER YEAR IN SWITZERLAND

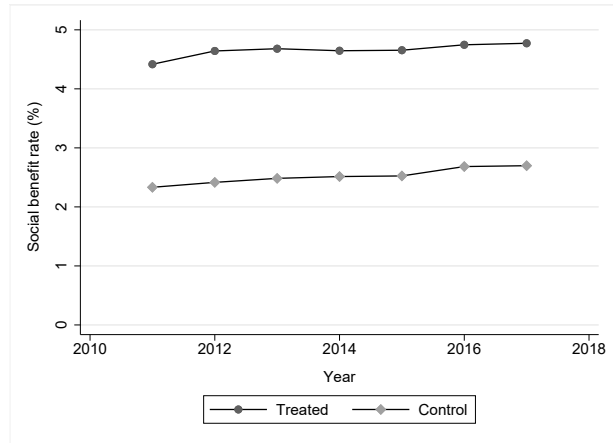
(a) Population density per km<sup>2</sup>



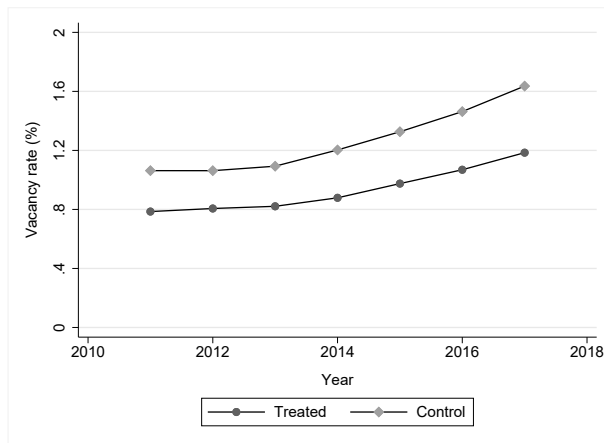
(b) Share of foreigners (%)



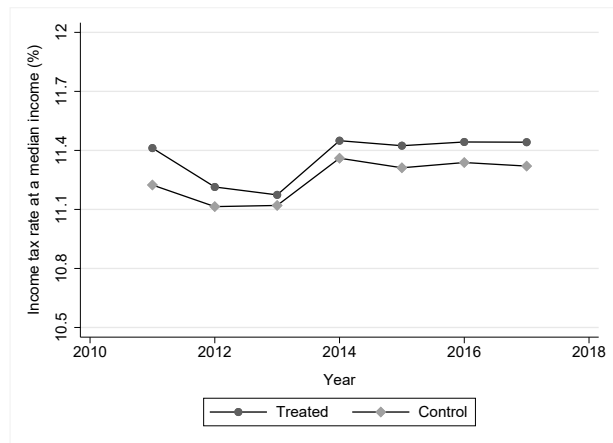
(c) Social benefit rate (%)



(d) Vacancy rate (%)

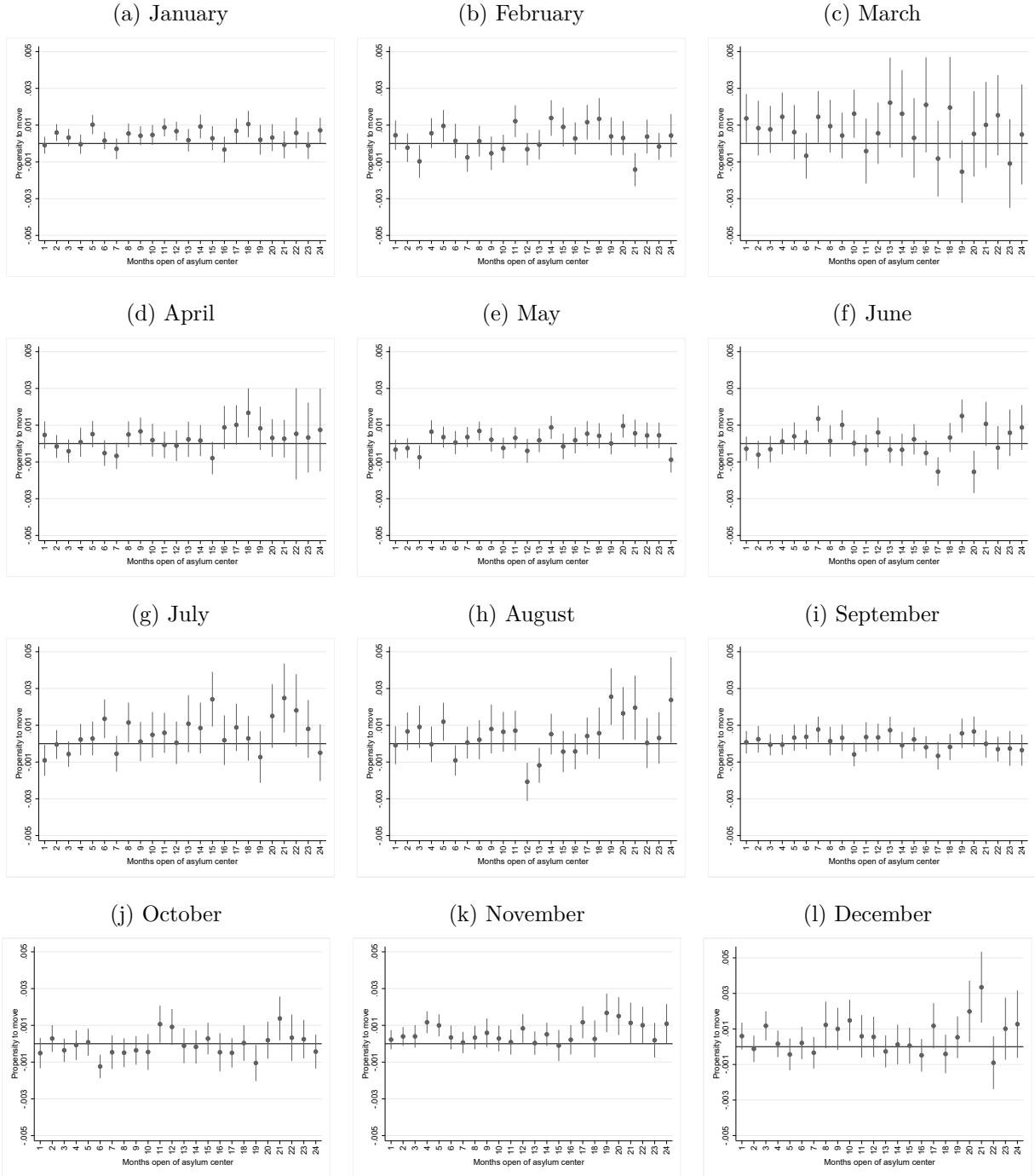


(e) Income tax at a median income (%)



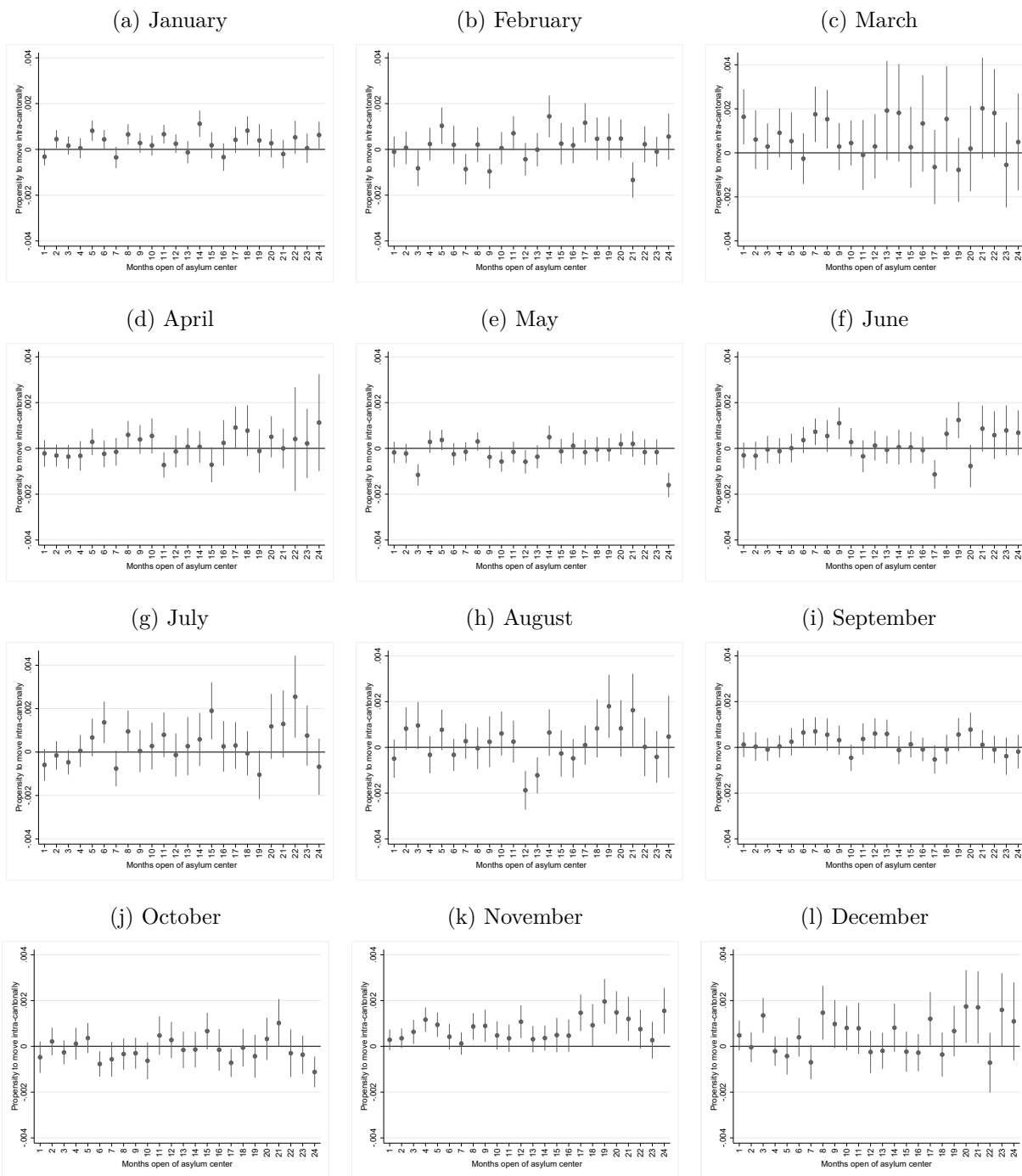
NOTE: Municipal characteristics per year in Switzerland between 2010 and 2017 separately for the treated and control group. Data stem from the Federal Tax Administration and the FSO.

FIG. B5: PROPENSITY TO MOVE OVER TIME BY MONTH OF OPENING



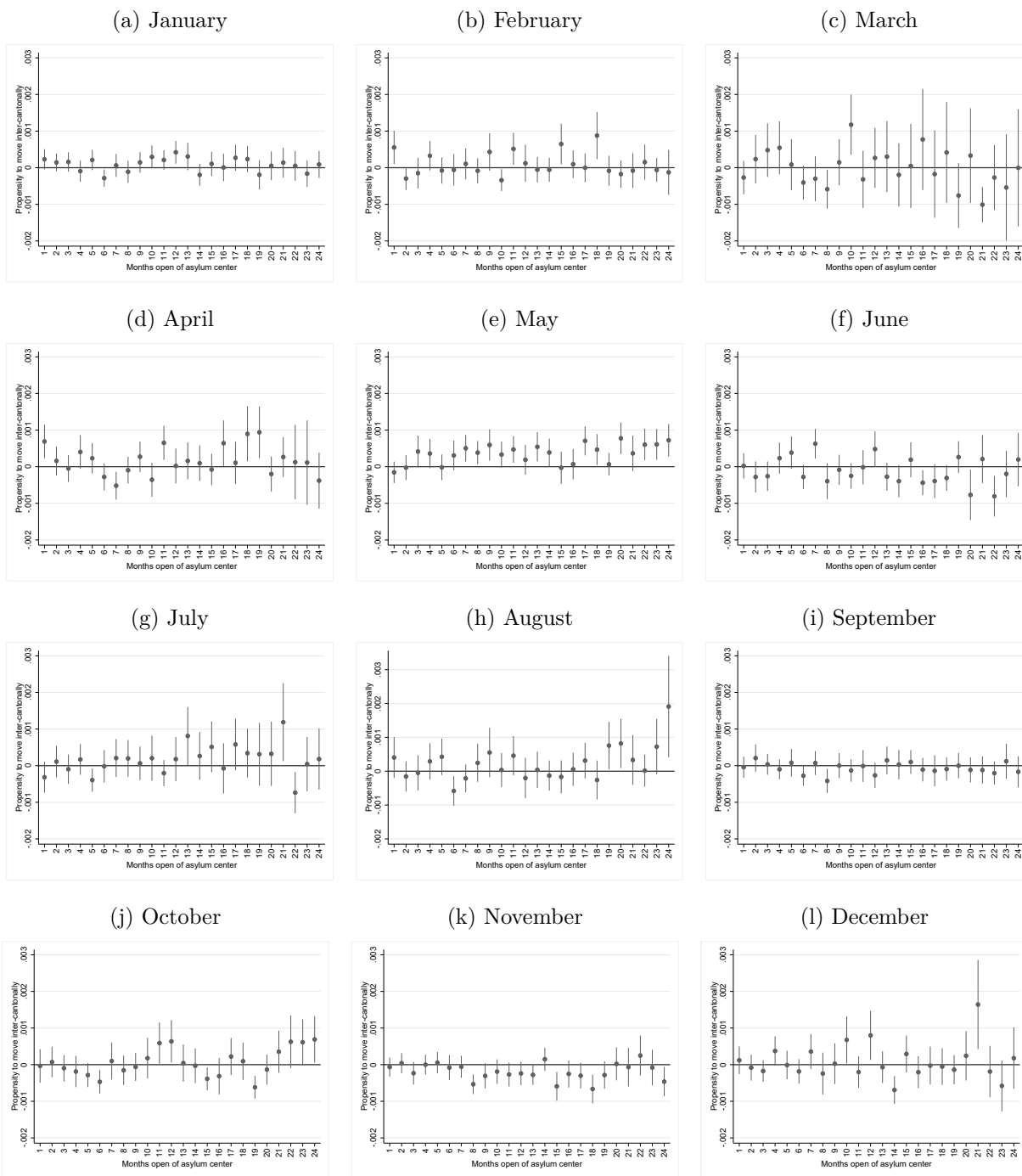
NOTE: Monthly propensity to move of local residents for the first 24 months the asylum center is open by month of opening. The coefficient of interest is the interaction between month since first opening and  $D_k^{within}$ . The vertical lines present 95% confidence intervals. The linear regressions are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017, where we control for individual and municipal covariates as well as for time-fixed effects. Panels (a)–(l) present the effects for total moves by opening month January through December.

FIG. B6: PROPENSITY TO MOVE WITHIN A CANTON OVER TIME BY MONTH OF OPENING



NOTE: Monthly propensity to move within a canton of local residents for the first 24 months the asylum center is open by month of opening. The coefficient of interest is the interaction between month since first opening and  $D_k^{within}$ . The vertical lines present 95% confidence intervals. The linear regressions are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017, where we control for individual and municipal covariates, as well as for time-fixed effects. Panels (a)–(l) present the effects for total moves by opening month January through December.

FIG. B7: PROPENSITY TO MOVE ACROSS CANTONS OVER TIME BY MONTH OF OPENING



NOTE: Monthly propensity to move across cantons of local residents for the first 24 months for the first 24 months the asylum center is open by month of opening. The coefficient of interest is the interaction between month since first opening and  $D_k^{within}$ . The vertical lines present 95% confidence intervals. The linear regressions are based on a balanced sample including individuals who are observed during the entire sample period 2011–2017, where we control for individual and municipal covariates as well as for time-fixed effects. Panels (a)–(l) present the effects for total moves by opening month January through December.

## C Newspaper search

We looked for newspaper articles in the database Factiva, referring to the openings and closings of asylum centers as well as to operating shelters published in around 100 national Swiss newspapers between January 1, 2008 and December 31, 2018. The related articles before the actual opening or closing of an asylum center should give insight into the announcement date and the possibility of anticipation effects. The following keywords were used and also combined in the newspaper database Factiva: “asylum”, “shelter”, “accommodation”. Our search first focused on the major national newspapers, such as NZZ, Tages-Anzeiger, Blick, 24 heures and Sonntagszeitung, drawn from Factiva. We then extended our focus to regional newspapers, such as St.Galler Tagblatt, Zofinger Tagblatt, Aargauer Zeitung, Basler Zeitung, Berner Zeitung, Die Südostschweiz, Le Temps, Tribune de Genève and Der Bund, and augmented our dataset with Google searches specific to the region of a new opening or closing.