**University of Twente.**
**Faculty of Behavioral, Management and Social Science**
*Program: Public Governance across Borders*

# Network Performance during and after a Crisis: The Case of the Second Package of Policy Measures: Enabling Access to Study

B. Sc. Thesis

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Student Number: 2599724
Number of Ethical Approval: 220863
Word count: 11,496

29.06.2022

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**Abstract**

Due to the current situation in the Ukraine, Germany is seeing an influx of refugees. To enable their integration, it is important to offer study opportunities to them. In the aftermath of the *refugee crisis,* the *German Education Exchange Service* cooperated with the *German Federal Ministry of Education and Research* to develop the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study*. The aim of this policy is to offer future refugees a facilitated integration in the German higher education system. These policy measures were implemented by a governance network. A case study of this network analyses the impact the shock of the refugee crisis had on the network relations and its policy goals. It shows that the network can adapt to new issues without developing new structures. To assess the success of the network's response to the crisis, different measurements are reviewed when facing difficulties assessing quantitative measurements. At last, the influence embeddedness and bridging ties had on the network's actions is discussed. For that Private Public Partnerships are explained as a special form of cooperation in the context of New Public Governance. For the discussion quantitative methods were used as well as qualitive textual analysis and interviews.

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**Frequently Used Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| BAföG | Federal Education and Training Assistance Act (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz) |
| BMBF | Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung) |
| DAAD | German Education Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst) |
| G.a.s.t. | Society for Academic Study Preparation and Test Development (Gesellschaft für Akademische Studienvorbereitung und Testentwicklung e.V.) |
| HEI | Higher Education Institutions |
| HRK | German Rectors' Conference an association (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz) |
| NPG | New Public Governance |
| PPP | Private Public Partnership |
| PCP | Public Citizen Partnership |
| SNA | Social Network Analysis |
| Uni-Assist | University Application Service for International Students (Arbeits- und Servicestelle für Internationale Studienbewerbungen e.V.) |

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## 1. Introduction

Due to the conflict in the Ukraine, issues in connection with refugees have gained a higher relevance in the public discourse. Right in the beginning of the war, there was a focus on donations, not only for internally displaced persons, but also for those arriving in Germany and applying for asylum there. For the German government, this was the second time within ten years that they had to deal with a sudden influx in the numbers of refugees. 2015 has shown how many problems have to be solved to enable a successful integration. Since Germany was not prepared for the sudden growth in the number of refugees, 2015 is also referred to as the *refugee crisis*.

Because of the crisis, the German government has tried to solve those issues and to break down the hurdles for integration in 2015, one main factor for integration being education. Different aspects of education enable different key abilities for integration. Learning the language for instance enables refugees to take part in everyday life. Primary and secondary education allows children access to peers. In schools they do not only learn mathematics and literacy but also cultural behaviors. And develop their cultural capital (Bourdieu 1997: 218). Vocational education is necessary to ensure the ability to earn money which makes them independent from welfare. These aspects are often the main focus of research as the basic needs are covered. However, higher education enables refugees to improve their social status. It should therefore be of interest to grant them the opportunity to study at a higher education institution. In Germany the higher education system is quite complicated and involves many actors. For one, there are the Higher Education Institutions (HEI). Since education is in the responsibility of the states, their functioning varies as much as the regulations they face. Implementing German-wide regulations is hence quite difficult and involves numerous actors and thus only functions via networks.

A lot of research has already been carried out analyzing the influence network activities have on policy makings (Holden & Lin 2012: 233). The policy cycle that consists of problem definition and agenda setting, formal decision making, policy implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation (Stone 2008: 25) shows different fields of expertise needed. Additionally, networks are relevant when concerned with the integration of refugees, as can be seen by the development of numerous integration networks such as the Scottish *South East Integration Network* (Scottish Refugee Council 2022). Not only do the actors learn from each other by networking, but they are also able to offer solutions to refugees' issues from different angles. This is important, as some problems cannot be solved by one actor alone, for instance education. Of course, in the end it is one single education institution, from which the refugee graduates. However, the refugees must among others know how and where to apply, they need to learn German and find a way to cover their bills while studying.

On top of that, networks have a significant influence on public agencies as shown by Torenvlied, Akkerman, Meier and O'Toole (2012) or Agranoff and McGuire (2001). This influence is especially important when looking at the performance of public agencies in times of crises, such as Bekerom, Torenvlied and Akkerman (2016) did. To show to what extend these findings are applicable in the particular case of the implementation of the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study*, this bachelor thesis focuses on the network concerned with the policy making and implementation of these measures. The aim is to generate a deeper understanding of how a crisis affects the network structures to integrate refugees and the implementation processes.

The *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study*, below also referred to as the *second package of policy measures*, is meant to improve the infrastructure helping refugees integrate in higher education institutions and enabling them to take on an academic profession. These measures were developed in 2015 (DAAD a n.d.) and consist of measures on three important issues. Firstly, the recognition of competencies and qualifications. This is achieved by determination of study abilities of refugees, via a test, in combination with an acceleration of university admission procedures and a classification of professional language competences. Secondly, ensuring study ability through an increase in study opportunities, as well as language courses specifically to learn the technical language needed. Thirdly, the support of integration at colleges, by supporting student initiatives, updating information offering and by including refugees under the Federal Education and Training Assistance Act (Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz (BAföG) (BMBF a n.d.; Interview BMBF). BAföG is granting financial support to financially less privileged students.

Still, there were several actors involved in the policy making process. Responsible for the measures were the *German Academic Exchange Service* (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD)) and the *Federal Ministry for Education and Research* (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF)). Which makes the measures especially interesting, the BMBF as a governmental organization was influenced by the DAAD as a private organization when developing the measures. As an association, the DAAD itself is subject to many influences and is center to an information network. Additionally, the measures were developed in response to an external shock. It is important to analyze how the network responds to that. Especially when Germany is facing a rise in the number of refugees arriving again. Within the first two months of the conflict, over 600,000 refugees from the Ukraine were registered in Germany (Statista a 2022), but because they can enter Germany based on the European freedom of movement (Auswärtiges Amt 2022), it is understood that there are a lot of unrecorded refugees.

To analyze how the situation today is for the integration of refugees in higher education institutions, this bachelor thesis answers the following research question:

**How can we explain the performance of the network around the DAAD during the refugee crisis of 2015 from the network relations the DAAD maintained with different actors in its environment?**

To answer this question the following sub-questions are answered:

1. What were the network characteristics?
2. How did the ties develop after 2015 and how did this influence the position of the DAAD and the BMBF?
3. To what extent are the found network relations associated with the performance during the refugee crisis?
4. Can the changes be explained by the shock of the refugee crisis?

To answer these questions, the bachelor thesis is structured as follows. Firstly, the theories used for the analysis are specified and the current state of the art is examined. Based on these theories, four contextual expectations are derived. Secondly, the methods are drafted out. Additionally, the type of data used is described. Thirdly, the findings are described and interpreted proving or falsifying the developed expectations. At last, the conclusion summarizes the findings and answers the research question by relying to the sub-questions.

## 2. Research Context

To gain an overview of the research subject some background information about the actors are necessary. As already established integration is a complex process in which many actors play an important role. Even when focusing on a specific aspect, such as the integration in higher education institutions, it is the cooperation of many actors that make integration possible. When analyzing the implementation of the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study*, one can focus on fewer actors, namely those directly involved with the implementation. This section explains who they are and why they are important while describing the measures.

The measures can be separated into three categories based on their aim. At first, recognizing competences and qualifications, secondly ensuring study ability and lastly the integration at the higher education institutions. For each step several actors take over specific tasks. For the recognition of competences and qualifications these are the g.a.s.t. and Uni Assist.

G.a.s.t. is an association whose official name is *Society for Academic Study Preparation and Test Development*. It offers four different types of tests to assess language skills. In the context of refugees, the most important ones are *testAS* and *OnSET* and the respective courses to study for them. Additionally, they do research to improve these test as well as appraiser effects, media didactics, online learning and other related issues.

Uni-Assist, officially called *University Application Service for International Students*, is an association as well. Its main purpose is to coordinate applications of foreign students. Additionally, it assesses certificates to test if they meet German requirements. If this is not the case, Uni Assist is also in charge of testing individual access requirements (Uni-Assist c 2022). More than 170 German universities are members. Additional important members are for instance the DAAD and the German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK)) an association of 269 higher education institutions (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz a n.d.).

In charge to ensure study ability are the state *Studienkollegs* or similar facilities within HEI. *Studienkollegs* are special colleges meant to support international students transferring from a foreign university. They prepare students for their future studies in Germany (Studienkollegs.de a n.d.). If the refugees do not have the required certificates to study at a university, they can acquire the needed qualifications at a *Studienkolleg* (Uni-Assist a 2022). The option to include similar facilities within HEI can be explained by the fact that it is the responsibility of the states and the federal government to provide education and the German federal government only has little influence. This leads to a lot of differences within the state and for instance Brandenburg does not have any state owned *Studienkollegs* (Studienkollegs.de b). The funding of the courses for refugees is coordinated by the Integra-program by the DAAD.

The DAAD is an association receiving 93% of its funds by the several German ministries and the EU (DAAD b n.d.). Its responsibilities are mainly managerial. The aim is to help the internationalization of German higher education institutions. Thus, the DAAD supports German cultural and language studies abroad. Furthermore, it helps with development cooperation and embraces sustainability by implementing the *Agenda 2030*. On top of that, it coordinates the EU wide cooperation of higher education institutions and the allocation of Erasmus+ granting scholarships as well as prizes and awards. Additionally, it provides advanced training through expertise and consulting, as well as giving information via facts and figures. At last, the DAAD is supplying services for higher education institutions, such as marketing and counseling (DAAD c n.d.).

The full name of the DAAD's Integra-Program is *Integra – Integrating Refugees in Degree Programmes*. It finances the two phases of the packet of policy measures described above. Its aim is to enable refugees to prepare them for studying at a German HEI and to start and complete their studies as soon as possible regardless of their residence status. Therefore, language and technical courses are financed. If the refugees are not able to provide the required certificates, they can take courses at a *Studienkolleg* or a HEI for free and catch up on a degree. Since 2020 there is an additional focus on support courses for refugees already studying at HEI and preparing them for the labor market (Fourier, Estevez Prado & Grüttner 2020: 11 ff.).

The integration at the higher education institution is supported through three measures. Firstly, refugees can apply for a special financial aid namely BAföG. BAföG is a federal funding system comparable with a student loan, that is special in the sense that it does not have to be repaid in full. It is made available by the BMBF. Secondly, refugees can acquire information via the new established website study-in-germany.de which is run by the DAAD and the BMBF. The BMBF is a federal ministry and as such part of the executive part of the German Government. It has five core responsibilities; to establish equal chances for participation through education equality and integration, to contribute to prosperity by supporting good ideas, to strengthen

Germany's position as economy and export nation, to enable innovation to research technologies viable for the future, to embrace sustainable research and to assist heath care by conducting medical research (BMBF b n.d.).

Moreover, there are student initiatives supported by the DAAD. For that the DAAD developed a program called *Welcome – Students Helping Refugees*, which started in 2016 with a term of four years (Interview DAAD). In the tender disclaiming its extension the following five aims are defined. Firstly, refugees should be able to integrate via social, linguistic, and technical support and consultation. Secondly, the volunteer work of German and international students should be supported. Thirdly, by supporting the volunteer work and service learning of German and international students their vocational, intercultural, and international competences shall be strengthened. Fourthly, the volunteer work should be manifested, and permanent structures shall be created. Finally, the volunteer work shall be interlocking with the courses funded by the Integra-Program. The DAAD wants to achieve that by funding student initiatives. The projects receive money for a student assistant after applicating (DAAD 2019:1 f.). Additionally, the projects take part in a contest for the *Award for the integration of refugees into German universities* (Interview BMBF).

The last measure is taken by both the DAAD and the BMBF since both update their system for distributing information. Together they created a new website which offers information about studying in Germany to all international students. However, there are detailed information for refugees answering all various questions (DAAD 2022).

Since the DAAD is the most important managerial actor, the network is referred to as the *network around the DAAD* in this bachelor thesis. However, since most actors are associations which members are various HEI that are often financed with money by the BMBF, a complex social network has developed, which is to be analyzed based on the following theories.

## 3. Theoretical Framework

The following sections offer an overview of the state of the art in network theory. Firstly, the fundamental role of networks for governance and public administration is spelled out. Secondly, theories on how to assess the success of a network are described and success factors and criteria are defined. To get a deeper understanding of the success factors, theories concerned with the network structure are examined. By exploring these theories, several expectations are found that later guide the analysis.

### 3.1 Networks and Governance

To understand how the refugee crisis of 2015 influenced the network, one has to understand first what a crisis is. This section defines a crisis in the network context and what influences a crisis has on the network performance.

Bekerom, Torenvlied and Akkerman (2015: 640) define it as an *environmental turbulence* or an *environmental shock*. A shock can for instance be caused by a drastic increase in student numbers (Bekerom, Torenvlied & Akkerman. 2015: 647). In this research, this would be the percentage of change in the number of refugees studying at German universities. Bekerom, Torenvlied and Akkerman (2015: 652) find that these environmental shocks have a negative impact on the network performance.

Secondly, one has to understand how networks are defined. The definition is rather contested as various scholars use different approaches. Agranoff and McGuire (2001) define networks as an agglomeration of organizations that are interconnected through resource dependencies and can be differentiated in their resource dependencies from other networks (Agranoff & McGuire 2011: 265). Networks act via mutual action, cooperation, interorganizational exchange and joint production (Agranoff 2006: 56; Agranoff & McGuire 1999: 20). Organizations create critical external linkages while improving internal structures (Agranoff & McGuire 1999: 19).

For a better understanding several types of networks have been identified. One of which are governance networks. Governance refers to horizontal cooperations of public and private organizations to provide public services and to implement new policies (Klijn & Koppenjan 2012: 594). In order to govern, agencies regulate themselves within networks and create interdependencies (Torenvlied, Akkerman, Meier, O'Toole 2012: 252). Thus, governance always includes network governance and embraces direct democracy since non-governmental stakeholders become involved in the policy making progress. Together with governmental organizations they focus on achieving common goals (Kupucu, Hu, Khosa 2017: 1091).

The reason why networks became so critical for the governance process is partly due to the *New Public Management* (NPM) initiative that reforms German universities (Lange 2008: 235).

NPM usually refers to the privatization of former public services and the creation of quasi-autonomous agencies and independent administrative bodes (Kickert 2001: 137). The aim of the NPM initiative is an efficient, effective, and economic policy implementation (Lange 2008: 239). However, the effectivity of the NPM is contested. Even before the term NPM was developed Weber (1946) criticized capitalization of universities based on their separation of workers from their means of production (Weber 1946: 131). This alienation increases the principal-agent problematic (Provan & Milward 2001: 416) which is concerned with the additional need of management as new organizations must be controlled, staffed, and financed while the governmental core departments risk an informational loss, as they are no longer able to acquire the demanded information themselves. Kickert (2008: 136) even speaks about a *devolution of executive organizations*. Osborne (2007: 377) argues that NPM was only a transition stage between the former public administration and the new approach called *New Public Governance* (NPG).

NPG was developed to deal with the increasing complexity and improve the policy making process and problem solving. Its theoretical roots lie in organizational sociology and network theory (Osborne 2007: 383). NPG works based on trust and relational contracts and focuses on inter-organizational governance emphasizing service processes and outcomes. (Osborne 2007: 383). Therefore, the cooperation can be described as horizontal in this approach as it includes private actors in the solution finding process. (Klijn & Koppenjan 2012: 589).

To summarize, within the network common goals are of necessity. Thus, actors need to make sure that they all share the same goals, and no one is trying to shift the process in a different direction. To assess whether the actors shared common aims or not, the following expectations are tested:

Expectation 1a: *The external shock of the refugee crisis created a long-term change in the network aim, improving its performance.*

Expectation 1b: *The external shock of the refugee crisis creates conflicts of interests between actors deteriorating its performance.*

### 3.2 Network Performance

The following section explains how network performance is assessed by analyzing both success criteria and network success as defined by Giachino & Kakabadse (2003).

#### 3.2.1 Criteria for Network Success

At first, theories defining what success looks like in the network context and how it is achieved are described. A successful or effective implementation is concerned with the discrepancy between the theoretical impact of a new policy and the result in reality (Menzel 1987). When defining the success of a new policy one has to differentiate between the *success criteria* and the *success factors* (Giachino & Kakabadse 2003). *Success factors* determine whether the policy is bound to fail given the circumstances of the policy making process or not, while *success criteria* help to assess the final outcome (Giachino & Kakabadse 2003).

*Success factors* are defined by Akkerman and Torenvlied (2011) by the number of ties a network has, this is also referred to as degree of centrality and its embeddedness (Schalk, Torenvlied & Allen 2010: 630). Their significance has been shown by Meier and O'Toole (2003: 697) as they proved that the efficiency of a network can be predicted by the interconnectedness of a network which would make the policy making process more effective.

*Success criteria* are defined by Akkerman and Torenvlied (2011: 166) by the number of college dropouts and the number of graduates. While this is a simple way of operationalizing the broad term *success*, the findings might not always be quantifiable. Whether this is possible in the case of the second package of policy measures is assessed by testing the following expectation:

Expectation 2: *Quantitative success criteria are proper measures for the success of the second package of policy measures: enabling access to study.*

#### 3.2.2 Factors for Network Success

The following section reviews theories regarding the network structure and the impact it has on network performance that can be used to assess the success factors. Networks consist of several entities and relations. These entities are so called *nodes* and the relations are referred to as *ties*. The nodes refer to the actors within the network. However, there exist several models describing different types of ties. One of them is the pipe model. This model imagines ties as pipes enabling the flow of resources such as money and information (Borgatti & Halgin 2011: 1172).

Additionally, ties can be defined and used for a social network analysis. Firstly, these ties can be formed on similarities such as location, memberships, and attributes. Secondly, they can be social relations like kinship, other roles, affections, and cognitive basis. Thirdly, they can be based on interactions or lastly flows of information, money, beliefs etc. (Borgatti, Mehra, Brass and Labianca 2009: 894). Furthermore, one tie can have several functions for the network. This is referred to as multiplexity (Provan & Milward 2001: 419). For instance, the g.a.s.t. and the DAAD are connected as the DAAD funds g.a.s.t, additionally the services they provide are directed at the same issues. Additionally, there is an overlap of members. The more use they get out of their ties, the higher their level of multiplexity and the stronger the tie (Provan, Veazi, Staten & Teufel-Shone 2005: 605). Moreover, network ties that are based on interorganizational trust improve its performance (Zaheer, McEvily & Perrone 1998: 155). Interorganizational trust is associated with lowered costs of negotiation and conflict (Zaheer, McEvily & Perrone 1998: 154), it may even enable conditions leading to a pursue of governance mechanisms such as shared decision making (Zaheer, McEvily & Perrone 1998: 155).

However, the long-term impacts after an external shock can vary depending on the network. Some networks adapt their structure to mitigate the consequences and to improve resilience (Pike, Dawley & Tomaney 2010: 61). Additionally, it depends on how the pre-existing ties were shaped and the impact the shock had on their structure (Pike, Dawley & Tomaney 2010: 65).

These theories can be summarized in the following expectations testing the reaction of the network around the DAAD. Trust being an important factor in both indicating an effective performance, the expectations control for changes in the network structure.

Expectation 3a: *The response of the network is associated with interorganizational trust and the continuation of its established network structure before the refugee crisis*.

Expectation 3b: *The response of the network is associated interorganizational trust and with the adaptation of its networks structure to new circumstances.*

To understand the web of ties, one can measure its *embeddedness*. This allows the researcher a basic understanding of how interconnected a network is. There could just be one actor connecting all other actors in an open network without ties between the others, just as in *Figure 1*. But in an *embedded* network several actors have ties to each other, building sub-groups (Schalk, Torenvlied & Allen 2009: 630) also referred to as cliques (Schalk, Torenvlied & Allen 2009: 632). An embedded network could look like *Figure 2*. Embeddedness can also be an indicator of how successful a network is (Schalk, Torenvlied & Allen 2009: 630).

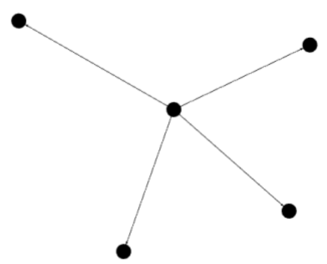

*Figure 1: Open Networks*

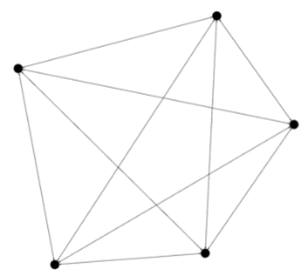

*Figure 2: Embedded Networks*

Furthermore, there exist several measurements to further analyze the position of the actors and the strength of their ties. One of the simplest measurements is the degree centrality. It simply counts the number of ties an entity has in comparison to the number of ties of other players and therefore how central it is within the network (Valente & Fujimoto 2012: 212). This allows the researcher to understand who the most important actors are. The fact that the BMBF provides funds for many actors while the DAAD organizes the details of distribution (Interview DAAD) suggest they are both central.

Burt's (2001) theory of structural holes sees *bridging ties* as crucial for an efficient implementation (Borgatti & Halgin 2011: 1171). Bridging ties are often weak ties connecting outsiders to the network or two cliques with each other. New resources can therefore be acquired and piped to the network (Borgatti & Halgin 2011: 1171) which makes the functioning more effective. An example can be seen in *Figure 3* in which the tie between B and H can be considered a bridging tie. Burt (2001: 35) argues that in an embedded network the actors are unlikely to acquire new resources, thus stating that bridging ties are crucial to acquire additional resources. Granovetter (1973: 1365) refers to this as the strength of weak ties.

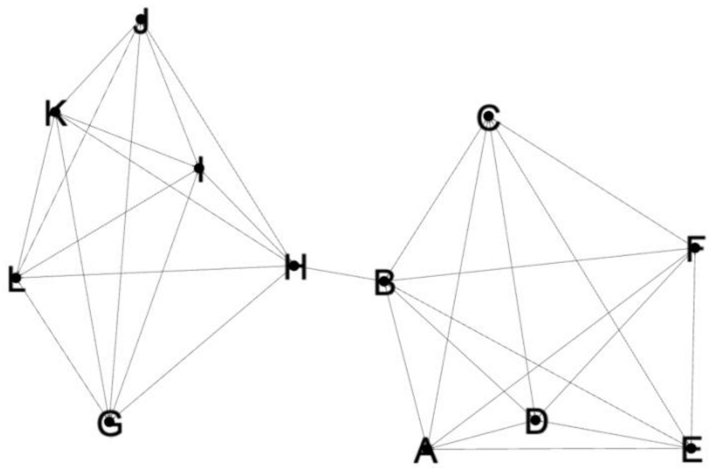

*Figure 3: Networks Connected by a Bridging Tie*

Bridging ties could also be an indicator for *Private Public Partnerships*. Different organizations can be part of those partnerships. Part of the PPP can be either public, private, or societal sector organizations (Degenhart & Wessel 2015: 191). The societal sector refers to the civil society. Organizations within this sector are for instance non-profit organizations or associations (Degenhart & Wessel 2015: 193). Within these partnerships the identities of the partners remain unchanged (Degenhart & Wessel 2015: 190). In this case the PPP is also called a *Public Citizen Partnership* (PCP) (Degenhart & Wessel 2015: 192). To ensure efficiency, there should not be any conflicts of goals, even though this does not mean that the aims have to be identical. Usually, their goal is to perform public tasks by using tools and bearing risks each according to their field of expertise (Degenhart & Wessel 2015: 201). The relationship is always based on trust as well as contracts (Degenhart & Wessel 2015: 191).

Depending on the kind of cooperation three types of PPP can be defined, (1) rather informal preforms of cooperations, (2) cooperation based on contracts, also called *contract-PPP* and (3) *organization-PPPs*, which are merger between public and private actors (Degenhart & Wessel 2015: 198). In all types of cooperation continues over a longer period, during which the relationships may change. Therefore, not even contract-PPPs can rely on a single all establishing contract. They are in a constant need for sub-contracts or regional contracts to improve their functioning (Degenhart & Wessel 2015: 199). Because the DAAD and the BMBF published the second package of policy measures together, it can be suspected that they are a PPP and would therefore form a bridging tie.

Since there are two contesting expectations found in the literature, stating that networks are either successful because of their embeddedness or due to bridging ties, the following two expectations are be tested.

Expectation 4a: *The response of the network is associated with the cohesion within the network (embeddedness of the network actors).*

Expectation 4b: *The response of the network is associated with the quality of the bridging tie between BMBF and DAAD.*

## 4. Methods

In the following sections the methodology used is explained to make the research replicable. At first, the research design is described. Afterwards, the expectations derived in *Section 3. Theoretical Framework* are operationalized.

### 4.1 Research design

This bachelor thesis is designed as a case study, where the network around the DAAD is analyzed in depth to gain a more sophisticated understanding of its functioning. Additionally, case studies are especially useful for network analyses (Berry, Brower, Ok Choi, Xinfang Goa, Jang, Kwon & Word 2004: 542). Most of the time, case studies are used for *how* or *why* questions, where the researcher has no control over behavioral events and therefore focuses on contemporary events (Yin 2018: 67), just as in this bachelor thesis. There exist four types of case designs, depending on whether it is a single- or a multiple-case study with an embedded approach, meaning a case is being studied by dividing it into sub-units or as a holistic approach (Yin 2018: 58). A single-case study analyzes a case that is critical, unusual, common, revelatory, or longitudinal. When deciding for multiple cases to analyze, one should either take a most-similarity or most-different approach (Yin 2018: 107). This bachelor thesis takes an embedded single case approach. Therefore, the development of the network around the DAAD is analyzed to record changes in its structure impacting the success factors.

One advantage is that case studies do not oblige the researcher to a systematic research procedure, it can be accounted for as soft research (Yin 2018: 32). Generally, case studies can either be used deductively or inductively, as they provide the researcher with a deeper understanding of the reality. The researcher can use qualitative, quantitative or mixed method approaches, they can also be descriptive, explanatory, causal or exploratory (Yin 2018: 87), all depending on the research question and the studied case. This brings the researcher great freedom in their methods. In this bachelor thesis a mixed methods approach is used. The deductive research is conducted using qualitative as well as quantitative data.

To gain a deeper understanding of the functioning of the network, two expert interviews are held to collect additional information of the policy making process in 2015. These interviews are conducted as semi structured in depth discussions. This allows the researcher to set the agenda, while still being able to respond to the answers given and ask follow-up questions. Therefore, the researcher gains a deeper understanding of the issue and collects additional information to the textual data available. Of course, the interviews only took place after informed consent has been given and would have been terminated if the interviewee wished to. The fact that more than one interview is conducted enables the researcher to verify the answers given. This is important, as interviews are responsive, and interviewees tend to present the facts in their favor (Knapik 2006: 87).

Additionally, the research relies on documents of the DAAD and the BMBF on the policy making and the policy implementation process. Other sources are used as well such as the statistics about the student population in Germany and reviews about the success of the measures taken. Moreover, the analysis partly relies on desk research to trace the building and functioning of ties between the actors.

### 4.2 Operationalization

All hypotheses are tested using Social Network Analysis (SNA). In this section it is first explained how SNA functions in general. Secondly, the way how each expectation is examined is spelled out to analyze the agglomeration of organizations that are part of this network, as well as the functioning of their ties and the outcome their cooperation produces. SNA is rather a method than a theory, used to characterize network structures and the position of nodes (Borgatti & Halgin 2011: 1169). This bachelor thesis is using a realistic understanding of networks. Meaning, it is understood that there is not one network that is studied but one network that is framed by the research question and is therefore in the focus of the analysis (Borgatti & Halgin 2011: 1170). The choice of nodes and ties examined can thus not be accounted as empirical but is defined by the research question (Borgatti & Halgin 2011: 1169).

The research question of this bachelor thesis is focused on the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study.* Hence, only actors involved in its emergence and implementation process are analyzed. Including all actors involved in the integration of refugees, even when limited to integration in higher education institutions, would exceed the scope of this bachelor thesis and lead to redundant results. Therefore, the network is reduced to the cooperation between the DAAD, the BMBF, g.a.s.t., *Studienkollegs* and HEIs.

The first expectations are assessed if the external shock created long term changes in the aims of the network around the DAAD and whether these changes aligned or disjoined the goals of the actors. For that it is defined if the refugee crisis can indeed be accounted for as a crisis. Additionally, the aims of each actor are analyzed for changes before comparing these findings with the aim of the second package of policy measures. To define the aims of the actors, mission statements and bylaws are analyzed, for some the information is supplemented with input from the interviews.

The second expectation is tested by searching for dropout and graduation rates of refugees at HEIs in Germany. For that their reliability is assessed. Additionally, alternative success criteria are considered. This is achieved by analyzing evaluations of the impact of the second package of policy measures as well as scientific papers assessing the situation of refugees at HEIs in Germany. The textual analysis is done using Atlas.ti. This tool supports qualitative data analysis by helping to organize findings in large data sets and detecting connections between the findings (Hwang 2008). Additionally, it helps making the research process more transparent since it can easily be tracked and replicated. Further advantages of Atlas.ti are the intuitive use that makes for easy learning and the fact that not only text data, but also pictures and videos can be examined (Hwang 2008: 525). The basis for the analysis with Atlas.ti is the *coding scheme.*

The coding scheme is based on the aims of the second package of policy measures. In the DAAD’s press release it is announced while reporting seven sub-goals (DAAD 2015). These are accelerating the admission process, assessing the academic study ability, assessing language skills with a focus on technical language, an increase in offered preparatory courses, support of student initiatives or integration, new information opportunities and an offering of BAföG for refugees (DAAD 2015). To sort the findings, one code for each sub-goal is created proving either the success of its implementation (successful) or shortcomings of its implementation (shortcoming). Since not all papers differ between the sub-goals an additional category was introduced to include general statements on the success (successful (overall)) and shortcomings (shortcoming (overall)). Additional important facts were saved as quotes.

For the analysis of the third expectation the network structures are assessed. Because analyzing the ties for every possible function they could have goes beyond the scope of this bachelor thesis, only those ties are considered that are based on membership relations and the flow of money before and after the refugee crisis of 2015. The membership relations are supposed to bring insights on interorganizational trust. Both types of ties have a direction. For one, relationship is defined by membership and actor a can be member in actor b without actor b being member in actor a. Furthermore, the money only flows in one direction meaning the cashflow is cascadic (Interview BMBF).

These networks are visualized using Gephi. There are three main reasons why Gephi was chosen. Firstly, it is open access (Bastian, Heymann & Jacomy 2009: 361). Secondly, the use is intuitive and easy, while the options it offers are still broad (Bastian, Heymann & Jacomy 2009: 362). Thirdly, it enables a good overview. For one, the option of selecting the design of nodes, labels and edges grants readability (Bastian, Heymann & Jacomy 2009: 362). Moreover, individual sets of nodes can be selected either manually or by filter allowing the illustration of size gradients, color gradients and color clusters (Bastian, Heymann & Jacomy 2009: 361 f.).

To study the fourth expectations, the visualizations created before are used to find cliques to determine whether the network around the DAAD is embedded. By visualizing the network, Gephi also provides the opportunity to identify bridging ties which allows to search for influential PPPs. In addition, the network is measured for centrality to determine whether the DAAD really is central. The measure of centrality used is the degree centrality. This is the most forward measurement which makes the analysis easier to follow. It simply counts the ties an actor has. As all the ties in the network around the DAAD have a direction, one has to differentiate between indegree and outdegree. Indegree refers to the ties that are directed towards an actor, outdegree are ties that lead away from an actor (Jansen 2003: 95). To measure the influence, the number of outdegree actors have is crucial (Jansen 2003: 132). However, the number of indegree can be important as well in this context as the actors receiving many resources can use them for a successful implementation of the second package of policy measures.

## 5. Findings and Discussion

As a full description of the network and its development was already presented in *Section 2. Background* of this bachelor thesis, the following sections presents the findings for each expectation and use them to discuss whether the expectations can be accepted or must be rejected.

### 5.1. Expectation 1: Alignments of Aims in Times of Crisis

This section first analyses whether there was a crisis in 2015 and how this impacts the aims of the network and the individual actors. It is difficult to assess the percentage of change in the number of refugees studying at German HEI like Bekerom, Torenvlied and Akkerman (2015) did to determine the existence of a crisis. This is due to the fact that the number of refugees studying at HEIs in Germany is not statistically assessed (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz 2020: 2). Many papers use the statistics published by the HRK. These numbers are based on surveys sent to the HEIs that are member of the HRK. These statistics are rough numbers and can fluctuate as the number of HEIs taking part varied between the years (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz 2020: 2). This must be taken into special account when looking at the numbers before 2015 when the refugees were not the main focus of the public discourse.

In 2015, only 205 students with refugee background enrolled in a German HEI (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz 2020: 6). Until 2016 the number of refugees enrolling in German HEIs rose by 556.1% (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz 2020: 6). When looking at the numbers of refugees enrolling in 2019, there still is an increase by 1,296.15% (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz 2020: 6). However, the peak seems to have been in 2018, when the percentage of change in the number of refugees studying in Germany was 1,847.8% (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz 2020: 6). This finding would suggest that the refugee crisis was not in 2015, but rather in 2016 or even 2018.

Looking at the percentage of change in the number of refugees coming to Germany, the picture is a bit different. Between 2003 and 2013 roughly 34,000 refugees applied for asylum in Germany per year on average (Herbert & Schönhagen 2020: 1). In 2014, already 173,072 refugees applied for asylum in Germany (Statista b 2022) which equals an increase of 509%. Until 2015 the number again increased by 1,599.7% which totaled 441,899 refugees. The most drastic increase was until 2016 when 722,370 refugees applied for asylum equaling an increase of 2,124.6%. Even though this evidence suggests that the refugee crisis began in 2014 and lasted until 2016, 2015 can still be accounted for as the year where the crisis was the most urgent. This is due to the fact that in 2015 it became a humanitarian crisis leading to an increase in attention and measure to tackle this crisis. One of those measures was the second package of policy measures that only then received the needed approval from the political management of the BMBF (Interview BMBF). Since then, it became a political aim of the BMBF.

The BMBF has several aims and as a governmental organization it is guided by the political will of the government. In the end of 2014, the department *European Higher Education Area, Internationalization* of the BMBF already developed ideas how refugees could be enabled to study in Germany, but these measures were not supported by the management of the BMBF. However, after the German chancellor at the time, Angela Merkel, announced her slogan for the refugee crisis “we can do this” (“wir schaffen das”) in August 2015, the political will to help refugees integrating in Germany grew (Interview BMBF). That lead to the development of the *first package of measures: enabling access to education and vocational training* enabling refugees’ opportunities to integrate by training for a vocation, learning German by determining the refugee’s competencies and supporting municipal infrastructures for integration (BMBF d n.d.). When the first draft of the second package of policy measures was sent to the management of the BMBF, it was a surprise that the draft passed without restrictions (Interview BMBF). It can therefore be concluded that the BMBF did have the same goals as the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study.*

Similar to the BMBF, the DAAD is a sizeable entity with numerous divisions having different aims. When the DAAD was founded in 1925, its purpose was to support exchange of students and academics mainly by awarding scholarships (DAAD d n.d.). In the latest mission statement, the DAAD commits to the following aims. Enabling exchange between nations and individuals, increasing political and social progress, and improving scientific findings (DAAD e n.d.). As one can gather from that, the DAAD does normally focus on international students without specifically considering the special need of refugees. However, in 2016 the DAAD created a new department which is called *Higher Education Programmes for Refugees* (Interview DAAD). As the name already suggests, this department is concerned with the integration of refugees in HEIs and was crucial for the development of the second package of policy measures and the DAAD programs Welcome and Integra (Interview DAAD). Thus, one can conclude that the DAAD aims align with the ones of the second package of policy measures.

Just like BMBF and DAAD, g.a.s.t. and Uni-Assist initially did not focus on integrating refugees into HEIs, but their aim is to offer assistance for international students and scientists on their way to HEIs (G.a.s.t. 2014: 1), respectively to support HEIs and international students during the process of application (Uni-Assist 2018: 1). In result of the refugee crisis and the second package of policy measures their focus seems to have shifted towards effort in the integration of refugees.

The same can be said for *Studienkollegs*. There was always an interest to support international students on their way to HEIs by teaching the fundamental competences from language lessons to technical learning and receiving the university admission if the students have not already received it (Studienkollegs.de c n.d.). By agreeing to take part in the second package of policy measures, the Studienkollegs only agreed to make few adjustments and to offer courses especially for refugee, but their fundamental aim did not change.

In result, the expectation 1a can be accepted. The external shock of the refugee crisis created a long-term change in the network activities and aim, henceforth improving its performance. Even though the change was not fundamental and can also be described as an adjustment. The expectation 1b must be rejected. The external shock of the refugee crisis did not create conflicts of interests between actors deteriorating its performance. Therefore, the performance of the governance network around the DAAD was not negatively affected by the refugee crisis, because the change of network goals was accompanied with a change of goals of the actors. However, this finding does not contradict the theory of Bekerom, Torenvlied and Akkerman (2015) even though the crisis did not negatively affect the network performance but motivated it to adapt to the new issue. The alignment of aims is only a small part of network performance.

### 5.2 Expectation 2: Performance of the Network Around the DAAD

The following section analyses the second expectation, *quantitative success criteria are proper measures for the success of the second package of policy measures: enabling access to study*. Research has shown that this is indeed a measure numerous scholars deem useful and would wish to include in their research (Streitwieser & Brück 2018: 46; Unangst & Streitwieser 2018: 284), but these numbers do not exist for the network around the DAAD. This is not due to a lack of interest in them, but due to German privacy regulations making it impossible for HEIs to collect this information. Meaning the expectation has not been fulfilled.

Still, many evaluations of either the second package of policy measures or the general situation for refugees at Germen HEIs have been written. The measurements they used varied from surveys (Fourier, Estevez Prado & Grüttner 2022: 17), to interviews with focus groups (Arar 2021: 3, Younso & Schammann 2021: 193). Additionally, the DAAD publishes additional data regarding the number and the focus of preparatory courses, number and aim of consultations, number of assessment tests taken at g.a.s.t. and many more (Fourier, Estevez Prado & Grüttner 2022: 17, 35, 39).

Measuring the discrepancy between policy aim and outcome as Menzel (1987) suggests is not always ideal either. In this case it defines success rather vague. The second package of policy measure does not define a goal in numbers, but instead wishes to improve the accessibility of German HEIs for refugees. Even though research shows that this aim has been achieved, this is only true in the sense that some hurdles have been reduced. Reports still show that refugees struggle with numerous issues such as finding information on how they can successfully apply to HEIs.

Additionally, some of these hurdles can never be abolished. For example, learning a language as complicated as German will always be difficult. Another issue is that depending on the subject the German higher education system can be quite competitive. For instance, medicine is not only a subject many refugees would like to study (Ashour 2021: 100), but also one of the subjects with the hardest competition over study places where German students struggle to get in as well (Hucklenbroich 2013). At last, there are private issues HEIs cannot solve such as struggling with trauma after the flight or becoming part of a social network outside of HEIs.

Even though general success criteria do not seem to be applicable, when being asked BMBF and DAAD both stated that their satisfied with the outcome (Interview DAAD, Interview BMBF). The BMBF based this satisfaction on evaluations by other institution such as the Expert Council on Integration and Migration (Sachverständigenrat deutscher Stiftungen für Integration und Migration) (Interview BMBF) as well as evaluations they commissioned (Interview BMBF). The DAAD developed criteria which they could assess by themselves and review regularly, unfortunately they are not publicly accessible (Interview DAAD).

In conclusion, it is difficult to assess the success of public measures such as the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study.* This is partly due to the issue that success is not only quantifiable, and in some cases, outsiders are unable to comprehend how success is defined by a network or the individual actors.

### 5.3 Expectation 3: Structure of the Network Around the DAAD Over Time

In the following, the structure of the network around the DAAD is described. At first, the network is analyzed regarding the development of ties that connect the members based on membership. Secondly, the network ties are analyzed based on the cash-flow, here the development of cashflow before the second package of policy measures and in respect to the implementation of those measures to comprehend the functioning of the network.

Since all the actors are larger entities consisting of several actors themselves, they are connected as can be seen in *Figure 4* (below). The analysis shows that these relationship ties already existed before 2015 and did not change as a response to the refugee crisis in 2015 since all those ties emerged when the respective association was developed.

The HEIs have the most relationship ties to other actors. The DAAD, Uni-Assist and g.a.s.t. are all associations that largely consist of HEIs (DAAD 2021: 2, Uni-Assist b 2022, G.a.s.t. 2018: 2). The tie to the *Studienkollegs* however is more difficult. As already mentioned, Germany's education system is complicated since each state derives its own laws and policies and the federal government only bears limited responsibility in this sector. Therefore, *Studienkollegs* are in some states state-run and organized within universities or colleges, for instance the *Studienkolleg* of Heidelberg University (University of Heidelberg / Internationales Studienzentrum n.d.). In contrast, other states do not run *Studienkollegs*, there the *Studienkollegs* do either not exist, like in Saarland, or are private, which is the case for instance in North Rhine-Westphalia (Studienkollegs.de d n.d.). The tie between HEIs and *Studienkollegs* is thus not existent in every case. Nonetheless, one can state that the trust is rather high. For one, in those states where Studienkollegs do not exist, HEIs take over their responsibilities. Secondly, the purpose of Studienkollegs is to offer international students the opportunity to obtain their university entrance qualification (Uni-Assist a 2022). Meaning even if there is no relational connection, the state regulates *Studienkollegs* with the aim for them to be an institution HEIs can trust.

The BMBF has relations with g.a.s.t. and the DAAD. With g.a.s.t. this relation is that the BMBF is a permanent guest (Interview BMBF; G.a.s.t. 2022). Meaning the BMBF can be invited as consultant to board meetings (G.a.s.t. 2014: 2). Meaning the BMBF is invited as consultant to board meetings and can influence the decisions made by g.a.s.t. even though, this influence is limited. Leading to the conclusion that there is a somewhat trusting relationship between these two. In contrast, the relationship between the BMBF and DAAD is rather strong. The BMBF is an appointed member of both the board of trustees and the executive board (DAAD 2016: 4 f.). This shows the BMBF is quite involved in the functioning of the DAAD and thus has enough reason to trust the DAAD.

At last, the DAAD has relational ties with both g.a.s.t and Uni-Assist as it is a founding member of both agencies (G.a.s.t. 2014: 1; Uni-Assist 2018: 1) and is a permanent member both executive boards (G.a.s.t. 2014: 2; Uni-Assist 2018: 4). This means that the DAAD is involved in all important decisions of those actors and therefore can trust both.

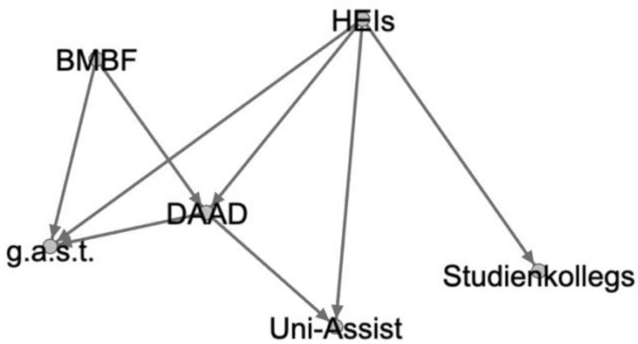


*Figure 4: Relationship Ties of the Network Around the DAAD*

The relationship ties in this network support the theory by Zaheer, McEvily & Perrone (1998), as actors that are part in another actor can be sure that their interests are kept in mind and thus the network trust can be accounted for as high. This finding is additionally supported by statements made in the interviews. Especially the BMBF highlighted the impact the trust had in the development and implementation of the second package of policy measures (Interview BMBF). The fact that the BMBF could trust the DAAD that they would develop useful solutions and the DAAD could trust the other actors that they implement those solution as good as possible led to a very flexible package of measures. Not only did it allow the actors to develop solutions to their individual needs, but it also allowed to set a new focus during the implementation. This led to the development of a new DAAD project called *PROFI* which started in 2020 and is financed via the second package of policy measures. The program is officially referred to as *Promoting Professional Integration of Academics with a Refugee*

*Background in the German Labour Market*. Its aim is to help refugees integrate in the labor market after completing their studies.

The cashflow before the development of the second package of policy measures can be described by *Figure 5* (below). The two actors having the most ties based on money distributions are the BMBF and the DAAD. The BMBF funds the DAAD, g.a.s.t. (G.a.s.t. n.d.) and HEIs. However, the financial resources are most of the time tied to specific projects. For instance, the BMBF publishes so called *announcements* (Bekanntmachungen) describing a project and the available funds and HEIs can apply for them (BMBF c n.d.). The money the DAAD receives is always distributed via so called *approval notices* (Bewilligungsbescheide) the DAAD has to apply for (Interview DAAD). The funds the DAAD receives from the BMBF make up 32.5% of their income (DAAD f n.d.). Some of that income is redistributed to Uni-Assist (Uni-Assist c 2022), g.a.s.t. (TestDaF-Institut n.d.) and HEIs (DAAD c n.d.). Funds are granted via so called *grant agreements* (Zuwendungsverträge). The money therefore has to be used for a specific aim defined by the DAAD, but the details on how to invest it are up to the respective actor (Interview DAAD).

*Studienkollegs* do not publish their financing. However, one can assume that the financial connection between HEIs and *Studienkollegs* is just like their relationship depending on the individual *Studienkolleg*. Those *Studienkollegs* that are located at universities or colleges can be expected to receive some sorts of funds from the respective HEI. In contrast, private *Studienkollegs* most likely do not receive such funds from HEIs.

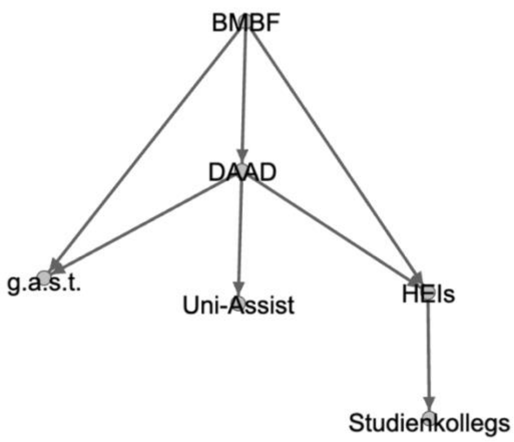


*Figure 5: Cashflow of the Network Around the DAAD before 2015*

*Figure 6* (below) describing the distribution of funds in the case of the second package of policy measures does indeed look quite different. The DAAD receives the funds from the BMBF and redistributes them among the other actors. This is no completely new way of functioning, it can be seen in *Figure 5* as well, it is just the additional ties that do not play a role in this example.

The only additional tie is the one connecting the BMBF to the *Studienkollegs*. This is indeed a novelty as the actors did not cooperate before (Interview BMBF). However, because the *Studienkollegs* were already part of the bigger network concerned with education for international students in Germany and had ties with actors close to the DAAD, their collaboration was likely.

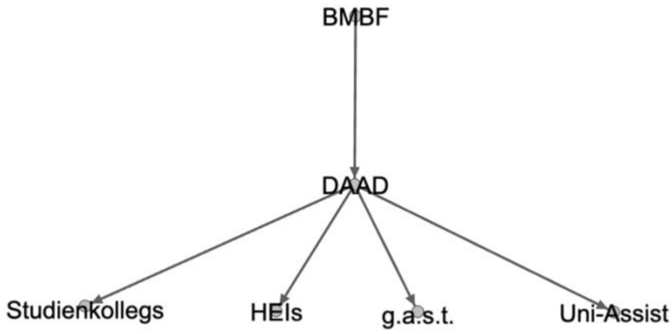


*Figure 6: Cashflow of the Network Around the DAAD for the Second Package of Policy Measures*

Finally, the expectation 3a can be accepted and expectation 3b must be rejected. The response of the network around the DAAD is associated with the continuation of its established network structure before the refugee crisis. Since the only change is one tie between two actors that were already connected via a bridging tie, it cannot be accounted for as an adaption of new structures. Therefore, the shock does not automatically cause an adaption of network structures. Even though the network is, depending on the definition of ties, not necessarily embedded, the performance is still described as successful by DAAD and BMBF. This can be explained by the solution approach to use existing network structures for a new issue. Additional research would be needed to find whether this is a special approach or a method, networks use frequently.

### 5.4 Expectation 4: Embeddedness and Centrality of the Network Around the DAAD

In this section the network around the DAAD is analyzed based on the relationship ties and cashflow after 2015. First of all, the embeddedness of the network is determined, then bridging ties and finally the most central actors are identified. Afterwards the bridging ties that include central actors are further examined to understand their importance and explore for PPPs.

Based on relationship ties, the network around the DAAD is relatively embedded. There can be identified three cliques. The first is connecting BMBF, g.a.s.t. and DAAD. The second consists of HEIs, g.a.s.t. and the DAAD and the last includes HEIs, DAAD and Uni-Assist. Only the connection between HEIs and Studienkollegs could be accounted for as a bridging tie, especially when considering that most actors are associations and therefore each being a clique.

The average degree of centrality 1.33 is rather low, as it means each actor has only slightly more than one tie on average. The actors with the highest degree are the HEIs and the DAAD with a degree of 4. However, since the ties are directed, only the outdegree is relevant (Jansen 2003: 132). The outdegree of the DAAD is only 2, one is the tie to g.a.s.t. and the second is the tie to Uni-Assist. Meaning the HEIs would be the most central actor in this network. Still, network centralization is accounted as a measurement for the problem-solving capacity of a group (Jansen 2003: 136). HEIs do not have the same potential for problem-solving as the DAAD. HEIs refers to all German HEIs individually. The DAAD refers to several HEIs united together with additional actors in one association. Thus, the DAAD already aligned the aims of its actors while the HEIs would first have to take that step, in order to solve a problem. Before one concludes the DAAD as the most central actor based on relationship, one must take into account that the BMBF has an outdegree of 2 and brings the two actors on the same level.

The network based on cashflow is not embedded at all, no actors build cliques, making every tie a bridging tie, because if one of them was cut the consequence would be that one actor dropped out of the network. All actors except for the DAAD have a degree centrality of 1, leading to a low average degree centrality of 0.83. The degree centrality of the DAAD is 5 as it has an outdegree of 4 and an indegree of 1. This also means that the DAAD acquires the financial resources from the BMBF for all actors collectively. This makes them the most central actor and the tie to the BMBF the most influential bridging tie. This fits the finding above that DAAD and BMBF are two actors of special importance.

The bridging tie between the HEIs and the Studienkollegs from *Figure 4* is not further analyzed. Since the HEIs and the Studienkolleg only have a weak tie that only exists in some cases depending on the state as explained in *Section 5.2* and they are not connected in *Figure 6*, one can expect that their relationship is not as critical for the implementation of the second package of policy measures and hence no important bridging tie.

Thus, the only bridging tie left to explore is the tie connecting the BMBF and the DAAD. Given the DAAD's managerial position, it takes over important tasks of a bridging tie. The DAAD acquires resources from the BMBF as well as collecting information from the other actors. Both activities also make it pivotal for the cooperation. Since the BMBF is a public actor and the DAAD a private one, the establishment of a PPP is possible. The DAAD as an association can be more specifically described as a societal actor which would mean there could rather be a PCP. Their cooperation started years ago (Interview DAAD, Interview BMBF) and as *Section 5.1* shows their aims align even though they are not necessarily completely identical. Moreover, it was shown that there exists a high level of trust. However, their fields of expertise differ. As a governmental actor, the BMBF has more expertise in the field of policy making while the DAAD focuses more on the implementation process. Considering the policy cycle, the skills of the BMBF can be placed within the first two phases, agenda setting and formal decision making, and those of the DAAD within the last two, policy implementation and monitoring and evaluation, even though this does not mean that either actor can be reduced to those fields of expertise.

Defining the type of PCP cooperation is more difficult. While it is not a merger as both actors kept their identity, they still have worked together to create new agencies such as Uni-Assist (Uni-Assist c 2022). Though the level of trust between DAAD and BMBF is high, their relationship is not completely informal (Interview DAAD, Interview BMBF). Because the money distributed stems from public funds, the spending has to be regulated in contracts. Still, those contracts are written in a way that grants the DAAD some freedom in their spending (Interview DAAD, Interview BMBF) and can frequently be renegotiated as they always define a period in which the projects are funded. Nevertheless, the relationship between DAAD and BMBF can be referred to as a PCP. One of their projects is the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study*.

Even though the network can be embedded depending on the definition of ties, expectation 3a must be rejected as the response of the functioning of the network is better explained by the PCP between the DAAD and the BMBF than network embeddedness since the network is managed by the DAAD as *Figure 6* shows and funded by the BMBF, making the two actors crucial for the development and implementation of the second package of policy measures. This leads to the conclusion to accept expectation 3b.

These findings contradict Meier and O'Toole's (2003) theory. This is not the first-time research has shown that embeddedness is not always a predictor for network performance. Schalk, Torenvlied & Allen (2009: 648) already found that Meier and O'Toole's (2003) theory is not applicable to their case. They argued that additional research focusing on network embeddedness and trust would be needed. While this was not the main focus of this research, one could argue based on the findings in the case of the network around the DAAD that network trust is more important than network embeddedness.

One of the main factors for network performance in this case was the PCP between DAAD and BMBF, supporting Borgatti & Halgin's (2011) theory that bridging ties are critical to acquire new resources. Still, there is relatively little research on PCPs as bridging ties within larger networks. Thus, additional research would be needed to verify this finding and to gain a deeper understanding of this phenomenon.

## 6. Conclusion

In the conclusion, the research question is answered by replying to the sub-questions to summarize the findings. Afterwards, the expectations are reviewed to discuss their scientific relevance and generalizability and the limits of this research are reflected upon. Finally, research fields are identified where additional investigations are necessary.

The performance of the network around the DAAD during the refugee crisis of 2015 from the network relations the DAAD maintained with different actors in its environment. This is achieved by analyzing the network characteristics. As the analysis of the first expectations has shown, the aim of the network and of the actors shifted, however, they are aligned at all times. This has shown that a shock does not negatively impact network performance by deteriorating the network structure as Bekerom, Torenvlied and Akkerman (2015) suggest. In fact, the network structure was hardly changed. Neither did the embeddedness, nor the centrality change. Only one new tie developed between the DAAD and the *Studienkollegs*, both were already part of the network and connected by HEIs. In this case, the shock improved the performance of the network around the DAAD because the new focus, adding to the network service. Whether this is an isolated case or not remains to be proven by additional research. This exceptional finding could be due to the high trust within the network.

Furthermore, the bachelor thesis shows that it is difficult to assess network performance. By discussing the second expectation, it was proven that measuring the number of dropouts and students reaching a degree, as Bekerom, Torenvlied and Akkerman (2015) did to assess success of networks concerned with education, is not always an applicable success criterion, even though this would be reasonable. Since it is not measurable due to privacy restrictions which are generally getting stricter, one could imagine that this is not the only case struggling with the issue of missing data. Additional qualitative criteria could be developed however they would have to be individual for each case and tied to the actors' expectations which is not always assessable as well. In this case for instance, the DAAD did develop such measures, but did not want to publish them.

The third sub-question has already been partly answered. The centrality of the network was unchanged. In result this means that DAAD and BMBF did remain central as the discussion on the fourth expectation has shown. The BMBF is mainly central as a money giving actor, while the DAAD is central due to its managerial function. The money is distributed by the DAAD and they develop projects, even though the specific details of implementation remain responsibilities of the actors. However, this freedom has advantages and disadvantages. Arar (2021: 9) states that for a more efficient policy implementation, the HEIs would have to cooperate more closely, he argues that this would also reduce the disparity between policy solutions existing in theory and the implemented solution. DAAD and BMBF decided for this approach as it secures a great flexibility, making it possible for the network to adapt to changes in the needs of refugees.

The effect of this can be seen by the DAAD program PROFI which started four years after the INTEGRA and WELCOME program to support refugees who have graduated on their way to employment. The flexibility is also useful now that many refugees from Ukraine enter Germany who have a different status than those who came in 2015 mainly from Syria (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2016: 20). The BMBF and DAAD already announced that needed adaptions will be made (BMBF 2022). These findings emphasize the importance trust has for network performance as this flexibility would not work without trust, thus proving Zaheer, McEvily and Perrone's (1998) theory. Additionally, it is also important to review the influence PPPs have in networks. In this case the PCP between BMBF and DAAD was the key factor for the development of the second package of policy measures. Considering Burt's (2001) theory of structural holes, this could be a frequent phenomenon.

All these findings can be summarized by answering the fourth sub-question, to what extent the found network relations were associated with the performance during the refugee crisis. The network could only perform this well because the aims of network and actors were aligned, since the network was embedded in respect to relationship ties. Furthermore, the bridging tie between DAAD and BMBF, when analyzing monetary ties, made it possible for the network to acquire the needed financial resources. On top of that, the special relationship between DAAD and BMBF as well as the high trust within the networks made such a flexible solution possible.

Due to external circumstances the research faced many limits. The scope of the bachelor thesis only allowed to focus on the implementation network for the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study.* This means actors involved in the policy making process were completely neglected. The BMBF recorded that they were also discussing ideas with the HRK, federal and state governments and several foundations (Interview BMBF). The influence of those actors is not accounted for in this bachelor thesis. Additionally, if the focus of research would have been policy making, the BMBF might have been more central to the network instead of the DAAD.

Even when looking at the implementation, not all possible actors were discussed, only those referred to in the announcements for the second package of policy measures. For instance, *the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany* already developed a tool, called *Anabin*, assessing the quality of diplomas completed in other countries (Kultusministerkonferenz n.d.). Additionally, the role of the HRK as an actor managing consultations between HEIs was not analyzed.

Moreover, HEIs and Studienkollegs were treated as one actor, when in fact both terms refer to numerous actors whose exact structure and tasks can vary due to regional regulations, as it was already explained in the introduction. To assess the way the second package of policy measures was implemented, one could have performed a multiple-case study to assess how each HEI has implemented it individually, what projects were financed and how effective they were. This would have been useful to assess the claim that too little exchange existed between HEIs, leading to a lack of good practice examples (Younso & Schamann (2021: 198). To support exchange the DAAD grants a price for HEIs who developed effective ways of implementing the second package of policy measures (Interview BMBF), however it is questionable for how long this price will be awarded given the time limit on the funding for the Welcome-Program. All limits named above show that there still exists a great need for additional research and that this bachelor thesis only tries to explain a very small scope of it.

Future researchers might also develop their own success criteria beforehand to assess the success of the policy measures. These criteria do not have to be quantitative, but maybe they could find a general way of assessing policy measures qualitatively. Additional research could also focus on how the second package of policy measures interact with regional or state measures supporting refugees to integrate in HEIs such as NRWege, a program developed by the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia that cooperates with the DAAD to develop solutions to integrate refugees specifically in HEIs in North Rhine-Westphalia (Ministerium für Kultur und Wissenschaft des Landes Nordrhein-Westfahlen n.d.).

Another research subject could be possible change in the future due to the increase of refugees coming from Ukraine to Germany. Because the Ukraine is in Europe, those refugees have a different status in Germany and some of the measures taken do not apply for them (Auswärtiges Amt 2022). On top of that, some researchers already suggested a link between the second package of policy measures and a digitalization of support measures for integration which became important during the Covid-19 pandemic (Heublein, Hutzsch, Kercher, Knüttgen Kupfer & Schmitz 2021: 13).

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## 8. Appendices

**8.1. Appendix A: List of Documents Atlas.ti** Arar, Khalid (2021): *Refugees' pathways to German Higher Education institutions*, International Journal of Educational Development, 85, 102459.

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## 8.2 Appendix B: Codding Scheme

**Successful:** The measures can be accounted for as successful

| | |
|---|---|
| Successful (academic study ability) | Measures determining the refugee's academic study ability were successful. |
| Successful (admission) | Measures for a fast admissions process were successful. |
| Successful (language skills) | Measures assessing language skills with a focus of technical language were successful. |
| Successful (preparatory courses) | Measures to offer preparatory courses were successful. |
| Successful (information) | Measures adding to the available information were successful. |
| Successful (BAföG) | Measures granting refugees BAföG were successful. |
| Successful (student initiatives) | Measures supporting student initiatives to integrate Refugees at higher education institutions were successful. |
| Successful (overall) | The measures of the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study* were overall accounted for as being successful |

**Shortcomings:** Shortcomings of the measures were reported

| | |
|---|---|
| Shortcoming (academic study ability) | Measures determining the refugee's academic study ability had shortcomings. |
| Shortcoming (admission) | Measures for a fast admissions process were limited. |
| Shortcoming (language skills) | Measures assessing language skills with a focus of technical language skills had shortcomings. |
| Shortcoming (preparatory courses) | Measures to offer preparatory courses ability had shortcomings. |
| Shortcoming (information) | Measures adding to the available information had shortcomings. |
| Shortcoming (BAföG) | Measures granting refugees BAföG had shortcomings. |
| Shortcoming (student initiatives) | Measures supporting student initiatives to integrate Refugees at higher education institutions had shortcomings. |
| Shortcoming (overall) | The measures of the *second package of policy measures: enabling access to study* were overall accounted for as having shortcomings. |

### 8.3 Appendix C: Interview Question DAAD

1. Welche Aufgabe übernehmen Sie beim DAAD?
2. Seit wann kooperieren der DAAD und das BMBF?
3. Wie verlief der Entstehungsprozess des zweite Maßnahmenpakets: Zugang zum Studium ermöglichen?
4. Waren außer dem BMBF und dem DAAD weitere Akteure an dem Prozess beteiligt?
5. Gab es hierarchische Abstufungen zwischen den Akteuren?
6. War der DAAD zufrieden mit dem Maßnahmenpaket?
7. Gibt es eine Sammlung an Verträgen zwischen dem DAAD und dem BMBF?

### 8.4 Appendix D: Interview Questions BMBF

1. Welche Aufgabe Übernehmen Sie beim BMBF?
2. Wie verlief der Entstehungsprozess des zweite Maßnahmenpakets: Zugang zum Studium ermöglichen aus Ihrer Sicht?
3. Hatte der BMBF mit weiteren Akteuren außer dem DAAD während des Prozess Kontakt?
4. Gab es hierarchische Abstufungen zwischen den beteiligten Akteuren?
5. War der BMBF zufrieden mit dem Maßnahmenpaket?
6. Gibt es eine Sammlung an Verträgen zwischen dem DAAD und dem BMBF?
7. Wie wird die Integration weiter unterstützt, wenn die Finanzierungen auslaufen?

### 8.5 Appendix E: Statutory Declaration

I hereby declare that I have authored this thesis independently, that I have not used other that the declared sources, and that I have explicitly marked all material which has been quoted wither literally or by content from the used sources.

| 29.06.2022 | M. Ruhstofer |
|---|---|
| (Date) | (Signature) |