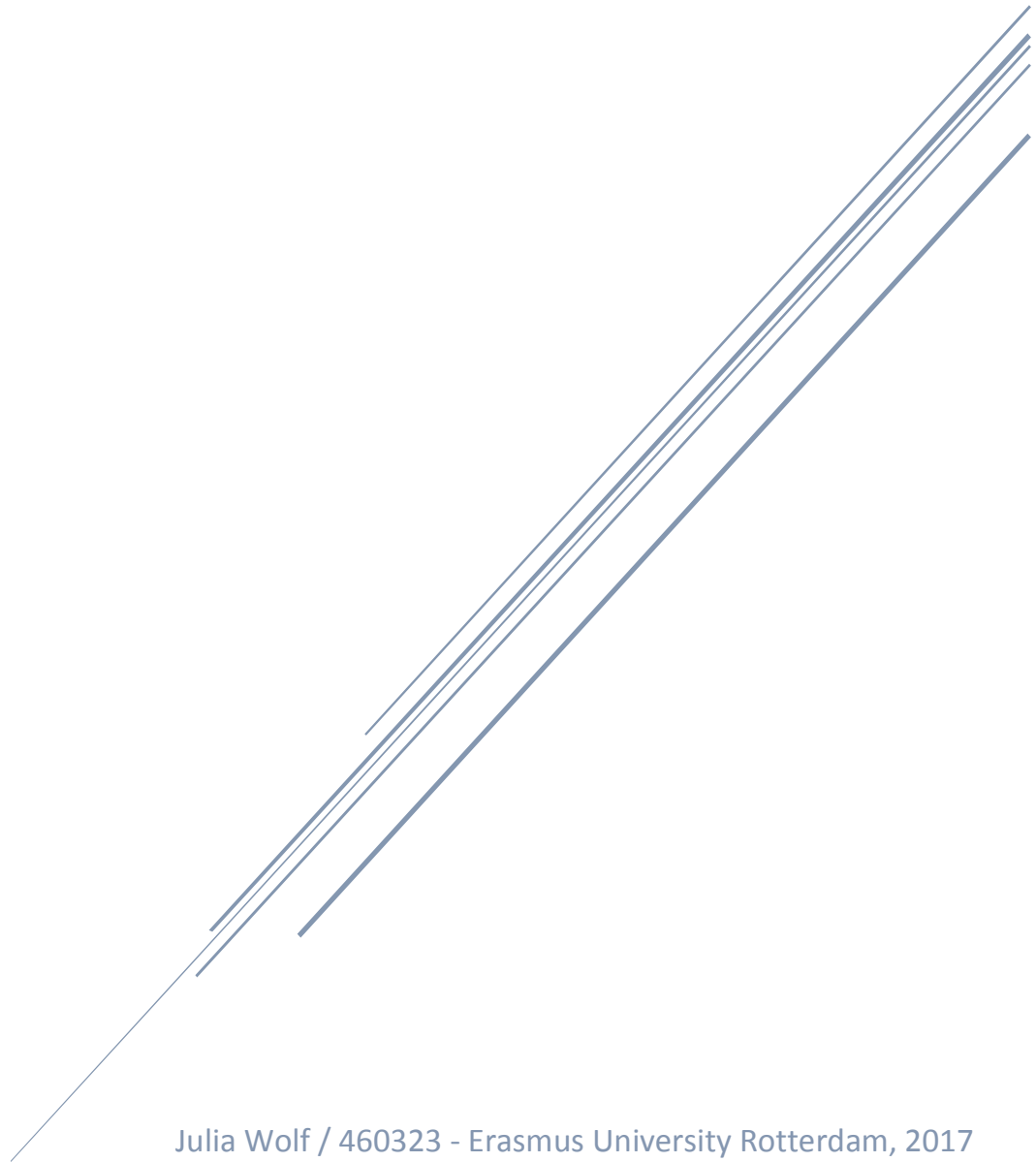


MASTER THESIS

Coping with 1.5 Million Humanitarian Migrants

Active Labour Market Policies in European Countries after the Refugee
Crisis of 2015

A comparison between Denmark, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom



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Governance of Migration and Diversity

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1. Introduction

“Refugees represent one of the most vulnerable groups of migrants in the labour market.... It takes refugees up to 20 years to have a similar employment rate as the native-born” (OECD 2016a, pp. 5-6).

What does that mean for European countries and their labour market policies after the refugee crisis in 2015? Probably a lot. According to official numbers by Eurostat (2016), 1.2 million humanitarian migrants have found their way to Europe to seek asylum in 2015. One third of them fleeing the civil war in Syria, followed by high numbers from Afghanistan (15% of all applications) and 10% from Iraq (Eurostat, 2016). These countries' rates of recognition already indicate that most of them will stay: in 2016, 98% of Syrian applications were accepted, 61% from Afghanistan and 63% from Iraq (Eurostat, 15-03-2017). Against that background, most European countries agree on the next step that should be taken after granting them asylum: integrating them.

Integration is a constantly used term when talking about immigrants. According to the European Union, it “is a precondition for an inclusive, cohesive and prosperous society. [...] If well integrated, migrants can boost GDP.” (European Commission, 07-06-2016). But how is this in line with the beforehand mentioned statement by the OECD regarding refugees as one of the most vulnerable groups? Literature agrees on the fact that socio-economic integration of asylum migrants is rather dragging on. Aimee Chin and Kalena E. Cortes (2015) found in their contribution in the *Handbook of Economics of International Migration* that refugees do not work less than other migrant groups in the US, but get lower quality jobs and lower weekly pay than other migrants. This is even though refugees had decent jobs in their origin country. They are “less positively selected on attributes associated with labour market success in the US relative to other migrants” (p. 619). Richard A. Wanner (2003) observes similar trends in his study about earning patterns of different immigrant groups in Canada. Also in Germany, the legal status at the arrival plays a crucial role for future labour market performance. According to their comparative study between Germany and Denmark, Constant and Zimmermann (2005a) find refugees and asylum seekers in fewer full-time jobs or self-employment (p. 21). In Denmark, differences according to the legal status cannot be observed.

Earnings are also affected negatively by status. It does not matter in Denmark whether a person has immigrated as a refugee or via family reunification, whereas German figures indicate a more negative impact of arriving as a refugee than arriving as a family member (p. 16). In his article about labour performance of refugees in Australia, Mark Wooden (1991) gives three reasons for the faring poorly of refugees compared to other immigrant groups. They face discrimination, a lock-in-effect in low skilled jobs and as a the most influencing difference, they lack proficiency in English (p. 533). Furthermore, Chriswick (1979) argues that the skill composition of the migrant plays a crucial role. Refugees usually have to leave their country suddenly without any further preparation whereas e.g. labour migrants leave their country for economic reasons and with a higher international skills transferability. Unprepared refugees do not bring that, on the contrary, they might have invested in specific economic issues in their country of origin before the reason for their flight occurred (p. 365). Refugees do not only perform weaker in labour market, they are also to a greater extent welfare recipients in hosting countries than natives and non-refugee immigrants. The duration of benefits is also affected by the time an immigrant has spent in the host country. Literature here is not agreed on the direction. Some studies have shown that welfare dependency rises with the duration of stay (Riphahn, 1998), whereas others found that “immigrants assimilate out of welfare with the time spent in the new country” (Hansen & Lofstrom, 2003, p. 76) and this even faster than other immigrant groups. Gustafson and Osterberg (2001) analysed in their article the burden refugees put on the public sector of the hosting countries and identify higher rates for refugees than for non-refugees, too. On the other hand, refugees are “typically young and highly motivated” (Zimmermann, 2017 p. 93). However, the above-mentioned studies do not consider that refugees are not comparable to native-born workers or non-refugees. Some of them suffer from traumata and insecurities concerning their legal status or the whereabouts of their families. The lack of language skills or knowledge about the cultural norms and values of the host country accrue, too. Martín (2017) refers to the necessity to *activate* them in a certain amount of time (p. 105). This is not only for the sake of their socio-economic integration, but also because it is a “good investment for the host societies” (p. 105).

Respecting all these findings, one may propose a set of specific measures tackling these impediments and fostering labour market integration of refugees. A comparative study by *Bertelsmann-Stiftung* (2016) on labour market integration policies in EU member states

suggests the four following key elements: “1) early skills assessment; 2) “introduction” programme including general cultural orientation, but sometimes also socio-professional orientation and even some training; 3) intensive language courses; and 4) access to general job intermediation services.” (p. 9). Furthermore, the study finds that there is a trend in European countries to implement policies that foster labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees since 2015. Studies by the OCED (2016), the European Commission (2016) and the European Migration Network (2016) find similar results. They take cross-national differences between asylum seekers and refugees but also between instruments into account. However, the studies do not consider the variety of labour market policies and welfare state structure across the European countries which may have an impact on the design of labour market policies targeting asylum migrants. The Scandinavian countries are highly developed welfare states with an extensive set of instruments, whereas the United Kingdom or Italy rather lack such conditions (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Countries such as Germany or Austria are somewhere in between with social partners playing an important role. That background information need to be considered when analysing specific policies targeting at asylum seekers and refugees.

As mentioned beforehand, asylum seekers and refugees lack certain aspects of human capital upon their arrival to perform well in the labour market. They are “one of the most vulnerable groups” (OECD 2016a, p. 5). Therefore, I argue that policies regarding labour market integration for refugees and asylum seekers resemble labour market policies targeting other vulnerable groups. Since one of the main goals of governments is to integrate them as soon as possible, *activation* is needed. The trend towards active labour market policies in OECD-countries suggests that countries already have established certain instruments and agencies to activate people. Such policy implementations followed certain conditions that made them necessary. Bonoli describes in his article (2010) how labour shortage, high unemployment rates or external shocks such as the financial crisis in 2009 paved the way for new policy ideas, such as active labour market policies as counterbalance to passive social assistance. These developments can be explained with John Kingdon’s theory of an open policy window caused by the awareness of a problem through a focusing event or the pressure in the political arena. In the past, such problems were the financial crisis or indicators such as a peak in unemployment - together with other conditions, e.g. changes in the political system. The refugee crisis may also have been such a focusing event that led to policy changes in labour

market policies, too.¹ The target group may have risen immensely and its vulnerability demands new policies. Martín (2017) sees in his article about labour market integration of refugees the importance for specific measures, not only general activation policies in the sense of *mainstreaming* (p.107). All in all, it seems interesting to analyse how countries have taken these policy suggestions into account and how their general labour market policies and welfare state structure is reflected in new policies. This paper looks at national active labour market policies² in four European countries and how the refugee crisis may have (had) an impact on them. The research question is the following: *To what extent do labour market policies of European countries respond to the refugee crisis and what other factors may have caused these changes?*

The answer to this question is relevant in various ways. Most academic studies on active labour market policies and welfare states have focused on the native population as target group and not on particularly vulnerable groups such as refugees. Other than labour immigrants, refugees will be given the right to stay in the country if they have work and can make a living independently or not. Therefore, this vulnerable group is an important issue for national governments. From another perspective, studies on labour market related integration measures for asylum seekers and refugees lack a comparative basis. As said before, most comparisons do not factor country-specific differences in general labour market policies that affect policies for refugees, too. This paper asks how a crisis such as the refugee crisis may affect regular labour market policies leading to a policy change with e.g. specific policies on refugees or an extension of active labour market policies. The societal aspect of this paper can be explained when returning to the opening statement from the OECD as well as the European Union's integration of immigrants. The relevance to integrate asylum seekers and refugees seems to be important to the GDP of a country, to disburden the welfare state from people on welfare that are available for the labour market but have not been activated yet. Even if this paper does not include evaluations of labour market policies, it can offer information for national governments on the base of different sets of active labour market policies. Additionally, with the help of John Kingdon's theory other factors that lead to specific

¹ A further elaboration on the refugee crisis and its character as a crisis will follow in the theoretical framework based on Kingdon's Multiple Streams Approach.

² Although exclusive language training can be regarded as part of active labour market measures, I decided against including them into the analysis. Employment-related language courses will be considered.

policies can be detected.

The following chapter will deal with the theoretical framework the paper is based on. Here, I will make use of two different theories. The first aims to explain and categorise different types of active labour market policies and under which conditions they occur. This and a typology of welfare regimes serve as frameworks for the country selection and comparison. The second theory explains the emergence of policy changes, such as *activation turns* in labour market policies by looking at three different streams that determine governmental and decision agenda setting. From the second theory, two overall hypotheses will be deduced, whereas the first will be operationalised in each country chapter according to the respective affectedness of the country by the crisis. The third chapter explains the methodology of the thesis, including explanations on why the selected countries were chosen and how the data was collected. The following four chapters can be regarded as country chapters. Firstly, they include background information on the country's history of active labour market policy implementation, but also on the way activation measures targeting at asylum migrants were designed and implemented before the crisis. The second subchapter deals with the impact of the crisis in the respective country. Here, the influx, its size and composition will be discussed. The recognition rate and the age of those being granted asylum is important for assumptions on labour market related policy changes. Considering these information on each of the four countries, one may assume to which direction the refugee crisis has impacted active labour market policies in the respective countries. Therefore, for each country, one hypothesis will be developed, serving as operationalisation of the first hypothesis developed in the theory. The second section will deal with the changes in labour market related policies that might have occurred after the crisis. In other words, the hypotheses deduced from the background information will be tested. The last subchapter aims to explain why the change has happened or why not – referring to Kingdon's *Multiple Streams Approach*. In the conclusion, the four countries will be compared and the two overall hypotheses deduced in the theoretical framework will be tested. Furthermore, limitations concerning the research for this paper will be discussed. Finally, a bow with regards to the introduction's content will be drawn and potential meanings for all, policy makers, the public, asylum migrants and others will be elaborated.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this paper contains two approaches. The first is a categorisation of four different ideal types of activation policies regarding labour market integration. With the help of the theory by Giuliano Bonoli (2010) and others, the countries being analysed were selected. A further elaboration on the case study choice will follow in chapter 3. Furthermore, the approach allows to identify and compare extensively and differentiated potential new policies that have evolved as a response to the high influx of immigrants during the refugee crisis in different European countries. This theory mentions several determinants for the occurrence of the different types of active labour market policies. These determinants can be regarded as an operationalisation of the second theory by John Kingdon which aims to explain how changes in policies develop and what conditions, being political, societal or other, enable such changes to arise.

2.1. Giuliano Bonoli: The political economy of active labour market policy

Giuliano Bonoli (2010) has developed a categorisation to classify different types of active labour market policies among OECD countries. His theory is based on a criticism on the widely-used dichotomist distinction between different forms of activation policies. One focuses on the preparation of individuals for the labour market by improving their skills and thus, their human capital whereas in the other type, negative stimulations, such as benefit reductions, should help to get people from social benefits to employment. Torfing (1999) describes the former as *offensive* workfare and the latter as *defensive* workfare. Taylor-Gobby (2004) terms these sorts of activation *negative* and *positive*. Regarding Esping-Andersen's *three worlds of welfare capitalism* (1990), Barbier and Ludwig-Mayerhofer (2004) distinguish *liberal* and *universalistic* activation styles. *Universalistic* does not only mean provision of social assistance to the whole population, but also a high standard of living for those who are assisted. Activation happens in a balanced negotiation "between the individual's and society's demands" (p. 427). Social investment in terms of training is the most applied instrument. On the other hand, liberal policies aim to encourage "people to be as active as possible across their life-course" (p. 427). Assistance is reflected in short information and job placement or short-term trainings. The goal is mostly to have people employed, but not on a certain standard.

As a response to these distinctions, Bonoli introduces four ideal types of active labour market policies that might belong to the beforehand described categories. Since the author explicitly declares his classifications as ideal types they do not exist in pure form, but rather as a mixture. The following ideal types of active labour market policies are:

- 1.) **Incentive reinforcement** that aims to intensify both, negative and positive work incentives for those on social assistance. Sequentially, Bonoli lists its tools being “Tax credits, in work benefits” (Bonoli, 2010, p. 11), illustrating positive work incentives, but also limitations on the duration of reciprocity, possible reductions and conditions of benefits and sanctions. The latter four function as negative incentives to stay on welfare and can occur if a recipient does not participate sufficiently. Bonoli argues that in most English-speaking countries, *incentive reinforcement* is used.
- 2.) **Employment assistance** fosters labour market integration by erasing barriers to the labour market. It mostly appears as job placement and subsidies, but also counselling and specific job search programmes (p. 11). This policy targets people who have very little experience in the labour market since they have never really participated in it or have been unemployed for a long period already. In combination with the former type, *employment assistance* is common in English speaking countries, but also in Continental and Nordic Europe.
- 3.) **Occupation** is an old practice, aiming to keep people on welfare engaged to impede possible reduction of their human capital during the time they are unemployed. The tool that is mostly applied here are “job creation schemes in the public sector” (p. 11) and training programmes that are not connected to employment. As mentioned before, this practice is old and according to Bonoli not used anymore. However, 20-30 years, middle-European countries made use of it.
- 4.) **Human capital investment** increases people’s chances of labour market entry by upskilling them. Basic education as well as vocational trainings are tools that are used in this type of action. As Bonoli describes it, with this approach people get a “second chance” (p. 12) if their former skills are not useful in the labour market anymore or if

they could not benefit from the regular education system. Nordic countries are the largest user of these practices.

To operationalise these categories, Bonoli proposes to look at the expenditures schemes of OECD countries on the sub-programmes. The OECD distinguishes between “Public employment service and administration, employment subsidies, job rotation schemes, start-up incentives, training and direct job creation” (p. 12). The author connects *employment assistance* with the former four categories, *occupation* with direct job creation and *human capital investment* with training. Herewith, one can analyse a country’s practices of active labour market policies over time. Furthermore, cross-country variations can be observed and compared.

Depending on different factors, these categories came to play in various countries during different times. Bonoli provides a set of determinants explaining different outcomes in countries. Firstly, he argues that *political* ideas of a government play a role in the decision of which practices are implemented and which are not. Regarding Esping-Andersen’s welfare regimes, active labour market policies are regarded as a typical social democratic instrument. This was approved by several studies analysing social democratic parties and their expenditure on active labour market policies. However, David Rueda (2007) found in his book *Social Democracy Inside Out* that social democratic are not always a defender of active labour market policies with regards to their voter groups. The group of so called insiders, meaning “manual workers, low to middle paid wage earners, public sector workers etc.” (p. 7) may oppose active labour market policies since they enable outsiders, such as unemployed people and marginalised people to enter the labour market more easily. For the cases of this thesis, immigrants may take the role as outsiders. This is due to two reasons. Firstly, insiders are protected enough against unemployment and might not understand why to finance such programmes. Secondly, with the help of those programmes, outsiders’ chances to enter the labour market and compete with insiders are raised. Since labour supply is high, wages might fall, too. Apparently, these consequences are not intended by social democratic parties. Scholars argue that in most Nordic countries, active labour market policies were developed in a “cross-class compromise”, in other words not only social democrats helped to implement them, but also by employers seeking for up-to-date skilled employees. For this thesis, other political forces may have an impact on the development and usage of different types of active

labour market policies. A further elaboration on these forces can be found in the second theory by John Kingdon under 'political stream'.

As a second determinant, Bonoli names *institutional* explanations. Especially welfare regimes and their practices regarding e.g. unemployed people are highly determined by their institutional evolutionary background. Regarding Germany, e.g. with the Bismarckian social insurance system may oppose active labour market policies to a higher extent than countries with other social insurance systems. Bonoli also argues that institutional changes may occur, too, which make active labour market policies easier to get implemented (p. 8). As examples of situations in which institutions may change, the author mentions the ageing population in Western countries. An institutional change might also have occurred in some countries due to pressure from immigrants arriving in European countries in the refugee crisis 2015. Since there is a common sense in social sciences that institutions usually follow a path-dependency, only situations that are perceived as problems that need to be changed can lead to institutional changes. What characteristic these problems need to comprise, will be discussed in the "problem stream" in the second theory by Kingdon.

As a last influencing factor, Bonoli names the "*diffusion of policy ideas*" (p. 9). Countries may model themselves on other countries that have already implemented new practices, such as active labour market policies. But not only countries serve as role model or stimulation, also international organisations such as the European Union and the OECD may influence countries. In relation to activation, the European Employment Strategy has promoted a policy re-orientation towards activation with several guidelines dealing mostly with incentive reinforcement and human capital investment (European Employment Strategy, 2015). Besides, academic experts may have an influence on the development of certain policy suggestions. Under which conditions, policy ideas can be implemented will be elaborated in the "policy stream" of John Kingdon's theory. The next section therefore deals with the policy process as a whole.

2.2. John Kingdon: Agendas, alternatives, and public policies

In his book "Agendas, alternatives, and public policies" (2014), John Kingdon elaborates under which conditions policy changes occur by using the *Multiple Streams Approach*. Here, the three streams, *problem stream*, *policy stream* and *political stream*, come together in a policy window and clear the way for policy advocates to either promote their policy proposals or to

raise awareness on certain problems (p. 165). In the following section, the three streams will be discussed in greater detail to explain the emergence and opening of a policy window including potential policy changes.

2.2.1. The Problem Stream

One precondition of policy change is that the attention is on a *problem* and the public/government sees the urgency to solve it. Kingdon describes how conditions become *problems* when the public realises they need to be changed. For this purpose, certain characteristics for problem definition are necessary. When certain conditions and ideas of a state do not fit, one could argue there is a problem in terms of values. Secondly, when comparing with other governments that have achieved something, one might observe a necessity to change something about it. Finally, the category of the problem itself is determining whether it will be on the agenda or not. Especially, when new categories with new definitions etc. emerge, a condition will be defined as a problem.

Problem awareness can have various mechanisms: *indicators*, *focusing events* and *feedback*. The former mostly refers to facts and figures compiled in studies in routine monitoring, such as costs of certain programmes or rates of unemployed people, federal expenditures etc. Furthermore, such indicators might also be compiled in studies after a certain event has happened. However, Kingdon emphasises the fact that those indicators do not necessarily show the existence of a problem, but rather leave further space for interpretation: “Policy makers consider a change in an indicator to be a change in the state of a system: this they define as a problem.” (p. 92). To raise awareness on a problem, the best practice is to show numbers illustrating the problem; in other words, to make the problem *countable*. However, indicators also leave space for interpretation. Hard facts might represent a certain issue, but after a closer look, the numbers are not “statements of conditions” (p. 94) anymore, but “statements of policy problems” (p. 94).

Focusing events, *crises* and *symbols* are the second mechanism where attention to problems raises. According to Kingdon, indicators are not enough, they “need a little push to get the attention” (p. 94). This can occur when crises or disasters happen. In the case of the *refugee crisis* it becomes obvious that this incidence may have caused a policy change. Only by the name, one can argue that this migration influx in 2015 was a focusing event. But, let us

turn back to the characteristics of *focusing events*. The importance of the emergence of crisis is illustrated by one of Kingdon's interviewee, saying:

"An issue becomes a burning issue when it reaches crisis proportions. Until there's a crisis, it's just one of many issues. Governmental policy always has been, and always will be, a function of crisis." (p. 95).

Kingdon names variations of how *focusing events* can occur. Firstly, the subject raises awareness among policy makers because they connect it with personal experiences. An example given by Kingdon are diseases that have arisen in the policy maker's family and he therefore aims to find a medical programme to fight it. Secondly, a more important variation of a *focusing events* are powerful symbols representing political events or problems or policy suggestions. Symbols can intensify the picture of an already existing problem and can summarise the whole issue very briefly, but also extensively. This only works well if the people have already been aware of the problem before, if there has been a certain warning concerning the problem and if the problem is observed in relation to a prior crisis: "Awareness sometimes comes only with a second crisis, [...] because the second cannot be dismissed as an isolated fluke, as the first could." (p. 98).

As a third mechanism, *feedback* in terms of monitoring and evaluations of existing programmes can lead to more awareness of a problem. Especially, bureaucrats and civil servants may give feedback and complain about the incapability of certain measures. The content of such may be different: (1) legislation is not synchronised with the implementation, (2) defined goals are not reached, (3) costs of the programme are too high and/or (4) unpredicted consequences with great impact appeared.

Kingdon mentions the role of *budget* as a special problem. Financial considerations can serve as promoter or as constraints of policy ideas. To deal with the latter, policy makers may have to regulate the costs, are sure that the programme itself is economical or less costly initiatives are pushed. All in all, the problem of budget is highly connected with the economic conditions in the country. For labour market policies, this is one of the most important determinants.

In the case of the *refugee crisis*, several characteristics apply. It can firstly be considered as a focusing event with highly *symbolic* value. The pictures of arriving migrants at the Greek border or at German train stations but also of waiting migrants in the Hungarian train station and the dead body of the Kurdish boy at the Turkish coast intensified the

assumption of European politicians and people in general that a migration crisis is going on. In that sense crisis is linked to human rights and the saving of people fleeing war or dying on a boat. On the other hand, the *refugee crisis* is considered as a crisis for European politics not being able to manage it. This emerged because of *feedback*. Legislation in terms of the Dublin III agreement were not synchronised with the way countries dealt with migrants and unpredicted consequences appeared, such as shortages in food and accommodation provision for asylum seekers. Even some might argue that the costs for hosting migrants were too high, but this was not part of the political debate. Overall, it becomes clear that the *refugee crisis* is not only a focusing event due its name, but also due to its symbolic connotation and its negative feedback. Nevertheless, European countries were affected differently by the refugee crisis which may lead to different policy processes and outcomes concerning labour market. Thus, the first hypothesis of this paper will be:

H1: Countries being affected more by the refugee crisis in 2015 meet a more powerful focusing event. Thus, a policy change in labour market policies is more likely to happen.

In the following country chapters, this hypothesis will be operationalised by considering the background information on the impact of the refugee crisis in the several countries.

2.2.2. The Policy Stream

For a policy change, not only a problem must be recognised, but also ideas that may solve it. Kingdon describes the *policy stream* the primeval soup with ideas and problem solutions from policy communities including researchers, policy makers, evaluation offices etc. Such as the evolutionary process, only ideas that fulfill certain requirements survive and may be used in the end. The author explicitly indicates that the selection does not follow a rational decision-making. Fragmentation of the beforehand mentioned policy communities may complicate this process and can result in instability of the whole policy system. However, it can also promote common ways of thinking among certain groups in the policy communities. The following criteria are considered when testing whether a policy idea is survivable.

The first is *technical feasibility*. It is achieved when something is 'worked out' or 'ready to go' for the actual implementation. However, not all consequences are anticipated when examining technical feasibility.

Ideas also need to be in line with the *values* of the involved experts. In other words, some ideas may not survive since they do not stand for mainstream thinking, the “distinctive ideology or political culture” (p. 133). In relation to the policy area of labour market policies different orientations concerning economy and labour market might lead to different selection of policy ideas. Not only public attitudes towards certain issues are important in this context. Furthermore, the existence of *equity and efficiency* is required. If a certain idea does not seem to be fair for all population groups, it cannot be implemented. Considering expenditure and benefits, some ideas may fall out due to their lack of efficiency. Again, the examined domain of labour market can be linked with the criterion. Cost-effectiveness or tradeoffs are surely considered when thinking of a new programme.

The third requirement for a successful policy idea is the *anticipation of future constraints*. These can contain budget constraints and/or public acquiescence.

If an idea may not find enough proponents, there is at least the possibility that specialist agree on a “narrow set of alternatives” (p. 140) which can lead to realisation.

2.2.3. The Political Stream

The last stream in the *Multiple Streams Approach* is the *political stream* containing the public mood, election results, campaigns and composition and changes in the parliament as well as the government. The author explicitly refers to his narrow definition of *political* factors being “electoral, partisan, or pressure group factors” (p. 145).

The *public mood* is one of features in the political stream. High numbers of a country’s residents share common opinion or values impacting agendas and outcomes. These opinion may change, popular expressions/trends are “a “swing to the right”” or “antigovernmental mood”” (p. 146). Only if a policy idea is in line with the public mood, it can grow. Policy makers are able to anticipate changes in the public mood and develop their agenda according to that. Tracking the national mood can work in two different ways. Politicians either get feedback on their legislations directly, via mails, meetings, delegations or non-elected participants may get feedback from politicians.

The *organisation of political forces* is the second feature of the political stream involving interest groups, political elites and forms of mobilisation. If important actors share the same policy direction, it is more likely that politicians follow. In our case, social partners and especially employers may have a leading role. If political groups are in a conflict about

policy solutions, politicians rather observe a balance and future conflicts when following one group. Sometimes, organised groups themselves change, too.

The *government* plays a crucial in the political stream, too. When key personnel changes, priorities and agenda may shift as well. Since administration is “at the very top of the list of actors in the policy-making arena” (p. 154), this has a huge impact. However, Kingdon indicates that a change has rather structural than personal reasons. Additionally, changes in jurisdiction may lead to policy changes. Constitutions, regulations, charters and conventions determine whether a policy is legally enforceable. In this regard, Kingdon speaks about “battles over turf” (p. 155).

The political stream demands consensus building, mostly in terms of bargaining. Political coalitions are built not only because of shared opinion, but because of the urgency to be part of a coalition. Policy ideas are already developed, coalitions are needed to win the game. If a problem allows or even demands, enemies of ideas might present their ideas, too to prevent certain outcomes.

2.2.4. The Policy Window

The policy window, also known as the *window of opportunity*, is the short time span where advocates of ideas can push them forward. In critical times, the problem, policy and political stream come together. The window opens because of a shift in the *political stream* or because a certain *problem* gets the attention from authorities. Depending on the two scenarios, the window is either a *political window* or a *problem window*. The former applies in situations where policy makers search in the policy stream for policy alternatives to strengthen their political goals whereas in the latter policy makers search for policy alternatives if they feel “convinced [that] a problem is pressing.” (p. 174). This can occur in combination with a change in the political arena, such as an administration change. The window may close due to various reasons: (1) decisions and enactments have been made to solve it; (2) advocates fail to come to the point; (3) the problem that opened the window disappears; (4) the personnel changes again and (5) there are no alternatives. Besides, the urgency to solve the problem decreases with the time the problem persists. There two scenarios of how problems find their solution or the other way around. In the problem-solving model, people recognise a problem and therefore search for a solution. The other scenario is that solutions are available already and search for a fitting problem. Kingdon terms the latter *coupling*. If one of the three streams is

missing, the probability of the subject to get on the decision agenda is low. Whenever the window of opportunity is open, policy entrepreneurs need to be quick in coupling the three streams. With the help of their expertise, connections and persistency, policy entrepreneurs can be successful. Sometimes windows are predictable, e.g. those related to cycles such as the budget cycles or regular reports. However, there are also those unpredictable.

As a last scenario, the author discusses spill-overs from one open window to another. This can happen as continuation of a principle established in the first window or as “a similar change in an area that is like the first in some way” (p. 192.). The first here was successful and there predicts the probability for the second, too. Following Kingdon, a recognised problem is not enough to open a window making a policy change possible. It needs to couple with the other two streams. Therefore, the second hypothesis will be:

H2: Only in countries where the political and the policy stream couple with the problem stream and a policy window opens, a policy change can occur.

2.3. The relation between Bonoli and Kingdon

With the help of the first theory one is able to detect changes and how they can be categorised into different types of active labour market policies. As Bonoli argues, these different types of activation measures occur in different times and in different spaces. Here, Kingdon’s theory comes into play. By working through all different streams and their power, one can identify the reasons behind the change. In the analysis, I will proceed in the following manner: Firstly, policy changes especially regarding refugees and asylum seekers and their labour market integration will be traced and then classified into Bonoli’s typology. Either if there has been a policy change or not, the policy process right before the implementation will be elaborated by making use of the Multiple Streams Approach.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research question and definitions

By considering multiple academic disciplines this paper aims to answer the question *to what extent labour market policies of European countries respond to the refugee crisis and what other factors may have caused these changes?*

The research the paper is based on is entirely qualitative. I will make use of literature collected during a desk research but also of statements and information given by experts during specifically conducted interviews and qualitative surveys as part of a research project for the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. Further explanation will follow in section 3.3.

Before giving a further insight into the methodology that I used here, it is necessary to give some extensive definitions of often used and important terms.

The independent variable in my conceptual model is the **refugee crisis**. According to the European Commission the *refugee crisis* is characterised by the high unpredicted influx – over one million - of migrants entering Europe for the sake of seeking asylum. This all started in the year of 2015 and is still not finished. Due to unpredictability and the high numbers, many European countries were not able to grant complete provision in terms of housing, food and medical treatments. Especially countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, such as Greece were struggling with the big number of migrants. To stem the influx, the European Union has developed several agreements with non-European countries adjoining the Mediterranean Sea. Furthermore, the EU Civil Protection Mechanism was established that intends to deliver material to EU-countries suffering from high influxes. (European Commission, 19-06-2016). Jeanne Park (2015) describes in her article how the crisis was the “greatest challenge since the debt crisis” for European governments. The most affected countries in Europe were Germany, Hungary, Sweden and Austria. Among them were struggling with capacity shortages but also with rising displeasure across their populations. Beside agreements with non-European adjoining countries, several countries have closed their borders for migrants or installed border controls. This measure is unique undermining the Schengen agreement and the European freedom of movement. Besides, the Dublin III agreement regulating the responsibility for asylum seekers was partly disregarded by countries. This led to a European crisis in which some countries adhered to the Dublin III agreement and others to the solidarity and divided responsibility. Most migrants come from the Middle East, with Syria as the origin countries in most cases, but also people from Asia (Afghanistan) and Africa (Eritrea). Another distinct character was the dangerous border-crossing across the Mediterranean Sea that the International Organisation for Migration calls “the world’s most dangerous border crossing”

(Park, 23-09-2015). European news coverage dealt with the topic by showing migrants arriving in small boats at Greek border or at train stations in continental Europe. News coverage reached its peak with the picture of the Kurdish boy Alan whose dead body was washed up at the Turkish coast.

Another important distinction will be made between **refugees** and **asylum seekers**. The former relates to people who have sought asylum in a country and received a positive decision in terms of asylum according to the Geneva Refugee Convention or of subsidiary protection. Asylum seekers are migrants that entered a country for the sake of asylum. They already submitted an asylum application but have not yet received a response. I distinguish these two types because most of the countries have different approaches and policies for the two types. I would argue that labour market integration usually starts with a positive asylum decision, thus my focus will be on refugees. Whenever I speak of “asylum migrants” or “humanitarian migrants”, I will refer to both, refugees and asylum seekers. Additionally, I will exclude asylum seekers from my analysis that received a negative asylum response but still live in a host country. Since I argue that the rationale for activation measures is integration and most countries do not aim to integrate rejected asylum seekers, the “activation supply” for this target group may be scarce anyway.

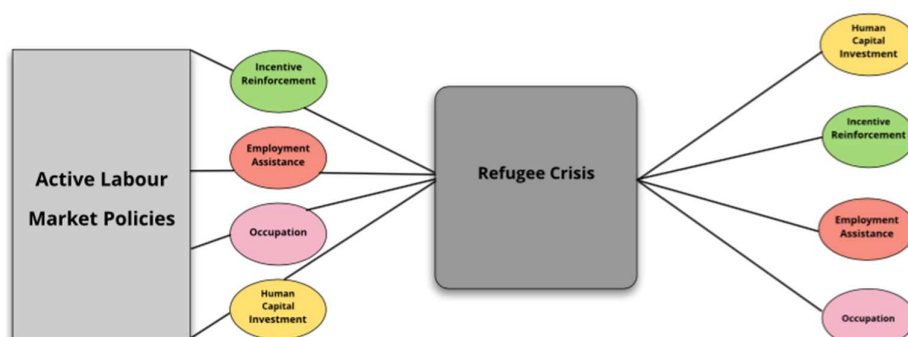
For the term **activation**, I will make use of the OECD’s definition on active labour market policies intending

“to bring more people into the effective labour force, to counteract the potentially negative effects of unemployment and related benefits on work incentives by enforcing their conditionality on active job search and participation in measures to improve employability, and to manage employment services and other labour market measures so that they effectively promote and assist the return to work” (OECD, 2013, p. 132).

3.2. Conceptual model

Based on a preliminary literature review, I developed the conceptual model underneath. It includes the independent variable “refugee crisis” as well as the dependent variables “incentive reinforcement”, “employment assistance”, “occupation” and “human capital

investment” as types of active labour market policies. Each dependent variable has 3-7 values that also serve as codes³.



The diagram shows the four dependent variables on the left side. They represent labour market policies in the four countries before the refugee crisis has emerged. For the sake of convenience, I did not distinguish explicitly between universal labour market policies and policies specifically targeting at refugees and asylum seekers. As we have learnt from Kingdon, during a focusing event - such as the refugee crisis – the policy window may open and due to a coupling of the three streams a policy change can evolve. Regarding the refugee crisis as focusing event, I will use it like glasses when analysing active labour market policies. In other words, I will examine how active labour market policies are ordered after the crisis, if they have changed and into which direction. This also includes a distinction between generic and specific policies targeting at refugees and asylum seekers. I am aware that there may be other omitted variables that intervene or moderate. Due to time and space limits, they could not be analysed in this paper. I will come back to that in the conclusion.

3.3. Social Affairs Research Project

As mentioned beforehand, gathering the data during the desk research, the surveys and the interviews were all part of a research project on behalf of the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. The focus of the comparative study was refugee and asylum seeker integration across different domains in 10 European countries, namely Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom since 2015. Besides, promising strategies as well as major changes on the local or national

³ You can find the list of values in the appendix under “coding scheme” for “active labour market policies.

level were also part of the analysis. Five countries were chosen for an in-depth-analysis in which two dissimilar local administrations in the respective countries are compared. The project was executed by five master students, under the guidance of dr. Peter Scholten. Additionally, exclusive data from the IMISCOE network was accessible. The four countries that will be examined in this master thesis also served as case studies in the project; three of them even in the in-depth analysis. Therefore, data from the project can be easily used here. This is also because one analysed domain was labour market integration including labour market related measures. As said before, the project only examines policies after the refugee crisis has been taken place. Thus, the data can be used for the analysis part of this paper, but not as background information on the specific countries.

3.4. Literature

One part of the analysis was the conduction of desk research. Hereby, reports from different organisations were analysed. They included studies by the OECD, by the European Commission but also by European Migration Network and other institutions of the European Union. As a second step, national legislations, white papers and policy reports were consulted to test and expand findings from the international sources. Whenever specific local initiatives or policies were detected, data was also gathered from primary sources, such as webpages or information booklets. As the time frame is very short, most data were rather descriptive than evaluative. Thus, interviews and surveys responded by academic experts as well as policy makers of the respective countries were adducted, too.

3.5. Focus group

Most of the data that was gathered in the desk research was descriptive. Therefore, the addition of information using interviews and surveys should serve as in-depth source. Especially in the interviews, questions explicitly related to the thesis could be asked and discussed. These questions can be found in the appendix.

Per country one academic expert and one, in some cases, two policy makers were interviewed. Both were selected according to their country of residence and expertise in the field of immigrant integration. The first round included the selection of academic experts because we hoped the scholar to recommend a fitting policy maker. The response rate was in some cases very low which made it necessary for us to widen the selection criteria. Beginning

with political scientists and sociologists being experts for immigrant integration, we ended up in considering scholars from other academic disciplines, such as urban studies.

Our goal was to find policy makers from the national level as this was our main level of analysis. Since the response rate was also quite low, we approached people being active on the local level, too. Due to a list by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment including policy makers in the examined countries being involved in immigrant integration, we could find policy makers as well.

We decided to include both, academic experts and policy makers due to many reasons. Policy makers make policy, in other words they implement regulations. Therefore, they have the best insight into practices and measures. Furthermore, they may have background information on the policies, too. However, due to their public employment they might not be able to assess the policies normatively. Hence, academic experts can give further evaluations on practiced policies. Additionally, they sometimes have broader knowledge on former policies and can link policies with theories.

Additionally, I interviewed experts during the IMISCOE conference independently from the Social Affairs Research project. I did so since I intended to get as specific information as possible on labour market related topics and some of the people that were interviewed for the research project were experts in the field of overall immigrant integration.

3.6. Interview

The questions can be found in the appendix. The interview questions were used as a second source to detect policy changes and their causes beside literature. This was necessary since most literature about recent policy changes rather focuses descriptively on how they changed but not why. The questions vary since for some countries I have already found important information in the desk research, whereas for others I could only rely on the input of the interviewed experts. With the knowledge of experts from the field, the policy makers, as well as experts knowing theoretical background information, I intended to get as much information as possible on the four countries. From each country, 1-5 experts were interviewed. In the analysis, I will refer to them as *expert x from country y*.

The interview analysis resembles a *directed content analysis* (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Hereby, I intend to either verify or extend Bonoli's categorisation of four types of active labour market policies and find forces that made a policy change possible. By identification, categorisation and coding, patterns in the data can be detected (Patton, 2002, p. 381) and the

analysis can follow an organised model. For Miles and Hubermann (1994), codes are “tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during the study.” (p. 56). I will create two types of codes since this asserts that all possible occurrences and phenomena are measured. Furthermore, it limits the bias that might occur when only codes deriving from a theory are used. One interview represents one coding unit.

My start-list contains pre-set/a priori codes that correspond to the values of the dependent variables derived from Bonoli’s theory (2010, p. 11) as well as from preliminary data collection (Eurofound, 2016, p. 27 and OECD, 2016). For the analysis of the policy process, I developed stream specific codes, too. Besides, I also include emergent/grounded codes. These are codes that come up during the reading and analysis of data collection. They are not represented by a priori codes (Gibbs & Taylor, 2005). If such codes are found, Bonoli’s typology as well as the code-set for the policy process may be extended. They are most likely to appear in open questions. Additionally, I intend to test the consistency of my codes by doing a “constant comparison” (Gibbs & Taylor, 2005). Here, I compare the passage that I coded with other passages having the same code. Thus, false coding or new dimensions of codes are detected.

3.7. Case study

The thesis resembles a most dissimilar case study. The easiest approach to determine the country selection would have been to choose them according to their active labour market approach. In other words, finding representative countries for each type of active labour market policy: *employment assistance*, *incentive reinforcement*, *occupation* and *human capital investment*. Bonoli mentions explicitly in his categorisation that these types are ideal types and usually do not “exist in a pure form in the real world” (Bonoli, 2010, p. 10). Therefore, other determinants need to be consulted.

The Danish political scientist, Gosta Esping-Andersen, has developed a typology of different welfare states (1990). According to how provision and entitlement of welfare benefits are organised, he distinguishes between three types. The *liberal* welfare state only caters low-income people with a means-tested assistance. Being employed is a key value in such a society; entitlement regulations are very strict. Furthermore, the state shifts some of its responsibility to private actors. The second welfare regime is termed *conservative*. Benefit entitlements are directly linked to contribution and the profession. The state acts as a

“provider of welfare” (p. 112) when the market is not able to do it. The last welfare regime is the *social democratic* with universalist entitlement rules and the promotion of equality by the state. Regarding this paper, this theory may not be completely applicable as it mostly looks at entitlement and provision regulations of social benefits and not at other labour market instruments. However, it already gives a hint to a categorisation of countries concerning their economy and labour market policies. In their evaluation of active labour market policies in OECD countries, Card, Kluge and Weber (2010) divide countries into three country groups that can be linked to Esping-Andersen’s welfare regime classification. The first country group representing the *conservative* welfare regime consists of Austria, Germany and Switzerland. The “Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden)” (p. 458) typify the *social democratic* regime, whereas Anglo countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States or Australia follow the *liberal* welfare regime approach. Along this distinction, the authors test the countries’ active labour market policies in terms of content, costs and target groups. Jochen Clasen (2000) uses a similar distinction pattern in his comparative study on about reforms of unemployment compensation in Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom. The Danish solidaristic welfare state is considered as the “most generous” (p. 93), whereas the UK as “the least generous within the EU” (p. 93) being residual. Germany is “somewhere in between” (p. 93), characterised as compartmentalised. Coming back to the specific forms of active labour market policies, Bonoli (2013) follows the other two articles by differentiating between highly developed systems of active labour market policies in the Nordic countries, much less developed in continental European countries and countries such as the UK that just have introduced active labour market policies, but “to a broader extent than most other Western European countries” (p. 2). A study by the OECD on policies improving employment opportunities (2006) also found differences in the spending on active labour market policies. The highest expenditures for active labour market policies can be found in Scandinavian countries and the lowest in non-European and Southern European countries (p. 71).

Considering all these findings, one can assume that the most comprehensible country selection would be to pick from each country group one country as a representative. Thus, I chose Denmark for the Nordic countries with a *social democratic* welfare regime, Germany for

the continental-European countries following the *conservative* welfare regime type and the United Kingdom⁴ for Anglo countries with a *liberal* approach concerning economy.

According to Esping-Andersen (1990), Italy can be categorised as a conservative welfare regime just as Germany (p. 108). Other scholars have criticised this classification and argue that there should be a fourth type of welfare regime for *Southern* European countries. Ferrera (1996) sees differences to other conservative regimes because of fragmentation in the provision, meaning e.g. high pensions, but no full protection macro-economically. Furthermore, due to the introduction of universalistic National Health Services a “departure from corporatist traditions” (p. 17). A greater mixture of state and family responsibility and the existence of clientelism make Italy also differ from *conservative* welfare regimes. The country is not explicitly mentioned as distinct country in the abovementioned studies on active labour market policies. However, I chose to include it as a case study, too. Its structural weaknesses by European comparison in terms of economy as well as its geographical position during the refugee crisis make it an interesting country to be analysed.

Further information on the countries’ active labour market profile as well as the impact of the refugee crisis 2015 on them will be discussed in the following chapters.

4. Denmark

4.1. Active labour market policies before the refugee crisis

Denmark belongs to the Scandinavian countries with – according to Esping-Andersen (1990) - social democratic welfare state regimes. This also affects the development of active labour market policies. Bonoli (2013) describes them in Denmark as “highly developed systems” (p. 3). Denmark’s public social spending amounting to 27% of the GDP is higher than the OECD average of 21% (OECD, 2016b). The public expenditure especially on active labour market policies rose between the years 2007 and 2012 from 1.29% of the GDP to 2.10% (Martin, 2015, p. 4). However, this activation turn in Denmark is rather recent, being only 0.4% of the GDP in 1980 (Bonoli, 2013, p. 11). Just as Sweden, Denmark is a representative of cooperative industrial relations where employers and workers act jointly due to several agreements. After post-war economic growth, Denmark suffered from high unemployment rates. The

⁴ For the sake of convenience as well as due to time and space limitations in this research project, the focus will be on England.

compensation system was generous, but employment protection liberal. With this regard, it is often referred to Denmark as an example of *flexicurity*, combining security in terms of a generous benefit system with flexibility meaning liberal employment protection (OECD, 2006, p. 98). This has also implications on the job flexibility of employees which is quite high in Denmark, too. With the rise of trade unions, employment protection got on the agenda but did not experience major changes. The first time, instruments like active labour market policies were installed in 1970s with “job search, training, and support” (Bonoli, 2013, p. 15), but only for people interested in self-employment. Smaller changes emerged in terms of more focus on education for welfare recipients. Several other measures led to a “continental drift” (p. 15) in Denmark. Welfare recipients whose entitlement to welfare was exhausted could get a job in the public sector until they have ‘charged’ their contribution period long enough to obtain new benefits. This is an explicitly hint to *occupation*, one of Bonoli’s active labour market policy types. In the 1990s, unemployment provision was newly regulated. Passive benefits were available for 4 years, followed by a period of 3 years of active benefits. These include i.a. individual action plans. The right to benefits were expired after 7 years, after a new decision already after 4 years. In the end of the 1990s, another activation turn emerged, especially for the Danish youth – with a stronger emphasis on “work incentives and investment in human capital” (p. 16). People younger than 25 were entitled to benefits for not more than 6 months and obliged to do trainings for 18 months. The same activation turn also happened in the provision of social assistance. Here, Denmark made use of *employment assistance* by subsidising wages. Systematic activation, meaning receiving a job offer after a certain amount of time, is used for all (Bonoli, 2013, p. 12). According to a comparative study by the OECD (2006) the increase of compulsory activation measures were executed through “increased job monitoring” and “individual action plans/profiling” (p. 70). The profiling starts already one month after the application for benefits through an interview (OECD, 2007, p. 212). Besides, meeting with an Employment Agency staff is repeated every three months where recipients must prove their job search (p. 217). Due to a reduction of unemployment benefits, one could also argue that Denmark applies *incentive reinforcement*. According to the OECD (2007), Denmark spent only 0.05% of its GDP on placement and related services (p. 233). This is in comparison to other OECD countries not a lot. Thus, one could argue that *employment assistance* does not rate highly in the Danish labour market policies.

There are **specific activation measures for refugees** in Denmark. The positive asylum decision serves as explicit boundary between those who are entitled to such measures and those who are not. Denmark has a 3-year long integration programme for refugees. This includes Danish language courses, but also “education aimed at maintaining and expanding the general and professional qualifications” (Wolffberg, 2016, p. 41), voluntary work and unpaid internships. These *trainings* explicitly target at the asylum seekers’ and refugees’ *human capital* that should be expanded or at least not reduced during their first time in Denmark. Since internships are unpaid, one could not argue that this is an incentive reinforcement since if there is no salary paid, there is no incentive to start it neither. Nevertheless, there is a hint to *incentive reinforcement*, too, but not in relation to employment but in to participation with the programme. In the integration contract all duties of the refugee are listed. This can be regarded as a conditionality for receiving benefits. After the integration programme is finished, the responsibility for further integration measures shifts from the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing to the Ministry of Employment.

4.2. Impact of the refugee crisis

Denmark was one of the key destination countries in the European refugee crisis starting in 2015 (Eurofound, 2016, p. 8). Comparing to the year before, the absolute numbers of asylum seekers increased by 43%, meaning 14.680 people in 2014 and 20.935 in 2015 (p. 9). Compared to other European countries such as Germany, Sweden, Finland or Austria this is – however – not a lot. According to Statista (2017), 1.061 asylum seekers per one million natives arrived in Denmark in 2015, this means a share of 0.1% in the whole population. Due to a more restrictive asylum law as well as the closure of the so called Balkan route in the beginning of 2016, the numbers for 2016 decreased again to 6.235 (Bendixen, 20.06.2017). Most asylum seekers came from Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, Eritrea and Iraq. Syrians and Eritreans are more likely to be granted asylum than applicants from Afghanistan. According to official numbers by the Danish government, 92% of all applications received a positive decision (Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing, 2016, p. 14). In 2016, 41% of all applicants “were children under 18 years” (Bendixen, 20-06-2017), 25% of all applicants are unaccompanied minors. One could argue here that especially education and training is affected by the newcomers. Additionally, one could assume that welfare recipients that are compatible for active labour market policies do not represent a very high number as almost one half of all applicants are children who are not able to participate in labour market related programmes

yet. Considering all the information on the impact of the refugee crisis, one may operationalise the first hypothesis the following way for Denmark.

H1.1.: *Due to a relatively small influx of asylum seekers and refugees and the high number of children immigrating, no change in active labour market policies can be observed.*

4.3. Active labour market policies towards asylum migrants - after the refugee crisis

In January 2016, the Danish government expanded the in September 2015 created “Asylum Package” containing policies targeting at refugees. By reducing benefits that refugees receive, the state aimed to *reinforce incentives* for them to search for a job (Kaasgaard, 2015). On the other hand, this policy aimed to make Denmark more unattractive for asylum seekers and thus, to reduce their immigration.

In February 2016, the “Three-party” negotiations between the trade unions, the government and the employers’ associations started. Their main goal was to facilitate labour market entrance and independent living of refugees. This goal replaced a former one that emphasised the importance to learn Danish and the norms and values (Kvist, 2016, p. 2). The negotiations led to a tripartite agreement being regarded as a “fundamental shift in Danish integration efforts” (Larsen in Christian W, 18-03-2016) by the Danish Minister for Employment. With the help of the measures, “every second refugee and reunified relative [should be] place[d] in a job.” (Danish Tripartite Negotiations, 2016, p. 2). Beside policies tackling challenges regarding unverifiable qualifications or the mismatch of job and housing opportunities, other measures were introduced to activate refugees. With one-to-one assistance, lingual barriers should be overcome since they reduced job opportunities before. They also emphasise the success of “company training and subsidised jobs” (p. 4). Therefore, local authorities were now forced to provide company orientated trainings for refugees even if they are still in the normal Danish courses. Participants on the other hand are obliged to attend trainings, otherwise financial sanctions occur. Languages courses should have a greater focus on employment related vocabulary and a “job-targeted competence clarification tool” (p. 9) should be established. The previously mentioned measures are described in a rather vague way and do not entail explicit instruments, however.

One measure that is explicit and was also developed during the three-party negotiations is the *integrative basic training (IGU)* being regarded as a “stepping stone to the regular labour market” (p. 15). It targets at recognised refugees between the age of 18 and 40

years and can take up to two years. A training programme including classroom education, language courses and labour market training will be developed for each participant and provided by social partners. In a best-case-scenario, the training can be continued in form of a general vocational training. The participants receive a benefit like the benefit they get during the integration programme. As the programme already indicates, the measure intends to prepare refugees for the Danish labour market by training them. *Human capital investment* is therefore the applied type of active labour market policy.

Additionally, a *bonus scheme* for employers who hire refugees was established. Here, 6 or 12 months of employment consisting of a minimum weekly working time of 19 hours are disbursed. The scheme should also finance the integrative basic training (p. 12). Here, one could argue that the Danish government aims to indirectly erase obstacles for refugees to enter the labour market. The obstacle here could be the unwillingness of employers to hire refugees since it is related to a certain risk. Refugees' skills may not fit 100% to the firms' needs, language problems may occur sometimes. Bonus schemes act as incentives for employers to hire migrants anyhow. Thus, they can be a sort of *employment assistance* for refugees.

Finally, the Danish government tried to introduce *phased-in wages* which parallel salaries paid for refugees "well below the sectoral minimum wage" (Fric & Aumayr-Pintar, 07-01-2016). Two trade unions were against this proposal as they predicted the risk for refugees to stay poor. Furthermore, a similar measure is already executed in the so-called *staircase model*. One step here is that refugees perform in firms without any costs for the employer. This is continued as full employment but with wage subsidy. As this is more attractive to employers than the above mentioned phased-in wages, the government's proposal did not find enough proponents to get it passed. A more elaborated analysis of the agenda setting process will be executed in the next section.

4.4. What made Denmark implement ad-hoc temporary specific measures?

We have seen that Denmark did implement some ad-hoc specific measures to facilitate labour market access of refugees and asylum seekers for a limited time frame. Other than generic active labour market policies they did not only focus on *incentive reinforcement* and *human capital investment*, but also on *employment assistance*. As described, they were accompanied by a lot of political bargaining what mostly becomes clear in the last example of phased-in wages that – in the end – were not executed. According to the literature and the experts I

have talked to, the biggest and most explicit change was the establishment of the IGU and bonus schemes. Thus, the following analysis will focus on the emergence of this instrument – regarding Kingdon’s Multiple Streams Analysis.

Starting with the **problem stream**, the size and composition of the refugee influx may have an impact on the way a political issue related to refugees is perceived as a problem in Denmark. I have hypothesised that the relatively young and small influx does not lead to a policy change. Nevertheless, the crisis itself was perceived as a problem. This becomes visible in policies that were installed to restrict further refugee immigration in 2015. Identity controls at the border with Germany, the power of the Danish police “to confiscate valuables from new arrivals to offset the cost of settling them” (Zucchini, 05-09-2016) and cutback in benefits have been established to mark Denmark as unattractive as possible for asylum seekers. Besides, they posted advertisements in Arabic newspapers clarifying how hard life can be for refugees in Denmark. This was mostly about immigration; the debate was about immigrants coming in and not about immigrants being already in Denmark. For the latter, public debate and herewith the problem awareness mostly circulates around socio-cultural differences and integration (Witte, 11-04-2016). Anyhow, labour market related integration comes into play when thinking of the budget. As we have seen in the section on the Danish labour market policies, Denmark belongs to the generous social democratic welfare regimes that provide welfare services universally. The Danish welfare states relies immensely on people contributing to it and they can only do so if they are in work. With this regard, an author for OECD insights (03-05-2016) speaks of a ““ dual loss”” when hosting refugees, no incomes for the state, but costs. With this regard, immigrants were not only related to “immigration control regimes but also to social policy” (Brochmann & Hagelund, 2011, p. 13). Already in the 1990s, the problem of “poor work incentives” (p. 18) for migrants and generous social assistance was discussed in the media as well as in academia. These previous discussions may have worked as a feedback. Being aware of former problems, policy makers were already aware of labour market related challenges for the newcomers and thought of potential solutions. The young age of most of the asylum seekers did not change these assumptions. Not only the faster you work, the better for the welfare system, but also the more people start to work. Thus, policy changes may have been necessary even if almost half of the newcomers were children.

The evaluation of previous refugee immigrants and their weak labour market performance leads us to the **policy stream**. When looking at the IGU schemes, one can find similarities to an older measure that used for highly skilled refugees. In 1996 and 1997, the Danish government installed the so-called *icebreaker agreement* where almost 250 employees are subsidised by the state for up to half a year when hiring a highly skilled refugee or immigrant (Wrench, 1997, p. 21). However, academic evidence on the success of this programme is rather rare, according to the Danish interviewee (expert 1 from Denmark). The reason why one may reduce the implementation of bonus and IGU schemes to the previous icebreaker agreement without having evidence on its success is its technical feasibility. Kingdon considers a programme technically feasible if it is 'worked out' or 'ready to go' but without anticipation of all consequences. With the icebreaker agreement Denmark had a type of ready-made instrument that may only need to have some adaptations according to the recent participants. Additionally, the two schemes also matched the mainstream thinking regarding labour market participation of refugees. The easier and faster they enter the labour market, the faster they are able to contribute to the Danish welfare state through taxes and other social security costs. Nevertheless, the technical feasibility and lack of positive evaluation do not seem to serve as a strong explanatory reason for the implementation of the two other schemes after the refugee crisis.

Since the interviewed experts did not indicate any debate on the academic level, the only remaining force determining the policy change may be **political**. Here, the public as well as interest groups could have had an impact on the way policy makers decided. Expert 1 from Denmark termed the Danish public as a crowd holding a "double sword". On the one hand, lobby groups and volunteers welcoming refugees were very visible, on the other hand anti-immigrant and populist parties rose. As described in the problem stream, the trade-off between receiving refugees and maintaining the generous welfare state was part of the public debate. Denmark, herewith, experienced a "swing to the right" (Kingdon, 2014, p. 146). In the last two years, the ruling conservative-liberal party *Venstre* and the ruling *Conservative People's Party* received contenders from the right. "The New Right" was founded in 2015 by four previous members of the Conservative People's Party after they have been discontent with their ruling party's politics. Its agenda is mostly libertarian and anti-immigrant, demanding e.g. to host only refugees directly relocated by the UNHCR and with high job chances. Furthermore, their programme aims to withdrawing from the EU membership and

the UN convention on stateless people (Pangagiotopoulos, 02-06-2017). But these are not the only political forces targeting at stricter immigration and integration policies. The Social Democrats e.g. claimed ““ If you come to Denmark, you have to work”” (Milne, 16-06-2015), whereas the liberals already require stricter immigration policies before summer 2015. All these political forces have had an impact on the Danish government regarding immigration. However, it is questionable whether they had an explicit impact on the changes related to labour market policies. The cutbacks of benefits, border controls and confiscation of valuables from refugees do have their origin in party politics and the pressure from the right. But the IGU and bonus schemes do not seem to fit into the populist parties’ programmes. According to the expert 2 from Denmark, the schemes and the tripartite are an outcome of the municipalities lobbying. They are responsible for the implementation of the two schemes, but without participating employers this is not possible. Thus, the national government was obliged to talk to firms to make this implementation by the municipalities possible.

Therefore, one could argue that in Denmark a **political window** was opened and led to the ad-hoc specific measures of IGU schemes. Political pressure from the far right as well as municipalities that searched for solutions to solve the problem of inactive refugees. The necessity to have contributing people for the welfare system may have led to policy instruments facilitating labour market participation of immigrants. As they are temporarily installed measures, one could also argue that they are an explicit response to the unusual influx of 2015/2016 and therefore to the problem stream. However, it is questionable whether the problem is related to labour market. As said before, the problem “refugee crisis” was mostly perceived as a problem in terms of immigration. Furthermore, the *human capital investment* as part of the integration programme that was already established in the end of 1990s is already fully developed – compared to other European countries. This is also the case for *incentive reinforcement*. The integration contract combining benefits with the participation in the programme already implicates enough conditionality for benefit reciprocity. Therefore, one could bring forward the argument that changes in active labour market policies were more necessary for *employment assistance* related issues. These were realised in the IGU and bonus schemes. All in all, the hypothesis 1.1. that the relatively small and young influx did not lead to a policy change in active labour market policies cannot be verified.

5. Germany

5.1. Active labour market policies before the refugee crisis

Referring to Esping-Andersen's typology of welfare regimes, Germany represents the *conservative* type. Contributions and the occupational status determine the amount of welfare benefits. This follows the *equivalence principle* that was established already in the 19th century under Bismarck. Bonoli indicates that this principle serves as obstacle for active labour market policies since it makes conditionality for welfare benefits complicated and active labour market measures can be regarded as a sort of condition (p. 24). Employers play a crucial role in the labour market, too. They provide vocational training in terms of practical work, whereas the other part of vocational training contains theoretical tuition at public schools. Besides, half of the contribution for social security costs is carried by the employer. Germany's share of social spending in the GDP is with 25% 4 points higher than the OECD average (see figure 1). According to Bonoli, Germany has "invested much less in" (Bonoli, 2013, p. 2) active labour market policies. Nevertheless, an activation turn can also be observed in Germany during the last decades. The spending on active labour market policies rose from 0.5% of the German GDP in 1985 to 0.8 % in 2005 (Bonoli, 2013, p. 5). In 1969, the German government passed the Employment Promotion Act, shifting "public expenditure from social consumption to social investment." (Alber in Bonoli, 2013, p. 26). With a rising unemployment rate, Germany implemented another policy relating to activation. In the 1970s, 190.000 jobs were created to fight open unemployment. This policy is a type of *occupation*. Due to budgetary constraints, this policy did not survive for a long period of time and was finally replaced by policy refocusing on training, but also on placement services. Due to the reunification, the unemployment rate rose again in the early 1990s which led to another period of job creation programmes. This also affected the expenditure on active labour market policies that reached a peak in 1992 amounting to 1.8% of the GDP (Bonoli, 2013, p. 29). The most recent reform that included activation-related measures was implemented in 2005, namely the Hartz reform. One of its features was stricter conditionality on welfare benefits, including reduced duration and job search requirements. These indicate a shift from *occupation* to *incentive reinforcement*. The slogan "fördern und fordern" (foster and oblige) emphasised this paradigm. With "stricter monitoring of job search, the profiling of jobless people, reintegration contracts and wage subsidies" (p. 31) Germany moved to convergence with the United Kingdom and Denmark. Statistics available in Jochen Kluge's paper on active labour

market policy in Germany (2013) indicate that 16.8% of the expenditure on active and passive labour market policy is used for *employment assistance*, 13.5% for *upskilling and training* and 11.2% for *job creation* in the private and public sector in 2010 (table 2). This is in line with findings from an OECD study (2006) where “increased job-search monitoring, individual action plans/profiling” and “early activation in general” (p. 70) were observed.

Following the policy of **mainstreaming**, Germany did not have a lot of specific measures related to labour market integration of **asylum seekers** and **refugees** before 2015. Recognised refugees were entitled to all types of active labour market policies, such as unemployed natives. They include typical employment assistance related services like counselling, job mediation and placement. Only employment-related language courses were offered.

5.2. Impact of the refugee crisis

Just as Denmark, Germany was/is one of the key destination countries for asylum seekers during the refugee crisis. Compared to 2014, the country received 135% more applicants in 2015. In total numbers, this means an increase from 202.645 to 476.510 asylum seekers (Eurofound, 2016, p. 9). In the following year of 2016, the statistics indicate another increase, amounting to 745.545 application; 0.9% of the population were asylum seekers (Statistika, 2017). This can be explained by the delay of the submitting the application in 2015. Most asylum seekers came from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, 2017). Almost one half of all applicants were between the age of 18 and 35 (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, 2016, p. 7), verifying the statement that refugees are usually younger and therefore can and should be prepared for labour market participation. The recognition rate rose from 49.1% in 2015 to 58.9% in 2016 (p. 11). One could assume here that the urgency to adapt labour market related policies to the new migrants is high. Considering all the information on the impact of the refugee crisis, one may operationalise the first hypothesis for the case of Germany the following way.

H1.2.: Due to the high influx of asylum seekers and refugees, being between the age of 18 and 35, a change in active labour market policies has occurred.

5.3. Active Labour market policies towards asylum migrants - after the refugee crisis

With the implementation of the “Integration Law” that included labour market related policies a clear change in the treatment of asylum migrants can be detected. The main idea of the law

is called “Fördern und fordern” (foster and oblige) that was also used for the *Hartz* reforms described above. It is considered as a mile stone in German integration policies since it is the first time that a national law regulates immigrant integration. Especially asylum seekers from countries with high recognition rates receive more assistance concerning their integration (Bundesregierung, 08-05-2017).

One measure targeting at people who are still in the application process is the “*Flüchtlingsintegrationmaßnahmen*” (measures for refugee integration). They are an ad-hoc temporary programme to facilitate labour market entrance of asylum seekers older than 18 years. The government has created 100.000 ‘job opportunities’ in the public sector. They include work in their accommodations, such as cleaning, serving food, but also outside, e.g. gardening of public places. People from safe third countries or subjects to immediate extraction are not entitled. The participation can either be forced by the responsible authority or be voluntary. Language acquisition and other integration related measures are however prioritised. The duration of the measure is not more than six months with 30 hours per week. The government explicitly mentions that these measures are not identical to an employment contract. A salary is not paid, but an allowance amounting to 80 cents per hour (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 21-04-2017). With the *creation* of such job opportunities, Germany makes use of the active labour market policy type *occupation*. The government argues that this measure could lead asylum seekers to German language and societal rules. One can assume here that it is not only about keeping asylum seekers occupied, but also about providing basic *training* in form of gaining experience during work. This argument seems hypocritical. When working in the accommodation with other asylum seekers the change to speak and hear German is quite low. For work outside of the accommodation, another requirement is not in line with the above-mentioned goal to foster integration. Municipalities can only employ asylum seekers for this type of jobs if the job is not performed by a person with residence permit. Hence, participants of this measure do not get in contact with natives or people who are fluent in German. Besides, even if participants do learn something about societal rules in Germany or German itself, the knowledge is not related to employment as the job itself are low-threshold. I would therefore argue that the policy behind it is exclusively aimed at *occupation*: Creating jobs in the public sector and providing non-employment-related training. Compared to other labour market related policies for inactive people, this is special.

Another instrument to facilitate labour market related integration of asylum seekers is *the abolishment of labour market tests or proofs of precedence* by the public employment agency. Before, German or EU citizen had priority for job offers. The abolishment applies only in certain areas depending on labour market conditions and is limited to three years. For highly skilled asylum seekers, there already has been an exception from the labour market tests. The labour market tests in general target at all immigrants residing in Germany. Thus, they can be regarded as a structural specific measure that was now and temporarily adapted. Herewith, asylum seekers are allowed to enter the labour market three months after their arrival (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 05-08-2016). Referring to Bonoli's typology, this measure can be related to *employment assistance* since obstacles to enter the labour market are erased. However, it is not accompanied by another assisting instrument, such as counselling or job placement. The classification into employment assistance is therefore questionable.

Another change has occurred in regulations on the access to apprenticeship. Firstly, the age restriction to 21 years for starting an apprenticeship was abolished. Herewith, the German government directly responded to the influx of young people, meaning one quarter younger than 25 years old and two thirds younger than 34 years (Bundesregierung). Additionally, asylum seekers from countries with high recognition rates are entitled to assisted apprenticeships already after three months. Those with exceptional leave to remain are granted such a legal status for the duration of their apprenticeship. This policy aims to facilitate *labour market related training* for asylum seekers and those with uncertain legal status. The government itself describes this as a response to the previous legal uncertainty not only for the participants, but also for the employers who provide one half of the vocational training (Bundesregierung). Herewith, access to training structures in Germany is opened. One could argue here that it is indirectly *invested* into the *human capital* of immigrants.

Related to this policy, the programme "Berufsorientierung" (orientation of occupation) was established to support young refugees with their pave to an apprenticeship. During 13 weeks, they get practical training in three different technical occupations as well as information on the structure of the corresponding apprenticeships and employment-related language courses. Additionally, they are offered placement services (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung). This measure is aimed directly at the investment into *human capital*

of young refugees as it provides an insight into the vocational training of certain occupations as well as employment-related language courses.

The latter is also fostered more intensively since 2015. They are combined with internships and apprenticeships. Occupations such as child care, health and care in general even have their own language courses. The entitlement to such language courses is determined by the responsible public employment agencies who also finance the programmes. Both, the measures regarding apprenticeships and “Berufsorientierung” can be defined as ad-hoc specific measures to prepare refugees for labour market and foster their entrance.

The national public employment agency introduced the measure “Perspektiven für Flüchtlinge (PerF)” (perspective for refugees) targeting at unemployed asylum seekers, recognised refugees and those with exceptional leave to remain with basic German knowledge. Its goal is the transition from unemployment to full employment. This can be regarded as the structural adaptation of generic measures targeted at unemployed, in this case at unemployed asylum seekers and refugees. The first four weeks deals with the identification of potential skills and qualifications and the conveyance of information on the German labour market. In the following six weeks, competencies are assessed during practical work in real firms. Afterwards, the participants are supported in their application procedures. During the whole programme, employment-related language courses are provided, too (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2017). This programme covers several active labour market policies types. The skills assessment can be categorised as a sort of *employment assistance*. People possessing qualifications are helped in making them visible and verifiable. Furthermore, the public employment agency supports them in finding a firm where the participant can get his skills assessed, this is similar to job placement. By providing employment-related language courses, one may also see the *investment into human capital* as it is a sort of training.

The interviewee identified a focus on *employment assistance* in general to bring refugees and asylum seekers as soon as possible into work. Training and therewith investment into human capital is mostly applied for those who cannot prove their qualifications or do not have any qualifications useful for the German labour market yet.

5.4. What made Germany implement the Integration Law?

It becomes clear that a policy change in terms of several new measures within the “Integrationsgesetz” has taken place in Germany after the refugee crisis. As said before, the new Integration Law can be regarded as a milestone in German immigration/integration policy – since it is the first time that policies are established on the national level. Its title “fördern und fordern” (foster and oblige) already gives a hint to the emphasis on labour market as this was also the motto of labour market related reforms in the 2000s. The following section aims to describe the policy process of this change by applying Kingdon’s theory on agenda setting.

Referring to Kingdon’s **problem stream**, we have already learnt that the refugee crisis as such marks a *focusing event* for Europe. In Germany, this applies even to a greater extent. One third of the people seeking asylum in Europe were received by Germany. This means in total 441.800 asylum seekers in 2015 (Eurostat, 2016). Additionally, the responsible authority, *Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*, has struggled with an immense tailback of unprocessed asylum applications amounting to 400.000 in the end of 2016 (tagesschau, 30-12-2017). These two numbers are accompanied by the widespread assumption that even 800.000 to 1 million humanitarian migrants applied asylum in Germany (Deutschlandfunk, 30.09.2016). All these numbers serve as fortifying indicators to illustrate Germany’s affectedness of the crisis. As Kingdon describes in his theory, problems need to be countable to become visible. In the case of Germany, this can be observed. Furthermore, a problem needs to be categorised in certain way so it is regarded as a problem that needs to be solved. Regarding labour market policies, we need a problem that combines the high influx of asylum migrants and a labour market related issue. When looking at Germany’s previous immigrant integration policies, one can observe that socio-economic participation is considered the most important pillar of integration (Geddes & Scholten, 2016). When migrants participate in the labour market and welfare, they are mostly perceived as well integrated. Thus, the problem of a high influx of immigrants that will probably stay – as most of the are from countries with high recognition rate – can be easily combined with the urgency to integrate them socio-economically. In other words, by fostering their participation in German labour market. Additionally, there has been a sort of positive framing of asylum immigration in relation to their utility in the German labour market. At the beginning of the crisis, media and politicians emphasised the possibility to tackle labour shortage with asylum immigration in Germany (rp-online, 02-09-2015 & Siems, 24-08-2015). This was also confirmed by a study conducted by

the UNHCR regarding 86% of all Syrian refugees as highly skilled (Die Welt, 08-12-2015). Reality then proved the opposite. Still in 2015, the German minister for Labour and Social Affairs, Andrea Nahles, announced that not even one tenth of all refugees fulfils all criteria to enter the labour market immediately. Thus, additional qualification (“ergänzende Qualifizierung”) and fundamental training (“grundständige Ausbildung” (Nahles in deutsche-wirtschafts-nachrichten, 11-09-2015) became necessary. The problem of budget accrues if refugees remain passive welfare clients. All in all, that problem in terms of high numbers of immigrants that need to be integrated into the German labour market needs to be solved - not only because the latter is perceived as successful integration in Germany.

The **policy stream** takes up this narrative. As Kingdon describes problem solutions need to fit the mainstream thinking. With this regard, the focus on labour market participation as form of successful integration serves as best starting position for labour market related policy changes. Even if Germany does not want to define labour market participation as the priority of integration in an EMN study (2016), it does give some hints already on its direction. Considering the variety of “personal needs and existing qualifications (educational background, knowledge of German language e.g.), access to the host society and job opportunities” (EMN, 2016) an important factor determining integration, Germany shows its bias towards socio-economic participation. Herewith, the German government received backup by social partners, academic experts, studies and the European Union. One of the most important academic figures was Herbert Brücker, director of the department “Economic Research on Migration and Integration” and employee at the Institute for Research on Labour Market and Profession. He described in an interview in January 2016 three problems relating to labour market integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Firstly, Brücker demands legal certainty, for both asylum seekers and employers hiring them. Secondly, he observes the necessity of an integration concept following the labour market concept of “Fördern und Fordern”. Finally, the expert criticises the labour market tests that hinder asylum seekers to start work and push them into irregular jobs (Brücker in Magazin Mitbestimmung, 01-2016). As we have seen before, all three topics were covered in the new Integration Law. Together with the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration, he may not have an impact on whether a policy change occurred or not, but on the change’s direction. The experts’ suggestions to bring refugees and asylum seeker into work as soon as possible was incorporated by politicians almost one-to-one (expert 2 from Germany). International

expertise recommended the same. Regina Konle-Seidl and Georg Bolits (2016) summarise in their study for the European parliament that “Participation in the labour market is, according to experts, the most significant factor favouring long-term integration into society.” (p. 9). To achieve this goal, most policy briefs recommend active labour market services, such as employment assistance, training or job placement (p. 9). The same is transferred in the OECD study “Making Integration Work” (2016c). Recommendations vary from early activation strategies for both, asylum seekers and refugees to easier labour market access to asylum seekers and the importance of long-term training. Beside all these policy recommendations from academics, the German government adopted policy suggestions from the social partners, mostly the employers, that have a crucial role in German labour market in general (Eurofound, 2016, p. 13).

They are not only part of the policy stream, but can also be regarded as important **political** force determining the emergence of policy windows. Already at the beginning of the crisis in Summer 2015, employers demanded a facilitation of labour market access for refugees. Besides, the federal associations for German employer’s union, BDA, advised to expand language trainings with employment-related language courses and to abolish labour market tests. Both suggestions as well as easing for vocational trainings were implemented through the integration law in summer 2016 (Siems, 24-08-2015). Being the provider of half of the training in apprenticeships, the employers’ impact on labour market related policies can be assessed as big. Besides, the previous director of the German federal agency for Migration and Refugees also indicated that fast action in terms facilitating labour market access is necessary because otherwise the public mood may tip over (Weise in tagesschau, 30-12-2016). Exactly as Kingdon states, a “swing to the right” (p. 146) might have occurred if the German government did not act. The emergence of the anti-Islam protest group PEGIDA as well as the populist party *Alternative für Deutschland* (AFD, “alternative for Germany”) put pressure on the government of Christian and Social Democrats. Although, there has not been a change of the national government or administration, elections in the federal states indicated this shift in the beginning of 2016, so right before the Integration Law was passed. In the Southwestern state Baden Württemberg, the AFD received 15% of all votes off the cut, in the Western German state Rheinland-Pfalz 12,6% and in the new federal state Sachsen-Anhalt even 24,3%. The nationally ruling parties of Social Democrats and the Christian Union on the other hand, mostly lost seats in the respective federal governments. However, it is

questionable whether this rise of the AFD has had an impact on the emergence of the Integration Law. Since the party's focus was on the restriction of immigration and not on labour market integration related issues, the pressure on the national government may be detected elsewhere. Nevertheless, the public myth on immigrants being lazy and living as welfare recipients at the German state's costs could have served as motive to establish new measures.

The coupling of problem, policy and political stream led to an open policy window that made a policy change possible. It is difficult to assess which stream, be it the political or problem stream, was the most striking. The three federal state elections showed a shift to the right, but more in relation to immigration and socio-cultural integration. A related topic that was also taken up in the Integration Law was ethnic segregation. But it is questionable whether labour market related policies could serve as defender against the right. The problem of inactive asylum seekers and refugees seems more influential and made policy makers search for effective measures to tackle it. On the other hand, employers' associations already indicated in the beginning of the crisis that certain policies need to be implemented to facilitate labour market integration. They can be regarded as meaningful political force. The integration law 2016 with its diverse measures regarding labour market is the result of both, problem and to some extent political stream. However, I would argue, that the initial power behind that change can be found in the problem stream which makes the open window a **problem window**. The problem of inactive asylum migrants was pressing. The hypothesis related to Germany is proven, too. The measures follow the generic policies' focus on *employment assistance* but do mark a higher extent of *human capital investment*, too. This is because some of the asylum seekers and refugees are not compatible with the German labour market requirements. Thus, a certain training that prepares them is needed.

6. Italy

6.1. Active labour market policies before the crisis

Italy represents the *southern European* welfare regime which resembles the *conservative* regime but is not identical. Italy has spent approximately 27.2% of its GDP for social expenditure (see figure 1). Bonoli (2013) refers already at the beginning of his analysis to Italy's stickiness to passive measures, rather than to activation. This is verified by low spending on active labour

market policies in comparison to other European countries' spending. The numbers vary between 0.2% of the GDP in 1985, 0.4% in 2007 (Bonoli, 2013, p. 6) and 0.45% in 2012 (Martin, 2015, p. 4). Even after recommendations of the European Union, Italy did not change the non-relational relation between benefit entitlement and conditionality. Attempts by policy makers have failed due to a lack of trust between them and social partners who play a crucial role in "one of the strictest employment protection laws (p. 43). One of the biggest obstacle for active labour market policies is "the typical Italian institution of temporary unemployment benefit (*Cassa integrazione*)" (p. 41) where employees stay employed but do not perform and do not get a salary. Instead, they get unemployment benefits. This was strengthened in the 1970s by a duration extension "to up to 5 years" (p. 43) and a replacement rate of 80%. With this policy, any activation is impossible since inactive people remain officially employed. In the eighties, another mechanism that could stand for *occupation* or *incentive reinforcement* was installed: part-time employment. Since workers were not allowed to work more than a certain number of hours, the incentive to work was rather low. In the end of the 1990s the *Treu package* was passed including some measures concerning human capital investment and fixed term contracts allowing people to work for a specific reason during a limited amount of time. Another obstacle for the implementation of national activation strategies is the highly-decentralised structure. Due to Italy's multi-level governance, regions and provinces enjoy much responsibility and autonomy for the design of their welfare policies (Kazepov & Barberis, 2011). The central government is responsible for "labour market policy setting, promotion and coordination" (EMN Italy, 2016, p. 18). The lack of active labour market policies such as *incentive reinforcement*, *human capital investment* or *employment assistance* is also illustrated in the OECD's comparative study on activation measures (2006) where no indicators are applicable for Italy (p. 70). The same can be observed for job-search requirements which are rare but legally required (OECD, 2007, p. 218) and interviews/meetings with placement officers (p. 224). Expenditure on placement and other services were therefore almost non-existent (p. 233). In May 2015, a new decree entered force. From now on, passive labour market policies, in other words benefits, are only provided if participation in activation policies is the case. Herewith, the emphasis is led on *incentive reinforcement* where conditionality of welfare benefits was installed (Ciccarone, 2016, p. 6). Before the refugee crisis, for asylum seekers and refugees, no specific activation measures can be detected (expert 3 from Italy).

6.2. Impact of the refugee crisis

Other than Germany and Denmark, Italy is not listed as a key destination country, but as highly affected by the refugee influx (Eurofound, 2016, p. 8). This is due to Italy's geographic position, bordering at the Mediterranean Sea where most migrants from Africa arrive. They do enter Italy, but do not apply for asylum there. This is verified by numbers from 2015 and 2016. In the first year of the crisis, 59.165 people sought asylum, mostly from Nigeria (21%), Gambia (11%), Pakistan (10%) and Senegal (8%). Only 8% of the applicants were children; more detailed information on the age composition are not available. The recognition rate was 45% (Asylum Information Database, 2015). In 2016, the numbers of asylum seekers doubled, constituting 123.370. 0.2% of the population were asylum seekers. The top five origin countries resembled the previous as well as the share of children in asylum applicants. The recognition rate amounted to only 39,4% (Asylum Information Database, 2017). Considering all the information on the impact of the refugee crisis and the characteristics and history of Italian labour market policies, one may deduce the following operationalised hypothesis for the case of Italy.

H1.3.: Due to the relatively low influx of asylum seekers and refugees and the lack of active labour market policies in Italian labour market policies, no policy change can be observed in Italy.

6.3. Active labour market policies towards asylum migrants - after the refugee crisis

In September 2015, the *Jobs Act labour market reform* was passed. As one part of it, the *National Agency for Active Labour Market Policies (ANPAL)* was established. It determines the minimum of services that should be provided by local agencies and will come into action if they fail to deliver. Hereby, the current fragmentation of providers should be stopped and better monitoring should be created (Iudicone, 13-01-2016). It does neither contain content based measures that concern active labour market policies nor asylum migrant specific measures. According to expert 3 from Italy, the implementation of the labour market related reform was the execution of an EU directive and time-wise only a coincidence. Therefore, it will not be discussed in greater detail in this chapter.

In Italy, refugees are entitled to the same labour market related provisions as natives. These include "equal access to training courses [and] to job placing offices" (Venturini, 2016,

p. 87). They offer skill mapping, advice for training selection, counselling as well as internships in firms. Labour market integration of both, asylum seekers and refugees can be facilitated by hiring subsidies and start-up support (Ciccarone, 2016, p. 1). Besides, the National Report contains specific policies since refugees “are considered vulnerable persons who have specific needs and therefore require adequate measures” (EMN Focussed Study, 2015, p. 17).

The two systems providing services to asylum seekers and refugees, CARA and SPRAR, also offer “labour counselling, direct training courses and information about the regional courses provided locally, and job-matching information” (Venturini, 2016, p. 87). They already exist since 2000 and must follow national guidelines. Two interviewed experts from Italy assessed the programmes to be effective. With the influx of asylum seekers already in 2013, Italy installed a new type of accommodation, the CAS services that do not guarantee any sort of assistance to asylum seekers. According to expert 2 from Italy, more than 60% of all asylum seekers are accommodated in these new accommodations. Herewith, labour market related policies were affected by an influx, but only indirectly, negatively and already before the refugee crisis of 2015: Before, SPRAR services provided labour market related measures to asylum seekers. With the establishment of the CAS systems, these are not guaranteed anymore.

Furthermore, there was a programming document for 2015 until 2020 developed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, directed at labour and integration policies. It aims to prevent double expenditure or efforts by establishing a system-wide approach (EMN Italy, 2016, p. 3). The interviewed experts from Italy indicated that only small changes have come up after the crisis. They include small programmes specifically targeted at asylum seekers and refugees.

In 2015, the national pilot programme INSIDE was developed. It aims to support refugees with “active labour-market policy services” (Venturini, 2016, p. 89) and upskilling. In practice, 672 endowments were provided to individuals to train them and place them into traineeships (EMN Italy, 2016, p. 14). Expert 1 from Italy happened to be the coordinator of this project. She specified the measures as following: (1) skills mapping, (2) tailor made set for activation measures such as counselling and guidance, traineeships, tutoring and orientation, (3) grant schemes for firms offering internship activities and for participating refugees and (4) job searching and placement. This measure can be categorised as *employment assistance* with constraints related to *human capital investment*.

Additionally, a *memorandum of understanding* was signed between Ministry of Interior and the trade association Confindustria in June 2015. Herewith, job placement through internships should be facilitated for refugees (Confindustria & Ministero dell'interno, 2016).

With the legislative from 18 August 2015, Asylum seekers have access to labour market sixty days after their asylum application has been submitted (EMN Italy, 2016, p. 7). Before, they had to wait for six months after the submission of their application to get access. This policy can be linked to *occupation* and *employment assistance*. The latter in the sense that the obstacle of a non-existing access in the first months was not erased, but at least eased. Additionally, one could argue that the Italian government rethought its assumption of being a transit country where integration is not the priority. With longer waiting periods until asylum applications are decided and the linked faineance of asylum seekers, the government intended to keep them occupied as soon as possible. This also becomes clear when looking at another new measure that was implemented after 2015.

Another pilot project that started running in September 2016 was REVaLUE. It aims to assist refugees to enter jobs that require higher qualifications by providing a skills assessment mechanism as well as workshops to upskill them and internships. The former will fit participating refugees with a detailed CV that reflects their skills, knowledge and competences. Additionally, participants will attend courses in training workshops in order to gain first experiences in practical work (Programme integra, 2016). Just as the above described measures, the project aims to *assist* people in seeking *employment* as well as strengthening their *human capital*.

6.4. How decentralised Italy happened to establish nationwide measures

Despite the relatively low influx of refugees, a policy change can be detected in Italy after the crisis. Other than Germany, they seem more ad-hoc temporary specific measures than a structural adaptation to generic polices. The following section will deal with the policy process behind these changes by making use of Kingdon's multiple streams analysis.

For the **problem stream**, it is most useful to have a look at Italy's perception of asylum seekers and their stay in Italy. As used in the above hypothesis, Italy was affected only by a small influx of asylum seekers and refugees. This only applies when looking at the number of people that actually sought asylum in Italy. The numbers may seem different when one also

considers the people who enter Italy, but travel up to the North of Europe. Thus, Italy is often regarded as an “highly affected transit” (Eurofound, 2016, p. 8) country where the “crisis is considered an emergency issue” (p. 11). The focusing event “refugee crisis” was symbolised by refugees either arriving safely on the coast of Lampedusa or being rescued by aid organisations or national coast guards from their sinking boats. These pictures, however, were covered in the media already after the Arab Spring, peaking in 2012 (Benedikter & Karolewski, 2017 & UNHCR, 2015, p. 14). The interviewees from Italy as well as Ferruccio Pastore (11-11-2016) in his article confirm that Italy itself did not experience the refugee crisis as dramatic as other European countries since the country is so to speak used to immigration inflows. Besides, most arrivals took place in Greek islands during the peak of the crisis in summer/autumn of 2015. Overall, the problem here was not how to integrate people that sought asylum, but rather to save them or provide them with first health related services. Regarding arriving asylum seekers only as transit migrants, “defined as aliens who stay in the country for some period while seeking to migrate permanently to another” (Duvell, 2006) does not make any integration policies urgent. The design and establishment of new accommodations in form of the CAS services in 2013 confirms this argument. These accommodations do not provide any services related to integration, only “emergency support, food, dress, medical assistance, linguistic support” (Venturini, 2016, p. 80). According to one interview (expert 4 from Italy), this problem definition changed in the beginning of 2016 when France, Switzerland and Germany increased the pressure on Italy to observe the Dublin III regulations. From then, Italy started to register asylum seekers and did not let them travel towards Northern Europe. Furthermore, “the two September 2015 relocation decisions” (Pastore, 11-11-2016) enabled Italy to register asylum seekers without the fear of obligation to actually receive all of them for a longer term. Due to the decisions’ failure, the migrants were stuck in Italy in the end. The EU/Turkey deal as well as the closure of the Balkan route made Italy again popular for migrants to enter Europe. From now on, integration was also part of Italian refugee policies. Due to long asylum procedures, enduring between six months and one year, the influx became more visible – on the streets as well as on the budget. Other than for recognised refugees, national law obliges the state to support asylum seekers financially. Budget became a problem for receiving municipalities.

Thus, in both, the **political and policy stream**, NGOs providing services as well as local authorities acted as lobby groups to enhance labour market related policy changes. The most

prominent one was the reduction of the waiting period for asylum seekers to labour market access. Herewith, the Italian state intended to reduce costs by fostering financial independency of asylum seekers (expert 3 from Italy). Additionally, the memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Interior and employer's association was signed. Herewith, the government tackled the problem that most refugees would not be employed in the first case. This is a typical case of bargaining which is mostly part of the policy stream.

We can observe two political forces that may have had an impact on Italy's policy changes. From outside and as a first push, bordering countries on Italy, such as France, Switzerland, Austria and France who forced the country to observe the Dublin III regulations and let humanitarian migrants seek asylum. Secondly, an internal political force, such as NGOs and municipalities, who had to deal with asylum seekers, lobbied a policy change into the direction of an easier labour market access and a better cooperation with employers. Regarding the policy stream, the necessity of efficiency may have been the major goal of these interest groups. **Politically**, the regionalisation may also have an impact on the fact that a relatively small number of policy changes occurred in Italy. According to the article by Kazepov and Barbaris (2011), Italy belongs to the country type with strong regional (or federal) frame. Municipalities do not only have responsibility in implementing policies but in developing legislations regarding social assistance and policies, too (p. 4). This may explain why –except from the facilitated labour market access – no major policy changes related to labour market can be detected on the national level.

Beneficiaries of international or subsidiary protection are not targeted in any policy. One expert even said that there are not active labour market measures for Italian natives and since recognised refugees are treated as such, no such policies targeting at them can be detected either. The same interviewee also indicated the mainstream thinking behind this laissez faire policy by terming it “a matter of culture” (expert 4 from Italy) that Italy does not have any activation policies on the national level. As we have heard in Kingdon's **policy stream**, policy suggestions need to be compatible with the mainstream thinking. Otherwise, they cannot find support across the public and this would be necessary for an implementation.

The other implementations, such as the projects INSIDE and REVaLUe, seem to have been implemented on the national level, but their emergence is much harder to be traced. Unfortunately, no interviewee could give me details about the reasons why these specific measures were implemented. Concluding, we can find a coupling of the three streams

whereas the policy stream seems to be the weakest. Mostly political forces from in- and outside as well as a new problem definition made policy changes possible and necessary. It is difficult to name the window that was opened to enable a policy change. One could argue that the public and especially policy makers were aware of the problem “refugee crisis” and therefore searched for potential solutions to it. But since this problem was more related to immigration, a more open labour market for asylum seekers may not perform as a possible solution. Political forces being part of a political window on the other hand changed the problem definition, so integration related problems appeared on Italy’s agenda. The memorandum of understanding with employer’s associations as well as the facilitated labour market access for asylum seekers can be regarded as an outcome of political bargaining between the national government, municipalities and social partners. I would therefore argue that the window is a mixture of **problem and political window** where political forces took part in the re-definition of the problem. This re-definition paved the way for a junction of “refugee crisis” on the one hand and labour market policies on the other hand.

Despite the relatively low application of active labour market policies for natives on the national level, one can find some activation measures installed for asylum seekers after the crisis. They mostly focus on *employment assistance* and *human capital investment*. Hence, the hypothesis cannot be confirmed.

7. The United Kingdom

7.1. Active labour market policies before the refugee crisis

Together with other English-speaking countries, the United Kingdom represents the *liberal* welfare regime featured by means-tested welfare entitlement and liberal wage policy. This is already visible in the expenditure for social spending amounting to 22% of the GDP and thus being only a little higher than the OECD average (see figure 1). Other than the three examined countries, the spending on active labour market policies has fallen between the years 1985 and 2007, from 0.7% of the GDP to 0.3% (Bonoli, 2013, p. 6). According to Bonoli, the British government always intended to provide as much incentives as possible to unemployed people to start work again. As this has not worked out, other activation strategies have been developed (p. 48). In the 1970s Britain suffered from various economic problems, such as a high unemployment rate. To tackle that, incentive reinforcement used by reducing benefits

and cutting e.g. child benefits. In the 1980s, work incentives in terms of wage subsidies and trainings for youth were installed. With them programme *Restart* compulsory interviews for unemployed people were implemented as well as job search requirements. These were considered a condition for welfare reciprocity. One could observe a mixture of two types of activation: *incentive reinforcement* and *employment assistance*. The end of the 1990s marked a real activation turn in the British labour market policy with the programme known as *New Deal*. The target group were young people, lone parents and long-term unemployed people. With the help of a placement officer, the participant develops a “personal action plan” (Bonoli, 2013, p. 53). It contains interviews, but also training, voluntary work and wage subsidies (Kluve et al., 2007). Overall, Bonoli finds that *employment assistance* and *incentive reinforcement* are the mostly applied tools in in the UK(Bonoli, 2013, p. 54). Every two weeks, the participant must report his job search actions. They should at least constitute ten actions per month (OECD, 2007, p. 218). Other than other OECD countries, jobseekers experience to “most rigid” (p. 223) reporting requirements in the UK. Hence, early activation is compulsory (OECD, 2006, p. 70). Public employment services make about 37% and placement services about 26% of the expenditure on labour market programmes (OECD, 2007, p. 233).

In general, **asylum seekers** are supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 regulated a number of measures to “provide a range of educational and other purposeful activities for all age groups” in the asylum centres (Department for Work and Pensions, 2002, p. 10). Including volunteer work as well as IT skills training, one can observe a mixture of *human capital investment* and *occupation*. These is also illustrated by the goal of the Department for Work and Pensions: “asylum seekers [should] their time in the UK productively and are able to develop skills that will be useful” (p. 10). Another law in 2002 extended the waiting period for asylum seekers to be allowed to work from six months to 12 months. Herewith, the government intended to reduce the incentive to immigrate to the UK as an asylum seeker (Eurofound, 2016, p. 14).

For **refugees**, the report “Working to Rebuild Lives” from 2002 aimed at a more specific treatment in the Jobcentre Plus. A mixture of *employment assistance* in terms of labour market information and assistance in housing and job search as well as *human capital investment* in form of work-related English courses should facilitate the refugees’ labour market entrance (p. 11). This should also be facilitated through the “Refugee Marker” in the Jobcentre Plus system (Walsh, 2016, p. 3).

7.2. Impact of the refugee crisis

The United Kingdom is one of the European countries that were only “moderately affected” (Eurofound, 2016, p. 8) by the refugee crisis. This is mostly because of its geographic position as an island, not easily to access for irregular migrants. Nevertheless, asylum application numbers also increased in 2015 by 38% and the UK received “the ninth highest number” (National Statistics Asylum, 26-05-2016) of asylum seekers. In total, this means 34.687 asylum seekers between March 2015 and March 2016. Per one million British natives, 586 applicants can be detected (Statistika, 2017). Most people seeking asylum came from Iran, Eritrea, Iraq, Sudan, Pakistan and Syria. An interesting finding is that most asylum applications were “made by people already in the country” (National Statistics Asylum, 26-05-2016) amounting to 91%. Depending on the time they have already been staying in the UK, one could argue that activation is not needed. They may already have enough knowledge in English and in the British norms and labour market related issues. Additionally, more than 75% were younger than 35 which already indicates a certain labour supply. Just as in Italy, about 9% were unaccompanied minors. Of course, the recognition rate varies immensely between the different countries of origin, with high rates for Syrians and Sudanese people and lower rates for Iraqis and Pakistanis. The average grant rate was 40%. For 2016/2017, the numbers decreased again, to 30.603 in total, as well as the origin countries being Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Bangladesh. The recognition rate has also fallen to 34% (National Statistics Asylum, 23-02-2017). Considering all the information on the impact of the refugee crisis, one may deduce the following hypothesis that constitutes an operationalisation for the hypothesis H1 for the case of the United Kingdom.

H1.4.: Due to the relatively low influx of asylum seekers and refugees, no change in active labour market policies, consisting mostly of employment assistance can be observed in the United Kingdom.

7.3. Active labour market policies towards asylum migrants - after the refugee crisis

As Martín (2016) already indicates, the United Kingdom did not follow the Europe-wide policy trend to implement policies facilitating labour market integration of asylum seekers and refugees after the refugee crisis (p. 106). As we have seen these policy changes have taken place already in the beginning of the 2000s. According to a study by Eurofound (2016), there

have been debates to widen the access to labour market for asylum seekers again. Now, they have to wait for 12 months until they can apply for a job – as mentioned above. Proposals suggested to reduce the waiting period to six months (p. 18). Since there was no governmental support, the proposal was not taken into action.

In May 2016, the *Immigration Bill* was passed. It includes regulations that concern the service provision for rejected asylum seekers and illegal working. From now on rejected asylum seekers should not be provided with welfare services since the UK “focuses on the welfare of the resident population, defined as those who are already formally settled in the UK.” (Home Office, 28-01-2016, p. 7). Since I explicitly excluded rejected asylum seekers from my study, I will not go into detail of this measure. The paragraph on labour market enforcement aimed at tackling exploitation in the labour market. Thus, the British government established a director of labour market enforcement who “will work closely with immigration enforcement” (Home Office, July 2016, p. 3). This is a policy change in the labour market related policy field, however according to expert 1 from the UK, not in explicit context with the refugee crisis and influx in 2015.

Another reform was passed in the beginning of 2016 changing the welfare system in the United Kingdom. It mostly consists of obligations to report on full employment, apprenticeships and social mobility as well as of cuts in annual welfare benefits (Welfare Reform and Work Act, 2016, p. 9). The latter can be regarded as *incentive reinforcement* for unemployed people. Other activation related measures are not part of the act. Besides, it is questionable whether the implementation of the reform is connected to the refugee crisis. Neither asylum seekers nor refugees are targeted specifically. Even if refugees are affected since they may be welfare recipients, the causality between refugee influx and the reform is doubtful. Therefore, I would argue that in the UK no policy change in labour market related measures targeting asylum seekers and refugees has occurred. The following analysis will elaborate the reasons behind the continuation of policies by using Kingdon’s Multiple Streams Approach.

7.4. Why the United Kingdom did not change anything

We have learnt in the previous analyses that the **problem stream** may have the biggest impact on policy processes regarding asylum seekers and refugees. The United Kingdom is – due to its geographical distance, natural oceanic border and non-Schengen-membership - only “moderately affected” (Eurofound, 2016, p. 8) by the refugee influx. Like Italy, the debate has

not been on integration, but rather on immigration. One example is the Calais Jungle, the informal refugee camp in France close to the Eurotunnel to England. Here, asylum seekers wait to find their illegal way to the United Kingdom. Pictures from there may work as symbols for the focusing event “refugee crisis” but they do not entail discussions about the integration of refugees, not to mention in relation to labour market. Despite the example of Calais, the refugee crisis is visible in the UK to a different extent. Only through pictures in the media, the British people are aware of the influx, but inside of the country they may not “see” the newcomers on the streets the way Germans or Italians do. However, the crisis was adopted by many British politicians. It was mostly discussed in relation to the EU and the upcoming Brexit in Summer 2016. According to polls “immigration was a key concern for many who were thinking to leave the EU.” (Hall, 24-06-2016). Even if journalists argue that the focus of the ‘leave’ camp was on economic migrants (Chater, 29-06-2016), Nigel Farage, leader of the far-right party UKIP made also use of the crisis. He published a poster with a line of walking refugees with the title “Breaking Point. The EU has failed us all”. He did not only intend to show how the European Union failed in managing the crisis but also how the UK would suffer from that. One could argue here that this **political** pressure from the right and the public mood following it have impeded a change in regulations on labour market access for asylum seekers. There has already been the idea in the **policy stream** to reduce the waiting period from 12 months to six months. Role models here were other countries, such as Germany, Italy or Austria. Besides, experts from the Refugee Council and the Centre for Social Justice have advocated it. But the shift to the right “looks inevitable in both the ruling Conservative Party and the opposition Labour Party.” (Siegfried, 26-06-2016). By arguing that a shorter waiting period would work as a pull factor for immigrants to come to the UK, the government defended its ‘no’ for a change (The Refugee Council, 2017, p. 2). Regarding the Brexit referendum that happened in summer 2016, parties that could have had an impact on active labour market policies towards asylum seekers or refugees remained silent. Politicians did not hear academic experts proposing specific labour market policies for asylum seekers and refugees, such as the recommendations of the Centre for Social Justice to “establish a national employment strategy for all refugees” (Gilbert, 2017, p. 8) with mentoring schemes, better language learning facilities and “wage subsidies – or temporary exemptions [the] from minimum” (p. 21) wage. As Kingdon says, only if a policy idea is in line with public mood, it can be used. In the case of the UK, the public was not ready for any policy changes regarding

asylum seekers and refugees that go beyond the restriction of their immigration. Here, we can see that the **political window** cannot be opened since political barriers were too strong. Not even a pressing problem would enable policy makers to open it. Additionally, the problem that could be associated with asylum seekers and refugees is not linked to labour market. The hypothesis for the UK is verified.

8. Country Comparison and Conclusion

This chapter firstly sums up the findings of the whole research paper regarding the two hypotheses that were deduced from Kingdon’s theory. Secondly, after elaborating on potential explanations for these findings as well as additional outcomes, I will also deal with limitations that occurred in this study. Finally, an outlook including meanings for policy makers, academia or anybody else will complete the thesis.

The chart below shows the **findings** from this research paper very briefly.

	Denmark	Germany	Italy	UK
Prior generic active labour market policies	Incentive reinforcement	Incentive reinforcement + employment assistance	Incentive reinforcement	Incentive reinforcement + employment assistance
Prior active labour market policies towards asylum migrants	Human capital investment + incentive reinforcement	Same as generic	Same as generic	Same as generic
Change/ Type of action	Ad-hoc specific temporary measure	Structural adaptation of specific regulation for migrants + ad-hoc specific	Ad-hoc specific measure	None / Laissez-faire
Measure	IGU schemes Bonus schemes Tripartite agreement	Integration Law	Easier labour market access Agreement between Ministry and Employers’ association Pilot projects	None
Current active labour market policies towards asylum migrants	Human capital investment + employment assistance	Employment assistance + human capital investment	Employment assistance (+ human capital investment)	-

One can see that a change in policies occurred in three of the four countries – against two country specific assumptions. The hypothesis H1 that *countries being affected more by the*

refugee crisis in 2015 meet a more powerful focusing event and thus, a policy change in labour market policies is more likely to happen can be verified only to a limited extent. If we look at Germany where the focusing event “refugee crisis” in terms of numbers was the most powerful, the biggest change occurred. The German government passed a new Integration Law regulating i.a. labour market access for asylum seekers or more legal certainty for asylum migrants doing an apprenticeship. On the other, the United Kingdom that was rarely affected by the crisis in terms of an actual influx of asylum seekers did not change its active labour market policies targeting that this group. The countries of Denmark and Italy are somewhere in between. I hypothesised that due to their relatively low influx of people seeking asylum and in Denmark also their young age, active labour market policies would not be affected as much as in Germany. These hypotheses could not be verified; both countries implemented measures related to asylum seekers and refugees and the labour market. Other than Germany, however, these changes resemble ad-hoc specific measures that should work in the aftermath of the crisis, but not as structural instruments to foster labour market integration in the further future.

How were these changes possible although the actual influx was relatively low? The **explanation** lies in the way the problem is framed in the four countries and what policy fields it is associated with. In **Germany**, the influx of asylum seekers was comparatively early connected with integration of refugees and their labour market participation. Already in September 2015, experts, media and politicians spoke about refugees who may fill labour shortage and could contribute to the German GDP in general. This early connection has its origin in Germany’s tradition to link immigrant integration with their labour market and welfare participation (Geddes & Scholten, 2016). Additionally, other than in other European countries, the official “welcome culture” in Germany from the ruling parties and citizens enabled politicians to turn the attention to integration related issues and not only to restrictive immigration policies. Since immigration already happened and people had arrived in Germany, the next problem that needed to be tackled was their treatment and integration. Thus, one can also verify the operationalisation of the first hypothesis in the case of Germany. The high influx of asylum seekers and refugees, being between the age of 18 and 35 years, led to a policy change.

The United Kingdom stands on the opposite side of the scale. The influx there was very low – mostly because of its geographical unattainability for asylum migrants. The problem

however was taken up by politicians especially from the far-right party UKIP and the camp of Brexit proponents. Since the political debate in 2015 and 2016 was essentially shaped by the Brexit referendum, the refugee crisis “only” served as another argument against the EU. For the “leave” camp, the refugee crisis illustrated the inability of the European Union to protect its members from illegal immigration. Again, one can observe how the influx is connected to immigration related issues, but not to integration of the people who came in. For the UK, the hypothesis can be verified: since there was a very low influx, the focusing event “refugee crisis” was not very powerful and did not enable a policy change in active labour market policies.

For Italy and Denmark, the hypotheses cannot be tested so simply. In **Denmark**, the influx of asylum seekers was mostly connected to immigration and solutions that could reduce it. Thus, a connection to labour market was not the first step for politicians and the public to take. Furthermore, Denmark already implemented an integration programme for recognised refugees in the early 2000s which also includes labour market related measures. The need to change these did not become visible in the crisis. Notwithstanding, the government installed some measures regarding refugees’ labour market integration. The problem window cannot be serve as the most powerful explanatory factor for that. Thus, the second hypothesis may give a hint to the policy process regarding political factors that paved the way for Denmark’s ad-hoc specific and temporary measures.

The same may apply to the **Italian** case. Here also, one cannot confirm the hypothesis that the relatively small influx of asylum seekers and refugees and the lack of active labour market policies in Italian labour market policies did not lead to a policy change. The numbers of people who actually sought asylum may be misleading. When looking at the medial and political debate about the crisis, Italy was affected very much – but as a transit country. The problem of the crisis was like in the Danish and British case exclusively connected to illegal immigration. Due to Italy’s geographical position, high numbers of asylum seekers entered Europe from there. However, this was not new for Italy. Since the Arab Spring Italy experienced not only an influx but also boat disasters. Like Denmark, the problem that needed to be changed according to the public, media, academia or/and politicians was not associated with labour market, much less to specific active labour market policies, but rather immigration control and security.

We can observe that in all countries, the refugee crisis was discussed as an urging problem. However, the interpretation and especially the relation to labour market varies. Thus, the focusing event “refugee crisis” and the way countries were affected by it in terms of asylum numbers cannot serve as the only explanatory factor for policy changes in active labour market measures. Especially, in Denmark and Italy another stream, precisely not the problem stream alone, paved the way for an opening window and policy changes in active labour market policies. Here, the second hypothesis may be able to explain further developments that led to the changes.

The second hypothesis assumes that only in countries where the political and the policy stream couple with the problem stream and a policy window opens, a policy change can occur.

In the case of **Germany**, the scenario is quite easily to reconstruct. The problem that current active labour market policies are not sufficient to achieve the best integration for the newcomers was recognised by most politicians as well as by academic experts. The suggestions from the latter were available already and very clear. Politically, the public mood’s shift to the right, visible in the rise of the populist right party AfD, put pressure on the German government, but mostly in terms of immigration and socio-cultural integration related topics. In the case of labour market policies, the political mood only played a minor role. I would argue that rationality played – on the other hand – a crucial role in the development of the labour market measures in the integration law. This is not only because suggestions from both, academic experts and employers, were incorporated almost one-to-one in the new law. The role of the latter, of employers, may also serve as explanatory factor in the political stream. Since they are part of the apprenticeship system and they are the ones hiring asylum seekers and refugees in the end, their opinion was highly recognised by policy makers. All in all, the problem that was recognised as a firing issue coupled with policy and political stream. The open problem window led to the policy change.

In the **United Kingdom**, the opposite happened. Due to the low influx, refugees and asylum seekers were not regarded as problem for labour market related issues. Politically, due to the upcoming Brexit referendum politicians were either busy with other pressing problems or would never consider to implemented policies putting the focus more on immigration. Political costs for that would be too high. Too many political barriers hindered a window to

open and there was a lack of a problem linking asylum seekers and refugees with labour market. This made a change in active labour market policies impossible.

The situation is different in **Denmark** and **Italy**, but similar for the comparison of the two countries. We have seen that the refugee crisis was firstly in both countries not regarded as a problem linked with labour market. Due to political discussions and especially pressure from receiving municipalities, the national governments in Italy and Denmark had to find solutions to unburden municipalities. In Denmark, policy makers fall back to a previous measure which was detected in the policy stream whereas in Italy the measures were not as concrete and did not have their origin in policy suggestions from the political stream. We can observe that in Denmark the political window opened when municipalities pushed the national government to find solutions together with employers. I would argue that in Italy the window was mixed. Pressure from political forces made a shift in the problem categorisation possible that in the end was so pressing that solutions in terms of the measures needed to be installed. All in all, the second hypothesis H2 can be confirmed.

To draw a bow back to general active labour market policies, in all three countries policies or regulations towards refugees resemble those towards unemployed natives. In the **UK** which was selected as a country case due its liberal welfare regime no specific policies could be detected at all. The most important active labour market policy is *incentive reinforcement* which ideally fits into the liberal welfare approach. People, being unemployed natives or asylum seekers/refugees, should be pushed into work by making welfare dependency as unattractive as possible. **Italy**, on the other hand, represents the Southern European welfare model when looking at active labour market policies towards asylum migrants. The regionalisation and the lack of activation measures provided by the Italian state for Italians resembles the way policies are designed for asylum seekers. Employment assistance is offered for asylum seekers, but only in terms of their labour market access. Besides, the projects INSIDE and REVaLUe aim to prepare asylum seekers for the labour market access. Human capital investment adumbrates. **Denmark**, representative of the social democratic welfare regime, invests into the human capital of its refugees in the integration programme. With the newly implemented IGU and bonus schemes it also intended to assist refugees better with finding employment. This is not in line with the focus of its focus on incentive reinforcement in the general active labour market policies. Other than the countries above, Denmark seems

to have taken policy briefs and international evaluations into account that advocate specific measures regarded as a complement to generic activation policies. The same can be detected in **Germany**. The newly developed active labour market policies for refugees focus on employment assistance which was also emphasised before the crisis - and human capital investment. Both were demanded by employers which indicates that the general labour market characteristics also had an impact on the way the country dealt with the crisis. In Germany, employers pay half of all social costs, thus their interest in well-trained employees is high. As they also contribute to the potential training of asylum migrants, politicians do have to take their suggestions into account. With more legal certainty for apprenticeships for asylum seekers, Germany has followed its path to emphasise occupational speciality. All in all, we can see that the labour market specific patterns across countries are also expressed in their approaches for labour market integration of refugees. However, other than expected, they do not entail typical activation measures, such as upskilling or training schemes, but more facilitators for employment, such as easier legal access or placement schemes. This is against suggestions by international organisations and experts who recommended to put more emphasis on training and skills assessment. Looking at the newly established measures, priority on labour market integration does not automatically mean more training offers for the target group. The policy of Germany and Italy to ease the labour market access rather indicates that countries aim to push asylum migrants as soon as possible into employment – whether this is sustainable or not. Occupation that is – according to Bonoli – an old not practiced type of active labour market policy stages its comeback in two countries. Germany and Italy installed programmes that aim at (almost) unpaid occupation of asylum seekers. This study also confirms Bonoli's criticism on the dichotomist distinction between negative and positive active labour market policies that do not take employment assistance into account. Most newly implemented measures entail this category. A reason for that is that asylum migrants have very little experience in the country specific labour market and therefore are reliant on support.

Limitations

Herewith, I would like to give some space to several limitations this research paper entails. Firstly, the data gathering was highly difficult for Italy due to my lack of Italian language proficiency. I am sure that for the analysis of all three streams, but also during the research

on potential policy changes, I would have found a lot more if I was able to speak and especially read Italian. Debates in which the problem definition of the refugee crisis and political bargaining are visible were almost exclusively in Italian and therefore not available for me. Fortunately, I was able to compensate this lack with four expert interviews. Similar difficulties occurred in the case of Denmark. Here as well, I talked to two experts.

Even if we found interview partners for the project, the search was quite difficult. Due to a very low response rate from invited experts, we had to extend the selection criteria for this group. After having started with the aim of finding experts for national policies, we ended up interviewing experts that were more familiar with the local level. On the other hand, one could argue that national policies in general are more discussed and mostly known by any expert.

Another limitation linked with content is the lack of knowledge on the qualifications of asylum seekers and refugees. One could argue that countries not only respond differently because of their affectedness of the crisis, but also because the composition of asylum migrants differ from country to country. Since countries themselves meet serious obstacles to assess 'their' migrants' qualifications and skill level, I did not find any reliable statistics on that.

Furthermore, regional differences were not considered in this research paper. It aimed at national policy changes, but nevertheless, in some countries, particularly Italy, regions may have experienced great policy developments that should have been part of the analysis, too. But again, the problem of language barrier appears accompanied by time and space limitations for this thesis.

The most disturbing shortcoming of this research are variables that may had an impact but could not be considered the way they should have been. Not all relevant factors in all three streams were analysed to give a complete overview of the policy processes in the four countries. Especially, hidden lobby groups that are not visible in the political arena could have influenced the way countries responded to the influx. This is reinforced by the fact that the literature review for Italy and Denmark may not include all relevant articles and most facts are based on the expert interviews. Important stakeholders may be missing in the analysis, too. Additionally, some factors may have been overemphasized in the research. For example, in Denmark, I have argued that the previous measure Icebreaker to foster labour market access of highly skilled could serve as role model for the IGU schemes. This was the only point that I could find in the policy stream. Even if this came up in the expert interview, the technical

feasibility of this Icebreaker measure may not have been the main reason to implement a similar scheme for all refugees. One could say here that I overemphasized the role of it in the policy developments in Denmark. Individual reasons of policy makers may also carry weight, but could not be taken into consideration in this research paper. Concluding, more time and sufficient proficiency in Italian and Danish would have led to more extensive or even different findings in this research paper.

More employment assistance and easy labour market access, but what next?

I assumed in the introduction that European countries agree on the fact that the most important step to take is the integration of recognised refugees. With the European Union's definition of integration, the focus is on labour market and welfare participation. This research shows that the countries do not necessarily agree on the fact that recognised refugees should be integrated very soon. The divergence between the countries already starts with the way immigration is perceived. The refugee crisis was acknowledged as a problem, but for three from four countries as a crisis in terms of illegal immigration. The political debate circulated around this issue, too which made a policy debate on labour market related issues almost impossible. During the last year and a half, there was neither time nor space nor for politicians to actually start thinking of labour market related policy suggestions since the public would always prefer policies tackling illegal immigration. The most evident example here is the United Kingdom, where no change at all occurred. Denmark and Italy – being somewhere in the middle – show how affected policymakers on the local level who are entirely involved in welfare provision made a policy change possible. For the future, one may assume that labour market related policy changes targeting at asylum migrants may not take place right after an influx, but rather after a certain time. Either because labour market participation is expected to start not right after the arrival and secondly, unexpected influx of immigrants rather lead to discussions on immigration than on integration. The only exception is Germany, where a major change occurred. This maybe happened since Germany was affected more than other countries, but also has an immense emphasis on labour market integration in its immigrant integration history. Besides, Germany is the only country where academic expertise was taken into account. Policy makers did not make use of expertise from integration experts in Italy, the United Kingdom and Denmark. Integration experts are the key to successful integration since they are the ones being engaged with the topic always. However, we have seen that

political circumstances either impede this cooperation or lead it to the opposite direction. Besides, the political culture in a country may be an important. For future policy developments, all circumstances, be they political, ideological or anything else, need to be considered.

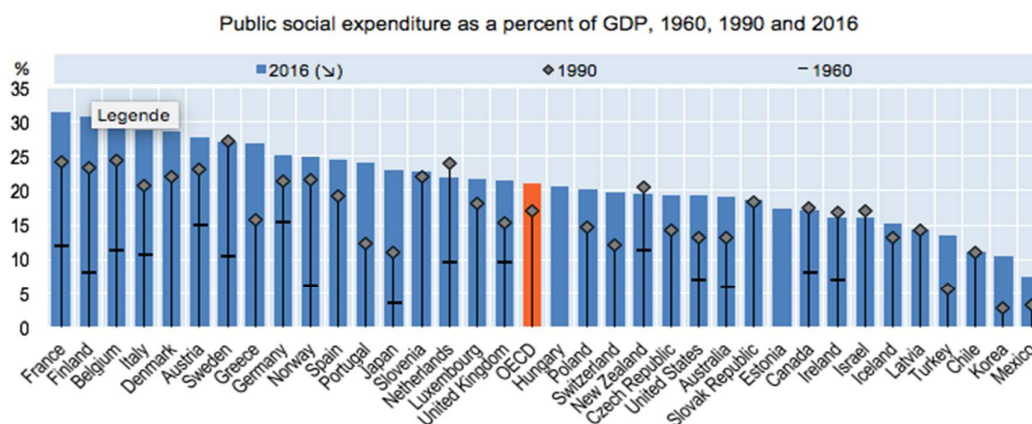
This study also reveals that asylum seekers should be considered as potential target group in labour market policies, too. Two countries, Germany and Italy, have eased access to labour market for this group and established programmes to either foster their occupation or even to prepare them for direct entrance to the formal labour market. Whereas Germany mostly limits the entitlement for the latter to those with high recognition rate, Italy offers voluntary work for all asylum seekers. These policies may be a consequence of the tailback in many authorities deciding on asylum applications. However, the opening of national labour markets to those who still have an uncertain legal status show that countries anticipate high numbers of asylum seekers also in the coming years. This is because one can assume that those arrived in the refugee crisis will sooner or later get a residence permit and hence that right to work anyway or a negative asylum decision and a request to leave the country.

The most unexpected finding of this research is the focus on employment assistance. Although this type of activation measures targets at people who have little experience in labour market and asylum migrants belong to this group, I expected more human capital investment. Especially, for a countries like Germany and Denmark where specific skills are indispensable for a successful labour market participation (Hall & Gingerich, 2009), one could assume more investment into human capital of the new residents. Experts indicate however that the main goal of policies was to bring them into employment as soon as possible. Regarding the previous statement by the OECD, this policy does not seem to be sustainable. If refugees perceived as one of the most vulnerable groups in labour market, more than employment assistance in form of laxer legal barriers should be developed.

Appendix

1. Figure 1

Figure 1. Public social spending is worth 21% of GDP on average across the OECD



Note:

Estimated for 2016, on the basis of national sources for non-European OECD countries, and/or OECD (2016), the OECD Economic Outlook 99 A, as in June 2016 and EC DG ECFIN (2016), the European Union's Annual Macro-economic database (AMECO) as at May 2016. For detail on the underlying methodology regarding estimates for recent years, and the detailed social expenditure programme data, see Adema, W., P. Fron and M. Ladaïque (2011), "Is the European welfare state really more expensive? Indicators on social spending, 1980-2012 and a manual to the OECD Social Expenditure database (SOEX)", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Paper No. 124 (www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure.htm).

2. Coding Scheme

a) Active labour market policies

Category/ Values	Incentive Reinforcement	Employment Assistance	Occupation	Human Capital Investment
	In work benefits	Placement services	Job creation schemes in public sector	Basic education
	Time limits on reciprocity	Job subsidies	Non-employment-related training programmes	Vocational training
	Benefit reduction	Counselling	Voluntary work	Upskilling
	Benefit conditionality	Job search programmes		Employment-related language training
	Sanctions	Skills assessment		
		Help in recognition of qualifications		
		Easier access to labour market		

b) Policy Process

- Impact of crisis on active labour market policies
- Occurrence of change
- Content of policy change
- Public discourse about crisis
- Academic impact on policies
- Political forces in debate
- Social partners' / Employers' association lobbying

3. Survey Questions

1. Are there any specific criteria for labour market access (e.g. legal status or length of stay)?
2. Are there any integration measures oriented at labour market integration (e.g. skill trainings, assistance, skill assessment)?
3. Are there any specific policies promoting entrepreneurship amongst refugees?

4. Interview Questions

a) Denmark

1. Can you identify whether the refugee crisis had a visible effect on Denmark's labour market policies?
2. We have found that there has been a tripartite agreement between the Danish government, the trade union and employer's associations. However, we did not find concrete measures that were implemented apart from the IGU schemes. Can you identify any other implemented and explicit measures regarding labour market integration of refugees?
3. Can you identify any other forces (beside the crisis) that can serve as explanatory factor for the policy change in labour market?
4. Can you elaborate on what type of active labour market policies integration measures for refugees focus the most (e.g. upskilling them, assisting them in finding a job, keeping them occupied with any type of work)?

b) Germany

1. In 2016, the *Integrationsgesetz* was passed including some changes in labour market policies. Can you find other forces that explain these changes (beside the crisis, e.g. changes in political system, power of social partners)?
2. Can you identify the focus of active labour market policies for refugees (e.g. keeping them occupied with any type of job, upskilling and training them, assisting them in finding jobs)?

c) Italy

1. According to your knowledge, have there been any changes in labour market policies after and due the refugee crisis in 2015?
2. If so, to what extent are these policies regulated and/or implemented on the national level?
3. Beside the refugee crisis itself, can you identify other factors that can explain the policy changes (such as policy feedback, public attitudes, role of social partners, economic conditions)?
4. If there are active labour market policies for refugees, can you explain on what type of activation they focus the most (e.g. upskilling and training them, keeping them occupied with any type of work, assisting them in finding a job, ..)?

d) The United Kingdom

1. Did the refugee crisis have any impact on British labour market policies?
2. If so, what did this impact entail? E.g. a change of policy?
3. Beside the crisis, are there other factors serving as a reason for changes?
4. If there are active labour market policies for refugees, can you explain on what type of activation they focus the most (e.g. upskilling and training them, keeping them occupied with any type of work, assisting them in finding a job, ..)?

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