

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Bachelor Thesis

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Bachelor circle: (Civic) Integration of Refugees

European Public Administration

University of Twente, Enschede (Netherlands)

Due: 29.06.2016

Word Count: 18.440

Refugee Labor Market Integration in Germany in the Initiative

‘Wir zusammen’ -

An analysis of three selected integration programs.

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the topic of refugees¹ in Germany and their challenge to get integrated into the German labor market. More specifically, the research question to answer is: *‘Can the integration programs, initiated by several German companies in the initiative called ‘Wir zusammen’, be successful in order to integrate refugees into the labor market? - An analysis applied to three labor market integration programs’*. This exploratory research establishes an overview on the integration programs that are provided by a selected number of German companies in the initiative ‘Wir zusammen’ in 2016. With the help of the so called ‘Patenschaftsversprechen’ i.e. ‘sponsorship promises’ that have been made by the three companies in the initiatives and interviews hold with one contact person of each company, these three case studies assess the success of the programs. The analysis of this thesis comes to the conclusion that the ideas presented in the programs are a good start to address the issue of refugee labor market integration, especially if they include practical as well as language training.

¹People having to leave their country of origin because of being a member of a persecuted social group (McGhee, 2001).

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1.) Introduction

'Over centuries, it has been immigrants and refugees who have been part of the alchemy of any country's success: they are driven, hungry and talented and add to the pool of entrepreneurs, innovators and risk-takers' (Ian Goldin in Hutton, 2015)

This quote by Ian Goldin (2015), professor at the University of Oxford in England and migration specialist, states how important migration is and always has been for Europe. However, the exceptionally high number of refugees and migrants coming to Europe in 2015 brought up a crisis inside the European Union (EU) and questions the laws and regulations that have been established in the unified political system in the past years. Travelling across the Mediterranean Sea or the Bosphorus, the largest part of refugees is coming from countries such as Syria, Afghanistan and the Iraq (BBC, 2016). Due to disastrously living conditions caused by civil wars and increasing influence of terrorists in the region, the number of people leaving their country and fleeing to Europe increased drastically in 2015. The German open-arms policy (Hutton, 2015) has made the country the preferred destination of refugees during this crisis. The lack of coordinated distribution between the EU countries and the exposure of the Dublin Regulations² thus caused the fact that in 2015 the largest part of refugees has made their way to Germany. The difficult task the country has to face now is to integrate this large number of people into its society (Woitas, 2016).

As a result, the topic that has been selected for this thesis in order to address this very recent topic of civic integration of refugees in Germany during the current influx to Europe is one important part of this integration: The integration of refugees into the German labor market. The analysis deals with Germany not only because the largest part of refugees tries to come and settle down there, but especially as a result of Germany's good economic situation (OECD, 2015b). The spontaneous helpfulness of the people in the country in 2015 inspired German companies to reach out to refugees and to give them the opportunity to get in contact with German employers in order to be able to enter the labor market (Ritzer, 2016). Based on this, different approaches on labor market integration programs have been made in 2016 in order to address this great challenge with joint action.

In general, providing refugees with the possibility to enter the labor market quickly does not only enable them to become part of the society and be integrated faster, it helps the German social system as well (Zimmermann, 2015). Making refugees work right after their arrival in Germany lowers the expenditures of financial support made by the state and at the same time increases public incomes through tax payments (OECD, 2015a). Another reason why this topic is of great importance is the fact

² The Dublin Regulation is a European Law that determines which Member State is responsible for examining an asylum application. In most cases it is the state through which the asylum seeker enters the EU first (European Commission, 2016).

that the reception of refugees can lead to economic growth since they will be in need of goods and services which increases purchase power. Furthermore, they might be able to fill the lack of skilled workers Germany has to face at the moment (Aiyar et al., 2016).

1.1.) The Program ‘Wir zusammen’

Coming back to the topic addressed in this thesis, it has to be clarified that integration programs initiated by German companies have not been subject to academic research yet. This lack of information is intended to be filled by this thesis as a first attempt. Focusing on the overall topic ‘Employment of refugees in Germany’, the Bertelsmann Foundation gives a first idea on the reasons why it is important to make refugees work early in general and additionally tries to establish how this could be done (Thränhardt, 2015). This study is thus taken as a starting point to assess what should be done in order to help refugees in finding work in Germany. The theoretical part is followed by looking at programs German companies are advertising in the media, especially those of the initiative called ‘Wir zusammen’ and evaluating their success in helping refugees in their labor market integration. ‘Wir zusammen’ is an initiative established by Ralph Dommermuth, inventor and president of the United Internet AG, a German internet services company (United Internet, 2016). The initiative, which would be called ‘We together’ in English, aims at providing German companies a platform for presenting their ideas concerning the challenge of integrating the large number of refugees into the German labor market. It further aims at inspiring as many companies and people as possible to start their own initiative or get engaged in one of those that are already being presented on the website (Wir Zusammen, 2016). Therefore, it is of high interest for the research topic of this thesis.

In order to address the question whether and why the German integration programs are actually successful (or not), this paper will provide an overview on three selected programs out of the ‘Wir zusammen’ initiative and establishes their quality by assessing them in depth. The overall success will be analyzed on the basis of two different approaches that jointly form a concept of success in labor market integration.

1.2.) Formulation of the Research Question

As stated before, the research question addressed in this paper is:

‘Can the integration programs, initiated by several German companies in the initiative called ‘Wir zusammen’, be successful in order to integrate refugees into the labor market? - An analysis applied to three labor market integration programs’.

Thus, this research seeks to address whether refugees are provided with some form of ‘Step-In’ program through the initiatives of the selected companies that help them in getting to know the German (work) culture, how to find a proper job and how to be able to start a living in Germany (UNHCR, 2013b). The recommendations established at the end of this paper on an ideal integration program is intended to be the starting point for politicians to find a proper solution to the problem of refugee labor market integration in Germany.

Looking deeper at this topic, further (sub-)questions need to be answered in order to come to a conclusion. They are:

- *What does the concept of integration stand for?*
- *What does integration into the labor market mean?*
- *What exactly is the ‘Wir zusammen’ program and what are its objectives?*
- *What forms of integration programs provided by German companies exist in ‘Wir zusammen’?*
- *Which programs are interesting to be analyzed further and why?*
- *What are the requirements that need to be fulfilled by the refugees in order to get into the programs?*
- *Which factors make these programs (un)successful?*
- *Can these programs serve as an overall solution for the refugee crisis?*
- *Which conclusions can be drawn?*
- *Can politicians be able to improve the situation of refugees in Germany with the help of the initiatives and should they increase the number of programs dealing with the integration of refugees into the German labor market?*
- *What incentives can or should be given by politicians to do so?*

The unit of analysis of this thesis focuses on is ‘*integration of refugees into the German labor market*’ which is further assessed by the variables ‘*German companies*’ and ‘*integration programs*’. In this case the independent variables are the companies selected since they provide the integration programs. These programs furthermore serve as the dependent variable that might be the subject to lead to successful integration. As already explained before, for the setting the focus will be on Germany.

1.3.) Scientific and Social Relevance of the Research

The topic ‘integration of refugees into the labor market’ is generally of high scientific and social relevance. It is essential for scientists and politicians to get an overview on the situation that the German society faces after receiving over one million refugees in the year 2015 of which 63,1 % were in the working age (Table 1). Integration into the labor market is the basis for settling down since the possi-

bility to work establishes opportunities for refugees to start a new life in Germany (BAMF, 2016). This is not only essential for the society as such, so it does not split up into different societal groups, but for the social state because it does not need to provide for them through social payments any longer (Zimmermann, 2015). Academic research should therefore now more than ever focus on determining the factors that underpin proper integration. Politicians, especially in Germany, have to react quickly to the refugee influx and implement policies that focus on easier integration. Thus, academic research such as this thesis is able to gain better understanding on the factors that determine integration and further establish strategies for successful refugee integration. Being able to base political ideas on academic findings can make the process of policy implementation easier and the programs more successful. Thus this study aims at being the basis for reviewing this topic and consequently giving an idea on how to improve the integration programs already existing in Germany.

Age (in years)	Percentage (in %)
<18 (not working)	35,4
18 - 40	53,6
40 - 50	6,7
50 - 60	2,8
>60 (not working)	1,4
Total % of refugees in working age	63,1

Table 1: Age structure of asylum seekers in Germany in 2013, underpinning the potential of the refugee influx (own illustration based on data of the BAMF (BAMF, 2016)).

1.4.) Structure of the Thesis

The exact setup of the thesis will be the following: As a first step, the theory and previous research that analyze which factors are required in an integration program in order to be successful are presented. The topic of the importance of work for refugees is the starting point to look at the different integration programs that have been initiated by ‘Wir zusammen’ (Thränhardt, 2015). This will be the second part of this paper. Describing selected cases of the program and providing the advantages and disadvantages of them will make it possible to look at the third part, the analysis of its success. This will be done with the help of data provided by the companies and gathered in interviews with them. Making use of the theories by de Vroome and van Tubergen (Thomas de Vroome, 2010) and the SMART criteria (Mannion, 1995) brought up in the theory part enables this study to come to a conclusion as a last step. The conditions required for a successful program will be specified.

2.) Conceptualization

2.1.) Conceptualization of Integration

As a first step, the concept of integration has to be defined further. Integration is a very broad topic thus there is no general and simple definition for it. Integration as a concept to address immigrants³ can be defined in many different ways.

As described by George Lemaitre (2007), integration is the ‘notion of an economic/social convergence between the immigrant and [the] native population with respect to a number of statistical measures, such as the unemployment rate, the employment to population ratio, average earnings, school achievement, home ownership, fertility rates, voting behaviour, participation in community organisations, etc., without this similarity necessarily implying any abandonment of home country culture and beliefs’ (Lemaitre, 2007). Comparing all these factors between immigrants and natives makes it, according to Lemaitre, possible to draw conclusions on the level of integration obtained. In contrast to integration stands assimilation. Assimilation is defined as ‘acceptance of, and behaviour in accordance with, host country values and beliefs, including similarity of economic and social outcomes’ (Lemaitre, 2007). This process might uproot the immigrant and focuses largely on the adaption of the new culture while not considering keeping up the immigrants’ roots.

This paper will use another definition of the concept of integration expressed in the UNHCR Research 2012/2013 ‘A new beginning: refugee integration in Europe’ which is based on the Canadian approach of looking at integration (UNHCR, 2013b). According to this research, integration stays in contrast to settlement. The latter is said to be ‘the immediate period after arrival when a newcomer orientates and integration is used for the longer-term process of becoming a member of society’ (UNHCR, 2013b). Becoming a member of society includes becoming part of it by adapting habits and customs of the receiving society and joining societal activities such as participation i.e. in a sports club. This definition consciously leaves open if the immigrant maintains links to his or her country of origin (such as the own culture and background) when integrating into the new society: ‘migration [today] no longer means leaving behind one set of connections and replacing them with another’ (UNHCR, 2013a). This enables the immigrant to connect to the new society while still keeping up his or her roots. Therefore, this definition appears to be more appropriate for the research done in this thesis than the first that has

³ The term ‘immigrant’ is in this thesis considered as an expression to cover both immigrants and refugees. It is thus always referring not only to non-persecuted migrants but also covering those that have to leave their country because of persecution and are therefore considered to be refugees (Kogan, 2011)

been stated in this section. In the context of labor market integration the abandonment of the refugees' roots is not required, nor necessary.

2.2.) Conceptualization of Labor Market Integration

Integration into the labor market itself needs to be defined further as well. As already mentioned before, this topic has not yet been addressed much in academic research. The definitions that can be found are thus in accordance with each other. This thesis thus takes the definition established by Bijl (2008) as a starting point. It explains that a refugee is considered to be adequately integrated in the labor market when he or she upholds a permanent job in the receiving country and does not have to face challenges in the daily work life due to his or her legal status in the country.

Overall speaking, it is about mutual accommodation in the hosting country (Bijl, 2008) and about showing the same labor market outcomes as the native population. This can further be combined with Lemaitre's (2007) statement on labor market integration which says that all this does not imply social integration (Lemaitre, 2007). Thus, this issue is in the following considered as the obtainment of a long-term employment of the refugee in the hosting country without looking at the refugees' integration in the society as such.

Coming back to the issue of refugee integration, the most important factor to focus on for refugees reaching their country of destination is finding a job (UNHCR Austria, 2013). The issue of refugee labor market integration should be addressed in the very beginning of a refugees' stay in the receiving country. This is emphasized several times in the study made by the Bertelsmann Foundation as well (Thränhardt, 2015).

Integration into the society as such is more successful on the basis of proper labor market integration, especially because of the great possibility of obtaining contact to locals, reaching more confidence and seeing a perspective of a future in the receiving country through work (Enders and Doleghs, 2015). The UNDP summarizes this as follows: 'It is essential to make human lives productive, worthwhile and meaningful. It enables people to earn a living, gives them a means to participate in society, provides them with security and gives them a sense of dignity. Work is thus inherently and intrinsically to human development' (UNDP, 2015).

Thus, successful integration of refugees is the biggest challenge Germany currently has to face by cause of the large number of refugees that has come to Germany in 2015 (BAMF, 2016). Integration, including labor market integration, is the basis for preventing refugees from unemployment, being in need of social help and not being able to settle down properly (Zimmermann, 2015).

Proper integration into a society includes contact to the civil society, becoming part of it, adapting the habits and customs of it so the refugee is able to build up a life in Germany. All this is not only the aim of the ‘Integrationsgesetz’⁴ passed in the German Bundestag on May 24th, 2016 (Spiegel Online, 2016). It is the basis of the integration programs by several German companies, such as the ones being part of the initiative ‘Wir zusammen’. This initiative aims at giving refugees coming to Germany a career perspective and showing them the chances the country can offer them. It stands for tolerance, social responsibility and openness towards the people reaching Germany. The initiative, which is well known for its commercials on German television, tries to establish a platform for companies to show their projects and further inspire a great number of other companies and people to become part of it and join them in tackling the challenge of integration of refugees in Germany (Wir Zusammen, 2016).

⁴ The ‘Integrationsgesetz’ which is called ‘integration law’ in English, was passed in the German Bundestag in May 2016 and not only aims at supporting refugees but also demanding for their cooperation. It provides new integration courses and special programs and at the same time requires certain duties that have to be fulfilled by the refugees. Only then they are given the legal certificate for asylum in Germany (Tagesschau, 2016).

3.) Theoretical Approach

Increasing numbers of refugees reaching Europe and especially Germany call for organized social as well as labor market integration in the host country (Bevelander, 2016). The topic of economic integration of immigrants in host countries has been addressed in many researches such as by Prof. Dr. Kogan on the topic of ‘New immigrants – old disadvantage patterns? Labour market integration of recent immigrants into Germany’ (Kogan, 2011) or the European study done by the UNHCR on the concept of ‘Refugee integration in Europe’ (UNHCR, 2013b). Both address the disadvantages that immigrants face in hosting countries and explain how to better integrate them in general. Nevertheless, very few studies have been conducted on the more specific topic of economic integration of refugees.

This certain group of people is nonetheless of academic relevance since earlier researches have shown that refugees generally appear to have lower employment rates than immigrants (Bevelander, 2016). This thesis thus addresses especially the time shortly after the arrival of refugees that are supported by labor market integration programs in Germany. An example for such a successful program has been presented by Pieter Bevelander. His research discusses the topic of ‘Integrating refugees into labor markets’ (Bevelander, 2016). The program he describes can be found in Sweden where refugees are provided with ‘introduction’ assistance for two years. It includes language training as well as knowledge about the Swedish society and labor market and further evaluates and acridities earlier skills.

Altogether, as a basis for the program analysis done in this thesis there will be on the one hand factors addressed that have been found in a previous research on this topic in order to integrate refugees successfully in the host country’s labor market (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010). On the other hand an overall analysis of program success will be done on the basis of the criteria described in chapter 3.2. (Mannion, 1995).

3.1.) Factors on Program Success based on de Vroome and van Tubergen

In order to address the question whether the three selected refugee labor market integration programs can be successful, different labor market integration factors have to be included in the program. As described in a research done by Thomas de Vroome and Frank van Tubergen on the topic of ‘The Employment Experience of Refugees in the Netherlands’ (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010), there are four factors requested.

More generally speaking, the research by de Vroome and van Tubergen focuses on the economically disadvantaged position of refugees. With the help of survey data on refugees from several countries

living in the Netherlands, they analyze the relation between employment and several factors. Factors found in the research relevant for this thesis have been:

host-country-specific education, language proficiency, contacts with natives and work experience (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010).

Two other factors the authors lay a focus on concerning successful labor market integration of refugees are health problems and admission experiences (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010). These two additional explanations of economic integration are new factors found by de Vroome and van Tubergen and therefore not as relevant as the other four factors which have been established already over time. Furthermore, both factors require questioning of individual refugees on their experiences and would lead too far for the analysis applied in this thesis but. Nonetheless, this could be a topic for further research in this study field in the future.

The four factors of successful refugee labor market integration described before are taken over as factors to be included in the company programs. This ex-ante approach is thus able to predict, on the basis of the four factors, if integration programs can be successful or not and can categorize program success (Bijl, 2008).

Host-Country-Specific Education:

Coming to the four categories mentioned, the first factor that is addressed is education. The assumption that skills foster economic integration is of high interest. Thus, the recognition of studies the refugee has received in his or her home country is the first step in order to reach successful labor market integration (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010). Presenting a certified diploma to future employers, thus being enabled to apply for a position proper to the capabilities existent is a key factor for finding an employment. Therefore the *host-country-specific education* is one of the main issues that should be organized right at the beginning of the refugees' stay in the receiving country. As a result, the company providing an integration program should include this. Helping refugees in transferring their qualifications obtained in their home country i.e. recognizing a reference letter legally to the German standards would facilitate the ongoing integration process highly (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010). Another idea to fulfill these criteria is to provide refugees with new certificates about their theoretical education qualifications and abilities that have been supervised during the program at the company. Testing the refugees' educational level and making them reflect on their strengths and weaknesses enables them to better understand the need for qualifications in certain areas, classify themselves objectively and to get to know the employments offered in Germany (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2016).

Language Proficiency:

The second factor to include is *language proficiency*. Teaching refugees the host country's language is one of the most important conditions in order to get properly integrated into a working society. This

enables the refugee to find work (Esser, n.d.) since language skills are required in most professions in Germany. Not only is the capability of talking to people provided by speaking the language. Building up a social network is further based on this. The social network is able to show the refugee the new culture and habits he or she has to live in. Furthermore, it is necessary to speak the language properly in order to be able to apply for a job. Since interviews are often held in the country's own language it is more difficult to find work without speaking i.e. German (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010). The company providing a refugee labor market integration program therefore has to focus on providing refugees coming to their company with a language course in order to be successful. This gives the refugees the possibility of connecting better to people inside the company and further establishes an easier understanding of the work the refugee is told to do (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010).

Contacts with Natives:

The third factor to include in labor market integration programs is *contacts with natives*. This factor is deeply connected to the second that deals with the issue of language obtainment. To get in contact with people that live and work in the receiving country enables the refugee not only to establish a social community, find friends and become part of the society (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010). It further gives him or her the possibility of finding a permanent employment more easily. The contact to people who are part of the working society in i.e. Germany is the basis for getting in touch with companies, thus finding more opportunities for a future employment. A social network with i.e. Germans is thus an important condition for finding work (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010). Additionally, it is more likely to find work that suits the talents and abilities of the refugee seeing that the people in the network know the refugees' background and have better resources. The responsibility of the company providing an integration program is therefore to let refugees get in contact with their 'normal' employees so they can establish a network and social contacts for the future.

Work Practice:

The last factor that needs to be addressed in the programs is *work practice*. According to de Vroome and van Tubergen this is a condition difficult to fulfill (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010). Due to the fact that work practice obtained in the refugees' home country does not get recognized by companies in Germany, even the legal certificates presented are often useless. Since work practice of the home country is not comparable with this in i.e. Germany due to different standards e.g. in operational procedures, certificates are not accepted. Thus this factor focuses in this thesis only on the practice obtained in Germany. Most companies have stated that this is the only possibility to guarantee work practice according to their standards (UNHCR, 2013b). Nevertheless, it is difficult for refugees to obtain proper work practice already now, since this is a factor that might be more accessible after a longer period of the refugees' stay in Germany. Altogether, it is required that the companies providing a refugee labor market integration program write a report or more specifically a review on the work

abilities the refugee has shown. This recommendation can serve for future job applications in Germany (De Vroome and van Tubergen, 2010).

Summing up, all four factors expressed need to be part of the integration programs that are going to be analyzed in this thesis in order to be successful. Accordingly, if one of the four conditions is missing, it will be concluded that this program is less successful in the integration of a refugee into the labor market than if it would include all.

3.2.) SMART Categories for Program Success

The following criteria called ‘SMART-criteria’ are a concept of measuring the success of the implementation of a program that has been established with a specific aim (Mannion, 1995). It furthermore aims at reviewing an initiative that is presented to the public and provides criteria to guide the objectives of project management (Mannion, 1995). These criteria serve as a second basis and further conditions in order to analyze the success of the integration programs. These categories establish whether the programs’ objectives are clear and categorize the program as successful if it helps refugees into permanent employment. It enables the following analysis to give an outlook on the factors that are missing or not clearly formulated in the company programs but should be addressed further in order to integrate refugees successfully into the German labor market. Nonetheless, not all objectives must be quantified at all levels since more abstract objectives can in combination lead to a more successful program planning (Mannion, 1995). Altogether, a recommendation for improvement and an idea for a national solution will then be established at the end of the program analysis.

Coming back to the ‘SMART’ criteria, the word itself is split up into its letters, thus addresses the following five categories: *specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound* (see Figure 1). In order to properly assess the integration programs in its parts, those criteria are further operationalized in sub-questions which are based on Mannions’ SMART requirements (Mannion, 1995). Altogether, this idea of evaluating a concept makes it possible to give a look-out and an ex-ante position on the success of the different refugee labor market integration programs. The following questions thus have to be answered properly in order to come to a conclusion on whether a program is feasible and can be successful or not (Mannion, 1995).

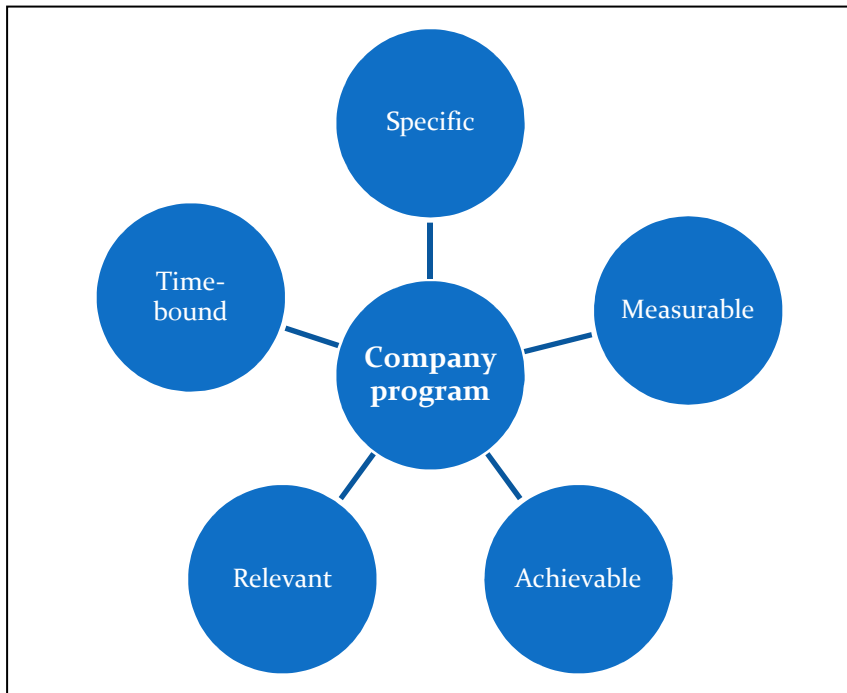


Figure 1: SMART categories (own illustration based on Mannions' SMART requirements (Mannion, 1995)).

Specific:

As a first condition, there has to be a specific goal of the employers apparent in the integration program initiated by a company. It has to be clearly formulated and unambiguous (Mannion, 1995). In this case, the following questions should be answered properly in order to reach a high level of success:

- What does the program want to accomplish?
- Why is the program initiated?
- Is there a specific reason, purpose or benefit of it?
- Who is involved in the program?
- Where does the program take place?
- Which requirements and constraints are made?

Measurable:

The next factor the integration program has to fulfill in order to be successful is concrete criteria on how to measure the programs' progress. If it is not measurable, there is no progress (Mannion, 1995). Therefore, the following questions have to be answered:

- How much money is spent?
- How many people are addressed/places available?
- How will the accomplishment of the aim be measured?

Achievable:

As third factor there have to be realistic and attainable goals in the program. They should not be out of reach or below standard performance (Mannion, 1995). The questions to address are the following:

- How can the goal of the program be accomplished?
- How realistic is the goal based on other constraints?

Relevant:

The fourth issue, the relevance of the program, is about the importance of its goals. This is assured by a broad support in the society, broadly attained resources and an idea that is driven by the company team itself (Mannion, 1995). The following questions need to be answered:

- Does the integration program seem worthwhile?
- Is it the right time to initiate it?
- Does it match the needs of refugees?
- Is the company the right institution to address this issue?
- Is the program applicable in the current socio-economic environment?

Time-bound:

The last factor to address in order to be able to measure success of a program is the time limit. The ground goals have to be in a time-frame and therefore focus either on a target date, a deadline or a due date (Mannion, 1995). Questions to be answered are the following:

- When is the program intended to take place (beginning and ending)?
- What can be done six weeks/months from now?
- What can be done today?

4.) Research Methodology

4.1.) Research Design

On account of the fact that this analysis tries to find out how successful labor market integration can take place, the focus will not only be held on reviewing secondary literature i.e. the researches done by de Vroome and van Tubergen but on primary literature i.e. interviews hold with one representative of each company. Taking both into account the relationship between integration programs and the successfulness of them in order to integrate refugees into the German labor market can be explained. Finally, this thesis will give an outlook on incentives that should be made by German politics and will provide a basis for the implementation of a national program for refugee labor market integration. Therefore, the study type can be classified as exploratory. In order to assess the research question in the most appropriate way, a cross sectional study is used as research design, analyzing all patterns at the same point in time and focusing on a case-study as sub-type.

A research design in an academic research aims at using the method of analysis that is best in excluding as much as possible the chance that a causal statement is incorrectly rejected or confirmed (NYU, 2016). The topic of integrating refugees into the labor market is very broad. Thus, it is hard to generalize findings that only look at the overall level of refugees being able to enter the labor market and not on any other details (Aiyar et al., 2016). Therefore, a case study appears to be the best method in order to analyze whether the integration programs are successful or not. Case studies in general aim at finding a deep understanding of a topic that might serve as the basis for a further research on the topic (NYU, 2016).

Looking at the topic at the micro level and assessing the programs that are provided by German companies in order to facilitate the integration of refugees might furthermore lead to a better understanding of the overall number of refugees in (un)employment. Difficulties refugees have to face resulting from this when searching for work in Germany might explain the low numbers of refugees in work and enable the government to improve this situation (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2016).

Coming back to the research question addressed in this paper *‘Can the integration programs, initiated by several German companies in the initiative called ‘Wir zusammen’, be successful in order to integrate refugees into the labor market?’* it has been intended to formulate hypotheses arising from this. Since this research is exploratory, it is not possible to come up with any. This is caused by the fact that the hypotheses can only be answered on the basis of the three cases studied which in academic terms is not irrelevant. Moreover, it is not possible to make an overall generalization or establish a review on the actual success of the programs in real life yet. Since this analysis is a pre- and not a post-analysis it is not possible to reject or underpin the hypotheses. Nevertheless, as this thesis aims at being the start-

ing point for further research on the topic, the lack of hypotheses is not influencing the analysis of this thesis.

4.2.) Case Selection

As already mentioned before this study lays its focus on Germany and the refugees arriving there. During the case selection the initiatives that deal with the topic of civic integration of refugees have been reviewed. The initiative ‘Wir zusammen’ which is a new program that aims at giving refugees the possibility to integrate easier and more quickly into the German labor market has then been selected (Wir Zusammen, 2016). The initiative aims at helping Germany with the extensive social and economic changes that have come up due to the one million refugees that have reached the country. As it is described on its website, the initiative aims at helping refugees to get integrated into the German society and to support them in finding a workplace. It explains that Germany has overcome this task already many times in the past and therefore can build up on its experiences. Looking at the spontaneous helpfulness in the country in 2015 inspired the initiative to get engaged with the newcomers and to overcome this great challenge with joint action. Accordingly, many companies in Germany share this conviction. Thus, ‘Wir zusammen’ established a platform to create an opportunity for companies to show their integration programs for the new arrivals (Wir Zusammen, 2016). Some well-known companies such as Volkswagen, Bosch and Daimler have launched first integration projects (Wir Zusammen, 2016). They promote the long-term potential of the refugee influx that is said to open up the immigration to Germany and can help lowering the demographic change. Altogether, ‘Wir zusammen’ is about shaping positive social change in Germany and aims at contributing to the openness and mutual understanding in the society. It becomes clear in the following citation: “‘We together’ provides a platform to present the projects of the companies. We provide an overview on the measures that are already carried out and acknowledge the dedication of the employees of the participating companies. Above all, we want more companies to participate and to get inspired to create integration projects or to join the existing ones’ (Wir Zusammen, 2016).

Since this initiative included 64 companies at the moment of the case selection⁵, the circle of companies to analyze was relatively small from the beginning. Now that the extent of this paper is limited

⁵ At the beginning of this research in February 2016 there were only 36 companies participating in ‘Wir zusammen’. Due to good promotion in the media, the number increased quickly. The case selection of this thesis took place in April 2016 when there were 64 companies participating. In May 2016 there were already 82 companies promoting their integration programs on the website. It is thus possible that the initiative becomes even more successful and the number of companies increases again also

and not all companies eager to cooperate it is nevertheless not possible to study all 64 companies. Therefore, a sampling number of three companies was chosen due to feasibility issues. This enables the analysis in this thesis to find advantages as well as disadvantages that can be assessed in order to improve the programs in the future.

The three companies have been selected by looking at their initiative programs. Selecting three companies that address the refugee labor market integration in a very different manner was the first criterion. It appeared to be the best way for this analysis to choose the ‘most-different’ approach, seeing that this enables the analysis of this thesis to evaluate which program is more suitable and successful in integrating refugees into the German workforce and which not. Subsequently, hindering factors can be evaluated and help in drawing a conclusion on how to improve the programs. An additional selection variable for the companies has been their size. All three companies are substantial and leading in their field. Therefore, they represent a great number of employees and families, thus a big part of the German society. Accordingly, they can serve as an example for smaller companies in Germany that might not have financial resources to experiment with different integration programs. In addition, there has been more information available on these three companies which made it possible to establish contact to them and find suitable interview partners. The selection of one representative per company as interview partner was on the one hand based on the fact that it is difficult to find and further get in contact with a person at the company who is in charge of this very specific topic in the first place. On the other hand it was not possible to interview e.g. participating refugees since the companies themselves have not finished their review process with the refugees yet. Furthermore, the interview partners have been eager to cooperate in the interviews, thus were able to serve as primary source for this paper.

Thus, the selection criteria have been:

- Initiative programs and the courses provided in it (three different forms required)
- Size of the company (leading in Germany and acting globally)
- Information available (Details already in the ‘promises’ of ‘Wir zusammen’)
- Response of a contact person eager to cooperate/hold and interview

For the sake of privacy issues, the companies will be kept anonymous and addressed as company A, B and C in the following.

after the completion of this thesis. However, this does not have any effect on the analysis done in this research since it focuses on three selected programs only.

4.3.) Data Collection

The factors by de Vroome and van Tubergen (Tubergen, 2010) established in the theory section as well as the SMART-criteria described before (Mannion, 1995) will serve as the basis in order to evaluate the success of the programs in integrating refugees into the German labor market. Thus, the data to be collected has to be relevant for this. The data assessed for this study is qualitative. This appears to be the right type of data since only three cases are going to be addressed which appears to be a too small number for a quantitative study. Furthermore, it is not possible to get statistically relevant data already now since the programs have started only recently, thus cannot be reviewed in statistical terms yet.

As a first source of information, the 'Patenschaftsversprechen' i.e. 'sponsorship promises' of the three companies that can be found on the website of 'Wir zusammen' (Viessmann, 2015), (Riera, 2016), (Klusik, 2016) are reviewed. Looking at three companies in depth makes it possible to describe these particular cases in detail and learn from them (Brandt, 2007). The promises mentioned, a basic description of which form of program the company provides, give a basic setup and overview on the ideas that are being promoted (Wir Zusammen, 2016). They have been assessed in depth and were taken as basis for the interviews hold with the companies. All information lacking in the promises but required for the analysis have been addressed in the interviews in order to obtain comparable data from all three companies. The promises are therefore not mentioned in detail in the analysis but are instead fully included in the description of each company program and further part of the interview questions.

Possible threats to the validity of the information gathered in the interviews have been non-objective answers, more sensitivity towards the question than expected or interpersonal dynamics. Those risks have been addressed by the interviewer through appropriate preparation and by keeping the situation as objective as possible. Furthermore, the interviewee has been informed that the data gathered is used for the research in this thesis only and that he has the possibility to end the interview at any time.

The interviews were hold with one contact person of each of the selected companies and transcribed afterwards (see Data appendix). The questions posed made it possible to see whether the company programs include all factors and criteria necessary for successful labor market integration that has been established in the theory section. Furthermore, the interviews done with the companies have all been held over the telephone and recorded entirely. Due to the fact that all three companies are located in different parts of Germany and the contact persons were not able to schedule a meeting in person, this has been the most feasible approach to receive the answers required for the success of the upcoming analysis. It has been assured that the interviewees were all informed about the aim of the thesis, participated voluntarily and further approved the (anonymous) publishment of the data in this thesis.

With the help of the four factors by de Vroome and van Tubergen and the SMART criteria questions, it was possible to ask very specific questions relevant for this analysis. The questions focused on many variables in order to identify how the programs address certain circumstances, i.e. the refugee influx that is topic of interest. The questions have been adapted to each company program and are attached in the appendix. Hence, the qualitative data of this thesis is an original dataset. This enables this paper to look at all three concepts and criticize them properly on each variable.

5.) Data Analysis

Since this paper focuses on a qualitative study, the theories presented in the previous parts will be used in the data analysis in order to draw conclusions. The theories present conditions that are required in order to provide a successful refugee integration program for the labor market. This enables the analysis of the integration programs in ‘Wir zusammen’ as expressed in the previous section. The data, more specifically the promises and the interviews, can therewith be analyzed further. Using the theories it will be possible to find out which problems might occur in the programs and if they lead to successful integration of refugees in the long term or not. Additionally, the analysis of three cases only makes it possible to see the advantages and disadvantages of the specific programs.

5.1.) Case Description

To begin with, the labor market integration program of the biggest technological innovation company worldwide located in Germany, company A, will be analyzed. Company A provides orientation internships for asylum seekers who are still in the asylum procedure. This full-time internship aims at giving the refugees the opportunity to getting to know the German labor market. Company A offers 100 internships in 2016 in 14 different locations all over Germany and includes around 500 employees in this project (Friedrich, 2015). Furthermore, company A wants the refugees to reflect on their own qualifications, give them the possibility to socialize with Germans, especially through the support provided by the Buddy⁶, and thus establish a basis for their future career. Another idea company A has come up with are the so called ‘remedial classes’. These special classes offer places for 16 refugees each (64 refugees participating in total) and provide German courses and job training for the duration of six months. At the moment the classes are offered in four different locations that are spread all over Germany (Greenpeace, 2015).

The second company out of the initiative ‘Wir zusammen’ that is going to be addressed in the upcoming analysis will be the leading German company of the field of chemicals and pharmaceuticals, company B. Company B provides so called advanced training courses that give refugees language training and further provide job orientation and are intended to last for four months in total. These courses are part-time and established for 20 young refugees between 18 and 26 each and further include a language course in German that works on getting the refugees from TELC⁷ level B1 to B2. At the end of

⁶ The so called ‘Buddy’ is an employee of company A that is assigned to be the supervisor/companion for a refugee during the time he or she spends doing the internship at the company (Siemens, 2016).

⁷ The European Language Certificates: language tests based on international standards such as fairness, transparency and reliability that go from A1/A2 (basic language skills) over B1/B2 (independent use of language) to C1/C2 (proficient use of language) (TELC gGmbH, 2016).

this course company B gives the refugees the possibility to do a practical traineeship of one month at the company (Siebenmorgen, 2015). The overall aim of the course is to make refugees speak German fluently at a level with which they are able to start any type of apprenticeship in Germany. Furthermore, they want them to get to know the German labor market and to show them i.e. what knowledge they need to obtain to successfully find a long-term employment there (Siebenmorgen, 2015).

The third and last company initiative to be assessed further in this paper will be the refugee labor market integration program of the leading German company in the field of heating systems manufacture, company C. Company C provides full-time language courses, traineeships and internships for refugees at the same time which last between two and three months. Thereby, they want to give them the possibility to getting to know the German labor market in a broader sense and to provide them with all help possible to successfully find a permanent employment in Germany (Viessmann, 2015). Company C's commitment reflects their sustainability principle, which is based on the three pillars of economy, ecology and social responsibility. The ultimate goal is the social integration of refugees and the consequent preservation of social peace (Viessmann, 2015).

5.2.) Program Success assessed through four Factors by de Vroome and van Tubergen

The following part of the analysis will focus on reviewing the three selected labor market integration programs concerning their success and will therefore summarize interview results. For full summaries of the interviews see appendices.

5.2.1.) First Factor: Host-Country-Specific Education

The first condition that has been established in order to estimate whether an integration program can be successful or not is the so-called host-country-specific education. Since it is important for the refugee to show the degree of education he has received, this is an important factor.

Although helping refugees with transferring their professional qualifications is very helpful for facilitating labor market integration, company A is not able to provide this in its integration program. Considering that the recognition is supervised by the competent authorities such as the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF, 2016), it is not possible to deal with this in the company's administration department. According to the interviewee it is difficult to address this issue considering that many documents of the refugees are missing and no certificates can be presented. Thus company A examines first case by case which skills are present or missing in the refugees' qualification. However, the staff being responsible for the refugees in the internship at company A notices soon which knowledge exists and which does not. The know-how that is missing can be addressed in the time the

refugee spends working at the company. The issue of host-country specific education is thus a factor that cannot be provided by company A due to the fact that they do not have the competence for doing this. The intention to review the qualifications of each refugee carefully is nevertheless present and something company A is working on.

Looking at the labor market integration program provided by company B, the contact person at the company stated that the company is conducting its own tests before and during the advanced courses and does not only base the selection on qualifications that have been recognized by German authorities. According to the interviewee this is as a result of the fact that even recognized qualifications are not comparable to those existent in Germany. The tests that are taken at the company before the course have shown that even the refugees who have obtained a university degree in their home country can achieve only a poor secondary school level, comparing the level in the test to the one that German students would get out of it. Therefore, the interviewee affirmed that a basic training is required as a first step before looking for permanent employment. Overall speaking, company B does not consider legally certificated qualifications of the refugees coming to the firm in any way for the integration program and does not help him or her in transferring them either. Instead, company B focuses on its own qualification review process in order to see whether refugees are suitable for the program or not. The intention to review the qualifications of each refugee carefully is thus existent, but the competence to officially transfer refugee qualifications is, like in the case of company A, not present.

The third company to be addressed at this point, company C, does not define any clear conditions for the traineeships and internships provided. Accordingly, refugees are not asked to show certificates of previous qualifications to the company. However, company C leaves the possibility open to inform itself about qualifications which the refugees might have obtained in his or her home country and which are recognized legally in Germany. Generally speaking, there is no need to present any transferred qualifications when participating in the program which implies that company C does not help with the recognition of refugee papers. Nevertheless, this is caused by the fact that company C, just like company A as well as company B, does not have the competence for doing this.

Altogether, the recognition of certificates is an issue which all companies do not provide in their refugee program. Nonetheless, this is not caused by the program ideas themselves but by legal constraints about the competences in this case that are established by the German authorities.

5.2.2.) Second Factor: Language Proficiency

The second factor to look at in this analysis is language proficiency. Speaking the language, in this case German, facilitates integration and especially labor market integration to a large extent. According to de Vroome and van Tubergen, it enables refugees to establish a network, getting to know their

possibilities in the receiving country and therefore being able to contact companies and finding a job that suits them properly (Frank van Tubergen, 2010). A language course would thus provide easier integration into the workforce and is the second condition for program success.

Company A's program in the initiative 'Wir zusammen' does not provide any form of language course during or before the internship. According to the interviewee this is because of the fact that the internship is limited to two months only, thus to a too short period of time in order to provide this. In contrast, it is necessary for the internship participants at company A to already obtain a certain level of German language skills before the course. Since this is not the rule in the group of refugees, English is sufficient in most cases as well. As a different approach in the sense of language obtainment, a so-called Buddy is assigned to each refugee. He or she is appointed to help the refugee not only concerning practical work issues but further linguistically. The Buddy assumes the responsibility for the refugee and accompanies him or her throughout the entire internship period. He or she is thus responsible for explaining the processes at the company, among others the normal workday, the working of the canteen etc. This can be of great help when learning the German language because the refugee can ask his or her Buddy if there are any language concerns. Coming back to the program itself, the lack of a language course and the requirement of a basic level of a certain language might nevertheless challenge the refugee already before becoming part of the integration program. The requirements for attending the program that company A provides are thus high and the program itself only addresses a small number of refugees instead of including all of them. Due to the fact that the company is very large and international it is nevertheless, as stated by the interviewee, most reasonable for it to consider English in the selection process and not limit itself to German only. The focus company A holds is furthermore on the practical rather than on the theoretical i.e. language training. This is, according to the interviewee, considered more important in the first period the refugees spend in Germany. The second condition for success in the labor market integration program, language training, is anyway not fulfilled.

Coming to the second company analyzed in this thesis, company B, it already has been expressed that the integration program itself is focusing largely on the language training of refugees and only includes practical training in it as a second step during the course at the company. Company B provides an advanced training course in German for 20 young refugees that are in the age between 18 and 26. The aim of the program is to improve the refugees' German skills from TELC level B1 to B2. The second condition for a successful labor market integration program, language, is thus fulfilled.

Company C, the third company of analysis, offers on top of traineeships and internships also language courses that focus on facilitating integration and especially labor market integration of the refugees in Germany. As stated by the interviewee, company C aims at enabling the refugees to communicate more easily inside the company but in their daily life. This is intended to let the refugees work without

constraints as quickly as possible in Germany. The refugee labor market integration program of company C thus fulfills the second criteria of success in its program too.

5.2.3.) Third Factor: Contacts with Natives

The third condition that needs to be included in the integration program to make it successful is the possibility for refugees to establish contacts with Germans. Being provided with the opportunity of getting to know Germans enables them to learn the language, establish a social community and being able to find a job more easily after completing the program.

This factor can be found in the program of company A in the so-called 'Buddy program'. Buddies that are directly assigned to the refugees in the company enable the refugees to get in touch with Germans that can show them the everyday life and provide them with local contacts. According to the interviewee the 'service' of the Buddy is primarily limited to work since the idea behind the program is to show the refugees the company. In general, however, help and advice in relation to the private life is always possible and in no way prohibited. An example for a successfully established network between a refugee and German workers of company A has been the (temporary) employment of a former intern, in this case an Afghan. By reason of his good contacts with the people at the company he was able to get a job there. All this makes clear that the labor market integration program of company A focuses extensively on the issue of a social network and completely fulfills this condition.

While at company A there is a buddy for each refugee, company B offers help only for groups of refugees. Each group in the advanced training course at the company is assigned with a certain number of supervisors that are especially there for taking care of them jointly. Moreover, the refugees are working with the trainees and the 'normal' employees of company B during their practical internship. At this point they can receive help in the sense of getting to know i.e. the German work culture. Generally speaking, there is no support in the field of accommodation or any other grants are given by the company that would help the refugees in establishing a social life outside the company. There are, however, the supervisors (three per course) and social workers (two per course) who are considered representatives of the German society and can be asked about anything the refugees need to know. The basis of how to live in Germany however should be, according to the interviewee, provided by the state prior to the course. Besides, the course has been placed in the afternoon on purpose. The reason for this has been that refugees can continue their work in the morning, thus provide for themselves and establish a living in Germany. All in all, it is not intended directly by company B to let refugees build up a social network at the company. Nonetheless, the refugees can get in contact with the trainees, other employees and the supervisors at company B. The third condition for program success is therefore fulfilled to a satisfying extent.

The third company to address, company C, explained in the interview that they have selected a project manager in the central human resources department as contact person who can be addressed by the refugees at any time. Moreover, the refugees are supervised by exclusive technical trainers and colleagues of the company in each of the specialist areas. On top of that, the interviewee explained that there is an interpreter available the entire time the refugees spent at company C in the traineeship or internship. Nevertheless, support concerning the private life of the refugee, i.e. searching for housing is not provided until now. It is nevertheless possible to build up a social environment inside the company that can help the refugee in his integration in the private life but is substantially up to the initiative of the refugees since they have to, according to the interviewee, build up the contacts with the employees for themselves. Altogether, the third condition is still fulfilled by company C seeing that refugees have the possibility to build up a social network although it is up to their own initiative.

5.2.4.) Fourth Factor: Work Experience

The last condition of de Vroome and van Tubergen to address when analyzing the success of labor market integration programs is work experience. Since this issue requires experience obtained in the receiving country, i.e. Germany, it is not easy to be owned by a refugee who reached the country only recently.

Company A focuses in its program on the group of refugees that is still in the asylum procedure in order to show them the tools and opportunities that they have in Germany. The idea is, according to the interviewee, to show the applicants a German company and to give them the chance to imagine the work-life there. The refugees who already have a residence permit may apply for regular apprenticeships and are therefore not in the focus of the integration program. In addition, the idea is to use the time refugees are waiting for their paperwork to be finished because of the long duration of the clerical (triggered by the high number of people which has arrived at a time in Germany and have therefore broken the capacity of the ministries). They often have a long period in which they have no job and therefore endure without any task in the refugee camps. Using this period of time for an internship is, according to company A, therefore ideal. In addition, company A provides refugees with a participation certificate after completing the program which they can use for future employers who can count it as work experience obtained in Germany. This last condition is therefore fulfilled.

Looking at company B, it fulfills this criterion to a satisfying extent with its program as well. Company B pays for the TELC B2 test at the end of the advanced training course and therewith provides the refugees with a Europe-wide recognized certificate on their abilities in the German language. Furthermore, refugees receive a certificate of participation in the practical training and an additional certificate for the internal B2 language test taken at the company. Although there is no guarantee for a take-over to company B, the four weeks of practical internship aim at showing the refugees how a profes-

sional career is structured in Germany and which types of work are existent. Moreover, the company addresses the qualifications that need to be obtained by them in order to apply for them. The internship additionally aims at awakening interest of the refugees in education and to organize a first preparation for the test that is taken for the 'jump start program' at company B. This test is the same one as this for a common apprenticeship at company B. The interviewee stated that there have been places reserved exclusively for refugees who have completed the training course successfully. Generally, it is accordingly possible for the refugees to apply for a normal apprenticeship and to compete with the German candidates in it. The preparation in the advanced course therefore focuses on training in terms of i.e. how to conduct job interviews. Altogether, the fulfillment of the criteria of work experience in the program is given.

Company C fulfills the last criteria of a successful labor market integration program for refugees as well since the trainees being part of the program receive a certificate of attendance after successfully completing it. Furthermore, a special certificate by the IHK⁸ that certifies the successful completion of the program is handed out. This certificate is a nationally recognized training certificate that certifies the passing of the program examination (Enders&Doleghs, 2015). Together with the certificate of the company itself, this nationally recognized certificate can be used later on in case of an upcoming application for i.e. an apprenticeship at another or the same company in Germany.

5.2.5.) Intermediary Conclusion on the Four Factors by de Vroome and van Tubergen

Looking at the first factor, the host-country-specific education, it appears difficult for all three companies analyzed to help the refugees in this issue as a result of the lack of competence needed for it. Considering that it is a duty of the German ministries to provide the refugees with the required certifications, the companies themselves cannot help refugees in this concern. Besides, the qualifications obtained in the home countries do not seem to be relevant for the companies providing an integration program. Since it is not possible to compare the work experience of the home countries to the one obtained in Germany, all companies leave this topic at side. Instead, they try to focus on the fourth criterion and provide the refugees with some certificate after the fulfillment of the courses or internships which clearly expresses their abilities under German conditions.

Each program has furthermore a certain strength and weakness to underpin. The initiative by company A for example has its strength in the care system for the refugees. The so-called 'Buddy'-program appears to be an ideal way to integrate refugees quickly and successfully into the company. The direct contact to employees that take care of the refugee enables him or her to establish good personal con-

⁸ IHK stands for 'Industrie und Handelskammer' and is the Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Germany (Enders&Doleghs, 2015).

tacts. Company A is furthermore the only company of the three analyzed in this thesis that pays their interns during the internship which enables the refugees to provide for themselves and establish a living and a social network in Germany. The initiative by company A nevertheless appears to be less effective in helping refugees in their labor market integration than the one by company C since company A not only has more demanding acceptance criteria but further does not provide any type of language training for the participants which appears to be one of the most important factors for program success.

The initiative by company B focuses exactly on this issue and addresses the topic of language training in depth. Helping refugees in learning German at a high level enables them to search for an appropriate employment and not only be limited to this that does not require any language skills. Furthermore, one month of practical training in the company enables the refugees to getting a first insight on how the work life in Germany looks like. A weakness apparent in the program that might hinder the overall success of labor market integration is the missing care system. Since the courses are only provided in groups and there is no direct supervisor for each refugee, the establishment of a network in the company that can help him or her in finding a permanent employment or integrate the refugee more quickly is not supported. Company B moreover poses high criteria for refugees to get into the program in the first place which can lower the success of the program as well.

Finally, the initiative by company C is a very promising combination out of the two programs analyzed before. Providing language courses, traineeships and internships at the same time is the first step to include as many skills as possible in the training. Secondly, the access to the program is not limited to any 'hard' criteria and additionally, the refugees are given the chance to stay at the company also after completing the program successfully. These factors all seem to be fulfilled ideally. The care system stands in contrast to this and is not as extensive as the one by i.e. company A. Nevertheless, the supervisor is available for each refugee in the same way and can be contacted at any time. This initiative therefore can be stated as being a very good example for a labor market integration program on the basis of the criteria set inasmuch as it includes almost every detail of it.

5.3.) Program Success assessed on the Basis of the SMART Categories

In order to look at the success concerning the implementation and aims of the labor market integration programs for refugees provided by the three German companies addressed in this analysis, the previously described SMART categories will be used and the questions established in chapter 3.2. are going to be answered in the following.

5.3.1.) *Specific*

Regarding the specificity of the integration programs, the overall program goal has to be analyzed further. It has to be clearly formulated and unambiguous (Mannion, 1995).

For the labor market integration program of company A, all the questions concerning the specificity can be answered easily. The program aims at contributing to the integration of refugees into the German society. The basic idea of the initiators has been to assist refugees in their 'waiting period' for the residence permit. Refugees should, according to the interviewee, benefit from the internship by getting to know the German work-life and by establishing contacts to German companies. The program itself is company-wide and includes 14 different locations of company A in Germany at the moment. A requirement made by the company in order to be able to enter the internship program is especially a linguistic basis for the necessary communication with the colleagues. Other factors are, according to the interviewee, difficult to generalize because the refugees show very heterogeneous backgrounds with partly finished, partly with unfinished education (different levels, qualifications, trainings etc.). In addition, the area of application differs from case to case since it depends on the qualifications of the refugee and his or her ability to be part of technical projects, controlling or the field of human resources as examples. Furthermore, this basically depends on the interests and skills available. The individual locations of company A determine the areas in which they need assistance. Accordingly, a job profile is created and together with the employment agency the refugee who best fits to the profile is selected out of the database. To sum it up, company A's initiative for refugee integration is very specific as it focuses on a certain group of people, in this case refugees with the motivation to work in Germany, and further has a clear aim on what to teach them during the time at the company.

Company B, the second company of analysis, has a clear aim that it wants to accomplish with its program. Both courses, the advanced language training as well as the practical internship, want to give refugees the chance to learn German fluently at a level with which they can begin any type of apprenticeship, to get to know the German labor market and to show them what knowledge they need to obtain to successfully find work in Germany in the long run. Furthermore, the interviewee articulated that the labor market integration program has been initiated in order to show refugees the conditions that exist in Germany for a commercial-technical profession which is why the refugees make, following the advanced courses, the additional month of a practical internship at company B. As stated by the interviewee, company B wants to be an example in this refugee crisis where a large number of refugees that has reached Germany in 2015 is searching for a job. Company B thus not only aims at helping refugees but further addresses the work power refugees bring with them to the company, thus let the German economy profit from it as well. Moreover, the focus of the initiative that is presented in 'Wir zusammen' is on the company's headquarters in Leverkusen and includes contact of the refugees to all employees and supervisors of the program. The area the advanced course addresses is however

much larger and includes the entire surroundings of Leverkusen. In addition, the interviewee described that some refugees even come from further away and look for a new housing in Leverkusen in order to be able to take part in the course at company B. Despite all that, company B cannot find enough participants for the course currently since the refugees are not able to fulfill the participation criteria. Company B requires a German-language level of B1 seeing that the course aims at bringing the refugees from TELC level B1 to B2. This criterion is checked regardless of the documents submitted to the company in a centrally generated test at company B before starting the course. Furthermore, the age is set from 18 to 26. This is based on the criteria made by the BAMF⁹ in the youth integration courses. The program of company B is intended to be the first entry into the later real professional training which is only possible if the courses are as homogeneous as possible concerning the age. Following this project, there is the possibility to go through the so-called 'launch aid program' for young people. This program has been around at company B for over 28 years and aims at helping migrants with their entry into the German labor market. Besides, the lower limit is set at 18 years since the refugees may no longer be obliged legally to attend school. It further has to be mentioned that the residence permits which are owned by the refugees are not relevant for the course at all. All in all, it can be stated that the program of company B appears to be very specific in its aim and is able to answer all questions posed in the SMART criteria.

Company C, the third company of analysis, provides language courses, traineeships and internships for refugees in order to give them the possibility to getting to know the German labor market. Company Cs' aim is to integrate refugees as quickly as possible into the German working society. This group of people that has to face an entirely new culture and way of living is addressed in their integration program. Including many employees in the program taking place in Allendorf, the company's headquarters, company C aims at giving the refugees the chance to learn about the German work life. Requirements and constraints made for getting into the program are, as the interviewee explained, no 'hard' criteria. The condition company C poses is a fundamental interest in a technically oriented environment and the willingness to participate regularly in the accompanying German course. Regarding the selection of refugees in general, the company works together with the German Red Cross refugee accommodation camp in Battenberg, which is located close to the headquarters. When starting to contact and select the refugees, company C cooperates with the supervising social worker at the camp. Moreover, it has to be stated that company C does not focus only on one type of course but on three different ones. The specificity in this program is thus not very clear. Instead, company C wants to give every single refugee in Germany the chance to participate in one of the three programs. Critically speaking,

⁹ BAMF stands for 'Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge' and is the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees which is responsible for i.e. the decisions on asylum applications including granting refugee status (BAMF, 2016).

the focus of the program should be clearer on one issue or group of people that company C aims at addressing. Nevertheless, the combination of three courses, different types of language as well as practical training, appears to be a good idea to show the refugees all issues he or she needs to be aware of in order to enter the labor market more quickly in Germany. Therefore, just as both other companies addressed in this thesis, company C fulfills the criteria of specificity to a satisfying extent.

5.3.2.) *Measurable*

The next factor the integration programs have to fulfill in order to be successful is measurable progress.

Company As' program is based on one million Euros of company resources and the same amount of money out of donations. At the moment its goal is to offer 100 internships for refugees in 2016. The review process of the program has already started in the last year since the recent program is the continuing idea of the original integration program which is based on a pilot project that has worked very well in Erlangen in the past year. The idea of the so called 'remedial classes', however, is new. According to the interviewee, these classes that are part of their integration program are based on a similar project which exists already for four years in Berlin and is called 'Europeans at company A'. The idea is to bring young people from all across Europe to Berlin in order to do an apprenticeship at company A. The goal is to tackle youth unemployment in their countries of origin. After completion of the training, participants go back to their home countries and work for company A there. Company A has obtained good knowledge from this on how it turns out when young people go to a foreign country for their company to work with them there. The experience has been used as a basis for the project with the refugees, thus is based on a similar review process which has already been successful in the past years concerning 'Europeans at company A'. Therefore, it can be concluded that the integration program of company A will be measurable in the upcoming months, although it is questionable whether the programs are similar enough to come to satisfying conclusions and are thus to the same amount successful in reviewing the program or not.

Concerning the expenses made in the refugee labor market integration program of company B, it has been presented by the interviewee that a total amount of Euros which is in a 6-digit range is spent. Considering that there are other projects based in Berlin such as humanitarian aid programs which are financed by company B, the country-wide expenditures might be even higher. Coming to the next question that needs to be answered, the total amount of refugees addressed with the program, the following was found out: 100 participants are scheduled at company B for 2016, if sufficient interested and appropriate participants can be found. The program is running since the beginning of October 2015, providing two courses at a time, each with 10 participants. To enable smooth transition, a new course starts already after only three months after the last one has begun. The prerequisite for the men-

tioned total amount of participants is that all courses are full at all times. This year company B will probably not be able to fill all 100 seats as already with the start of the course in May 2016 there has been only one instead of two courses starting anew. Due to a shortage of refugees with German B1 level, company B has not been able to find sufficient participants for the course in May 2016. Theoretically, it would however be possible to provide courses for 200 people if the participants were suitable enough and at the same time be found within the area of Leverkusen. Concerning the review process, the interviewee stated that considering the fact that the company already has completed some of the advanced courses in the past, it has been possible for them to review the program already before presenting it in 'Wir zusammen'. The improvements have been made directly for the next courses and are entirely adapted already. Since the advanced courses were initially new, the feedback of the first participants has been very important right from the start and constructive proposals have therefore been gladly accepted and implemented by the company. An example for this explained in the interview is the German grammar which initially was addressed a lot in the courses but not requested in the B2 test. This topic has therefore been reduced. Instead, the focus has moved to the exam preparation. In addition, company B has been able to adapt the practice part to the needs of the refugees. The second SMART criterion, the possibility to measure the program, is therefore fulfilled entirely by company B.

Finally, company C stated that their expenses for the refugee labor market integration program are annually in a clear five-digit area and address all together at least 59 refugees in a traineeship, internship or a German course. The accomplishment of the goal is determined by talking to the participants of the traineeships and internship who, as expressed by the interviewee, for now perceived the program as a great help. Already the regulated daily routine and the chance of a meaningful activity in another social context outside the refugee shelter have been stated as being a great opportunity for them. The progress in the command of the German language appears to be noticeable in their daily communication and is a fundamentally important step for the successful integration into the company and the environment in Germany in general. Nevertheless, it should be considered to implement a written review process so the employees in charge with improving the program at company C are able to address issues that have come up in the group of refugees directly. Furthermore, this should be done anonymously, thus make it easier for the refugee who does not have to consider the consequences his critique could bring up. Nonetheless, just like the first criterion also the second can therefore said to be fulfilled to a satisfying extent by the program at company C.

5.3.3.) *Achievable*

As third factor the goals of the program have to be realistic.

The refugee integration program of company A has the goal of contributing to the integration of refugees into the German society. This goal is intended to be accomplished in the long term if refugees successfully complete the program and on its basis are able to obtain a permanent employment in Germany. This aim appears to be very broad although an internship at a company such as company A can be the basis for getting to know the German work-life and help in obtaining specific qualifications. Nonetheless, it appears to be unrealistic to get integrated in the German society with a program that is only established for two months. This is a very short period of time for building up deep knowledge in the German work culture and to get integrated in it. Getting to know a certain work-field and the work-day in Germany seems a more realistic goal since there is no guarantee for a job in the company after the internship which could help in the integration in the long run. Altogether, the time at company A can be the basis to find out the abilities and interests of the refugee and therefore help him or her in finding a job in Germany later on. Nonetheless, the goals of the program that have been articulated are not achievable easily and seem too high.

The third criterion established in the SMART categories, achievable goals, gets addressed by the program of company B successfully. The overall aim, to give refugees the possibility to obtain a German level which enables them to enter the labor market more easily, is facilitated. This goal is accomplished by letting the refugees take the TELC test and makes it therefore realistic for refugees to find work in Germany with it more easily. A good German level is the first step in being able to work in the receiving country. Nevertheless, one constrain has been made clear in the interview. The interviewee stated that there has not yet been a single refugee who has been able to pass the apprenticeship tests, as their skill levels are less than the German secondary school level. It is thus difficult to guarantee the successful labor market integration based on the program. This is nonetheless not an issue which is only apparent at company but a difficulty that refugees all over Germany have to face, thus not caused by the program itself.

The program goal of company C appears to be achievable insomuch as the goals to integrate refugees as quickly as possible into the German labor market can very probably be fulfilled through the program. The combination of a traineeship, an internship and a language course addresses most issues refugees have own when coming to Germany and when facing the challenge of finding a job. Since interested trainees get the chance to do an internship with company C after successfully terminating the traineeship, their chances to attain the program's goal are given. More specifically, the interns get a job offer at the company after their interests, suitability and performance. Accordingly, the chances are very high for them to get integrated into the German labor market directly, although there is no guarantee for it. Altogether, the accomplishment of the goals is achievable and therefore the third SMART criterion entirely fulfilled by company C.

5.3.4.) *Relevant*

In order to address the fourth issue, the relevance of the program, the goals have to matter clearly.

Generally speaking, the topic of refugee integration is an issue that gets a high level of attention at the moment, since one million people reached Germany in 2015 and are now looking for their place in the society (Tagesschau, 2016). A big part of this process is based on successful labor market integration. For this reason, the idea of company A to provide a labor market integration program that offers an internship at the company for refugees is worth the effort and money they put into it. It matches the needs of the refugees as finding work and being able to provide for themselves and their families is the basis of successful integration into a society. Moreover, the timing appears to be ideal since company A already started the initiative in 2015, when the big flow of refugees got to Germany. Starting at a later point in time would have been less efficient. Company A is the right company to address this issue due to the fact that, as mentioned before, it is one of the biggest employers and educators in Germany and therefore serves as an example for many other, smaller, companies located in Germany. The applicability in the current socio-economic environment is given not only because the German economy itself is increasing and strong at the moment but because company A increases its leading role in the technological innovation field worldwide more and more every day (Siemens, 2016). All in all, the program of company A seems to be largely relevant for the German society and the German economy at the moment.

Just as already affirmed in the analysis of the refugee labor market integration program of company A, also company B's program appears to be worthwhile. By cause of the large influx of refugees in 2015, a language course is a good approach in order to let the refugees settle down in Germany. Doing this right after their arrival is furthermore the right timing. Language training is moreover an ideal way to let refugees getting to know the German (work) culture and a company like company B which is one of the leading ones in Germany. It can therefore serve as an example and appears to be the right institution for this. This is underpinned by the fact that the company's economic situation is very good at the moment. The relevance of the program is thus fulfilled as well.

Company Cs' integration program wants to reflect their sustainability principle which is based on the three pillars of economy, ecology and social responsibility. The ultimate goal is the social integration of refugees and the consequent preservation of social peace. The program itself focuses, just as the other two analyzed in this thesis, on addressing the refugees that to a large amount came to Germany in 2015. Therefore, it appears to be worthwhile and has the right timing. The needs of the refugees are matched largely since, as stated in the first SMART criterion, they address three integration factors at the same time. Although company C might not be the biggest German company, it still faces a good socio-economic situation, is leading in its field and therefore another role model for those smaller

companies that might look at their program and copy it at a later point in time. This SMART criterion is thus fulfilled.

5.3.5.) Time-Bound

The last factor to address in order to measure the success of the program is the time limit.

The refugee integration program of company A takes place in the year 2016 with the possibility to be extended further. Generally speaking, as it has been expressed by the interviewee, it is difficult to say how company A will continue with its project as it is hard to predict the number of refugees that will come to Germany the next years. In general, the program will continue in the upcoming weeks as planned and since there are a fixed number of places available for interns, it will end the latest at the point when these have been filled. The criterion of a time limit is nonetheless not given in the program provided by company A because there is no clear ending and no information on what can be done about it today. Instead of leaving this issue open, the company should set a time-limit that is stated and in accordance with the number of places provided.

The program established at company B so far only has the approved budget for 2016 and is therefore limited to this year. There will be, however, a proposal made to continue the program in the next year. Particularly, it has been explained by the interviewee that it will be of great use then, since until now only the first candidates living in Germany already for a year (the B1 language course takes one year) are willing to go through their program. The great wave of refugees will accordingly be following in the next year when the large number of new arrivals from 2015 completes the one-year course in German B1. Furthermore, the interviewee said that the program might be established for the long run as a general labor market entry program of company B. This is especially caused by targeted immigration which is going to be a topic in the next years by cause of demographic changes¹⁰. Therefore, the interviewee stated that it is important to address this issue in order to maintain the concept of labor market integration and especially to promote language training in Germany for all immigrants. One further idea is that the program is going to be fixed for the next 10-15 years, just as the 'jump start program' which exists for nearly 30 years at company B. It helps immigrant children to successfully enter the labor market. Company B would invest in this new program in order to be able to choose the ideal candidates for their education programs, thus help lowering the effects the demographic change will bring for the company itself. A decision in this regard has anyhow not been taken yet. The fifth SMART criterion of a clear time-limit nonetheless is fulfilled.

¹⁰ The demographic change refers to an ageing population, low birth rates and changing family structures in Europe which furthermore are predicted to increase in the upcoming decades (Aiyar, 2016).

The third integration program analyzed which is provided by company C has not yet set a clear time limit. As presented by the interviewee, the company itself has not decided on whether there will be an ending of the program for refugees or if other programs will be implemented in the next months. Additionally, he stated that it is probable that the program will continue in the next year but that fixed dates have not yet been made inside the company. The criterion 'time-bound' and a clear plan on what will be done with the program in the future are thus not fulfilled by this initiative.

5.3.6.) Intermediary Conclusion on the SMART Categories

Coming up with the idea of helping refugees in their integration into the German labor market during the recent influx to Germany with the help of some form of 'Step-in' program is something all companies have in common. Nevertheless, concerning the SMART categories it can be concluded that the three company programs fulfill them in different ways.

Looking at the program provided by company A, it can be summarized that only two out of five categories are fulfilled. Although the program is very specific and relevant in its goal to address, the other three SMART factors are not included sufficiently. The programs' review process is not anonymous and might therefore not find all problems in the program. Furthermore, there is no clear time limit for the program although this is not a factor to influence the program as such. More important is the fact that the goals are not realistic and set too high for the limited period of time of the program. Overall speaking, the program is not established clearly enough concerning the SMART categories.

Company B on the other hand fulfills all of the five SMART categories. They are addressed successfully in the program, only the time limit is not set very clearly. Since this factor does not have a great effect on the success of labor market integration of refugees, it does not have a great effect on the program either.

Finally, company C fulfills four out of five categories of the SMART criteria. Although the specificity could be set clearer to one specific aim and the review process should be improved, the program has clearly achievable goals and is relevant in the recent context of the refugee crisis. Concerning the last factor, 'time-bound', the following has to be mentioned: When establishing the program this year, the company focused on providing refugees in general a possibility for getting to know the German labor market and not limiting it to only those refugees coming to Germany this year. The goal of the program is to contribute to the refugees' integration in Germany in the upcoming years in general since, according to the interviewee, the influx is said to last for a longer period of time. Company C does thus not limit its program to only one year but rather to the need for help they see in Germany. Hence, the time factor cannot be fulfilled but nevertheless does not limit the program in any way. Instead it

seems rather reasonable not to set a clear ending but see what the year brings concerning the number of refugees that are in need of an integration program.

For further illustration of the fulfillment of all criteria established in this chapter see Figure 2.

Theory	Company A	Company B	Company C
De Vroome and Van Tubergen			
<i>Host-Country-Specific Education</i>			
<i>Language Proficiency</i>		X	X
<i>Contacts with Natives</i>	X	X	X
<i>Work Experience</i>	X	X	X
SMART categories			
<i>Specific</i>	X	X	X
<i>Measurable</i>	X	X	X
<i>Achievable</i>		X	X
<i>Relevant</i>	X	X	X
<i>Time-bound</i>	X	X	

Figure 2: Table on the fulfillment of the criteria established in this thesis. x = category/criteria fulfilled (own illustration).

6.) Findings on an Ideal Program Relevant for Politics

Taking the conclusions that have been drawn from the different factors for program success, this thesis tries to establish an idea on an ideal refugee labor market integration program for Germany. Making use of the strengths the different programs have is the first attempt. Company C serves as an example concerning the three different types of courses that exist: language training, practical training and theoretical classes. Combining all three courses establishes an ideal basis of knowledge a refugee needs to obtain in order to find a permanent employment. Practical as well as theoretical skills are only possible to obtain in the country's language which is why none of the three courses should be missing. Supporting these classes by selecting 'normal' employees as Buddies that are helping the refugees at the company such as those in the program of company A would secure integration into the company itself. Furthermore, company B can be taken as an example in fulfilling the SMART criteria. Thus, establishing a specific goal that is achievable and measurable would render the program success in the long-term. As a last step, the refugees should be given the opportunity to start their work life right after completing the courses at the company they did it in. Therefore, the factors established are more successful if they offer a particular course that provides a high level in e.g. contact with colleagues or practical work. All these factors combined would be of high quality and could provide the refugee with sufficient skills and with an employment in Germany.

Taking the findings of the analysis of this thesis, it is possible to come up with an idea on how to address the topic of refugee labor market integration programs by politicians. In order to further increase the number of programs and the motivation of companies in Germany to participate in this initiative, certain incentives should be composed. Providing companies with i.e. public financial support is one concept. This idea could be promoted by politicians i.e. in a campaign, thus help companies in taking the first steps in helping refugees in their labor market integration in Germany. Especially smaller companies are in need of financial aid when giving refugees the possibility to work with them. A possible approach would be to establish a social benefit system or legal regulations in the beginning of the employment of the refugee. This could facilitate the contact of companies and refugees and enables companies to pay for the professional education of the refugee. This is often the biggest problem in smaller companies due to smaller budgets. Leaving the companies with the possibility to work with refugee for i.e. six months without bearing any risks such as high costs or possible financial losses would clearly motivate them. The possibility to end the employment at any time would further leave the companies with more flexibility and less financial risks. An incentive like this could solve the problem of unemployment of refugees in Germany.

7.) Conclusion

After defining the concept of integration and labor market integration as well as after presenting the 'Wir zusammen' initiative and its objectives, this analysis showed three exemplary programs for labor market integration of refugees. An overview of the requirements made by the companies offering these programs and the advantages refugees obtain after completing the program was provided entirely. The last step, the analysis of the success of the programs, made clear that there are several conditions that need to be fulfilled by the programs in order to be successful and that these cannot be provided by all of them at the moment. The research question addressed in this thesis '*Can the integration programs, initiated by several German companies in the initiative called 'Wir zusammen', be successful in order to integrate refugees into the labor market? - An analysis applied to three labor market integration programs*' can nevertheless be answered with yes. All three programs provide a certain degree of help for refugees in finding their way into the German labor market. Either through language training that enables them to apply for a job or through practical training at the company which shows them the work life in Germany. Nonetheless, there are different factors for and against each program which have to be kept in mind when answering the question.

As already stated in the intermediary conclusion, the four factors for program success established by de Vroome and van Tubergen have only been entirely adapted by the initiative of company C. However, the criterion 'host-country-specific education' cannot count as an important factor since the transfer of qualifications is not in the competence of the companies but instead in the hand of the legal authorities in Germany. Notwithstanding, the three factors language proficiency, work experience and contacts with Germans can be articulated as being overall fulfilled by company C. Although company A and company B fulfill their aim to help integrating refugees into the German labor market based on the criteria set to some extent, their programs are not as broad as the program by company C as they only focus on either language or practical training instead of combining both.

Coming back to the SMART criteria, all three programs mostly fulfill the questions posed in the theory section and analyzed in this thesis as well. Each of the programs is stronger in one of the criteria and weaker in another as it has been stated in chapter 5 already. Altogether, company B is the only company to address all criteria directly whereas company C leaves the criterion of a time limit open. In the long term, company A might face several challenges, such as reviewing their program or reaching their goals. The latter are very ambitious, especially considering the rather short time frame in which they are set to be reached.

Combining the conclusions of the SMART criteria with those made on the basis of the four criteria by de Vroome and van Tubergen, the following final statement on the success of the programs can be drawn: All of the three programs are lacking some parts of the SMART criteria as well as the criteria

established by de Vroome and van Tubergen. Especially the inclusion of a language course combined with a practical training in a certain time frame appears to be more difficult to address by all company programs. Nevertheless, it can be affirmed that they might still be successfully implemented and are able to reach their own goals, since these are mostly in accordance with the courses provided and focuses on either giving the refugees language or practical training.

Coming back to the conclusions drawn in this thesis, a statement on the initiatives in 'Wir zusammen' and its possible success can be made. All in all, the three company programs might serve as an example for all companies that are based in Germany if their best features are combined. The analysis in this thesis has come to the conclusion that none of the three programs can be stated as being entirely successful in their aim of integrating refugees into the German labor market. Notwithstanding, the programs can still serve as a basis for establishing an ideal program for Germany as presented in the last chapter. Combining the different strengths of the programs might be a starting point for this. Offering all three types of courses (language training, practical training and theoretical classes) just as company C as well as providing support by 'normal' employees in a Buddy-program such as company A would secure integration into the company itself. Furthermore, fulfilling the SMART criteria and setting a specific goal that is achievable and measurable would render the program successful in the long run.

Altogether, it has been difficult for the three company programs to prove all criteria since they have been established only recently. Nevertheless, it has been possible to draw conclusions from it which could be used in an improved program that may well be promoted nationwide.

8.) Reflection and Recommendation for Further Research

Looking at three selected company programs, the analysis provided in this paper has made it possible to show detailed information on their advantages and disadvantages in successful refugee labor market integration. It has come up with an idea on how to improve these disadvantages, introducing even a potentially better program since the analysis showed that not all necessary criteria were fulfilled by any of the three companies.

At the same time the limitation to the analysis of three company programs brought up a weakness of the research which is about the generalization of the findings. In consideration of the fact that this thesis could only address and analyze a limited number of programs, the drawn conclusions and the idea on how to build up an ideal refugee labor market integration program are only based on the three examples that have been reviewed. Thus, it is difficult to draw overall conclusions for the entire initiative 'Wir zusammen' and further research is still needed.

Furthermore, this analysis showed that refugee labor market integration in 'Wir zusammen' only covers some elements of the overall topic of integration that has been defined at the beginning of this thesis. The company programs are a first step in the direction of successful integration i.e. the refugee becoming a member of the society of the hosting country. Nonetheless, they cannot cover all elements that are part of this issue to be addressed by politicians but rather focus on economic integration, i.e. providing refugees with employment in Germany.

Concerning further research on the topic addressed in this paper, analyzing additional programs in a pre-analysis such as the one that has been done in this thesis, comparing those to the three assessed in this paper and drawing further conclusions from is left to other scholars in a separate research. This research could help politicians to come up with a more detailed idea on how to best integrate refugees into the German labor market and where and how to build up the programs.

Another interesting idea for further research would be a post-analysis of the success of the labor market integration programs. Measuring whether the factors that have been established in this analysis actually helped the success of the programs could be of high scientific and social relevance. Furthermore, exploring how the three (or more) company programs worked out in real life and comparing the verdicts to the conclusions drawn in this analysis could be interesting in order to make new and relevant findings in the topic of labor market integration.

As a last recommendation on how to proceed with academic research on the topic of refugee labor market integration and the initiative 'Wir zusammen', a scientifically relevant research could be done with companies that are not participating in it yet. It would be of interest to ask these companies about their arguments on the reasons for not participating or not providing any form of integration program.

Moreover, asking the same questions to the companies participating in 'Wir zusammen' would enable the researcher to find out motivating issues other than the incentives given by German policies. These could thereupon be addressed in order to reach out to as many companies as possible in the future.

9.) Literature

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10.) Data Appendix

Interview with Company A on 20th April 2016

Good day,

Before starting this interview I would like to thank you for taking the time to carry out this short talk with me about the refugee integration program that has been implemented by your company in the last year.

In my bachelor thesis I am focusing on, as described in the previous email I sent you, the very relevant and current topic 'Integration of refugees into the German labor market'. Since there are many different projects that address this issue, I have selected one of them, the 'We together' initiative, as the focus of my thesis. It is, in my opinion, a very innovative and promising idea. Furthermore, I have selected your company as one out of three in the focus of the analysis due to the fact that it is the most important German company in the field of technological innovation and is one of the largest German instructors. It is thus a great role model for many other German companies in that sense.

Below I would like to ask you some questions about your program to integrate refugees into the labor market which will help me to analyze how integration can be enhanced successfully through them and which factors might be hindering. If you cannot or do not want to answer one of the questions, please simply express this clearly and we will continue with another one or just end the interview.

So now coming to the integration program of your company:

In my research on this topic, I found out that your company provides orientation internships for asylum seekers who are still in the asylum procedure. This internship aims at giving the refugees the opportunity to get to know the German labor market. The overall goal is to offer 100 internships in 2016 in 14 different locations all over Germany and to include as much as 500 employees in this project. Furthermore, your company wants the refugees to reflect on their own qualifications, give them the possibility to socialize with Germans (especially through the support provided by the Buddy), thus establish a basis for their future career.

Concerning this my first question would be:

1. Why does your company precisely select asylum seekers that are still in the asylum procedure and not those which already own a residence permit?

My company focuses on this group of refugees in order to show them the tools and opportunities that they have in Germany. The idea is to show the applicants a German company and to give them the chance to imagine the work-life here. The refugees who already have a residence permit may apply for regular apprenticeships and are therefore not in the focus of the integration program. In addition, the idea is to use the time refugees are waiting for their paperwork to be finished because of the long duration of the clerical (triggered by the high number of people which has arrived at a time in Germany and have therefore broken the capacity of the ministries). They often face a long period in which they have no job and therefore endure without any task in the refugee camps. Using this period of time for an internship is therefore ideal.

2. Are there, before or during the internship, German courses available at your company or are these just available in the so called 'remedial classes'? If not, is there another possibility for the refugees to learn German with the support of your program?

During the internship no course is provided by us because of the fact that the internship is limited to two months, thus the period is too short to do this. Instead, it is necessary for the internship participants to already obtain a certain level of language skills (proof of basic German, but English is sufficient in most cases as well). In addition, in order to assist the refugees, Buddies (Supervisors/companions during the time at the company) are selected and help the refugees also linguistically. They assume the responsibility for the refugee and accompany him or her throughout the internship period. He is responsible for explaining the processes at the company (among others workday, canteen etc.) and to help the refugee throughout the day.

3. Which acceptance criteria/conditions set to the candidates do exist and how does the application process designed for your program for the refugees work?

Firstly, it is required that the refugee has a linguistic basis so communication is possible. Therefore, it is ideal to speak a little German, although this is the exception in the group of refugees. Instead, English is the rule. Other criteria are difficult to generalize because the refugees show very heterogeneous backgrounds with partly finished, partly with not finished education (different levels, qualifications, trainings etc.). In addition, the area of application differs case to case according to the qualifications of the refugee and the ability to be part of technical projects, controlling or the field of human resources as examples. This is basically determined by the interests and skills that are apparent. In addition, the individual locations of our company determine the areas in which they need assistance. Accordingly, a job profile is created and together with the employment agency the refugee that best fits in it is selected out of the database.

4. Are qualifications of refugees from their country of origin recognized or how does your company consider them?

The recognition is not possible at the company but instead supervised by the competent authorities in Germany. This point is difficult to address in general since many documents of the refugees are missing, thus similar no certificates are present and it first has to be examined case by case what skills they actually own. Generally, however, the staff being responsible for the refugees in the internship soon notices which knowledge is existent and which education is lacking.

5. The care during the internship is a very important issue you focus on in your business: Buddies directly assigned to the refugees in your company enable them to get in touch with Germans that can show them the everyday life, provide them with local contacts and on top of that you even pay the interns so they can provide for themselves. My question now would be, does the support extend to the private life, with respect to the search for an accommodation, the construction of a social environment etc.?

The 'service' of the Buddy is primarily limited to work since the idea behind the program is to show the refugees the company. In addition, the fact that most participants still reside in refugee camps plays a role in the integration program. In general, however, help and advice in relation to the private life always is possible and in no way prohibited. This has already happened when practical compounds led to a (temporary) employment, inter alia, with an Afghan.

6. Can the applicant build up a social environment in your company that helps him or her with his integration in private life (especially form friendships that can help in everyday life)?

As already said before, help and advice at any time in respect of the private life is possible, however, there is no special program available for this.

7. Are the participants in your internship program taken over or passed to another job?

There is the possibility for a takeover and as already mentioned, it has been the case. However, there is no guarantee for the time after the internship. It is certainly helpful to stay in contact with the Buddy since like that the refugees have a direct advocate in the company when it comes to the application. Moreover, the process is certainly easier when good contacts and skills are available.

8. Is there any kind of certificate for the refugees upon completion of the program, which reviews the qualifications obtained which can be used for future applications?

A training certificate is provided for each participant, but there is no real reference.

9. How do you determine whether your program was successful and is there a reflection talk with the applicant after the completion of the internship on his experiences?

The integration program itself is based on a pilot project which has worked very well in Erlangen in the past year. This shows that the program has already been reviewed and is based on success of another initiative. The idea of the so called 'remedial classes', however, is new. These are based on a similar project which exists already for four years in Berlin and is called 'Europeans at company A'. The idea here is to bring young people from all across Europe to Berlin in order to do an apprenticeship at our company there. The basic idea is to tackle youth unemployment in their countries of origin because after completion of the training participants will go back to their home countries and work for us there. We have obtained good knowledge from this on how it turns out when young people go to a foreign country for the company to work there. The experience has been used as a basis for the project with the refugees. The remedial classes are furthermore the next step after completing the internship and offer a German course, practical aids such as the search of housing and forming a social environment through joint activities within only six months.

10. What is the goal of the integration program and what do you want to achieve through the internships?

The basic idea of the integration program from our company is the contribution to the successful integration of the large number of people into the German society. They should be assisted especially when they do not have a residence permit yet. This 'waiting period' is, according to us, considered the ideal time to get to know the German work-life and making preliminary contacts with German companies.

11. Is there already a pre-determined end of the project? Are there other objectives or new initiatives for the future to follow?

There has not yet been any decision made on this and it can only be said that until now the program is scheduled for 2016. The possible continuation will be set in the future. If the interns get into the remedial classes, thus get an apprenticeship at our company, the refugees will stay three more years at the company anyway and the program does thus not end directly.

Interview with Company B on 10th May 2016

Good day,

before starting this interview I would like to thank you for taking the time to carry out this short talk with me about the refugee integration program that has been implemented by your company in the last year.

In my bachelor thesis I am focusing on, as described in the previous email I sent you, the very relevant and current topic 'Integration of refugees into the German labor market'. Since there are many different projects that address this issue, I have selected one of them, the 'We together' initiative, as the focus of my thesis. It is, in my opinion, a very innovative and promising idea. Furthermore, I have selected your company as one out of three in the focus of the analysis due to the fact that it is the most important German company in the field of chemicals and pharmaceuticals and is one of the largest German instructors. It is thus a great role model for many other German companies in that sense.

Below I would like to ask you some questions about your program to integrate refugees into the labor market which will help me to analyze how integration can be enhanced successfully through them and which factors might be hindering. If you cannot or do not want to answer one of the questions, please simply express this clearly and we will continue with another one or just end the interview.

So now coming to the integration program of your company:

In my research on this topic online I found out that your company provides so called advanced training courses that give refugees language training and job orientation and are intended to last for four months. These courses are established for 20 young refugees between 18 and 26 each and include a language course in German that works with level B1 to B2. At the end of this course your company gives the refugees the chance to do a practical traineeship of one month at the company. The overall aim of both courses is to give the refugees the chance to speak German fluently at a level with which they can start any kind of apprenticeship, to get to know the German labor market and to show them what knowledge they need to obtain to successfully find work in Germany in the long run.

Concerning your program my first question would be:

1. How many places for the advanced training courses does your company offer in 2016 in total?

A total amount of 100 participants is scheduled at our company for 2016 if sufficient interested and appropriate participants can be found. The program is now running since the beginning of October 2015, providing two courses at a time, each with 10 participants. To enable smooth transition a new course starts already after only three months. The prerequisite for the total amount of participants mentioned is that all courses are full at all times. This year we will probably not be able to fill all 100 seats since already with the next start of a course next week there will only be one instead of two courses. Due to a shortage of refugees with German B1 level we have not been able to find sufficient participants for the course this time. Theoretically, it would, however be possible to provide courses for 200 people if the participants were suitable enough and at the same time be found within the area of Leverkusen.

2. Which acceptance criteria/conditions set to the candidates do exist and how does the application process designed for your program for the refugees work?

In general, the German level B1 is required. This is checked regardless of the documents submitted in a centrally generated test at our company. Furthermore, the age of 18 to 26 is set which is based on the criteria made by the BAMF in their youth integration courses. This criterion is based on the fact that our program should be only the first entry into the real professional training which is only possible if the courses are as homogeneous as possible concerning the age. Following this project, there is the possibility to go through the so-called 'launch aid program' for young people. It has been around at our company for over 28 years and aims at helping migrants with their entry into the German labor market. Furthermore, the lower limit is set at 18 years since the refugees may no longer be obliged legally to attend school. It further has to be mentioned that the residence permits which are owned by the refugees are not relevant for the course at all.

3. Are qualifications of refugees from their country of origin recognized or how do you consider them?

We are conducting our own tests before and during the advanced courses since even state recognized qualifications are not comparable with those we have in Germany. Our tests have shown that even the refugees who have a university degree in their home country have achieved only a poor secondary school level comparing it to Germany. It is therefore not possible for the refugees to start with vocational training right away, basic training must be done first. This difference in the level of education is mainly caused by the fact that refugees study in their home countries in the evening only because during the day they still have to work in order to be able to finance the studies in the first place.

4. Which locations of your company in Germany are participating in the program?

The focus of the initiative that is part of 'Wir zusammen' is our headquarters in Leverkusen. Nevertheless, there are also other projects that are based in Berlin. The area addressed by the advanced course is however much larger and includes the entire surroundings of Leverkusen. In addition some refugees even come from further away and look for a new housing in Leverkusen in order to be able to take part in the course. Despite all that we cannot find enough participants for it currently.

5. How does the care during the course work at your company? Are there some kind of 'Buddies' directly assigned to the refugees in your company that enable them to get in touch with Germans that can show them the everyday life, provide them with local contacts? Or do they have some other kind of supervisor/contact person that might support the refugee also in the private life, with respect to the search for an accommodation, the construction of a social environment etc.?

The assistance of the program takes place exclusively in groups. Each group has supervisors together who is especially there for them. Moreover, the refugees are working directly together with the trainees and the 'normal' employees of our company who might be able to help them in that sense.

6. Are the refugees paid or do the refugees themselves have to pay for the course in any kind?

The refugees in our program are generally supported by the state and therefore not paid by us. However, they must also not pay anything for the advanced course. The support by the state passes through programs such as Hartz IV or the initial support, although the refugees often live in Germany for more than a year already and therefore have secured living conditions, which are mostly supported financially by the state.

7. How does the support take place concerning the private life of the refugee e.g. searching for housing?

Generally, there is no support in the field of accommodation or any other kinds of grants are provided. There are, however, the supervisors (three per course) and social workers (two per course) who are considered representatives and can be asked about anything. The basis of how to live in Germany however should be provided by the state prior to the course. The course has furthermore been placed in the afternoon on purpose so the refugees can continue to work in the morning.

8. Can the applicant build up a social environment in your company that helps him or her with his integration in private life (especially form friendships that can help in everyday life)?

It is not intended directly, however, the refugees can get in contact with the trainees, other employees and the supervisors at our company.

9. Is there any kind of certificate for the refugees upon completion of the program, which reviews the qualifications obtained which can be used for future applications?

At the end of the advanced course the refugees get the official language certificate TELC B2 which is accepted and paid by us and tested by an external auditor. The certificate is in the end either passed or failed which is also clearly stated on it. In addition, each participant will receive a certificate of participation for the advanced course and an additional certificate for the internal B2 language test we take at the company.

10. How do you determine whether your program was successful and is there a reflection talk with the applicant after the completion of the internship on his experiences at your company?

The fact that we have already completed some of the advanced courses made it possible for us to review the program in the last months. The improvements have been made directly for the next courses and are adapted entirely already now. Due to the fact that the advanced courses were initially new, the feedback of the first participants has been very important right from the start and constructive proposals have therefore been gladly accepted and implemented. An example for this is the German grammar which initially was taught a lot in the courses but not requested in the B2 test. This topic has therefore been reduced and instead the focus has moved more to the exam preparation. In addition, we have been able to adapt the practice part to the needs of the refugees.

11. How high are the expenses made by your company for the program?

I cannot give any exact information on this but the total amount is in the 6-digit range. The fact that there are also other projects based in Berlin which are financed by us increase the expenditure made in the entire country largely.

12. What is the goal of the integration program and what do you want to achieve through the courses?

Our goal is to show refugees the conditions that exist in Germany for a commercial-technical profession which is why the refugees make, following the advanced courses, also an additional month of a practical internship at our company. This is intended to give the refugees the opportunity to get to know the German labor market more accurately.

13. Are the participants in your internship program taken over or passed to another job?

Generally, there is no guarantee for a take-over, the four weeks of practical internship should show the refugees, however, how a professional career in Germany looks like and which kinds of work there are and what needs to be done to get them. The internship aims at awakening interest of the refugees in education and to organize a first preparation for the test that is done for the 'jump start program' at our company. This test is the same one as the one for a normal training we provide. There have been places reserved exclusively for refugees who have completed the training course successfully. Generally, it is also possible for the refugees to apply for a normal apprenticeship and to compete with the German candidates in it. The preparation in the advanced course therefore also focuses on training in terms of how to conduct job interviews. Until today there has, unfortunately, not been a single refugee who has been able to pass the tests successfully, as their skill levels are located not even on the German secondary school level. At this point not even the recognition of qualifications from the home country of the refugees can change this and is thus irrelevant.

14. Is there already a pre-determined end of the project?

So far, only the budget for 2016 has been approved and therefore the course is limited to this year but there will be a proposal made by myself to continue the program also in the next year. Particularly it will be useful then since until now only the first candidates living in Germany already for a year (the B1 language course takes one year) are willing to go through our program. The great wave of refugees will be following in the next year when the large number of new arrivals from 2015 completes the one-year course in German B1.

15. Are there other objectives or new initiatives for the future to follow?

I can imagine that in the long run the program might be established as a general labor market entry program of our company. Especially due to the fact that targeted immigration will be a topic in the next years because of the arising demographic change. Therefore, it is important to address this issue in order to maintain the concept of labor market integration and especially to promote language training in Germany. One further idea is that the program gets fixed for the next 10-15 years just as the 'jump start program'. This exists now for nearly 30 years at our company and helps immigrant children to successfully enter the labor market. We would furthermore do all this also for the company itself since it would enable us to choose the ideal candidates for the education programs and lower the effects of the demographic change on the company at the same time. A decision in this regard has anyhow not been taken yet.

Interview with Company C on 10th May 2016

Good day,

before starting this interview I would like to thank you for taking the time to carry out this short talk with me about the refugee integration program that has been implemented by your company in the last year.

In my bachelor thesis I am focusing on, as described in the previous email I sent you, the very relevant and current topic 'Integration of refugees into the German labor market'. Since there are many different projects that address this issue, I have selected one of them, the 'We together' initiative, as the focus of my thesis. It is, in my opinion, a very innovative and promising idea. Furthermore, I have selected your company as one out of three in the focus of the analysis due to the fact that it is the most important German company in the field of heating systems manufacture and is one of the largest German instructors. It is thus a great role model for many other German companies in that sense.

Below I would like to ask you some questions about your program to integrate refugees into the labor market which will help me to analyze how integration can be enhanced successfully through them and which factors might be hindering. If you cannot or do not want to answer one of the questions, please simply express this clearly and we will continue with another one or just end the interview.

So now coming to the integration program of your company:

In my research on this topic online I found out that you provide language courses, traineeships and internships for refugees in order to give them the possibility to get to know the German labor market. Your aim is to integrate the refugees as quickly as possible into the German society.

Concerning your program my first question would be:

1. How many places for the language courses, traineeships and internships does your company offer 2016 in total?

The distribution of the places available is as follows:

Traineeship: 1st March, 2016 – 31st May, 2016: 5 people

Internship: 1st March, 2016 – 31st August, 2016: 6 people

German course A1: 8th February, 2016 – 31st May, 2016: 4 classes, up to 20 participants

German Course A2: 8th February, 2016 -31st May, 2016: 3 lessons, up to 16 participants

Additional traineeship: 3 months, 6 places

Additional QFF: 2 months, up to 6 places

Additional German course A1: 3 Months

Additional German Course A2: 3 Months

All together we therefore offer at least 59 places for some kind of training at our company in 2016.

2. Which acceptance criteria/conditions set to the candidates do exist and how does the application process designed for your program for the refugees work?

There are no 'hard' criteria so to say which we apply to select the refugees. The condition we make for the participants is that there needs to be a fundamental interest in a technically oriented environment apparent and that the willingness to participate regularly in the accompanying German course is high. Regarding the selection of the refugees in general we work together with the German Red Cross refugee accommodation camp in Battenberg which is located close to our headquarters. If we start to contact and select the refugees we cooperate with the supervising social worker at the camp.

3. Are qualifications of refugees from their country of origin recognized or how does your company consider them?

Since we do not define clear conditions for the traineeships and internships no certificates need to be presented to us. We can, however, inform us about qualifications of the refugees they have obtained in their home country and are recognized legally here in Germany but they do not have to be presented when participating in our program.

4. For how long do you provide the language course including the traineeship/internship?

As stated already before the exact dates are the following:

Traineeship: 1st March, 2016 – 31st May, 2016: 5 people

Internship: 1st March, 2016 – 31st August, 2016: 6 people

German course A1: 8th February, 2016 – 31st May, 2016: 4 classes, up to 20 participants

German Course A2: 8th February, 2016 -31st May, 2016: 3 lessons, up to 16 participants

This means that the traineeships last for three, the internships for six and the language courses for around four months each.

5. Which locations of your company in Germany are participating in the program?

At the moment we focus only on our location in Allendorf which is the company's headquarters.

6. How does the care during the course work at your company? Are there some kind of 'Buddies' directly assigned to the refugees in your company that enable them to get in touch with Germans that can show them the everyday life, provide them with local contacts? Or do they have some other kind of supervisor/contact person that might support the refugee also in the private life, with respect to the search for an accommodation, the construction of a social environment etc.?

There is a project manager and an organizer as a contact person in the central human resources department (that's me). Moreover, the refugees are supervised by exclusive technical trainers and colleagues in each of the specialist areas. On top of that there is an interpreter available the entire time the refugees spent with us in the traineeship or internship. For the German courses we have hired an external expert.

7. Are the refugees paid or do the refugees themselves have to pay for the course?

Trainees at our company do not receive any payment but instead get non-cash benefits such as bus transfers, working clothes and lunch. Interns furthermore receive appropriate remuneration.

8. How does the support take place concerning the private life of the refugee e.g. searching for housing?

Until now there is no other active support provided.

9. Can the applicant build up a social environment in your company that helps him or her with his integration in private life (especially form friendships that can help in everyday life)?

Basically, yes, but it is substantially up to the initiative of the refugees since they have to build up the contacts with the other employees for themselves.

10. Is there any kind of certificate for the refugees upon completion of the program, which reviews the qualifications obtained which can be used for future applications?

The trainees receive a certificate of attendance at the end of the program. The interns receive for the successful conclusion of the training a special certificate by the IHK (Chamber of Industry and Commerce) that can be used in case of an upcoming application for i.e. an apprenticeship.

11. How do you determine whether your program was successful? Is there a reflection talk with the participant after the completion of the internship on his experiences obtained?

We know from talking to the participants that the traineeships and internships are perceived as a great help. Already the regulated daily routine and the chance of a meaningful activity in another social context outside the refugee shelter are perceived as a great opportunity. The progress in the command of the German language is noticeable in their daily communication and a fundamentally important step for the successful integration into our company and the environment in Germany in general.

12. How high are the expenses made by your company for the program?

The spending are annually in a clear five-digit area, unfortunately I cannot give any further details on this at this point.

13. What is the goal of the integration program and what do you want to achieve through the courses?

Our commitment reflects our sustainability principle which is based on the three pillars of economy, ecology and social responsibility. The ultimate goal is the social integration of refugees, especially in the labor market and the consequent preservation of social peace.

14. Are the participants in your internship program taken over or passed to another job?

Interested trainees can get the chance to do an internship with us if they successfully end the traineeship before. The interns are offered a job at the company after their interests, suitability and performance. Accordingly, the chances are very large to stay at our company but there is no guarantee for it.

15. Is there already a pre-determined end of the project?

No not yet, the ending of the program is still open.

16. Are there other objectives or new initiatives for the future to follow?

There has nothing been decided yet but we will see what the future brings us.

Declaration of Originality

I hereby confirm that I am the sole author of this thesis here enclosed and that I have compiled it in my own words. The work reported herein has been composed by and originated entirely from me. Information derived from published and unpublished work of others has been acknowledged as such in the text and the references for it are all given.

Ann-Sophie Bergmann

Enschede, June 29th, 2016