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Into the mind of a war refugee: An ethnography of refugees from Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina concerning the integration system in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2007

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“I feel like throughout the whole process of integration they try to brainwash you completely and then give you the Dutch citizenship. They could have gotten a teacher, but now because of this whole process, they have a completely crazy person”

(Srebrenican refugee 1, p. 82, 2018)

Abstract

This thesis explores the lives of powerless victims from Srebrenica who specifically sought refuge in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2000. In this vein, the paper's main research question asked, 'how can the perceptions and experiences of refugees from Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the integration system in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2007 be explained?'. This question is constructed from the desire to understand the relationship between the Dutch system-world and the specific Srebrenican life-world. While the system-world includes policymakers and the implementation of the refugee integration system, the life-world presents the lived refugee experiences concerning this system. Herewith, a document analysis was employed to contextualize the integration system and an ethnography by using semi-structured interviews was performed to gain insight into the life-world. The outcome of this research shows the presence of two separated and incoherent worlds. On the one hand the dominated and powerful system-world and on the other hand the powerless and submissive life-world.

Keywords Yugoslavia; refugees; integration; experiences; policies; system-world; life-world

Preface

In front of you lies my thesis focusing on the lives of traumatized war refugees from Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The basis for this research originated from the fact that I was one of these refugees myself. In 1997, my parents and I sought refuge in the Netherlands. After spending five years in different asylum centers we obtained the Dutch citizenship in 2002. The war in Yugoslavia left many scars for most of my family members and took his toll on my parents - I knew how hard it was for them to assimilate into a new society. For this reason, I was curious about the experiences of other refugees from Srebrenica and what kind of obstacles they had to overcome to resettle in Dutch society.

Overall, this thesis was very interesting and at the same time emotional for me. However, I could not have achieved this end result without strong support. Therefore, I would like to thank dr. Ringo Ossewaarde and dr. Veronica Junjan for their help and advice during the development of this thesis. Especially, dr. Ringo Ossewaarde for his inspirational and overall important guidance during this research.

I hope you enjoy reading this thesis.

Thank you.

Sumedin Verlasevic

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1. INTRODUCTION

The massacre at Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina twenty-three years ago—a result of the war in the former Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (hereafter referred to as Yugoslavia)—was a crime against Bosnia's Muslim community, and which irrevocably altered many lives. While traumatised victims desperate to find shelter and peace endeavoured to escape the terrible reality of the war, their decisions in doing so were a result of their restricted circumstances rather than their free will (Kovacevic Bielicki, 2016). Ultimately, 1.2 million Bosnians choose to flee the country as war refugees; nearly half of them sought asylum in Western Europe (Barslund, Busse, Lenaerts, Ludolph & Renman, 2016). The decision to emigrate and start a new life in a new country heavily impacted their life path and opportunities even to this day (Kovacevic Bielicki, 2016).

This thesis focuses on the aftermath of the war and explores the lives of the victims from Srebrenica who 'suffered through war trauma, persecution, torture, abrupt and sometimes repeated displacements, physical violence against themselves or their family' (Knezevic & Olson, 2014, p. 317) as well as their decision to specifically seek refuge in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2000. During this period, the Netherlands received almost twelve thousand Bosnian refugees (Alders & Nicolaas, 2002). However, according to research done by the Central Bureau of Statistics, only 497 people who originated from Srebrenica were living in the Netherlands in 2007 (Mulalic, Harmsen & Oudhof, 2007).

These refugees, survivors of genocide, who had been traumatically impacted and displaced by war, originated from a society based on Ottoman traditions and culture. Fleeing the war, they arrived in an entirely foreign environment with its own culture and traditions, a complete contrast to their home. Deprived of family, friends, and livelihood, and carrying the weight of their trauma, they then began the process of resettlement. Thus, in the process of becoming a member of the Dutch society, they had to make a challenging adjustment from a traditional to a modern world. Given these circumstances, this thesis sets out to discover how these genocide survivors, with such a traumatic past and a completely different background were incorporated into the receiving society. Therefore, the main focus of this thesis is to comprehend the coherence between the life-world and system-world. Within this research, the system-world includes policymakers and the implementation of the refugee integration system, while the life-world reflects on the experiences of the refugees from Srebrenica concerning this system.

The life-world is a world that focuses on understanding the structure of everyday life, how this is experienced and lived (Flick, Kardoff & Steinke, 2014). This world will be explored through the narrative of the refugee—first-hand knowledge from the refugee's point of view.

The primary objective is to focus on the individual's lived experiences and perceptions, in order to achieve a greater understanding on the life-world of traumatised war victims, and their immense struggle and surmounting a multitude of barriers when integrating into a new society while still being affected by the aftermath of their turbulent past. Overall, meaning will be provided on how refugees from Srebrenica, from their point of view, have experienced the Dutch integration system. This system, which is developed within the system-world – a world that serves the interests and goals of institutions and organisations. 'Laws, regulations and executive organizations, as well as unwritten rules and practices, are part of such institutions' (Penninx, 2004, p. 3). This world has to provide the right tools for newcomers to function independently within the life-world, this system can hinder or facilitate the overall resettlement. Thus, this system influences the overall refugee integration by shaping refugees' ability to participate within host societies frameworks (Hynie, 2018). However, the relationship between the experts in the system-world and those with lived experience in the life-world is consistently imbalanced because the system norms become more dominant than the moral values of the life-world (Abma, Leyerzapf & Landeweer, 2017). The system-world aims to achieve their goals in the most efficient and effective way, often at the expense of the life-world (Howlett, 2004). Or as explained by Hathaway, 'preferred governmental and agency agendas increasingly sacrifice the autonomy of the refugee himself or herself to broader migratory management goals' (2007, p. 350).

In sum, the system-world includes the different political entities, social institutions and organisations who can create the social context which facilitates or impedes refugee resettlement within the life-world. Overall, the interaction process between two worlds is a crucial factor which affects successful refugee resettlement. In the chapters that follow, this thesis will reflect on this process and discover the particular coherence between the two worlds within the Dutch context from twelve Srebrenican refugees.

1.1 Background

Given that Europe is having the largest refugee problem since the end of the Second World War, there is great value in studying the personal experiences of refugees in the European societies that receive them (Kovacevic Bielicki, 2016). The importance of resettling refugees in a host society has grown significantly and refugee integration has become a meaningful subject for public discussion as successful resettlement of refugees is seen as the main policy objective (Ager & Strang, 2008). The importance is even more pronounced, since, as Korac argues, researchers in the field and policy makers frequently contradict each other in defining refugee integration (2003). Over the years, there has been increasing interest from

scholars to investigate the integration process of refugees from former Yugoslavia, especially Bosnian refugees. However, there has been a limited exploration of the Dutch approach to the resettlement of refugees from Srebrenica who experienced genocide. The lack of research on this topic prevents the experiences of these refugees from having an impact on Dutch integration system. More specifically, there is an absence in understanding the refugee integration problem via the life-world and system-world framework.

According to Valena and Strabac, previous research on refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina can be sorted into three categories: first, scholars who only focused on the reception policy of host societies; second, studies that investigated all aspects of integration; and third, studies that focused on the return of Bosnian refugees to their home country (2013). For example, Coughlan and Owens-Manley (2006) explored the experiences of refugees in the United States by focusing on all aspects of the refugees' migration path. Alternatively, Knezevic and Olson (2014) focused on the pre- and post-migration experiences in the United States using interviews. Seffo, Krupic, Grbic, and Fatahi (2014) on the contrary, analysed the integration experiences of refugees in Sweden by concentrating on the health of the refugees and using more quantitative research. Kovacevic Bielicki however, only investigated how former child refugees experienced the integration process in Norway (2016). A more recent study by Bakker, Dagevos and Engbersen (2017) involved researching refugees from the former Yugoslavia between 1995 and 1999. This study explored the labour market and education experiences of Bosnian refugees in five Western European countries. In 2003, Korac studied the situation of former Yugoslavian refugees in Italy and the Netherlands. However, he only focused on how the refugees defined integration success and developed strategies to achieve their goals. Furthermore, a study by Ives (2007) examined the experiences of Bosnian refugees and their resettlement in the United States by examining the specific active integration policy.

All of the abovementioned scholars recognized the importance of investigating the integration experiences of forced refugees. Current research indicates that in order for refugees to adapt to host society, they can have an active voice within their resettlement. Like Eastmond (2007, p. 253) reported:

'while transformation and change are part of the refugee experience, not all change is perceived as loss or defined as problematic or unwelcome by all individuals involved. Nor are refugees necessarily helpless victims, but rather likely to be people with agency and voice'

Altogether, the literature argues that there is a need to better understand the life stories of refugees from their view (Korac, 2003; Miller & Rasco, 2004; Eastmond, 2007; Ives, 2007; Knezevic & Olsun, 2014).

This thesis will contribute to filling this knowledge gap by focusing on the 'voices' of refugees from Srebrenica and their experiences concerning the Dutch integration system. The narrative form will broaden the understanding of the resettlement challenges that refugees experience and therefore, provide policy recommendations for the system-world. Ultimately, the main contribution of this thesis is to explain the refugee integration phenomena via a new original framework which is absent in current research. This framework, concerning the two different 'worlds', will provide new scientific insight into the lives of traumatised war refugees and their life-world experiences. This thesis will take both worlds into consideration and will mainly focus on the similarities and differences between the implemented Dutch integration system in practice and the experienced integration system by the recipients from Srebrenica. By focusing on this framework new insight into the refugee integration phenomena will be provided via two different perspectives. On one hand, the experiences within the life-world will provide beneficial, bottom-up knowledge for policy evaluation and implementation within the system-world as European countries cope with the current refugee crisis (Barslund et al., 2016, Abma, Leyerzapf & Landeweer, 2017). As Kovacevic Bielicki (2016) pointed out:

'Turning back to the past experiences and memories of people who went through this type of experience in the not so distant past, might help us understand what challenges the numerous refugees of today are facing, and help answer what receiving societies can do in response to the arrival of the new refugees' (p. 14).

On other hand, this framework will be also beneficial for members of the life-world who have to welcome new 'neighbours'. In sum, this outlook on the integration phenomena via these two perspectives will provide new scientific knowledge regarding refugee integration and societal knowledge for policy-making.

1.2 Research questions

This thesis explores, in narrative form, the lives of traumatised victims of a horrible war by capturing refugees' lived experiences and seeks to better understand the challenges they faced during their resettlement into Dutch society. The focus will be on their life as they experienced it; how they, from their perspective, perceived and assigned meaning to what happened to them. Therefore, this research will allow the voices of refugees from Srebrenica

to inform the understanding of the integration policy. In this way, this paper identifies and explores which factors enhance and hinder the integration process. However, understanding the integration process is extremely complex and every refugee has his or her unique range of individual experiences and struggles (Korac, 2003).

With this mind, this paper's main research question asks, **how can the perceptions and experiences of refugees from Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the integration system in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2007 be explained?** This main question is constructed from the desire to understand the relationship between the system of refugee integration and the reality that refugees experienced. Also, already described as the system-world and the life-world. To truly understand the interplay between these two worlds, the main research question is broken down into the following three sub-questions.

1) What was the integration system for refugees from Srebrenica in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2007?

The purpose of the first sub-question is to understand the integration system that was in place between 1995 and 2007 in the Netherlands. Namely, to understand how the system that was formulated by policy makers was implemented. Ultimately, this will provide the context to understand how the integration system was organised and how it functioned.

2) What are the similarities and differences between refugees' perceptions and experiences with the integration system and the actual integration system between 1995 and 2007 in the Netherlands?

The next step aims to understand how refugees from Srebrenica perceived and experienced this Dutch integration system. The purpose of this sub-question is to focus on the voices of these refugees; this is a critical component in portraying the whole integration system experience. Through a narrative format, the reality that refugees experienced will be explored. From these narratives, this paper will draw conclusions between the integration system in practise, experienced by the refugees, and the integration system on paper, constructed by policymakers.

3) How can the differences between the integration system and the reality that refugees experience be explained?

The last question deals with providing meaning to the differences between the two worlds. Each question and answer inevitably and necessarily build on the previous ones.

1.3 Research approach

In order to answer the research questions, a rich understanding was developed on the relationship between the system-world and life-world. Taking into consideration that feelings and personal stories were emphasized, a qualitative method was chosen over a quantitative one. This methodological approach was based on undertaking two activities. First, a document analysis was performed to contextualize the integration system, which reflects the integration policy developed by Dutch policymakers. These documents helped develop empirical knowledge to answer the first sub-question. Second, the life-world, the reality experienced by refugees, was explored in an ethnography. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews that provided rich insight into the lives of refugees by illuminating their lived experiences during their resettlement in Dutch society. Data from twelve refugees from Srebrenica who resettled in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2007 was obtained and used to answer the second and third sub-questions.

This thesis proceeds as follows. After the introductory chapter, the second chapter serves as the theoretical framework for answering the research questions. Here, the focus lies on characterizing the contrast between the integration system and the reality experienced by the refugees. Theories will be described which help contextualize the system, - and life-world. Following from this, the third chapter will provide an in-depth explanation on the methodological framework. This includes the data selection and analytical approach. In chapter four I explain both worlds within the Dutch context and demonstrate the coherence between the integration system in practise and the experienced integration system by the recipients from Srebrenica in reality. In the last chapter, answers are provided for each sub-question and the overall main question together with a discussion and research implications.

CONCLUDING REMARKS CHAPTER ONE

This chapter describes the present situation and argues that current research lacks a complete understanding of the refugee integration problem via the system-world and life-world framework and specifically how traumatised refugees from Srebrenica have experienced the Dutch integration system. This chapter demonstrates that there is a need to investigate how traumatised war refugees experience the integration system by showcasing their point of view. This thesis will investigate this in terms of the system-world and life-world by focusing on the similarities and differences between the perceived and experienced integration system by the recipients from Srebrenica and the implemented integration system by Dutch policymakers. The four research questions serve as the framework from which to understand the coherence between the two worlds within the Dutch context.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter serves as the foundation for answering the research questions by providing theories to make sense of the integration system and reality experienced by refugees. Thus, the system-world and the life-world. The aim of this chapter is threefold. The first is to shed light on the interface between the two worlds and thereby gain a better understanding of the relationship between the two. The second is to conceptualize the integration system by explaining the integration system. The third is to characterize the experienced reality from the perspective of a war refugee.

2.1 The system-world and life-world

The theoretical approach of this research nests around the existence of two worlds, the system-world and life-world. Looking back to the past, focusing on refugee studies and policymaking, several other theoretical approaches have been used by scholars to understand this specific phenomenon. Literature around policy making, like listed by Nilsen (2015) oriented about explaining the transition from policy on paper into policy in practise, understanding what influences the policy outcome and evaluating the overall policy implementation. However, all of these mentioned approaches did not really suit this research as the main focus was to understand real life experiences together with describing the integration policy as it was implemented. This means that the focus was on two different spheres, on one hand the integration policy and on the other hand the experiences and perceptions of the refugees. Overall, examining the coherence and relationship between these two spheres was aimed to be achieved. In order to do so, these different spheres were approached by using the theory of the life-world and system-world. This theory was used because it truly could explain the existence of both worlds and how they interconnect with each other.

Overall, the situation regarding refugees and their integration process is formed by the relationship between the state, as the implementer of the system, and the refugees that experience the reality of the system (Indra, 1993). How the refugees from Srebrenica have experienced and perceived the Dutch integration system depends on how the system-world was organised. The system-world consists of different organisations and institutions which has its own set of norms and values and pursues specific goals. Like Abma, Leyerzapf and Landeweer point out, it is a world that focuses on 'material goods and welfare and values efficiency and effectiveness' (2017, p. 4). Generally, it is a world that concentrates on political power and hierarchy. It is part of the ruling apparatus, the ability of this powerful group is controlled through its core foundations (Vasta, 2007). Howlett argued that the system-world

consists mainly of powerful actors acting in absolute self-interest (2004). While the reality experienced by refugees, also known as the life-world, a concept first used by Edmund Husserl (1858-1938), refers to “the only real world, the one that is actually given through perception” and “the original ground of all theoretical and practical life” (Zelic, 2008, p. 413). ‘The life-world is a material, cultural world and is on the one hand a social reality and on the other hand a subjective reality’ (Eberle, 2012, p. 284-285). Thus, the lived experience happens within the life-world, also known within the literature as the study of phenomenology (Van Manen, 1997; Cresswell, 2013).

Phenomenology was developed by the philosopher Edmund Husserl, it is aimed to describe how participants experience a certain phenomenon in their life. How this person interprets this in everyday life (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). Life-world values find their expression in stories, and lived experiences lend insight into the meaning of experiences. It is a world with different values and norms than the system-world (Abma et al., 2017).

Abma et al. stated, focusing on the view of Habermas (1987), that ‘modern society has resulted in an imbalance between both worlds, meaning that the system components of economy and technology and the accompanying norms of productivity, efficiency, and strategic action penetrate all aspects of daily life, repressing chances for communicative action’ (2017, p. 38). A perfect world would be one where people communicate on the basis of ‘mutual recognition, reciprocal perspective taking, a shared willingness to consider one’s own conditions through the eyes of the stranger and to learn from one another’ (Habermas, 2003, p. 291). Overall, there is a need for harmony between experts and those with lived experiences. However, it is hard for those with less power, such as refugees, to have their voices be heard (Abma et al, 2017).

2.2 The integration system-world

Refugee integration is a term frequently used in the literature; however, there is no consensus about what it truly means (Korac, 2008). Nevertheless, certain trends can be identified within literature. For example, Alencar (2017) and Ager and Strang (2010) argued that integration can be seen as the process of resettlement of newcomers in a new society. Similarly, Threadgold and Court confirmed that integration ‘is the process by which immigrants and refugees become part of the receiving society’ (2005, p. 8). Integration is a complex process with several scopes, from the arrival, referring to the immigration policy, to the ideal future situation (Platss-Fowler & Robinson, 2015). It is a process with many actors, from the newcomers themselves, the host government, institutions, and communities (Penninx, 2004). The integration system is mostly implemented to meet short-term results

since refugees are expected to leave the country once a permanent solution to their situation is found (Hynie, 2018). In short, empirical evidence appears to confirm the notion that the integration system can be seen as a complex process which focuses on successful newcomer resettlement, or within this context, successful refugee resettlement. In order to understand how this system is contextualized within the Dutch context, this thesis will focus on the work of Ager and Strang (2004a, 2004b, 2008) who developed a comprehensive framework that consists of key issues identified within the literature as the most important factors of refugee integration (Platss-Fowler & Robinson, 2015). These factors highlight the integration system, and within this thesis are used as the conceptual model to understand the Dutch integration system-world.

2.2.1 The conceptual model of the integration system

This conceptual model, as illustrated in Figure 1, shows ten core factors that are organised into four domains. The key areas for successful integration, referred to as ‘means and markers’, are: employment, housing, education and health. These factors support integration but are also markers of successful integration. These indicators are classified as the ‘public’ side of integration (Da Lomba, 2010). Studies have shown that refugees who receive access to employment, housing, education and language training directly upon arrival, benefit more and integrate faster. Conversely, not granting refugees such immediate provisions hinders their integration process (Valenta & Strabac, 2013).

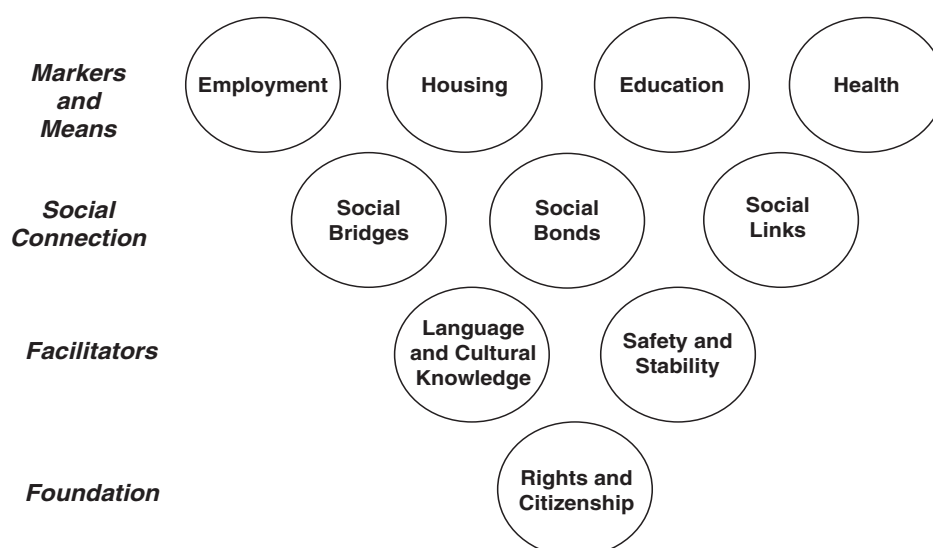


FIGURE 1 The conceptual framework of the integration system developed by Ager and Strang (2004a, 2004b, 2008)

The first factor in the integration system is employment. This factor influences many other important matters such as, 'promoting economic independence, planning for the future, meeting members of the host society, providing an opportunity to develop language skills, restoring self-esteem and encouraging self-reliance' (Ager & Strang, 2008, p. 170). Threadgold and Court (2005) and Phillimore and Goodson (2008) argue that having a job creates an environment where refugees can meet new people and improve their language skills. Conversely, a long period of unemployment negatively impacts the integration process. Nonetheless, often newcomers must wait long at different centers before being able to orient themselves at their new host society, but also poor (mental) health of refugees due to the situation for which they fled. Research also shows that refugees often first find employment below their original educational level (Scholten, Baggerman, Dellouche, Kampe & Ypma, 2017). Hence, education helps to build a meaningful life where refugees can be active members within society. Additionally, Ager and Strang claim that housing positively impacts the overall physical and emotional wellbeing of a refugee and makes the refugee feel 'at home' (2008). 'For those seeking refuge, it could be argued that the importance of finding a home is particularly symbolic as it marks the end of a journey and the point at which refugees can start to consider their wider needs' (Phillimore & Goodson, 2008, p. 316). Moreover, as argued by Scholten et al. (2017), refugees should receive housing as soon as possible since this will allow them to develop relationships with the host society. Housing is the basis for other aspects like education, employment and other services refugees need (Cart & Osborne, 2009). Nonetheless, as stated by Netto (2011), when refugees receive permanent housing, they still face several problems and difficulties. Lastly, health, which not only refers to being healthy but also to the ability to reliably access healthcare services (Ager & Strang, 2008). Thus, as described by Threadgold and Court (2005), the complete 'physical, mental and social well-being' (p. 48) of a person. The important matter herewith is whether the healthcare system results in the feeling of being included or excluded (Scholten et al., 2017).

On the second level, the social connections domain contains three indicators – social bonds, social bridges, and social links (Platss-Fowler & Robinson, 2015) – that concentrate on links or chains within a refugee's own cultural community, bridges to other groups, and links to key institutions in society such as the central government (Ager & Strang, 2008). This domain emphasizes the importance of 'relationships' in the process of refugee integration (Platss-Fowler & Robinson, 2015; Alencar, 2017). In 2003, the study of Korac revealed the importance of social connections in relationship to the integration success of refugees. Also, different public institutions have an important role who arrange education and employment (Penninx, 2004). The amount of interactions institutions and organizations have with the

refugees and recognize and adapt to their various needs is an important aspect of resettlement (Hynie, 2018)

The facilitator's domain contains two indicators that focus on the skills and situations that help refugees successfully integrate into the new society: language and cultural knowledge and safety and stability (Platss-Fowler & Robinson, 2015). According to Ager and Strang (2004, p. 4), 'cultural knowledge refers to refugees obtaining knowledge of the dominant culture as well as non-refugees acquiring knowledge of the circumstances and culture of refugees'. Language knowledge, an important determinant that can positively or negatively effect other aspects during the resettlement. Like Hynie (2018) explained that refugees who have difficulties with language will likewise find it hard to find employment or access to education. Safety and stability deal with issues such as discrimination and crime (Alencar, 2017). These factors can be seen as barriers that could hinder refugees' successful integration but also as measurements that reflect on effective integration. Finally, the foundation domain contains one indicator – rights and citizenship – that focuses on rights and obligations expected of refugees, of other people, and of the state (Ager & Strang, 2008). Like Penninx explained how it is necessary that a system is transparent to newcomers concerning their rights and obligations and what they can expect (2004).

2.3 The integration life-world

The moment that asylum is sought as a refugee in a country, refugees have to obtain a place in that new society (Penninx, 2004). However, as explained by Hynie:

'Refugees typically arrive in more vulnerable circumstances than other immigrants. Refugees are less likely than voluntary migrants to arrive speaking the language of the country they settle in, have fewer economic resources and capital, more limited social networks and supports, and are more likely to have been exposed to trauma prior to and during migration' (2018, p. 266)

The life-world focuses on the lived experiences of these refugees from their own perspective; these experiences are built on the life before the war, the circumstances during the war, and the progress through displacement and resettlement (Springer, 2006). These experiences can be positive or negative, full of opportunities or limitations (Coughlan & Owens-Manley, 2006). Healey points out that negative experiences result in a larger gap between host society and a refugee, whereas positive experiences bring the refugee closer to the host society (2006). However, positive experiences are not always possible, like George (2010) observed: 'refugees are suffering losses of every description, including social identity, place,

family, livelihood, and support systems, and must struggle to find their way in a new, often hostile, environment with a foreign language and customs' (p. 383). Likewise, Sorgen outlined that 'negative perceptions are often intertwined with the very labels of refugee and asylum seeker, which carry the significant legal connotation that are embedded in certain host society institutions' (p. 242). Most refugees or foreigners within the Netherlands receive the label of 'allochthon'. The definition of 'allochthon' as used within the Dutch context, reflects on people who are born somewhere (Essed, 2008). Essed argued that most of these 'allochthone' citizens are 'considered and treated as second-class citizens, never quite Dutch, never quite the norm, always considered as aspiring, as a problem, lagging behind' (p. 58). This anti-immigrant behaviour of host society negatively impacts the integration process of a refugee. Herewith, certain events within society can have a large impact and sudden effect on the public mood regarding newcomers within society (Scholten, Baggerman, Dellouche, Kampe & Ypma, 2017).

2.3.1 The life-world stages of integration

In order to truly understand the integration life-world, it is necessary to examine all aspects of the integration path. This path, identified by Coughlan and Owens-Manley (2006) and illustrated in Figure 2 has four stages: the life of a refugee before the war, the experiences during the war, displacement and transit, and resettlement in a new society. It is helpful to gain perspective on the refugee's entire experience (Wessels, 2014).

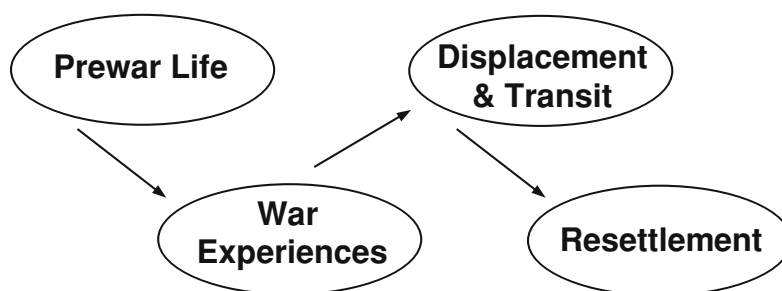


FIGURE 2 The stages of integration in the life-world by Coughlan and Owens-Manley (2006)

Firstly, it is important to recognize the background of a refugee, from their motive for leaving their country, to the difficulties with host government refugee policies, together with all the other physiological and psychological factors (George, 2010). Secondly, the war experiences; Morales and Sheafor (2002) acknowledge the importance of the historical experience of refugees and the impact that war, ethnic cleansing, and displacement can have on a person. Thirdly, the experiences of refugees during the war impacts their transit,

transit does not mean that the journey of a refugee necessarily ends (Coughlan & Owens-Manley, 2006). Even during this process, a refugee experiences certain fear and stress since the protections that they are granted are only temporary (Wessels, 2014). Like Bakker et. al point out, the rights of a refugee depend on the residency status that is granted to them; therefore, the better their status, the more rights they have (2017). Improving their status is a process that could take months or even years. This long asylum procedure can further negatively affect a refugee. It can cause 'insecurity about the future and hindered personal and skill development, which may also negatively affect mental health' (p. 1777). In addition, Bakker, Dagevos and Engbersen (2017) stated that refugees often suffer from traumatic experiences and are less prepared for this long procedure in comparison to normal migrants. In the same vein, a study by Sorgen (2015) stated that refugees are often in a weak mental and/or physical state. This makes the integration process complicated. Universally, refugees endure a long and difficult journey before receiving a permanent status in the host society (Wessels, 2014).

Lastly, during the resettlement process, every refugee is forced to learn the host country's societal and cultural principles (Wessels, 2014). The different services and programmes provided to the refugees and the way that the host society treats incoming refugees inevitably affects the experiences of the refugee (Coughland & Owens-Manley, 2006). Every refugee experiences these things in his or her own unique way. Nevertheless, this process creates certain issues, such as those mentioned by Wessels (2014): refugees experience 'culture shock, bereavement, assimilation, acculturation, and deculturation' (p. 12). Overall, in the end, the refugees just want to have a 'satisfactory life', or as Van Heelsum (2017) described how refugees just want to live normally but not necessarily fully similar to the native citizen.

2.3.2 The one-, or two-way process of integration

Literature has shown that the life-world can be understood as either a one-way or as a two-way process; each with different implications for refugees. In the one-way process, refugees must fully adapt to their new society without having a 'voice' in the process (Alencar, 2017). It is a process that refers to complete absorption, through policies and of forced assimilation (Vasta, 2007, p. 734) Therefore, this means ignoring their own culture and values and adapting completely to those of the new society. If ever a refugee fails to do this, then they are seen as a burden and having failed to integrate. In contrast, the two-way process assumes that refugees have an active 'voice' and thus are involved in the entire process of resettlement (Alencar, 2017). 'Both refugees and host society members play a crucial role in

making sure that refugees have access to jobs, education, housing, health, culture and language and that they feel part of the new environment, instead of problematizing refugees' (Alencar, 2017, p. 2). Additionally, as stated by Platss-Fowler and Robinson, refugees retain their original culture and identity during the integration process (2015). Da Lomba (2010) however, favours the notion that integration has to be a multidimensional two-way process from the very first moment a refugee sets foot in a host society. This view is supported by Ager and Strang (2004) and Mulvey (2015) who observed that integration must be seen as a process of mutual accommodation and that the host society must develop a certain acceptance of refugees. When this acceptance is missing, it negatively impacts the refugee's integration process (Sorgen, 2015). Ghorashi (2006) argued that having own identity is important, letting refugees keep their own identity would only be more beneficial for having a social capable society. Hence, not providing this right could result in segmentation and fragmentation within society. When people feel threatened and forced, they usually act in a reactive way. As a result, the room for connection becomes very small, because people will close out rather than open up for possible new contacts and combinations. In 2003, Korac studied the situation of former Yugoslavian refugees settled in Italy and the Netherlands from the perspective of the refugee. Korac made clear that integration has to be seen as a top-down and bottom-up process, meaning that refugees should 'contribute to the processes in which integration is defined, facilitated and assessed' (p. 5). More often than not however the voice of a refugee is neglected while the state maintains the 'upper hand'. Similarly, Ives (2007) also makes clear that the integration must be a two-way process. 'Refugees must be removed from the traditional position as policy objects to a place where they are integral, active agents in resettlement' (p. 61).

CONCLUDING REMARKS CHAPTER TWO

As to clarify how the refugees from Srebrenica have perceived and experienced the Dutch integration system this chapter has theorized the system-world and the life-world. As outlined, the theory has shown that there is a need for harmony between the two worlds as both have their own perception concerning successful refugee integration. Within this process mostly two actors are present, the refugees within the life-world, with their needs and unique features; and the different organizations and institutions as the system-world. The interaction between these two affects the overall outcome of the process. Overall, as the theory has demonstrated, the system-world has the power to create the structure of opportunities and/or limitations for a successful integration process (Penninx, 2000). Only if

these opportunities take places under the right conditions, refugees would integrate more successfully (Penninx, 2004).

To understand this harmony between the two worlds within the Dutch context, the conceptual framework that was adopted and served as the basis of understanding the system-world was a model developed by Ager and Strang. This model consists of several domains that conceptualize the complete integration system. This system, stated by Plattss-Fowler and Robinson is very complex and has different aspects which all have an impact on successful integration (2015). Studies have shown that refugees who receive access to certain aspects of the integration system like education and employment would integrate into a new society more successfully. Herewith, providing enough education to refugees to learn the host country's societal and cultural principles is seen as important. Moreover, it is crucial that refugees know what they can expect and what is expected from them. Long periods of uncertainty about the future should be avoided (Penninx, 2000). Therefore, Penninx also noted that the integration system should have active interaction with newcomers to avoid these uncertainties (2004). Active participation of refugees within the host society and the presence of mutual acceptance are essential conditions for successful integration. In general, it is argued that the system-world can 'make or break' successful refugee resettlement as it can hinder or rightfully facilitate refugees.

Furthermore, to develop an understanding of the life-world of the Srebrenican refugee and their experiences with the particular Dutch system, the stages of integration developed by Coughlan and Owens-Manley is going to be used. Every stage of this model provides different experiences and perceptions which help to understand the whole life-world. Hence, this thesis will mostly focus on the resettlement stage - the different experiences the refugees encountered with the integration system while trying to resettle into Dutch society. The theory has shown that more positive experiences would help bring refugees closer to the host society. The way how the host society treats its newcomers is therefore crucial for successful integration. It was stated that it is important that refugees are included in the whole integration cycle. This means that a two-way process of integration would be preferable in order for refugees to integrate successfully. Yet, the theory has demonstrated that mostly refugees are being seen as 'outsiders' and different than the national community (Vasta, 2007). Whether this was the case within the Dutch society concerning the refugees from Srebrenica will be acknowledged in the next chapters. In general, these theories will be used to inform the methodological design and influence the data analysis described in the next chapter. Following from this chapter, the framework in figure 3 has utilized for this research to understand both worlds.

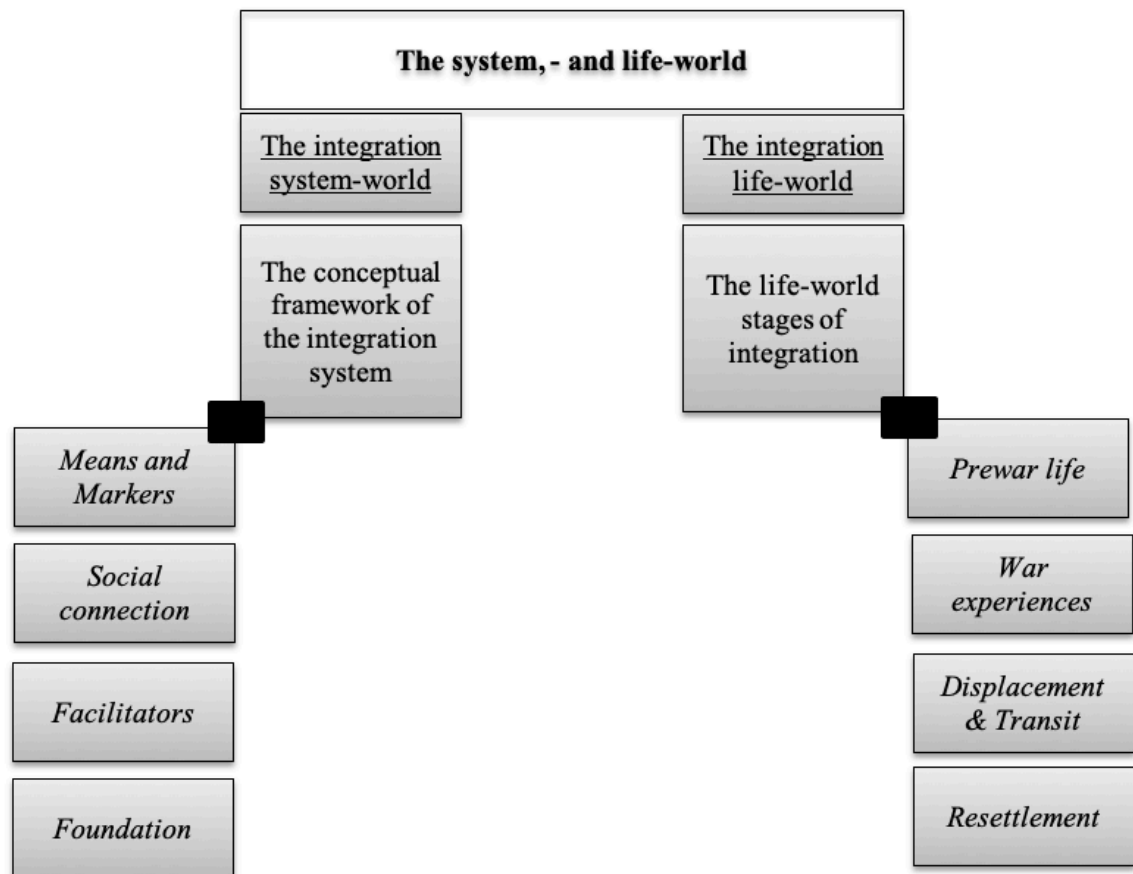


FIGURE 3 Overview framework research

3. METHODS

Focusing on the qualitative nature of this thesis, this chapter outlines the approaches that were employed in order to answer each of the research questions. To begin with, a rich background on the specific case that was selected for this research is presented. Secondly, the different methods of data collection are explained. The data for contextualizing the system-world was collected through the analysis of policy documents. This was used to answer the first sub-question and as input for the second and third sub-questions. In order to understand the life-world, an ethnographical research was conducted using semi-structured interviews. This was used to answer the second and third sub-questions. Thirdly, the methods for data analysis are described considering both of the mentioned methods of data collection. Lastly, this chapter will also elaborate on the ethical considerations and limitations of the research.

3.1 Case description

Looking back to the past, before the war started in 1991, Yugoslavia had a population of almost 24 million, four million of which were living in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Hessels, 2005). Furthermore, almost two million already lived in West-Europe, mostly in Germany (70%), Austria and Switzerland. Before the war there were already 18 thousand people from Yugoslavia living in the Netherlands (Snel, 2000). With regards to Srebrenica specifically, the municipality of Srebrenica had approximately forty thousand inhabitants at the beginning of the war (Rhode, 1997). Overall, since the start of the war, 25 thousand refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina sought refuge in the Netherlands between 1991 and 2000. After the war, between 1995 and 2000, there were almost 12 thousand people who fled to the Netherlands (Hessels, 2005). Most refugees however, sought refuge in Germany, Austria, Sweden and Switzerland (Barslund, Busse, Lenaerts, Ludolph & Renman, 2016). Concerning the Netherlands, on average, 38% of these refugees took an immigration exam (Hessels, 2005). Nonetheless, 60% of all the refugees received the Dutch citizenship (Snel, 2000). Almost one-quarter of these refugees ended up in one of the four largest cities (Alders & Nicolaas, 2002). Regarding refugees specifically from Srebrenica, Mulalic, Harmsen and Oudhof did a research in 2007 and concluded that within the Netherlands there were 497 people who had originated from Srebrenica. Unfortunately, this was the most recent data available.

This research focuses on the lives of twelve traumatised war refugees particularly from Srebrenica who experienced genocide and other traumatic events during the war. While other studies have shown how important it is to investigate the life-stories of refugees who experienced traumatic events like genocide, this area is still mainly neglected within the

scientific field. Specifically, examining the genocide survivors' lives within a different country focusing on the integration experiences. Like Sheftel and Zembrzycki (2010) researched how holocaust survivors aimed to rebuild their lives in Montreal between 1947 and 1952. Overall, the statement was made that these refugees with their past struggled to create their own social world within the host-societies framework. In the same vein, this research will demonstrate how the genocide survivors from Srebrenica, who came to a totally different world and focused on adjusting to a new way of life rebuild their lives within Dutch society. This specific case, focusing mainly on the life-world experiences of these refugees rather than other refugees from Yugoslavia is of great importance because it can be linked to the historical context of the municipality of Srebrenica. Looking to the past, the massacre in Srebrenica was the most brutal atrocity on European grounds since the Second World War and has been the subject of many debates in the last two decades (Rhode, 1997). Also, in the Netherlands, who contributed in the war, and are seen as partly liable for the outcome (Nollkaemper, 2011), the capability of Dutch politicians and army has been questioned (Van de Bildt, 2015). Considering this, the refugees from Srebrenica still sought refuge in the Netherlands and decided that the Dutch environment would become their new safe haven. Furthermore, this case can be associated with a very specific life-world. A world focusing on refugees with particular traditional Ottoman characteristics who are present in an unfamiliar life-world with a different culture and traditions alongside the recent memories of being targeted because of their identity. Overall, this paradoxical decision of these refugees to seek refuge in the Netherlands, considering the Dutch contribution during the war and the total contrasting life-world makes this case interesting and unique and therefore quite exceptional to research.

All of these refugees from Srebrenica resettled in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2000, all with different hopes and future aspirations and experiences with the Dutch integration system until the last refugee received his Dutch citizenship in 2007. These participants are the experts on refugee integration and all experienced the Dutch integration process. Overall, ten males and two females were interviewed. These twelve refugees all lived in Srebrenica before the war and performed different professions—from an engineer to a school teacher to a farmer. Overall, they had a peaceful and happy life. They loved their life in Bosnia and Herzegovina before the war destroyed everything. During the war, most refugees were between the ages of twenty and thirty; the youngest was 17 and the oldest was 31. Most of these refugees had younger kids when the war broke out. The refugees from Srebrenica experienced a long and difficult journey to arrive in the Netherlands. After arriving in the Netherlands most refugees were dropped at a random place and had to find their own

way to an investigation center (OC). The time within the OC was the hardest part of the integration process for most refugees. In total, only one out of the twelve refugees expressed contentment during this phase of the integration process. Most refugees stayed three months within this center before being transferred to an asylum center (AZC) where their process of becoming a Dutch citizen began. Overall, these refugees spent between one and ten years within different centres before receiving their Dutch citizenship. It took a police officer ten years to finally obtain his Dutch citizenship, while a student obtained it within a year. In general, the overall time varied between three and seven years before refugees were able to obtain Dutch citizenship. The refugees who came in 1995 were mostly able to obtain their citizenship within three years, while refugees who came in 1997 and 1998 had to spend ten and seven years, respectively, within different centres before finally obtaining their citizenship in 2007 and 2005.

Over the course of the research, the refugees made clear that they were grateful that they had the opportunity to portray their story to someone; for them it felt like a relief, as finally a moment arrived to express their feelings. During the interviews, six refugees became emotional about the things they experienced and how this impacted their life. Nonetheless, most of these refugees were angry and made this clear during the interview; they were disappointed at the system-world and the way they had been treated. Even though all these refugees lost everything during the war, came traumatised to a new country, and experienced the hard and long journey to obtain a Dutch citizenship, they ultimately found some happiness and are living nowadays in peace. In general, most of them were grateful for a chance of a new life in a new country. The following parts of this chapter will explain how these particular findings were obtained.

3.2 Methods of data collection

This section explains the two methods that were used for data collection. Firstly, a document analysis was employed to answer the first sub-question. Secondly, interviews were conducted to answer the second sub-question. The answer to these two sub-questions was used to answer the third sub-questions. Each step that was taken to ensure the selection of the correct data is clarified in this section.

3.2.1 Document analysis

The first sub-question, which focuses on better understanding **‘the integration system for refugees from Srebrenica between 1995 and 2007’**, was approached by conducting a qualitative document analysis. Such an analysis can be described as ‘an integrated and

conceptually informed method, procedure, and technique for locating, identifying, retrieving and analysing documents for their relevance, significance, and meaning' (Altheide, 1996, p. 2). The data was obtained from governmental publications, official electronic written documents, which were available on the web and focused on refugee integration policies that were active between 1995 and 2007. The method used for collecting data was a purposeful sampling method—a technique used to gather rich insights into a specific phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002), in this case: the Dutch refugee integration system. To find the appropriate policy documents, the following starting keyword was used: 'vluchtelingen integratie beleid 1995-2007' (refugee integration policy 1995-2007). The aim of this research was to analyse policy documents in accordance with the municipality where the respondent was present during the integration process. Unfortunately, it was impossible to find the right data on the municipality level since the Dutch Government had decided that during that time that they would no longer have a specific integration policy in place. Instead, of a specific policy, they adopted a more general approach. Therefore, the documents that were collected were the documentation of policies that were adopted on a national level rather than on the municipality level. Overall, the policies listed in Table 1 were discovered. These policies were then used as keywords to find additional data, which was then used to illuminate the integration policy in its entirety. Most policy documents were found via the websites: rijksoverheid.nl, zoek.overheid.nl and zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl. These are the central access points for all information regarding governmental organisations within the Netherlands.

TABLE 1 Analysed policy documents

Policy document	Year of publication
'Contourennota'	1994 (active until 1996)
'Invest and integrate' (Investeren en integreren)	1994 (active until 1996)
'Civic integration policy' (Inburgeringsbeleid)	1996 - 1997
'Getting chances, taking chances' (Kansen krijgen, kansen pakken)	1997 - 1998 (active until 2002)
'Newcomers integration act' (Regeling inburgering nieuwkomers)	1998 (active until 2007)
'Integration policy ethnic minorities)	2000

In terms of deciding whether a specific document consisted of relevant data, and thus increase the reliability of the findings, the following four criteria, listed by Flick (2014), were employed:

1. *Authenticity* – primarily or secondary data.
2. *Credibility* – reliable and free from error
3. *Representativeness* – typicality
4. *Meaning* – the information clear and right.

It was crucial to determine whether the documents would cover the topic completely or selectively (Bowen, 2009). Some of the documents which were found covered only some aspects of the integration system while others provided more comprehensive data about other aspects. Only one policy document that focused specifically on refugees from Srebrenica was found, this document only partially described the ‘health’ aspect of the integration system. Consequently, whether sufficient data per aspect was lacking, Bowen stated that ‘the researcher should be prepared to search for additional, related documents, which could fill gaps in the data and shed light on the issues being investigated’ (p. 34, 2009). Therefore, this research also found initial data from academic journals from different scholars who focused on the Dutch integration system in the desired period of time.

3.2.2 Interviews

The second part of this research focused on performing interviews with the refugees in order to answer the second sub-question: **‘what are the similarities and differences between refugees’ perceptions of and experiences with the integration system and the actual integration system between 1995 and 2007 in the Netherlands’**. Thus, the question aims to understand the integration system from the refugees’ point of view, focusing on the ‘voices’ of the refugees themselves. Ethnographical research granted an opportunity to narrate the stories of this special group of people who are otherwise often overlooked. Their stories were obtained through semi-structured interviews.

So, after the first sub-question was answered via a document analysis, interviews were conducted to explore, describe, and analyse the lived refugee integration experience. Interacting with the participants in their real-life environment permitted refugees to express their experiences on their own terms. Altogether, the data obtained from interviews and the document analysis also enabled answering the third sub-question, which aims to provide meaning to the differences between the system-world and the life-world.

The data sample for this research was drawn from a population of refugees from Srebrenica who had experienced the Dutch integration system between 1995 and 2007. However, finding respondents proved challenging since only 497 people from Srebrenica were still living in the Netherlands (Mulalic, Harmsen & Oudhof, 2007). Unfortunately, no more recent data was available. Therefore, the quoted population in 2007 was used as a guideline for this research. Since the population was quite small, the method of snowball sampling was used to reach these respondents. This was an effective method to use for a population that is difficult to reach (Aglipay, Wylie, & Jolly, 2015) or like Ornstein (2013) noted, it is a useful method for 'sampling rare populations'. Furthermore, it is also a useful method when endeavouring to investigate a sensitive subject such as refugee integration.

The sampling began with the initial sample of the group of interest, which were recruited by purposive sampling from friends and contacts (Ornstein, 2013). Additionally, a different method of sampling was also utilized due to Zohrabi's (2013) argument that an interviewer should select respondents with cautious as to gain more accurate knowledge. Therefore, this study used criterion sampling; to obtain higher reliability, respondents who match the following criteria were selected:

1. First-generation refugees who lived in Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war between the years of 1992-1995;
2. Refugees who arrived in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2000;
3. Refugees aged 20 years or older during their resettlement process in the Netherlands (since they were most likely to remember their experiences);
4. Refugees who were willing to describe the entire story of their integration process, including all experienced events and perceived moments.

The starting sample included five people who were introduced to the interviewer by family members and friends. Following their interview, the respondents were asked to introduce another reliable informant; if the abovementioned criteria were met, this person was added to the sample (Noy, 2008). In this fashion, the starting sample increased with each additional stage of sampling (Ornstein, 2013). Concerning the sample size, Sargeant (2012) points out that the number of respondents is not predetermined. However, since the focus is on ethnographical research, Guest, Bunce and Johnson state that twelve interviews are sufficient (2006); therefore, twelve interviews were carried out. Table 2 provides an overview of the twelve respondents who participated in this research. The column on 'age and gender' presents the age of the respondent when the research was conducted.

TABLE 2 Overview respondents

Respondent's ID	Age & Gender	Year of arrival in the Netherlands	Year of receiving the Dutch citizenship
Respondent one	48-year-old male	1998	2006
Respondent two	47-year-old female	1999	2005
Respondent three	54-year-old male	1997	2004
Respondent four	50-year-old male	1996	1998
Respondent five	48-year-old female	1995	1998
Respondent six	57-year-old male	1999	2003
Respondent seven	54-year-old male	1997	2007
Respondent eight	49-year-old male	1996	1999
Respondent nine	48-year-old male	1998	2006
Respondent ten	39-year-old male	1999	2000
Respondent eleven	52-year-old male	1996	1998
Respondent twelve	54-year-old male	1998	2001

These interviews were conducted with ten males and two females. Since it was difficult to obtain the right participants, most interviewed respondents presented another informant which was mainly male. Consequently, this means that this research lacks in understanding the life-world from a female point of view and thus can be more generalized to other male refugees rather than explicitly female refugees. Nonetheless, with regard to the external validity, I do not claim to be representative of all other male refugees who experience traumatic events but will purely illustrate the intricacy of the integration phenomena. Since traumatic events affect males and females differently - for females this effect is more negative (Kucharska, 2017). It can thus be stated that both sexes could differ in experiencing the Dutch system world since both have different ways of coping with their traumatic past.

The data was collected by performing one-on-one, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. The focus was on the following two types of questions: the main questions and follow-up questions. The main questions concentrated on the goal of the research, while the follow-up questions helped gain a more comprehensive understanding of the main question. All questions were theory-driven and were based on the theoretical presuppositions mentioned in chapter 2¹. So as to stay as organized as possible, and have the respondents

¹ See Appendix A for the interview guide

interpret the questions in the same way, an interview guide was created outlining the main questions as well as some follow-up questions. The questions were derived from the theory that focused on the integration system-world and the refugee integration life-world. Thus, questions built off of the answers to the first sub-question. Furthermore, the interviews were conducted at the respondents' homes and were structured informally and exploratory, thereby allowing the respondents to feel free to open up and talk about their past. The interviews were performed in the Bosnian language because it was easier for the respondents to answer the questions in their native language and allowed for the collection of higher quality data. As Zohrabi states, the interviewer should use the language that is most familiar to the respondents in order to generate a greater amount of data (2013). Enough expertise was available to conduct and analyse the interviews in this language; the translation error remained as low as possible. The length of each interview was not predetermined; every respondent was permitted the time to explain their entire experience in the integration process. This allowance meant that I was able to focus on gaining as much knowledge as possible regarding every aspect of the integration life-world. During the interviews, my role as the interviewer was quite challenging because the subject of the research was personal and therefore respondents expressed a range of emotions. I had to adapt and find a respectful and professional way of handling this. Overall, I believe that the respondents felt comfortable and were able to tell their whole integration experience.

Moreover, even though I had membership status in gaining access to this population, it was crucial to create a certain distance between the researcher and researched. It was important to have the role as the 'outsider' rather than an 'insider' in order to present a fair analysis. Still, in my case, since it was a population that was difficult to reach, the only way I have obtained the data was because of my insider status. Harrell-Bond and Voutira explained how time-consuming and difficult it could be to research and gain access to a particularly hard to reach refugee community (2007). In this sense, it can be argued that I was 'lucky' considering my 'insider' status. Nonetheless, during the research, it was crucial not to 'go native' and to be the 'outsider' in order to have a valid research. Therefore, I tried to distance myself as much as possible from the respondents - still, creating a total physical and emotional distance was also not desirable or possible, some empathy was always present and that has to be acknowledged. Like Goffman (1989) argued that the researcher's identity is part of the research and trying to remove it could actually negatively impact the quality of the research. Hence, to create a certain distant and separate researcher-participant relationship, I detached myself from the respondents and conducted the interviews without any expectations, I viewed myself as the researcher who was interested in the lives of the

refugees from a neutral point of view. I have tried to be as consistent and accurate as possible throughout the process - every respondent received the same line of questions in order to stay as objective as possible.

Overall, in order to keep the reliability and validity of the study high, all interviews were recorded on a CD and notes were taken to record the impressions, reactions and other significant events that occurred. Furthermore, the right interview techniques were used, such as, 'avoiding asking leading questions and giving the participants a chance to clarify the points they have made' (Alshenqeeti, 2014, p. 44). Before performing the interviews, a test interview was conducted to ensure everything was covered and see if new topics might arise. The duration of the interviews varied between 30 and 80 minutes.

Since this research naturally included working with people, several ethical implications were taken into consideration. Firstly, the approval from the Ethics Committee was obtained (18126). Before starting the interviews, for every respondent, both the goal of the research and what was expected of the interviewee was clear made clear. Consent from each of the respondents was obtained prior to each interview and the identity of each of the interviewees was protected. This research will not use real names since this may cause harm to the population under study. Therefore, the respondents were each identified as follows:

1. *Name – 'first, second, third, etc.' respondent*
2. *Gender – male or female*
3. *Respondents age during the research*
4. *Year of arrival to the Netherlands*
5. *Year of receiving the Dutch citizenship*

Participants' information was treated in a confidential manner and no one had access to that information except for me as the researcher. Furthermore, arrangements were made regarding the recording procedure of the interviews, including the storage of information and the publishing of results. Protecting the privacy of the respondent was of great concern. Additionally, every respondent had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage for any reason. Lastly, as a researcher, I did my best to present the respondents' stories in a way that avoids misinterpretation as much as possible.

3.3 Methods of data analysis

This section explains how the policy documents and the interviews were analysed. The theoretical framework explained in chapter two served as a basis for shaping this analysis.

3.3.1 Document analysis

The different policy documents which were found and describe the Dutch integration system were analysed by following a thematic analysis; the data were analysed and ordered in different themes. The analysis is done in a deductive way, data is observed through a theoretical lens, this means that the themes and codes are based on the theoretical framework and are derived from the different theoretical constructs. By analysing the policy documents, the conceptual framework developed by Ager and Strang (2004a, 2004b, 2008) showing the integration system-world that consists of different categories and domains was utilized. The different domains within the integration system, illustrated in Table 2, were incorporated as themes and used as the starting point for the analysis.

TABLE 3 Domains used as themes from the integration system-world

Categories	1. Means and Markers	2. Social Connection	3. Facilitators	4. Foundation
Domains as Themes	Employment	Social Bridges	Language and Cultural	Rights and Citizenship
	Housing	Social Bonds	Safety and Stability	
	Education	Social Links		
	Health			

An explanation for each of the themes is provided in chapter 2 and was utilized to acquire valid data. The aim was to provide a broad description of each theme, and in this way, a complete summary of each category could be used to illustrate the integration system. Overall, transparency to the highest degree possible increases the reliability of the research, therefore the documents were analysed following the steps demonstrated in figure 4, an approach that was proposed by Mayring (2000a) and utilized for this research to achieve the objective.

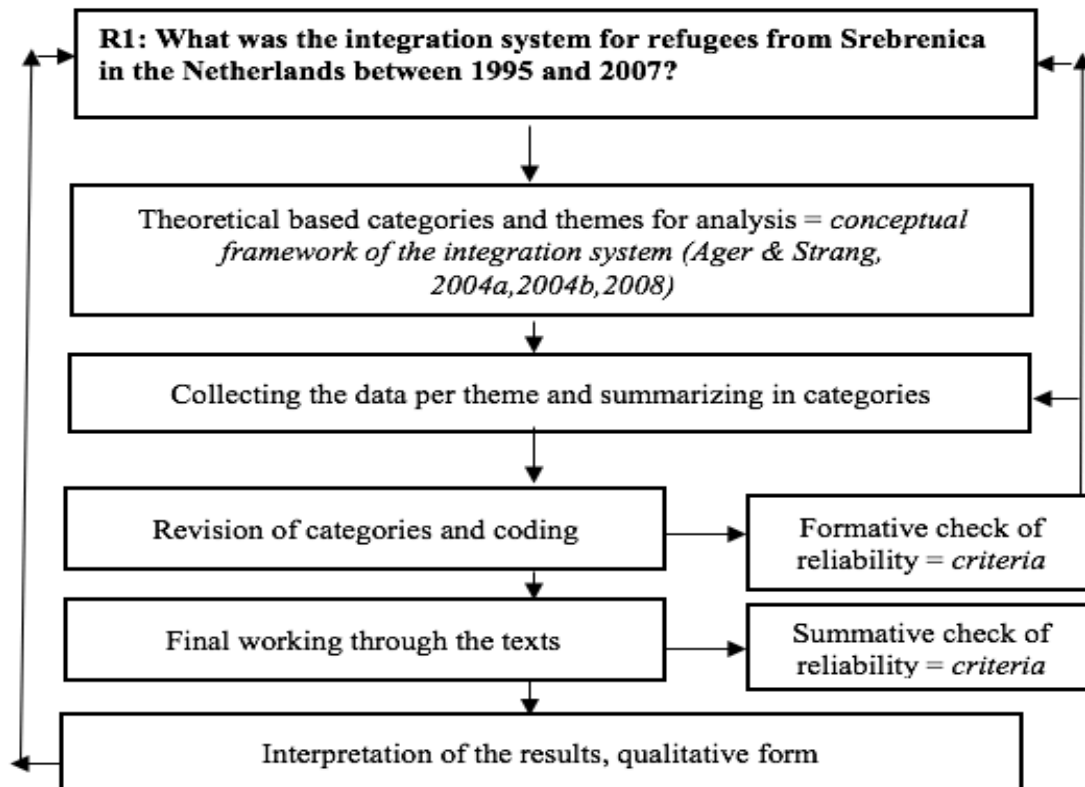


FIGURE 4 Steps for analysing policy documents

As illustrated, the first step involved the detailed reading of the different documents, then the data was reduced to relevant data which was based on the different themes. Each of the themes was then analysed in accordance with the different codes which represent different passages in order to explain a theme entirely. The whole coding framework is demonstrated in table 4, this coding frame shows all the themes mentioned in table 3 with the emerged codes used for analysis. Within this framework, several codes are explained with fitting quotes found within the policy documents. This way the whole analysis is made more transparent.

TABLE 4 Coding framework policy documents

Categories	Themes	Codes
	Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to the labour market ▪ Transition/facilitation ▪ Activities
	<u>Explanation:</u> The aim is to examine the different measures that the system-world presented in order to	

Means and Markers	<p>ensure that refugees could access the labour market. How was the transition organized, which strategies and activities were there deployed?</p> <p><u>Examples of transition and activities presented within the policy of 'Getting chances, taking chances' (1997-1998):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'An effective transition from education to the labor market, special attention for the long-term unemployed young people, support for ethnic entrepreneurship' (p. 36).</i> ○ <i>'The Minister of BZK will encourage ministries to develop their own diversity policy, aimed at the proportional distribution of members of ethnic minorities across all job levels' (p. 32).</i> 	
	<p>Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability ▪ Assistance ▪ Organisation housing stock ▪ Input decision-making
	<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <p>The housing aspect focuses on the availability and accessibility - how did the integration system ensure sufficient available accommodations for the refugees and that these were accessible for them. Did the refugees had any input when it came to decision making?</p> <p><u>An example of an aim concerning the housing of refugees found in the policy 'Contourennota' (1994):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'The physical infrastructure when it comes to restructuring old neighborhoods: in the area of safety and live ability of the living environment, the prevention of marginalization, segregation (p.23)</i> 	
	<p>Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability ▪ Accessibility ▪ Guidance/assistance ▪ Facilities
	<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <p>What kind of educational facilities were there present, how did the refugees have access/participate to/within the different educational programs and what was the structure of the educational program?</p> <p><u>An example of accessibility found in the policy 'Contourennota' (1994) and overall</u></p>	

	<u>educational program within the Newcomers integration act (1998):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>‘Ethnic minority students were put on a waiting list for placement into a particular denominational school’; Ethnic minority children were being placed on a waiting list exclusively on the basis of their origins’ (p. 90)</i> ○ <i>‘In 1998 every asylum seeker who received his citizenship was obligated to finish the civic integration course. This course focused on the following topics: educational program consisting of language courses and an occupational and social orientation; counseling and social guidance; transit within six months after taking the final test. The total course took an average of 500 hours. At the end of the course, refugees received assistance in finding suitable employment’ (p. 2)</i> 	
	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability/accessibility healthcare ▪ Guidance/assistance ▪ Trauma ▪ Medical services
	<u>Explanation:</u> What kind of medical services were there provided to the refugees, how did the system deal with refugees who suffered with trauma and how were the refugees guided and assisted to find suitable medical help when it came to their overall wellbeing. <u>Example of health found in the policy of Getting chances, taking chances’ (1997-1998):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>‘Improving health care for asylum seekers. After the criticism of the quality of health care for asylum seekers, it was decided to reorganize medical care. Many tasks will no longer be carried out by the COA itself in the future, but by the regional GGD and the regular care in the region. In doing so, care is also taken to ensure a good introduction to health care (information provision) and good guidance from the client to healthcare’ (p. 56)</i> 	
<u>Social Connection</u>	Social Bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social contacts local community ▪ Inclusion/exclusion
	Social Bonds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Links to own group ▪ Contact own community
	Social Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessibility/availability services ▪ Contact public services
	<u>Explanation:</u> The social connection domain focuses mainly on the social interaction aspect. It is about	

	relationships within refugees own ethnic group, other groups within the community and the connection with governmental services and organizations. How did the integration system facilitate all of these aspects?	
<u>Facilitators</u>	Language and Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One or two-way process (<i>can be linked to rights and obligations</i>) ▪ Culture knowledge ▪ Language assistance/provision
	<u>Explanation:</u> Did the integration system focus on a one or two-way process of integration, how did the system make sure that the refugees obtained sufficient culture knowledge, were able to learn the language and find their way into the Dutch society?	
	Safety and Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Racism and discrimination ▪ Preventive measures
	<u>Explanation:</u> What kind of measures did the integration system propose to prevent any racism and discrimination towards newcomers? <u>An example within the policy of 'Invest and Integrate' (1994):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'It is important that the approach to discrimination takes place close to the people and that customization is offered. Precisely because people often have to live with each other for a long time, in a neighborhood, at a school, at work, it is necessary to create facilities that mainly look for solutions to be able to continue together' (p. 45).</i> 	
<u>Foundation</u>	Rights and Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rights and conditions ▪ Accessibility ▪ The context of the integration system/approach
	<u>Explanation:</u> How did the integration system make sure that all refugees participated within the society following the Dutch norms and values? What was the overall policy approach containing the different rights and obligations of the refugees?	

3.3.2 Interviews

The data analysis focusing on the interviews meant to bring order, structure, and meaning to the findings; it provided a framework that described the integration life-world of the refugees from Srebrenica. Every respondent's narrative was gathered and analysed following a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is defined as, 'identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6). The themes were predefined and were based on the theoretical framework. Significant statements, sentences or quotes that provided an understanding of the experienced integration system within the life-world were described. Figure 5 illustrates how the analysis was performed. The life-world was analysed following the stages of integration by Coughlan and Owens-Manley. Yet, the main focus of this research was on resettlement as this portrayed the real integration experiences within the Dutch society.

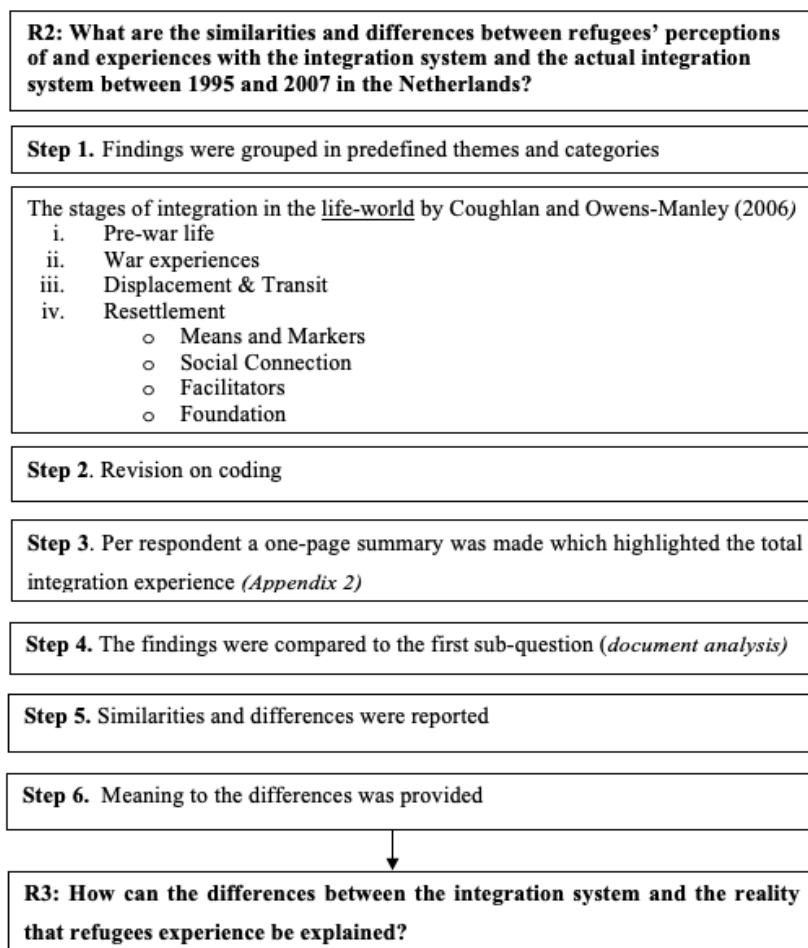


FIGURE 5 Steps for analysing the interviews concerning the life-world

Following these steps, a coding framework was developed concerning the twelve interviews. This framework is shown in table 5. Several citations are provided from the interviews which

cover one of the codes presented within the framework. These codes are mostly in accordance with the codes from the document analysis.

TABLE 5 Coding framework interviews

Categories	Themes	Codes
Means and Markers	Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability labour market ▪ Assistance/guidance ▪ The transition from the educational field
	<u>Examples from the interviews:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'They wanted me to work at the same place where they send their drug addicts and criminals too. I wanted something that fitted my qualities. I was a teacher in Bosnia with a diploma and here they treat me like a criminal who cannot do anything but only things that people from the bottom of the latter do' (respondent 1, p. 81-82, male)</i> ○ <i>'It was forbidden to work, there were also not enough. I really would have liked if we could work. It would make me feel more human and less like an animal isolated between walls' (respondent 4, p. 48, male).</i> 	
	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability ▪ Accessibility ▪ Assistance/guidance ▪ Input decision-making by refugees
	<u>Example from the interviews:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>I'm not happy about the housing aspect of the integration within the Netherlands, they just put us somewhere where all foreigners are, a neighborhood of people of the 'second row'. The worst thing however is, they don't pay that much attention to neighborhoods like this, you feel so less important. They don't treat you that good as they treat the normal people here (respondent 6, p. 85-86, male)</i> 	
	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational measures/activities ▪ Guidance/assistance ▪ Background and experience refugee ▪ Availability/accessibility education
	<u>Examples from the interviews:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'I was happy with the type of education they provided to me, they saw I was good with studying and altered the content to my qualities. They did offer me to further educate myself, but because of my mental condition this was very difficult for me'</i> 	

	<p>(respondent 4, p. 48, male).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘I had no education, I wanted to learn things, to keep my mind occupied. It would make my life easier nowadays, with the right education I could have had a better life. However, I did not have the possibility to educate myself (respondent 9, p. 89, male) 	
	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability/accessibility medical service Guidance and assistance Trauma support Health care
	<p><u>Examples from the interviews:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘I had several talks with a psychologist, this helped me to somehow to forget the struggle and the war experiences. I am the Dutch government grateful for this opportunity’ (respondent 2, p. 82-83, female). ‘We received help but this was not at the moment when I needed it most. Nonetheless, the doctors and people who were there to help me did not really believe what I was struggling with and therefore the right and adequate help were lacking’ (respondent 7, p. 87-88, male). 	
<u>Social Connection</u>	Social Bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social contacts local community Inclusion/exclusion community
	Social Bonds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links to own group Socializing within own circle
	Social Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility/availability services Connection refugees with governmental organisations
	<p><u>Examples from the interviews:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Making new friends during the process, the presence of some relatives, made life easier. Without this, I would not survive. I would give up. You were just living day by day, friends made this easier’ (respondent 6, p. 85-86, male) The contact with other people made it easier for me to adapt to the Dutch way of life and to survive the integration process. However, I did not really have the chance to make friends with Dutch people and this way learn the language (respondent 2, p. 82-83, female). 	
<u>Facilitators</u>	Language and Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or two-way process Culture knowledge Language assistance/provision

	<u>Example from the interviews:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>I perceived sometimes that they wanted us to erase our past, to force people to forget everything and just accept the new culture rapidly. More assimilation than integration (respondent 7, p. 87-88, male)</i> 	
	Safety and Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Racism and discrimination ▪ Safety and security ▪ Preventive measures
	<u>Example from the interviews:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>'I felt safe and secure in the different centres, I did not really have any situations regarding racism or discrimination. Just after I received a permit, then it was different when it came to employment and daily life' (respondent 11, p. 90-91, male).</i> 	
Foundation	Rights and Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy information ▪ Knowledge about rights and citizenship ▪ Guidance
	<u>Examples from the interviews:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Nobody would tell us what we can expect and what our right were. I would love that this happened because it would calm me a bit down. That moment you just were afraid and scared all the time of not knowing anything (respondent 7, p. 87-88, male).</i> ○ <i>I had no idea what the policy was about or how it was implemented. I wish I knew, it would make me maybe some calmer in my head (respondent 4, p. 48, male).</i> 	

3.4 Limitations of methods

Two different methods of data collection and analysis were employed, both of these methods have some limitations which posted some challenges during this research.

Firstly, performing a document analysis to witness past events and gain historical insight into the Dutch integration system. This method made it challenging to find the right data focusing mainly on the population of interest. Also, as stated by Bowen (2009) documents could also sometimes not provide sufficient detail to answer a certain research question. Within this research, some aspects of the integration system have been described sufficiently while for other aspects the data was lacking and absent. This means that some aspects could be described in greater detail than others. Hence, it can also be interpreted that the

Dutch system-world finds these aspects crucial when it comes to refugee integration since sufficient data could be found focusing on these aspects and not on the other. Nonetheless, as to find missing data, I made use of scientific journals.

Secondly, emphasizing that conducting semi-structured interviews was a great way to get a grasp of the refugee inner experience by using predefined themes in order to make sure that every aspect of the integration system would receive enough attention and this way sufficient data could be collected. An interview more in the form of a conversation could also have been applied, thus with less predefined themes. Yet, I believe that this type of interview would result in a misbalance of the discussed themes concerning the integration system. Some themes would be discussed with one respondent but could be absent from the another. This would not be beneficial for the total analysis. With the semi-structured interview nonetheless, I covered all the different themes equally which was necessary for the overall analysis. Still, semi-structured interviews do have some limitations. A limitation concerns the applied snowball sampling method to find the difficult to reaching population. This method started with the initial starting sample of respondents who then nominated other subjects suited for research, as a result, the possibility that these new informants share the same experiences as the already interviewed respondent could be present. However, as theory already demonstrated, every refugee has their own unique range of individual experiences and emotions and this way the sampling bias would remain low. The last limitation concerning the qualitative nature of this research, mentioned by Rahman (2017), is that policy-makers may give low believability to results from qualitative data and prefer data via a quantitative approach. This because this form is mainly focusing on subjectivity. However, in contrast, Penninx argued that sometimes perceptions of refugees are important in the process of refugee integration, often more than facts and objectivity (2004). Also, since the subject of this research is of a sensitive nature, from my point of view, a qualitative method seemed the most applicable one.

CONCLUDING REMARKS CHAPTER THREE

In summary, this chapter demonstrated the approach to answering the three sub-questions, and subsequently the main question. The integration system-world was researched through a document analysis that focused on policy documents on a national level. Herewith, a qualitative document analysis was applied to investigate the different policy documents. Most of these documents were found via the websites: zoek.officiëlebezoekingen.nl, rijksoverheid.nl and zoek.overheid.nl. These are the central access points for all information regarding governmental organisations within the Netherlands. However, this research also found initial data from academic journals from different scholars who focused on the Dutch integration system in the desired period of time. The analysis of the system-world was done through a theoretical lens, which was based on the conceptual framework developed by Ager and Strang. This framework provided the appropriate themes to understand the integration system. To develop an understanding of how this system was experienced by the refugees from Srebrenica within the Dutch life-world, the stages of integration by Coughlan and Owens-Manley were employed. Ethnographical research granted the opportunity to narrate the stories of this special group of people who are otherwise often overlooked. Their stories were obtained through semi-structured interviews. In general, twelve interviews with refugees from Srebrenica were conducted. A coding framework was used to analyse both worlds. This coding process was based on the theoretical constructs and aimed to explain every domain by providing different quotations found in the different documents and presented within the interviews.

4. ANALYSIS

This chapter aims to explain the perceptions and experiences of refugees from Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina with the integration system in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2007. This is done by focusing on the relationship between the system-world and the life-world. In order to understand the relationship between these two worlds, the strategy described in the previous chapter was applied. Regarding the system world, the integration system was analysed through policy documents and different scientific journals. The life world, which encompasses the reality that refugees experience within the integration system, was analysed through interviews with the refugees. The first section of this chapter will illustrate findings related to the system-world, while the second section will do the same for the life-world. The last section demonstrates the similarities and differences between both worlds. In general, this chapter will provide an answer to the three sub-questions.

4.1 The system-world analysis

The purpose of this section is to understand the integration system that was in place between 1995 and 2007 in the Netherlands. Namely, to understand how this system that was formulated by policy makers was organised and implemented. As found within the different policy documents and mentioned by different scholars, the subject of refugee resettlement was during this time the most controversial issue on the Dutch political agenda (Scholten & Snel, 2005). The extensive public and political attention to the theme of 'minorities' would be an indication of a change in thinking and speaking about the integration topic in this period. As noticed within the policy documents, the main objective of the system was to prepare incoming refugees to function independently in Dutch society and create a social and stable society (Contourennota, 1994). For the incoming refugees, the integration system was a crucial step in becoming a Dutch citizen, however, a problematic interpretation was made since different scholars and following in the footsteps of Essed and Trienekens (2008) who argued that refugees were mostly seen as a 'strain on society's resources; as unwilling or culturally and socially incapable of integrating into Dutch society' (p. 56). Comprehensively, it is observed that the system went from a 'rather liberal to a rather narrow and restrictive approach' (Vasta, 2007, p. 714) to obtain this. Overall, the analyzed policy documents showed a very powerful and forcing way of resettling newcomers into society. The next sections will describe this powerful system-world in greater detail and provide some explanatory surprising findings concerning this statement. Why is the system-world seen as powerful?

4.1.1 A mandatory assimilative policy approach

As the different policy documents have shown, the Dutch integration system was developed by the national government and disseminated to the local governments. The national government focused on regulating and controlling by creating the right conditions for a more effective approach to the refugee problem while the local governments concentrated on implementing the policy (Contourennota, 1994). While the Ministry of Home Affairs was overall responsible for the integration system, the Department for the Coordination of Integration of Minorities concentrated on implementing the system across the national and local levels of government (Penninx, Garcés-Mascareñas & Scholten, 2005). In 1994, the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) became responsible for the implementation of the admission policy, while the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA) took responsibility for all asylum accommodations in the Netherlands (Contourennota, 1994). However, from the analysed scientific journals, the interpretation is made that a truly effective way of coping with newcomers was absent. Local governments were resistant to change 'from above' and were dealing with the refugee phenomena differently which resulted in conflicts between national and local governments (Penninx, Garcés-Mascareñas & Scholten, 2005). As observed within the policy document Contourennota, the system decided to discontinue implementing an integration system that focused on refugees from particular countries or specific groups, and instead apply a more general approach (1994). However, as found within theoretical field, it can be questioned whether this approach is beneficial. A strong relationship between this policy approach and successful refugee resettlement has yet to be acknowledged since scholars contradict each other on this matter. As on one hand, Korac (2003) made clear that policy actors should recognise refugees as a heterogeneous group with differentiated needs, 'rather than ascribing them a common identity without any acknowledgment of the differences' (p. 3). On other hand, Scholten, Baggerman, Dellouche, Kampe and Ypma (2017) mentioned that a general approach is more beneficial since it prevents to 'having to reinvent the wheel for every new migration flow' (p. 46). Out of the policy documents analysed it can be assumed that the Dutch system-world mainly supported Scholten et al. argument.

Furthermore, another striking observation from these policy documents was that refugees who sought refuge within the Dutch society were mainly responsible for their own integration ('Getting chances, taking chances', 1997-1998). As pointed out by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1994, refugees had to become active participants in society and achieve individual self-reliance. Nonetheless, the government believed that a system with a more mandatory character was needed to not have a fragmented and segregated society (Newcomers

integration act, 1998). Therefore, the policy frame, which consists of the basis of which politicians and policy makers perceive reality and determine how the problem in question is interpreted and in which direction solutions are sought shifted during this period from a soft to a strict and coercive way of coping with refugees in which obligations were high (Scholten & Snel, 2005). The interpretation of this situation indicates that on one hand, every citizen was expected to contribute to Dutch society by taking responsibility for their own environment-while on other, several coercive measures were introduced for specifically refugees to ensure successful resettlement into host-society. Like emphasized within the 'Getting chances, taking chances' policy, all newcomers had to utilize the available facilities to their full potential, declining the offered chances resulted in different sanctions such as a discount on benefits (1997-1998).

In line with this, this mandatory approach was needed since the assumption of the government was that refugees were mostly participating within their own circle, focusing on their own culture and country of origin (Contourennota, 1994; Penninx, 2004). The Second Chamber argued: 'it is a fact that large groups of the first generation, especially the first generation, have stood too long and too much with their backs to Dutch society' (p. 8-9). The system found it important to bring people together to have a socially stable society. Consequently, nationally, the shift went from 'good citizenship' to 'common citizenship', to a greater emphasis on common norms and values ('Getting chances, taking chances', 1997-1998). As noticed within the Newcomers integration act, a policy approach was introduced wherein refugees had to adapt to the Dutch norms and values and fully embrace the Dutch identity by giving up most of their original identity (1998). Surprisingly, as stated by Vasta, this shift to assimilation was the largest in the Netherlands compared to other countries within Europe (2007). However, from the observed scientific literature, it can be questioned whether this assimilative approach is necessary to prevent fragmentation and segregation within society. Some scholars argue that this approach would only be counterproductive, while others note that this approach is necessary because otherwise it would be seen as a symbolic threat for host-society members. On the one hand the scholars who noted that this approach works counterproductive used the argument that having own identity is important, so letting refugees keep their own identity would only be more beneficial for having a social capable society. This implies that not providing this right could result in segmentation and fragmentation within society as the room for connection becomes very small and people will close out rather than open up for possible new contacts and combinations (Ghorashi, 2006). In other words, contrary to the expectations of the system, it could be interpreted that this approach would result in an even weaker social cohesion rather than a stronger one as

aimed for by the system. On the other hand, scholars who claimed that this approach is necessary emphasized the importance of not being too tolerant too refugees since it could bring about changes in host-societies appreciated values and norms. As an effect, host-society members could become more negative towards newcomers as they are seen as not respecting their local values. Eventually, this would result in a greater segmented and fragmented society (Hynie, 2018). Comprehensively, after analyzing the policy documents, the Dutch integration system supported the view of Hynie. Still, whether assimilative approach was the right one concerning the refugees from Srebrenica has yet to be acknowledged and will be explained in the next paragraph following the analysis of the life-world.

4.1.2 The institutional power of the system-world

As illustrated in the previous part, the overall aim of the system was to create a social and stable society – the different policy documents demonstrated several aspects which were used to achieve this. The first aspect, as detected within the Newcomers integration act (1998), was education. Newcomers were obliged to participate in civic integration programs, including courses in Dutch language and orientation on Dutch society. According to Snel, de Boom and Engbersen (2005), this program focused on the ‘skills immigrants need if they are to be able to take part in Dutch society and build an independent life for themselves here, i.e. mastery of the language and knowledge of the society, particularly of the values and norms in our country’ (p. 4). As there is interpreted from the findings of Snel et al., and argued by Vasta, the positive side of this program was that it did consider refugees’ educational background, but on the other, the downside was that those who did not have the expected grades the chance of withholding citizenship was present and exclusion from welfare benefits (2007). In addition, another striking observation concerning education was that ethnic minority students could not attend schools where mostly host-societies members were present, or as Schriemer explained that students were ‘put on a waiting list on the basis of their origin (2004, p. 29). These findings are somewhat surprising, since it can be argued that at one hand the system wanted to improve the social cohesion by bringing people together, but on other hand, newcomers were to a certain extent excluded to participate within the educational field wherein mostly host-societies members were acting.

The second aspect that played an important role in creating a socially stable society as observed within the policy documents was employment. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, employment was a vital integration aspect, one that brought people into contact with each other and fostered mutual acceptance between refugees and hosts societies members (Contourennota, 1994). Some scholars (e.g. Fermin, 2009) with regards to employment

noted that the integration program should largely be in line with the starting level of the refugee, i.e. their training background, work experience, and offer opportunities for further development in the Netherlands. It was observed within the policy documents that the system wanted to provide an efficient transition from education to the labour-market and ensure that long-term unemployment was absent. In general, it is interpreted from these documents that the system-world found it crucial for refugees to be active in the labour market as this would improve their acceptance within the society; thus, employment facilitated successful integration. This finding supports evidence from previous observations (e.g. Ager & Strang, 2004a; Threadgold & Court, 2005; Phillimore & Goodson, 2008). Nevertheless, the abovementioned statements are somehow contradicting to other findings. As observed within the journal of Snel et al, that even though 'the unemployment rate from 1994 to 2000 among people of non-western origin fell to less than 10 percent, it was still two to three times higher than among the native Dutch' (2005, p. 97-98). This finding is not surprising since as found within the Newcomers integration act (1998), it was inevitable that long-term unemployment would occur since refugees with a conditional residence permit (voorwaardelijke vergunning tot verblijf, or VVTV) could only participate within the labour market when their status was changed to a permanent one. The policy documents have demonstrated that most of the refugees from Srebrenica received this VVTV, it can thus be argued that they mostly were unable to access the labour market (Contourennota, 1994). This can also be interpreted from the study of Barslund, Busse, Lenaerts, Ludolph and Renman (2016) who analysed the labour market integration of Yugoslavian refugees within the Dutch society. The observation was made that refugees only had access to the labour market when they obtained their permanent status, while during the active asylum procedure their access was denied. Hence, it could credibly be questioned whether the abovementioned approach resulted in a more social stable society since as recognised refugees were mainly excluded from acting on the labour market.

The third factor that was present within the documents concerned the aspects of safety and stability. Consistent with theory, it was found that in order for every incoming refugee to successfully integrate into Dutch society, the system found it important to prevent and combat the emergence and the presence of prejudices, discrimination, and racism towards newcomers because this would hinder refugee's overall resettlement. As observed, several interventions were implemented to address this challenge including: prevention (with education and image formation) and action against discriminatory and racist behaviour (by different codes of conduct, mediation provisions, intercultural management training, and sanctions). With these measures it was aimed to create a harmonious society, combat

discrimination, and promote the participation of minorities throughout society (Ethnic minorities policy, 2000; 'Getting chances, taking chances', 1998).

The fourth aspect which had a prominent role within the system, and also implied as important by different scholars within the scientific field was whether refugees have access to the available health care services. Recalling from the theoretical framework in chapter two, it was stated by Scholten, Baggerman, Dellouche, Kampe and Ypma (2017) that it is crucial that refugees have the feeling of being 'included'. The observed policy documents demonstrated that the care for ethnic minorities was offered within existing care facilities. In general, in this period, the aim of the system was to improve the quality, accessibility and effectiveness of care regarding ethnic minorities by introducing them to the health care system ('Getting chances, taking chances', 1998). Although, as detected in these documents, refugees who experienced traumatic events in their lives were afforded care services under a trauma policy. Surprisingly, the striking part of this was that the refugees had to prove that they experienced traumatic events in order to receive help and demonstrate that it was the cause for seeking asylum in the Netherlands ('Getting chances, taking chances', 1998). However, the interpretation of this finding raises intriguing questions whether this approach would result in the feeling of being 'included'. It could rather be expected that it would result in the feeling of being 'excluded' and this way not affect in a socially stable society. Hence, this will be acknowledged in the next couple of paragraphs.

The fifth aspect which contributes to successful refugee resettlement and in this way ensures a socially stable society concerns the aspects of rights and citizenship. Overall, the rights of a newcomer depended on the type of status that was granted to them. Someone who was granted an 'A-status' had more rights than someone with a VVTV status. From the findings within the Contourennota, it can be suggested that the rights of the refugees from Srebrenica were restricted since most of them were granted a VVTV status (1994). Moreover, it was found that the system aimed for a more open and transparent way of operating. This implies to the accessibility concerning policy information and practical data noting the rights and obligations of incoming refugees. This finding further supports the idea of Penninx who made clear that a 'key condition for an effective integration policy is transparency of admission of immigrants and their residential and legal status' (2004, p. 5). Like observed within the ethnic minorities policy (2000), a communication plan was implemented to provide an overview of the system on the most practical and accessible level. The attention was drawn to the short and long-term expectations, efforts and positive effects of the system. Several instruments were herewith introduced which helped to provide insight to the refugees (Getting chances, taking chances, 1998).

The last aspect concerns the housing part of the system and focusing on ensuring that sufficient and suitable housing was accessible for refugees. As observed from the policy documents, disadvantaged old neighbourhoods were restructured in order to make these areas more safe and liveable for incoming refugees (Contourrenota, 1994). The system aimed to provide the right housing for socially vulnerable people—newcomers within Dutch society. Emphasizing individual freedom of choice was crucial. Furthermore, the integration system made sure that the opportunities for housing were equal for all people within society. In other words, no diversification policy for migrants could be present. People should be treated as individual housing seekers, regardless of their ethnic background ('Getting chances, taking chances', 1998). Overall, the government feared that refugees living in disadvantaged environments would result in a larger gap within society. For this reason, providing refugees with assistance in securing housing was crucial. In this way, it would create more opportunities for people in vulnerable situations.

In sum, this part has shown the power of the system-world concerning the different domains of the integration system. This world has the power to control the refugees and the different situations wherein the refugees are present in. They can decide what is best for them and what it is not.

GENERATED INSIGHTS ABOUT THE DUTCH SYSTEM-WORLD

The purpose of this paragraph was to answer the first sub-question, which reflects on developing an understanding of the integration system that was active in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2007 concerning refugees from Srebrenica. After analyzing different policy documents, examining what the scientific field had to say about this matter and interpreting the observed results, the following findings have emerged which help to understand this system:

Education and employment

The theory has demonstrated that both employment and education enable interactions, opportunities for learning the local language and it provides the opportunity to build a future and to regain confidence. Thus, all aspects that would strengthen the social cohesion. However, according to the found data within the policy documents, it has been interpreted that the system-world was mostly hindering refugees in being active members within the labour market and on the educational field.

Safety and security

The system wanted to prevent any form of discrimination and racism towards newcomers by introducing several instruments. Ambiguously, an interesting finding argued that refugees were excluded from denominational schools. This situation could be used to suggest the presence of structural discrimination within the Dutch context.

Health

The contradicting finding was that even though the system wanted to include refugees within the health care system, the introduced policy approach was interpreted as it would result in the opposite because refugees have to prove that they needed help in order to receive help regarding their traumatic past.

Social connection

The system wanted to bring people closer together, nonetheless, the interpretation from the documents is that refugees were mainly forced to function within own circles rather than have the opportunity to establish links with host-society. In general, the system blocked any participation since no evidence could be found that showed any form of opportunity where relationships could be developed between refugees and host-society members (e.g. looking at the education and employment aspect).

Language and cultural

The system made the shift from good citizenship to common citizenship focusing on the Dutch norms and values. This implies that while from the start cultural identity was initially seen as a possible positive condition for integration, 'preservation of identity' was now considered as an obstacle and hindered the overall social cohesion within the society. In other words, the implementation of a one-way process of integration. This is not beneficial for successful refugee resettlement as theory has demonstrated.

Rights and obligations

Following the policy documents, it was interpreted that the system aimed for a more open and transparent way of operating. This implies to the accessibility concerning policy information and practical data noting the rights and obligations of incoming refugees.

4.2 The life-world analysis

In order to explain the similarities and differences between refugees' perceptions and experiences with the integration system and the actual integration system between 1995 and

2007 in the Netherlands, this section will allow the voices of refugees from Srebrenica to inform the understanding of the integration system and describe their lived experiences within the Dutch life-world². As theory has demonstrated, it is helpful to gain perspective on the refugee's entire experience (Wessels, 2014). The first aspect concerns the motive for leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina and seeking refuge in the Netherlands. As observed from the interviews, the refugees from Srebrenica came to the Netherlands largely as a result of the Dutch government's influence in Srebrenica during the war. The interpretation from the refugees' perspective was that they felt like the Dutch battalion should have done more in order to prevent certain events from happening; they therefore saw the Dutch government partially responsible for the outcome of the war. This sentiment was in part expressed by respondent 9: 'I came to the Netherlands because I was mad at the Dutch battalion and the way they acted during the fall of Srebrenica. I wanted to see if they would help me now when they did not then'. Similarly, there were some suggestions to assume that they held the Dutch government accountable for what happened to them and for their future as the next comment illustrates: 'if they did not try to help us to their best abilities then, they should now' (respondent 4). The refugees thought that of all the countries in Europe, that the Netherlands would be the most likely to offer them help since the Dutch government knew what they had been through. Respondent 1 expressed the following:

'I came to the Netherlands because I thought that the Dutch government would somehow understand what we, the people from Srebrenica, have experienced during the war and in this way provide the help which we truly needed. I thought that refugees from Srebrenica would be welcomed with open arms'.

Thus, as an interpretation from these findings, it is assumed that the refugees expected that the Dutch government would want to compensate for their mistakes during the war by providing the best possible help during their resettlement. As one refugee clarified: I expected a better life, a future without fear and an environment to be happy again, a place where I could find myself again because I was lost' (3). The refugees believed that the help that they would receive would get them back on their feet and guide them to live a normal life again. For example, respondent 6, who commented about this with clear sadness in his eyes: 'I just wanted to be free and to sleep normal again without having to worry that today is going to be my last'. In sum, the compelling observation from the interviews was that the

² See Appendix B for the summaries of the interviews

perceptions of most refugees about their new life in the Netherlands hinted high expectations and therefore their future aspirations³ were positive.

The second aspect, as described by scholars, concerns the refugees' journey to a new country which ultimately impacts overall refugees resettlement (Springer, 2016). In all cases, the refugees from Srebrenica experienced a long and difficult journey to arrive in the Netherlands. They used different means of transportation and traveled through different countries; some traveled a couple days, while others traveled a couple of weeks. Whilst the majority were relieved to leave Bosnia and Herzegovina, all agreed that they were still frightened of what lays ahead. One respondent commented about his feelings during this phase: 'the things I saw in the war, the things I experienced, I felt emotionless, I was lost. I really did not know what was normal or what was not' (4).

Following from this, the third and last aspect of the integration process concerns the overall resettlement focusing on the experienced integration system within the life-world (George, 2010). Like expressed by Coughlan and Owens-Manley (2006), these experiences can be positive or negative, full of opportunities or limitations. The positive experiences bring the refugee closer to the host society whereas the negative ones result in the opposite (Healey, 2006). The following sections will illustrate these experiences in greater detail and will enhance the understanding about the Dutch life-world from the refugee perspective. After interpreting the results from the interviews, this chapter will demonstrate that the world of the refugees from Srebrenica was a problematic one wherewith the refugees were dominated and treated like a number, rather than humans which eventually led to a state of submissiveness and disintegration.

4.2.1 The powerless life-world

As part of the Dutch integration system the refugees from Srebrenica mostly experienced a two-stage admission and reception procedure; firstly, to the investigation centre (OC), and secondly at an asylum centre (AZC). In all cases, refugees commented that the first phase of resettlement was the hardest. This sentiment was expressed with the following surprising quotes: 'I felt like I was in a prison, I was treated like a criminal' (respondent 1). 'The first stages were a disaster, like I was in an army. It felt like a strict regime (respondent 8). For respondent 9, the first stages of the integration process felt like he was back in Srebrenica during the war:

³ Aspirations refer to the future perspective, the realization of a satisfactory life (Van Heelsum, 2017)

'This felt like a concentration camp, I already survived this during the war and now I was back at it again. I was broken because of the war in every way possible, now here I began to break day by day even more. All the time I was hearing, 'you can't stay here, you have to leave,' thus, making me non-stop afraid. I was hopeless and saw no perspective at all during this period. I experienced this as they could not wait to get rid of you and that they just wanted you to give up and return back to Bosnia'.

During this phase, as stated by the scholar Penninx (2004), a 'key condition for effective integration is transparency of admission of newcomers and their residential and legal status' (p. 5). So, within the interviews the question was asked whether the refugees had any knowledge about the integration system. In other words, did they know what to expect from their resettlement concerning their rights and obligations? Respondent 2 explained the following: 'I was always scared what the future would bring. You never knew what to expect. I thought that at any moment someone could come knock on your door and tell you to go back'. Surprisingly, as observed from the interviews, all refugees stated that they were left in the dark and did not know what to expect, and therefore one hand experienced a great deal of fear and uncertainty which was extremely hard for them. However, on other hand, they did claim that they felt safe and secure. Still, 'the war had made too many scars to ever feel safe again' as expressed by respondent 2. Comprehensively, it can be interpreted that the refugees felt safe because there was no overt violence like there had been in the war. Still, the refugees experienced a different kind of fear since they were uncertain about their future and commented that they preferred to gain knowledge about the integration system as this would have made them calmer and less frightened. However, in contrast to this sentiment from the refugees regarding the as interpreted from theory 'transparency of the system-world', scholars have associated this as something positive because this would also mean that host-society members would not gain any knowledge about the system which eventually affects in less negative attitudes towards refugees (Hynie, 2018).

Moreover, within the OC, the refugees mentioned that they had several interviews with the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND). Mostly, the refugees expressed their anger towards this organization since they did not believe their narration as explained by respondent 6: 'I was destroyed by the war, I was seeking help but they did not want to help me because they did not believe what I really went through and the things I saw during the war. I felt hopeless'. In their accounts, they found this surprising because their perception was that the Dutch government knew exactly what kind of circumstances were present during the war in Srebrenica. As one respondent put it: 'they knew what happened in Srebrenica, they knew what we went through, but still the right help was lacking when we

came here. This was awful' (9). Another respondent described how this made him feel: 'I lost many family and friends. The people here acted like this was nothing. I felt angry, but you could not do anything then to hope for something better' (7). In the same vein, another refugee furiously stated that 'the Serbs were trying to kill us with bullets, while here the people were trying to kill you with words, destroying you mentally' (5). A refugee recalled that during these interviews, a Serb translator was present to translate what he was saying. He expressed his opinion in the following way:

'How the hell can you let a Serb be a translator when those people tried to kill me in the past? Like they were choosing the side of the Serbs. They said that I could not change this because this was the only option. So, my integration process started already in a negative way' (respondent 10).

From the interviews it was interpreted that the refugees felt unwanted and unwelcome in Dutch society as respondent 11 commented the following:

'I think they wanted to get rid of us as soon as possible because we all knew what happened in Srebrenica, and that the government thought that we came here to make some problems or stuff like that. Well, I felt like they were purposely treating us badly so that we would leave'

Similarly, another respondent stressed that 'Serbs have destroyed our houses, the houses that Dutch soldiers promised to protect, and now they wanted to send us back there where we have absolutely nothing' (2). Additionally, respondent 5 explained: 'nobody was there to help me. I always had to find help for myself. I made some Dutch friends after I received my Dutch citizenship and they helped me a lot, more than the governmental organizations ever did'. As recognized, the refugees mostly received support from the foundation of refugees (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland) and from a contact person from their municipality. The experiences with this contact person varied among refugees; while some were grateful for the help and developed a trusting relationship with their contact person, others were not that positive - for example respondent 9, who put forward the following:

'They promised me many things, offered me a lot, but eventually never kept their end of the bargain. Just like in 1995 when the Dutch soldiers told me not to worry and that they would keep me safe. We all knew how that ended'

Yet, even when the refugees received help, the observation from the interviews made illustrated that this help sometimes was perceived as insincere. As one respondent said: 'the people who had the profession to support me did not really care enough, they just did it because it was their job' (11). The overarching sentiment was that the integration system should have provided suitable support for refugees with their background. On the whole, following from these perceptions of the refugees, the interpretation of this situation can be linked to the domain of social links, focusing on institutional adaptation, who normally have an important role in ensuring that newcomers feel welcomed within society. The findings from the interviews suggest that this help was lacking. As a result, it was interpreted that the positive aspirations of the refugees about their future faded and were drastically changed compared to the beginning. Nonetheless, on the other hand, the refugees noticeably explained that they still continued to hope for something better because they knew they had to survive; it was the only option for them. Going back to Srebrenica was not thinkable. Interestingly, this result match those observed in earlier studies - for example, with the scholars Vervliet, Vanobbergen, Broekaert and Derluyn (2014) who demonstrated that 'aspirations are considered to be dynamic over time, as pre-departure aspirations might change under the influence of particular experiences during the migration journey or in the host country' (p. 331).

4.2.2 The isolated life

While on the one hand, the refugees were glad to leave the investigation centre (OC) in favor of the asylum centre (AZC) as their freedom was largely restricted because everything had to be shared with others, on the other, they were still locked up between 'walls' in the AZC. Even when the refugees had greater opportunities to communicate with others within the AZC, the refugees still expressed their awareness of the fact that it was impossible to establish closer ties with host-society members. From the interviews it was interpreted that the integration system did not really provide sufficient possibilities for the refugees to come into contact with Dutch people and as a result, they mostly spent time with people with the same background. Yet, as observed within literature, on one hand, this does not necessarily have to hinder refugee resettlement, as commented by Scholten, Baggerman, Dellouche, Kampe and Ypma (2017) that communication with own community is sometimes favorable. But on other hand, Hynie noted that 'policies that segregate refugees and asylum seekers from the rest of community, or that limit contact to minimal and/or unequal interactions between groups and individuals, will undermine efforts at integration' (2018, p. 271). Nevertheless, in this context, following from the interviews, the view of Hynie (2018) was

supported because it made the refugees feel detached from the rest of the society. This is rather an expected finding since the theoretical observation was that when refugees' only option is to seek contact with own community the feeling of 'exclusion' would arise which eventually like Vasta (2007) stated would 'lead to concentrated ethnic enclaves' (p. 12). Comprehensively, this is not favorable for successful integration and would not result in a social stable society as this was the main aim of the system like commented in the previous paragraph.

In line with the feeling of being excluded, as observed from the interviews, the time within the AZC was a rollercoaster of different emotions because most refugees felt horrible during their stay in the AZC; the feelings of isolation and uncertainty about the future were indicated as the key barriers during this time. Some felt that the time spend within the centre felt like a 'rehabilitation center for people who committed serious crimes. You were just a number, a nobody eventually' (respondent 1), while others compared the experience to that of being back in Bosnia during the war:

'In the asylum centre I felt the same like the people in 1995 in Potočari (Srebrenica). Again, you were locked up waiting for other people to decide what is going to happen with you and how your future is going to develop. This uncertainty was destroying me'.

This view was echoed by another respondent who commented: 'all my life I was free, now I felt like in a prison' (7). Comprehensively, what can be interpreted from these findings is that the amount of time spent within AZC can be seen as a crucial factor which impacts how refugees experience the overall integration system. Whilst a minority mentioned that they felt happy during this time, all others perceived their time in the AZC as a waste of their time, a long period of waiting in fear and stress, which resulted in an even weaker mental condition. The comment below from respondent 3 illustrates this sentiment:

'A total waste of seven years of my life, not much to do here to become a better person who can manage themselves in Dutch society. This long period of waiting, I thought they just wanted you to give up and go back to Bosnia. They did not allow you to do anything. This was disturbing. I don't think it was beneficial for my integration process. They kept me caged for seven years, every day you feared that it could be your last and that they would send you back to a country which was not liveable'.

Following from the interviews, it can be inferred that while on one hand the refugees were glad that they found some peace and safety within the Dutch society and specifically within

the AZC, on the other hand, they felt like the war was not over yet since most of the refugees were traumatized and struggled with post-traumatic stress disorder. In general, within this context, the interpretation from the findings suggest that a long period within the AZC results in a negative perception on overall resettlement. A long process was not really beneficial for the refugees, as they became demotivated, which slowed down their resettlement. Additionally, it resulted in an even worse mental and physical condition as respondent 1 explained:

'I feel like throughout the whole process of integration they try to brainwash you completely and then give you the Dutch citizenship. They could have gotten a teacher, but now because of this whole process, they have a completely crazy person. From my point of view, if the integration system was constructed the right way, I really could have benefited the society. I came here as an educated, well-raised and mannered person, of course I was traumatised by the war and everything I experienced during the war, but I still had my conscious. Instead of using me for the right things, taking my qualities into consideration to add something to society, the whole process destroyed me to a total waste. Almost nine years of waiting in a cage resulted in total evaporation of everything positive that I had in my head'.

Surprisingly, as observed, even though on one hand the refugees expressed that this long process made them lose hope for the future and was not really beneficial for their wellbeing, on other hand, they were positive about the overall healthcare aspect since there were enough possibilities to seek medical help as the comment below illustrates:

'There was an organisation who helped me mentally. If this organisation had not been present, I think I would have killed myself. The war was terrible, but the times within the centres were hard too. All the people who survived the war should have been provided the right medical help because we all needed it' (respondent 4).

Nevertheless, some of the refugees encountered some negative experiences as the vast majority of the refugees believed that the doctors did not really understand what happened during the war in Srebrenica, and therefore did not believe the things they were struggling with. However, after some time, this changed, particularly when the war in Bosnia started to gain national attention. In general, all refugees affirmed that without this help it would have been almost impossible to adapt to a new society and endure the whole integration procedure. These statements are in accordance with theory and support the argument made by Scholten, Baggerman, Dellouche, Kampe and Ypma (2017) that refugees should be included within the health care system in order to resettle successfully.

Furthermore, following the health aspect, studies have shown that refugees who receive access to employment, housing, education and language training directly upon arrival, benefit more and integrate faster. Conversely, not granting refugees such immediate provisions hinders their integration process. As scholars described how education claims a crucial role in the integration process (Korac, 2003; Alencar, 2018). However, as observed from the interviews, the refugees from Srebrenica did not all have the same opportunities when it came to education. While some could participate within certain educational programs other could not which as interpreted made them feel even more isolated and consequently resulted in disintegration. In general, therefore, it seems that the refugees thought that it would have been impossible to integrate without education. Respondent 9, who did not have the chance to educate himself, expressed the following: 'I wanted to learn things, to keep my mind occupied. It would have made my life today easier. With the right education I could have had a better life. But I didn't have the chance to'. Additionally, the education provided the refugees with distraction from worrying about the uncertainty of their future. Nonetheless, while on one hand, the refugees expressed the importance of education, on the other hand, studying was hard; as respondent 6 described the following: 'I lost hope for everything. I did not feel it necessary since they could deport you anyway. Looking back to it now, this was a wrong decision'. However, after the refugees received their Dutch citizenship, all refugees were obligated to finish the civic integration course, and this regard all received the same educational opportunity. The refugees were asked about their experience with this course and whether it was beneficial for their overall integration within Dutch society. While respondents stated that they were grateful for the opportunity to educate themselves and learn something about the Dutch culture and language, they also provided some negative comments in regard to this course. They stated that the timing of the course was not the right one and that they found it difficult to be finish the course in such a short amount of time. A possible explanation for this might be that refugees were mentally broke after spending several years within the AZC and were not capable to achieve the proffered level of the course. Moreover, another negative aspect that became clear was that the refugees were stressed and fearful that if they did not complete the course successfully they would be deported. However, this was to be expected, there are several possible explanations for this. This presented sentiment may be explained by the fact that system-world introduced many coercive measures to secure successful integration like demonstrated in the previous paragraph which eventually made the refugees afraid to fail as they thought that they would be 'punished' again. Moreover, it was also already pointed out that communicative action between both worlds was not possible, this implies that refugees would not receive any

information regarding the procedure and outcome of this course. Overall, in all cases, the refugees reported that they did not achieve the goal of the civic integration course.

Another observed aspect in the integration system which resulted in the same feeling of isolation as education was employment. Talking about this issue one respondent explained how this made him feel:

‘It was forbidden to work. There were not many people who had any kind of employment within the AZC. I really would have liked if we could have some kind of employment as this would have made me feel more human and less like an animal isolated between walls’ (4).

One respondent who had received a university degree in Bosnia commented: ‘people always looked at us as if we were incompetent, that we came here to steal their jobs, we were downgraded and not valued for our qualities. You were powerless’ (5). Another respondent expressed the following:

‘There were not enough jobs for the refugees who came here, the only jobs that were available, and what they wanted you to do, were the jobs that criminals did. The government sent us to places where they would also send criminals and drug addicts. I had a university degree in Bosnia, I had qualifications to perform some better jobs but still they saw you as a second-class citizen’ (1)

However, these statements are in agreement with Bevelander (2016) findings which demonstrated that refugees often find first employment below their original educational level. Yet, on the other hand, as commented in the previous paragraph, it was interpreted that the integration system would ensure that refugees would be assisted from the educational field to the labour market, as observed in practice, this was not the case. Most refugees maintained that they had to find work mostly themselves and that they were not adequately prepared to function independently on the labour market. Taken together, these findings suggest that having something to do, be it employment or education, kept the refugees occupied and made them feel less isolated. Ideally, more opportunities for education and employment would have been beneficial for the integration process as also theory has pointed out.

4.2.3 A forcing assimilative way of integrating

Within this research, both the one-and two-way approaches of integrating were used to define the refugee’s perception of integrating. For most refugees’ integration meant adapting to a new environment, to a new system with its own set of values and rules. In all cases, this

means accepting the new culture and living life like every other person within society. However, as observed from the interviews, while on one hand most refugees were willing and found it a necessity to obtain knowledge about the Dutch culture and language; on the other, they also wanted to protect their own cultural identity while assimilating in the new culture. Many refugees felt like the Dutch integration system was focusing more on a one-way process as illustrated in the following quotes: 'I perceived sometimes that they wanted us to erase our past, to force people to forget everything and just accept the new culture rapidly' (respondent 8). 'You had to fully assimilate, to take over everything of the Dutch way of life. I do understand that you have to adapt to the country who provided you help, but still, to forget everything you stand for is not right' (respondent 5). This is interpreted as it was mainly them who had to take over everything. They perceived that others did not really care what they went through, they just saw them as a threat.

Furthermore, regarding the aspect of housing. On one hand, the refugees argued that they did not have any input when it came to their housing, on the other hand, some did not really care since most of them just accepted everything just to be out of the AZC. Like respondent 7 explained, 'after 10 years of being an asylum seeker, I was ready to accept anything'. In contrast, respondent 6 experienced housing part negatively:

'I am not happy about the housing aspect, they just put us anywhere where all the foreigners are, a neighbourhood where people of the 'second row' live. The worst thing was that they did not pay that much attention to neighbourhoods like this, you feel so less important. They do not treat you as well as they treat the normal people here'.

In general, the refugees were grateful for any sort of housing after their Dutch citizenship. Yet, their perception was that they mostly were sent to places where generally many foreigners lived, which were mainly bad neighborhoods that the government paid little attention to. Their assumption of being second-class citizens was confirmed by this. As a result, this made it even harder to come in contact with host-society, likewise as during the whole integration process.

GENERATED INSIGHTS ABOUT THE LIFE-WORLD

The objective of this paragraph was to generate insight into the lived refugee experience regarding the integration system in order to provide an answer to the second, - and third sub-question. The following findings have emerged which help to obtain this objective:

Education and employment

The refugees felt excluded from the domains of education and employment. Even though their perception was that these aspects are crucial for successful resettlement.

Safety and security

The refugees felt safe and secure and therefore were positive about the domain of safety and security.

Health

The results have demonstrated that the health aspect was experienced as positive since help was available and sufficient medical services were provided to the refugees. Yet, the argument was made that more medical help could have been provided focusing on the 'traumatic' nature of their past.

Social connection

The refugees experienced many feelings of exclusion. Firstly, regarding the domain of **social bridges**, they felt detached from the rest of society because participation with host-society was not possible. Moreover, the refugees felt unwelcome and unwanted. This research has demonstrated that the refugees were mainly dependent on help from social agencies and institutions. However, they mostly experienced negative situations with these actors. Thus, taken together, this evidence suggests that refugees experienced the domain of **social links** as negative. Regarding the domain of **social bonds**, even though refugees were glad for the opportunity to meet members of own community, from their point of view this was not the most beneficial way for ensuring successful resettlement.

Language and cultural

The dominant one-way process of integration made the refugee feel weak since they were forced to fully assimilate to host society. It was them who mainly were responsible to change and take over everything concerning host-societies culture, norms and values.

Rights and citizenship

The refugees experienced much fear since they were uncertain about their future, they pointed out their anger towards the 'non-transparent system' because they never knew what the future would bring and therefore lived in great uncertainty. They never knew what their rights and obligations were during their resettlement process.

Housing

The refugees felt powerless when it came to housing since most of them did not have any input when it came to their future accommodation.

Looking at the aftermath of the system-world, refugees still have problems to function independently as echoed by respondent 5:

‘I thought that life would be easier when I received my citizenship, I thought that I could function normally within the society. But because of the long process I became really demotivated, I felt useless. The whole process did not really help me grow as a person, now I found it hard to stand on my own’.

Overall, fully integrating into Dutch society continued to be very difficult, as explained by respondent 1:

‘A foreigner who tries to integrate into a new country has to understand that 90% of the society will know that you are a foreigner. This way you will never integrate to the maximum. For me personally, I think I am integrated, since this is my home now and I started loving this country, but everyone sees me as a stranger so this makes it hard. This way you will never feel the same as a Dutch person. Yet, everyone should integrate because a country provides you a chance for a new life and you should be thankful for it’

Within this research, after twenty years, six out of the twelve refugees felt integrated. While the ones who feel integrated are not planning to go back to Bosnia since this was their home now, others are still planning to go back because the Dutch system has failed in their eyes as respondent 6 made clear:

‘Yes, I’m going back, the future aspiration did not come out. This country will always treat me differently, so what am I doing here? So, I’m planning to go back. Tell me how you can feel at home when you are always treated differently. You are irrelevant. Like I was protecting them in Srebrenica and I did not succeed and that is why they treated me like this and not the other way around. This is the same as the war in Srebrenica, you were expecting help, but this help never came’.

4.3 Similarities and differences between the two worlds

This section will reflect on the findings of the two previous paragraphs and will illustrate the observed similarities and differences between the two worlds. Herein, interpretations will be

provided on the occurred differences between the two worlds. In other words, this part will answer the second, - and third sub-question.

4.3.1 Similarities system-world and life-world

A comparison between the two worlds has resulted in the identification of a number of positive similarities. Firstly, the system-world found it important to prevent and combat the emergence and the presence of prejudices, discrimination, and racism towards newcomers because this would hinder refugee's overall resettlement. Following the results of the life-world, the refugees explained that they did not experience any form of racism or discrimination during their resettlement and therefore were positive about the aspect of safety and security. Overall, they felt safe and secure during their integration process as the system ensured for. Secondly, the health aspect, as explained in the first paragraph, the expectation was that refugees would feel excluded from the health-care system. However, surprisingly, in contrast to this expectation, no evidence from the interviews was detected which demonstrated this feeling. Refugees were merely grateful for the received medical help. Thirdly, the aspect of social bonds, the opportunity to meet members of own community was experienced as positive by the refugees. A common view amongst the refugees was that the system provided enough space to communicate with other likeminded refugees.

4.3.2 Differences system-world and life-world

The present study has found several differences between the two worlds which are identified from the previous two paragraphs. In the first place, the system-world applied general policy approach as their assumption was that this was needed to create a socially stable society. As the findings from the interviews show, the refugees did not find this policy approach preferable since it was mainly experienced as negative and made them alter their future aspirations.

In the second place, in the line with the previous, the system-world introduced a one-way process of integration where refugees were forced to adapt to the Dutch norms and values and where refugees should integrate fully into Dutch language, culture and history. As identified from the interviews, this policy approach only resulted in the opposite since the refugees felt more detached from host-society as they were the only ones forced to change. In their view, this approach does not result in a social and stable society.

In the third place, when it came to education and employment, the system found these aspects crucial for bringing people into contact with each other and foster mutual acceptance between refugees and hosts societies members. The results, however, demonstrated that the refugees felt mostly excluded from the rest of the society since they had no opportunity to

access the labour market and educate themselves. Surprisingly, even though the refugees had the same status, differences among them were visible concerning these two aspects. Refugees mostly described how the system did not really take their background into consideration, even though the findings from the policy documents illustrated that the system-world aimed to do so. Overall, this rather contradictory result may be due to the implemented general resettlement approach since this way the system did not have any knowledge about the needs and background of the refugees. With a specific resettlement approach, however, this would not be the case. Also, this result could be linked to the fact that the integration system was mostly implemented to meet short-term results rather than assume that refugees would permanently reside within the Dutch society (Hynie, 2018). Thus, as an interpretation from this statement, providing the best possible conditions for refugees would not be preferable.

In the fourth place, the system-world emphasized the importance of communicating with refugees about their rights and obligations. It was interpreted in the policy documents that the system aimed for a more open and transparent way of operating. This implies to the accessibility concerning policy information and practical data noting the rights and obligations of incoming refugees. Nonetheless, in reality, the recipients from Srebrenica did not really experience this, they perceived the system as mostly non-transparent. Since the refugees did not know what to expect, they became submissive as they feared for deportation or imposed sanctions.

In the fifth place, concerning the housing aspect, the system-world feared that refugees living in disadvantaged environments would result in a larger gap within the society. For this reason, providing refugees with assistance in securing housing was crucial. In this way, it would create more opportunities for people in vulnerable situations. In contrast, the refugee's perceptions hinted that they were mostly sent to places where generally many foreigners lived, which were mainly bad neighborhoods that the system-world paid little attention to.

In the sixth place, regarding the category of social connection, the system-world wanted to bring people closer together. However, the findings presented that the Dutch system did not really promote any interventions for 'bridging social bonds and links, thus, the relationship between newcomers and host-society members and institutions. This proves that the refugees were in many ways excluded from the rest of society.

CONCLUDING REMARKS CHAPTER FOUR

In this chapter, it was attempted to analyse the Dutch system-world and the Srebrenican life-world and herewith answer the three sub-questions. The first aim of the present chapter was to understand the refugee integration system that was active in the period between 1995 and 2007 and this way answer the first sub-question. This analysis shows evidence that this system has great power and authority on the life-world in order to create a socially stable society. With respect to the second sub-question, the aim of the present paragraph was to examine the specific life-world of the refugees from Srebrenica and their experiences and perceptions concerning this specific integration system. Altogether this part has shown how powerless and submissive the refugees were because they perceived the whole system as very problematic. Collectively, between the two worlds, only similarities were found within three aspects of the integration system while the three key aspects of the integration system; education, employment and housing were experienced as negative and were perceived differently than it should have been. These results strengthen the theory that both worlds are imbalanced because mainly significant differences between the two worlds were found. The main objective of the system was to prepare incoming refugees to function independently in Dutch society. Nevertheless, the results indicate that after twenty years, six out of the twelve refugees felt integrated. Some of these refugees still nowadays have problems to function independently and for this reason even expressed the desire to return back to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

5. Conclusion and discussion

Within this chapter, firstly the main insights will be provided which answer the main research question. Secondly, a discussion will start focusing on the contribution of this research to the scientific field. Thirdly, the practical implications of this research will be elaborated and lastly, recommendations for further research will be provided.

5.1 Conclusion

This paper's main focus centred around Srebrenican refugees' individual lived experiences and perceptions in order to achieve a greater understanding of how these traumatised war victims, after an immense struggle and surmounting a multitude of barriers, integrated into Dutch society. The main focus of this paper was to comprehend the coherence between the life-world and system-world. One on hand, the system-world included policymakers and the implementation of the refugee integration system, while on other hand the life-world reflected on the experiences of the Srebrenican' refugees concerning this system. To truly understand the interplay between these two worlds, the paper's main research question asked, **'how can the perceptions and experiences of refugees from Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the integration system in the Netherlands between 1995 and 2007 be explained?'**

After analysing numerous policy documents and examining what various scholars had to report on the Dutch integration system, this paper proves that this system can be viewed as a system made to dominate by using coercive methods to secure successful integration and obtain a social and stable society. It is important to note that the system shifted from a soft to a more strict and assimilative refugee approach in this period. Consequently, following from the 'voices' of the refugees themselves, the generated evidence implies that the perceptions and experiences of the refugees were mostly negative because they experienced this 'superior' and 'controlling' system as very problematic since they were mostly powerless.

Altogether the results of this paper reveal an incoherent relationship between the worlds as mainly differences between the two worlds were discovered. The explanation for the negativity of the refugees can be linked to the power of the system-world since they can create an environment that facilitates or impedes refugee integration. The different services and programmes provided to the refugees inevitably affect life-world experiences. Like many scholars have proved that refugees who receive access to aspects as employment, housing, education, and language benefit more and integrate faster. Conversely, not granting access to these aspects hinders refugee resettlement (Valenta & Strabac, 2013). On the whole, the findings indicate that the system can be seen as impeding successful resettlement because

the refugees lacked access to certain aspects (e.g. education, employment). As a result, the refugees were mostly on their own; they felt detached from the society since they were not provided the same rights as others. They felt like second-tier citizens rather than a full member of society.

Moreover, as interpreted from the interviews, the overall negative experiences and perceptions were mainly manifested as a result of the difference between the refugee's hopes and aspirations about the Dutch world and the reality they experience with their new life. The refugees all expected something different here, something better, they assumed that they would be treated in accordance with their past and welcomed into Dutch society. The expectation was that the Dutch government would understand what they had been through, and thus take their background into consideration and correspond to their needs. However, in reality, this study has revealed that the refugees were pressured to 'integrate' following the system-world norms, values and needs. Comprehensively, the refugees were people with a past, they needed help, nevertheless, their general perception did not materialize; therefore, the refugees felt broken and experienced the assimilative process of forcing to integrate as a 'hell'. However, this finding is not surprising since, as observed within the policy documents, the system was implemented to view every incoming refugee the same no matter their background or previous experiences. In other words, traumatised refugees from Srebrenica, who experienced genocide, were treated no different than regular asylum seekers in this period. Nonetheless, what can there be interpreted from this situation is that this paper has underlined the importance of focusing on a specific refugee resettlement approach rather than a generic one since this is not beneficial for traumatized refugees.

Given the abovementioned points, it is not surprising that the experiences and perceptions of the refugees were negative, since, as highlighted by Healey, mostly negative experiences occur when the gap between host society and a refugee is large (2006). This study has revealed an abundant gap since no harmony and communicative action was present between the experts and those with lived experiences because, as interpreted from the interviews, the system-world is not made in the interest of the life-world even though scholars affirmed that it should be. Like Habermas described, a perfect world would be one where people communicate on the basis of 'mutual recognition, reciprocal perspective taking, a shared willingness to consider one's own conditions through the eyes of the stranger and to learn from one another' (2003, p. 291). All in all, the evidence from this study points towards the idea of a 'non-perfect world' since both worlds lived in the separation of each other and a great fragmentation of power was visible. Likewise, to theory, the results of this study can be interpreted to show that the system was implemented within an egocentric world were

different actors all pursue their own interest (Howlett, 2004). In this case, it can be agreed that the Dutch world was not the right 'world' for the refugees from Srebrenica to start all over again.

5.2 Discussion

This research contributed to understanding how refugees with traumatic pasts experience resettlement in a new country. Within this context, the refugees from Srebrenica were provided the opportunity to express their 'voice' and explain how they experienced and perceived the Dutch integration system. In this paper, the results reveal that, despite the different means proposed by the system-world to create in 'perfect society' and welcome refugees in Dutch society, the reality of refugees from Srebrenica prove that this was not achieved. A controversial finding was, as interpreted from the policy documents, that the refugees were free and responsible for their own integration. However, following from the results of the interviews it can be questioned to what extent the refugees actually were free and autonomous to shape their own integration when they always had to be accountable for and perform within the system-world arena in order to prevent from being sanctioned. This arena which controls and directs the behavior through the use of rewards and punishments, deciding what is best for others because of their power and authority. All in all, the findings from this study make several contributions to the current literature.

First, with regard to the category of rights and obligations, it was explained that the system-world applied a 'general' policy approach because their assumption was that this was needed to create the desired society. As observed, this approach corresponded with that of Scholten, Baggerman, Dellouche, Kampe and Ypma (2017) who explained that this approach is more beneficial since it prevents to 'having to reinvent the wheel for every new migration flow' (p. 46). Nevertheless, contrary to expectations of the system-world and the explanation of Scholten et al, this study proved that this approach is not advantageous to obtain the desired policy objective. This finding of this study complements those of previous studies (Korac, 2003) and likewise highlights that policy actors should recognise refugees as a unique and heterogeneous group with different needs. Still, it is quite intriguing that the refugees from Srebrenica were treated like asylum seekers from other countries or continents.

Second, the system-world adopted an ideology of assimilation and herewith introduced a one-way process of integration where refugees were forced to adapt to the Dutch norms and values and where they should integrate fully into Dutch language, culture and history. This approach was in accordance with the argument of Hynie as he emphasized the importance of not being too tolerant too refugees since it could bring about changes in host-societies

appreciated values and norms (2018). Hence, like already observed from theory, many scholars (e.g. Ghorashi, 2006; Korac, 2003) have questioned whether this assimilative approach is necessary to create a strong and stable society. In reality concerning the recipients from Srebrenica, this study has contributed in identifying that refugees do not consider this approach preferable since they are pressured to 'integrate'. It was interpreted from the interviews that this approach makes it hard for the refugees to connect with host-society, consequently, and also pointed out by Ghorashi (2006), refugees felt 'left out'. In general, this paper agrees with Ghorashi that the recognition of the difference between people is the most important basis for a 'healthy democratic society' and refusing to do so can damage those to whom recognition is denied.

Third, the theory has outlined that the integration process has to be portrayed as a process of mutual accommodation with the presence of bilateral communication (Ager & Strang, 2004; Mulvey, 2015). It was indicated that the interaction process between two worlds is a crucial factor which affects successful refugee resettlement. However, this study casts new light on the relationship between the system-world and life-world and extends in proving that these worlds are imbalanced since no possibilities for communicative action is possible. Good results were obtained to prove that any form of input from the refugee's point of view was impossible because most decisions were made within a dominant system in which the 'voice' of a refugee was totally neglected. Since, conforming theory, no communication is possible when the 'voice' of a refugee is neglected. Comprehensively, this result ties well with previous studies wherein scholars confirm that refugees remain in many ways excluded from host-society and this way have a hard time resettling. Mainly, the argument made by Abma, Leyerzapf and Landeweer (2017) is relevant within this study: it is difficult for people with less power, such as refugees to have their voices heard. This paper's research found this argument to be applicable. During the integration system refugees did not have much say; there were not enough opportunities for them to have their voices heard. Additionally, the data in this paper support the finding of Habermas (2003) that usually no harmony is present between the experts and those with lived experiences.

Taken together, as previous literature argued that there is a need to better understand the life stories of forced displaced refugees from their perspective. Specifically, regarding refugees from Srebrenica, there was an absence in incorporating their voices in characterizing the integration system. This research endeavoured to fill that gap by granting these refugees a voice. The narrative form broadens the understanding of the resettlement challenges that refugees experienced and provided meaning to the relationship between the system-world and the life-world. In other words, even though the results prove that the

refugees felt voiceless during their resettlement in Dutch society, this research has granted them an opportunity to voice their experiences.

5.3 Implications of the research

5.3.1 Theoretical implications

First of all, this research has contributed to the already existing theoretical framework of Ager and Strang focusing on the different domains of the integration system. It has demonstrated which domains are crucial when it comes to refugee resettlement and which seem 'less important'. However, the biggest contribution of this research is that it has provided a new unique framework (system-world vs life-world) to the scientific field for investigating the refugee integration phenomena. It has to be acknowledged that the present study appears to be the first study to investigate this subject following this framework, therefore it can be noted that this research lays the groundwork for future research of refugee integration in this manner.

5.3.2 Practical implications

The primary objective of this research was namely to provide beneficial, bottom-up knowledge for policy evaluation and implementation within the system-world as European countries cope with the current refugee crisis. This research has proved that the integration system wanted to create a social and stable society but in practise failed to succeed. Hence, the results of this research can help in explaining why and how policy makers still eventually can achieve this objective. It provides future Dutch policy makers more perspective and deeper insight on how traumatised refugees experience a particular implemented integration system and what they, from their perspective, find important when it comes to resettlement into a new and unknown society. A practical challenge, is, of course, how to apply the present research findings into the field of policy-making.

In order to create a 'perfect' world as implied by Habermas, policy makers should consider stepping away of an ideology based on assimilation and a one-way process of integration. This study shows evidence that newcomers do not wish to be forced to adapt to the Dutch language, culture, history and 'way of life'. These findings made it clear that methods of coercive nature to secure successful integration are not perceived positive within reality and are not needed to create the desired social and stable society. Additionally, a 'perfect world' would be with the presence of bilateral communication. However, the findings confirm that refugees were merely voiceless and therefore felt powerless during their resettlement. Therefore, addressing the policy makers, even though the system aims for its own

objectives, they cannot forget that refugees are people with feelings and emotions and must take into consideration the background of these refugees and provide them a 'voice'. This is advisable to do by providing refugees access to their resettlement process, thus, being as transparent as possible. Overall, it has to be stated that incorporating the voice of the refugee into the whole process would not prevent the achievement of the original system-world objectives like scholars have admitted (e.g. Korac, 2003).

Another point for policy making is that in the case of the refugees from Srebrenica, a long integration process was not really beneficial since refugees became demotivated and as a result negatively affected their wellbeing. Like Bakker, Dagevos and Engbersen explained that a long process can further negatively affect a refugee, especially refugees who experienced traumatic events (2017). This long process is also seen as 'the first step in creating a refugee identity as distinct from other migrants and residents' (Hynie, 2018, p. 270). In general, this study has proved that a long resettlement process would result in an even greater segregated and fragmented society. These findings are important for policy makers since it can be seen as a cause for not being able to create a social and stable society where newcomers and host-society members connect with each other. Considerably, policy makers should try to shorten the length of the resettlement process for newcomers, and also introduce more possibilities for refugees to come into contact with host-society residents. Likewise, to the previous part, this could be done by providing refugees more access within certain aspects of the integration system (e.g. education and employment).

Comprehensively, the findings of this research are of great importance for policy makers since this can help creating the 'perfect world' for both newcomers and host-society members.

5.4 Limitations of the research

The following points can be considered as the limitations of this research:

- One of the main limitations of this research concerns the misbalanced proportion of the researched population, as more males than females were interviewed. Consequently, this research has mainly portrayed the life-world from a male perspective and lacks understanding the life-world from a female perspective.
- Another limitation is that the replication of this study by a researcher with a non-Bosnian background could be difficult, and the researcher may therefore fail to obtain comparable findings. The reason for this is twofold; firstly,

because of the existing language barrier, and secondly, the participants might hesitate to talk to someone who does not have their same background since the subject is of a personal and traumatic nature.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

Following the limitations and implications, the next suggestions are provided for further research:

- Scholars who are interested in the lives of Srebrenican refugees could investigate how particularly women deal with their trauma in a relationship with refugee resettlement and the specific integration system. It could be questioned to what extent the experiences and perceptions between men and female differ when it comes to resettlement.
- Scholars could continue to explore what the most efficient and effective ways are for incorporating refugees within the system-world 'arena'. This implies, how to grant a 'voice' to a refugee during their integration process.
- The framework (system-world vs life-world) used within this study may be applied to other cases elsewhere in the world focusing on traumatized (e.g. genocide, holocaust) refugees and their experiences and perceptions concerning the implemented integration system.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Interview guide

Main questions:

- Could you describe to me the journey from your home country to the Netherlands?
- Could you describe to me what happened from the moment you arrived in the Netherlands?
 - *System-world domains*
- Could you describe to me how life within asylum seekers' centre was like?
 - *System-world domains*
- How is life after the asylum seekers' centre period?
- What does integration mean to you?
- Overall, how did you perceive the integration process in the Netherlands?

Follow-up topics:

- *Future aspirations during stage of integration*
- *Feelings/emotions during stages of integration*
- *Difficulties and problems during stages of integration*
- *Positive points during stages of integration*

Appendix B. Summaries interviews

Respondent one (male/48 years/1998)

I came to the Netherlands because I thought the Dutch government would somehow understand what we, people from Srebrenica, have experienced during the war and this way would provide the right help. I thought that refugees from Srebrenica would be welcomed with open arms. I thought that the Dutch government would want to make up for their mistakes, therefore my hope for the future was positive. I really believed that they would help us to the best of their abilities. I believed I could find a place where I was safe, a place where I can live normal and forget about my horrible past. However, I survived the war, I was traumatised, but the help which I hoped for was not present. I felt like a criminal in a prison. I experienced this as a rehabilitation centre of people who committed serious crimes. You were just a number, a nobody in their eyes. I experienced a lot of discrimination during my resettlement. The people where I worked with did not know half of the things I knew but because I was a foreigner I would not receive the same chances. I felt hopeless, you had to accept it and move on, you were just an object, the only option was to do what they want. I did not receive any concrete help concerning this. The only help I received came from the foundation which helps refugees, however, this was not a governmental organisation so they could not mean that much for you. My future aspirations changed completely after I saw what this asylum process was all about and what kind of help we really would receive. I perceived this whole process of integration as humiliating. They treated me like I did not know anything and that I came from a country which was underdeveloped and far behind the Dutch society. They started explaining to me how basic things like switching the lamp on and off works. I received information about the laws and rules of the country but I had no clue how the integration policy was implemented or organised. So, I did not know what to expect during the whole process. This was very hard for me. Every moment of the whole process I wanted to go back, but because the kids were getting used to this environment, they were integrating very well and got used to the Dutch way of life we stayed here. Overall, I think I am integrated since this is my home now and I started loving this country. However, a foreigner who tries to integrate into a new country has to understand that 90% of society will know that you are a foreigner, this way you will never fully integrate. You will never feel the same as a Dutch person. Still, everyone should try to integrate as best as possible because a country provides you a chance for a new life and you should be thankful for that. But for me, everything sank, every little hope I had in the begin was destroyed. The only happiness which is present is that of my kids. For me, it was bad to come here, for my family and kids it

was good. But, I would not go back to Bosnia because everywhere I go I would be a considered as a stranger.

Respondent two (female/47 years/1999)

There is no specific reason for me why I came to the Netherlands, but I expected of all the countries in Europe the most from the Netherlands - because of the situation in Srebrenica during the war. I expected a better life, a better future without fear and an environment to start a new life. However, this changed during my integration process, I expected better somehow, I had little kids and this was hard for me. I was always scared what the future would bring, you never knew what to expect. I thought that every moment somebody could come to knock on your door and tell you to go back. The first phase was difficult because you did not know what to expect, a lot of interviews and a lot of emotions. Long hours of waiting with young kids and not knowing the language to ask help were really hard. During my whole integration process, I had no idea what the integration policy was about, I had no clue about my rights and obligations. I wish I had known how this was organised. The time spent within the asylum centre (AZC) was too long, it was a roller-coaster of emotions. Living life without knowing what tomorrow will bring. Even though we are all humans, I always felt like I was less important, that I was on the second row compared to the Dutch people. I was nothing eventually. I perceived this as a way of bullying us to leave the country. Concerning my health, I had several talks with a psychologist, this helped me to somehow get healthier and forget the struggle and experiences of war. I am the Dutch government grateful for this opportunity. Looking back to the education part, I am happy with what we studied, but I think it could focus more on language because this would help refugees integrate faster. For me personally, the integration system did not really help me with finding employment. Since you are on your own it was even more difficult, companies see your name and act immediately differently. During the whole integration process, I felt safe, but the war has made too many scars to ever feel 100% safe. But during the process, I was mostly scared of being deported back to Bosnia. Overall, am I integrated? I really tried and did my best to fully integrate, till this moment I still have not succeeded because for a stranger it is always hard to fully feel the same the majority of the society. Every phase during the process I felt unwanted and like a burden like they did now want me here and wanted to get rid of me as soon as possible. How can you integrate then? Also, because during the whole process I experienced that they wanted us more to assimilate than to integrate. Forcing us to learn new things and to adapt rapidly to the new environment.

Respondent 3 (male/53 years/1997)

I was asking myself: what can a person do when he lost everything - I knew it was not safe in Bosnia, I had to make a decision which would change my whole life. I heard that the Netherlands were receiving people from Srebrenica and because I thought that the Dutch government was reliable for what happened in Srebrenica I chose to seek refuge in the Netherlands. I expected a better situation here, a place where I could be happy again, a place where I can find myself again. The journey to the Netherlands was very scary, I was thinking: did I make the right decision, will the Dutch people help me or not. You just did not know what to expect, this was making me very sad. The first two years within the Netherlands I even did not know where I was, I was lost in my head because of the war and the whole process of integrating into a new society. They did not allow you to do anything, this was disturbing. I don't think this was beneficial for my resettlement. They kept me seven years caged, every day you feared that it could be your last. I was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, luckily, I received help for this. Even though the war was over, the whole integration process for me still felt like a matter of survival. I wish they provided me some education earlier on, even though we learned a lot of useless things that do I did not need. I wanted to work more, but they did not really allow me too and did not help me to find some employment. I had to do everything on my own. A good point was that I felt safe during the whole process of resettlement but I was always scared of being deported. When it comes to racism or discrimination, I have no idea if this occurred because simply I did not know the language. However, nowadays that's different. I felt like a black sheep among white sheep's the whole period - detached from normal society. During the whole process, I did not know my rights, I did not know what the integration policy was like, so they could fool me as they want, this was disturbing. I experienced the whole integration process mostly thinking that the Dutch people were thinking that we, people from the Srebrenica, came out of the jungle. Like we did not have any civilization in Bosnia, they were downgrading you as a person to the maximum. Still, I am the Dutch grateful for a new life even though I spent seven years in hell. Overall, I have integrated myself more than the whole integration procedure has done for me. Concerning the help, I experienced that they did not really care enough about the refugees.

Respondent 4 (male, 50 years, 1996)

I sought refuge in the Netherlands because I thought the chance for a better life would be higher here than in other countries since the Dutch government had an influence on the outcome of the war. I think they are accountable for their actions during the war and because of this they would provide the best possible help for people from Srebrenica. I hoped for a

place to start a new life, so I was thinking positively about the future. Still, in the begin I was lost, I did not know what was normal or was not so the first phases were very tough. The future aspirations changed completely at the start when I somehow experienced that the translator did not really translate the things I was saying properly, then the mistrust began. Moreover, I experienced that the general intelligence and security service (AIVD) was following me, they put instruments in my house to overhear what we were talking about. I was running 2 weeks for my life through the forests of Srebrenica but they did not believe me. They did not know anything about our culture and the way of life in Bosnia- they did not take us seriously. They compared us with other people from Africa or Asia. You were always at a disadvantage no matter what. I felt humiliated. They knew that we needed help and what we have experienced. During the integration process I was very much interested in learning new things - to learn the Dutch way of life. I liked what we had to learn during the civic integration course, this helped me to integrate faster. I was happy with the education they provided to me, they saw I was good at studying and altered the content to my qualities. They did offer me to further educate myself, but because of my mental condition this was not possible for me. However, the times in centres I really wanted to have some employment, it would make me feel more human and less like an animal isolated between walls. I am happy about the housing aspect within the Netherlands, they really listened to us when wanted to change our housing from an apartment to a house because my family was afraid I would jump from the balcony. The people here always had some distance towards us, they were more afraid of us than we of them. Sometimes I did feel discriminated, they always asked when I am going back to Bosnia. During the whole integration procedure, I had no idea what the integration policy was about or how it was implemented. I wish I knew, it would make me maybe some calmer in my head. Finally, after twenty plus years I can say that I am integrated. I have achieved nowadays more than I was hoping for or thought about in the past when I came here. I am very well integrated, I speak the language well, I work and I am happy. I have Dutch friends who treat me like one of them that makes it easy.

Respondent 5 (female, 48 years, 1995)

I came to the Netherlands because I thought that the Dutch government would help me now when they did not during the war. I just needed to be rescued, I needed help, I did not think about the future then. When I came here I was so scared, I felt horrible, every time I saw the police I thought they would kill me. A lot of panic in the begin because I did not know what to expect and therefore I thought that they would send me back every second. The start was so difficult, Serbs were killing us with bullets, the people here were killing us with words

mentally. I felt like I was in prison, I felt like a criminal. I understand that they have to know what kind of people come to their country, but they knew what we been through, they could have been somewhat softer. The life in the AZC was better than in the OC, but still, you were in chains afraid to be deported. For us refugees, the hands were tied, the doors were shut. Regarding education, we finally could educate our self after we received the Dutch citizenship, we would have liked that this was available sooner. Looking to the goal of the Dutch civic course, for me this failed, it is hard to function on my own - hard to find employment when always treated differently. It was hard for me to find work after I received my citizenship, the civic course did not really prepare for me for this. During the internships, I had the people always looked at me as I was incompetent while I had more qualities than them. I felt always at a disadvantage but still you were powerless. A positive point about the integration was concerning health, it was always possible to visit a doctor. On the contrast, the housing aspect was bad, we had no input what so ever. Thus, we felt again powerless. The whole integration process they wanted you to fully assimilate, to take over everything that is Dutch. They wanted me to forget everything where I stand for. This is not right. We did not receive the same rights as every other person within society. Overall, nowadays I am happy, I'm healthy, I have a roof on my head, my kids are happy. I think we made it. But I think I could have achieved more when I had a bit more help during the process. I could have been more successful within this society.

Respondent 6 (male, 57 years, 1999)

The Dutch battalion was present during the fall of Srebrenica, I heard a lot of positive stories about the fact that the Dutch government was welcoming refugees from Srebrenica, and since I had no future in Bosnia, I thought I could find some happiness and brighter future in The Netherlands. I expected to live normally again, to have my freedom back and to sleep at night not having to worry if tomorrow is going to be my last. In the begin, I was lost, scared and frightened just like in the war. My future aspirations changed completely after some time, I had a hard time surviving this process. I thought my future would be back in Bosnia where I lost everything and had nobody. I had some time to go to school within the AZC, they offered you some education to learn the language. I was happy about this. But during that time, I lost hope for everything, so studying was hard, I didn't feel it necessary since they could deport you anyway. Looking back to it now, this was a wrong decision. After I received my Dutch citizenship I had to do this civic integration course. However, this course went too fast for me to handle, I was just getting used to a new environment and then I had this commitment, so it was difficult. For me personally, the goal of the civic integration course is not met. It had to happen so fast, I was mentally broke and that made it hard to really learn everything in that

short amount time. Moreover, I did not really experience any racism or discrimination. I was younger, I felt safe again, I just needed to survive so I did not really think about discrimination or racism during that time. My main goal was to integrate into a new society, what other people thought of me didn't matter. However, now I take it more personal and it is sometimes hard. I try everything to be like other people but still they treat you differently. Regarding employment, there were not many possibilities for this during my time in the AZC. It was difficult, I had not the same chances as everyone and I received no help to find a job which suited me. I'm not happy about the housing aspect of the integration within the Netherlands, they just put us somewhere where all foreigners are, a neighbourhood of people of the 'second row'. The worst thing however is, they don't pay that much attention to neighbourhoods like this, you feel so less important. They don't treat you that good as they treat the normal people here. We survived the genocide, happy to be alive, still lost a lot of family and friends, came to a new country in the search of happiness and to function like every other person within the society. However, it is impossible because you were always being treated differently. So, tell me, how can you call this home? This whole process was downgrading you as a person, with this I struggled the most. So, no I am not integration. Only the future I was hoping for my fam came out. For me personally not. I wanted to integrate, but it is impossible within the current society and because of the integration policy during that time. Let me say to you this: why do you nowadays see a lot of foreigners going the wrong path? This is all because of this process in the begin. Not providing the right guidance and treating people the same. We refugees were not dumb people, we were educated as well, we could benefit the society and be successful here. But they treated you like you were nothing. Therefore, I am going back to Bosnia, the future aspiration did not come out. This country will always treat me differently so what am I doing here? So, I'm planning to go back

Respondent 7 (male/59 years/1997)

I came to the Netherlands because I was searching for safety and stability. A place where I could start all over and have some future. A place where I can feel safe again. This was impossible within Bosnia. We heard that the Netherlands was democratic and provides the right tools for a safe and healthy life. A place where people from Srebrenica could start a new life. I had thought I would have again a brighter future in the Netherlands, that this integration process would help me get back on my feet and provide me some guidance to live a normal life. However, during the process of resettling this changed completely, every day I was afraid that I would be sent back. The first phase was the hardest, happy to come alive within

the Netherlands but still the ignorance was taking his toll on a person. We lost a lot of family and friends, the people here acted like this was nothing. I felt angry, but you couldn't do anything then to hope for something better. After the OC, the life within the AZC was better. I had more contact with other people, we could do volunteer work and had more freedom. Your own place which you somehow could call home. Then again, we could dream of a better future. But during this phase I did not feel comfortable, I had not many rights. All my life I was free, now I felt like in prison between walls. Concerning education, we had some possibilities to learn the language within the AZC– the teachers were there on voluntary basis. I was positive about this and the content we learned (mostly language wise). I am happy with the civic integration course, it helped me learn the language faster and find a job which till this day on I am doing. However, maybe the course could be somewhat sooner, I would have liked that. I also liked the content of the course, I am interested in the culture and the Dutch way of life. So, I really liked it. Looking back to the help factor within the integration system, we received help but this too late, not at the begin when we needed it most. Even when we then receive help, the doctors acted weird and not believed us. Because of this I still have some issues because I did not receive any adequate help during that time. Mostly things were positive for us, I liked the process overall, it helps me integrate. However, 10 years is long to be in an AZC. Sometimes I felt downgraded too, that was the worst feeling. That everyone thought we did not know anything. I worked as a policeman and in the department of justice, here they treated me like I even did not know what a TV was. They sometimes just treated you like a number, and not as people with a past who survived something terrible. Nobody would tell us what we can expect and what our rights were. I would love that this happened because it would calm me a bit down. That moment you just were afraid and scared all the time of not knowing anything. Overall, nowadays I can normally within society, I don't need any help anymore. I am integrated, I know how the Dutch society works and learned their culture, value and norms.

Respondent 8 (male/49 years/1996)

The only reason why I came to the Netherlands was that my family was already present here. The influence of the Dutch government in the war did not play any role here. I thought when I came here that I would just stay couple of years before the situation in Bosnia returned to normal, so I did not think my future would be in the Netherlands. I asked for asylum without even knowing what that was. The first 6-12 months I wanted to go back, I felt horrible during this period. After a year I saw there was no future for me anymore in Bosnia, so I wanted really to stay here and build a new life here. So, my future aspirations changed

from that moment. The first phase was a disaster, it felt like some kind of army. A lot of people and not enough space for us all. The first 6 months were just a like strict regime. A period of downgrading you as a person to the max. I would immediately go back if I had no family here. Life in the AZC was like a zoo, no obligations, no rights no nothing. Just some Bosnian people I met along the way who I spend time with, killing time doing different activities. During this time, I felt really useless. I become demotivated for everything, I was a robot just going through time. I felt safe during my time in the AZC and the whole procedure did not really encounter any discrimination of people really. Nowadays, it is different, now I do experience this. All the time during the whole integration you were in some coma, not paying attention really to your surroundings and the things people were saying. So, this is maybe why I did not experience any racism or stuff like that. I thought that life would be easier when I received my citizenship here, that I could function normally in society. Because of the long procedure, I was really demotivated. It really did not help me benefit and grow as a person. It would be good that the society was educated in what refugees are, not always portray us something negative. The whole process does not really let you feel as the other people within the society. You are always different and always were treated differently. So, that's why I never can be integrated. One moment during the whole integration process I said to myself, do I really want to integrate and become like these people, sometimes so cruel and heartless. Do I really want that? The integration system has failed to really make me feel home and welcomed in this country.

Respondent 9 (male, 48 years, 1998)

I came to the Netherlands simply because I was mad at the Dutch battalion, the way they acted during the war. I wanted to see if they would help me now when they did not then. I expected a better life, a life without war and without the Serbs. A place where I can feel normal again and truly feel alive like the times before the war. The journey to the Netherlands was hard, with different means of transportation, not knowing where you were heading, what you can expect. A period of stress and constant being afraid. The first phase felt like a concentration camp, I already survived this during the war and now I was again present in one. Broken in every way possible of the war and now here day by day broken again. All the time in the begin I was hearing: you cannot stay here, you will leave - making a person afraid. I was hopeless and saw no perspective at all. I experienced this as they could not wait to get rid of you, that you quiet yourself and just return. Life at the AZC was better than in the OC, more freedom, more room to live and to feel human. During the times in the AZC I had no education, I wanted to learn things, to keep my mind occupied. It would make my life

nowadays easier, with the right education I could have had a better life, but I did not have the chance too. Well, during the process I expected every day that I would be deported back, so my future aspirations were not that positive as I thought in the beginning before coming here. I was living from day by day, just like in the war. Losing hope for a better future. After I received the Dutch citizenship It became somehow better, more freedom and stuff. Live your life on your own turns. However, still the insecurity was there, I was always afraid that they would send me back. So, I really could not integrate that well when you think that every day still can be your last. I needed still help when I received my citizenship. The life here goes so fast and when I finally received the paper I had a lot of stress to keep my feet on the ground and live normally. Some trauma again got to me.

Respondent 10 (male/39years/1999)

I sought refuge in the Netherlands because I thought that the Dutch government would help me. I was happy because I was safe again, I felt safe. I just afraid that they would send me back, that was the begin when I came here. I expected to find happiness again, to get my lost years back, to live normally again. I thought I could build a new future here, a future with hope and no war. However, from the moment I had the interviews the future aspirations changed, it was not that positive like I expected in the begin. I felt like they did not believe me and that they would send me back. The fear of being denied here was larger than being positive. After I received more help, I had a good lawyer, the positive future aspirations came back. It all depends on who is there to help you, I think I was lucky that I met the right people on my way. The time in the AZC was a nice period for me despite living with the fear of being deported, I felt safe and I was healthy. I had free time to what I want, I could learn new things educate myself because I had no other obligations to do so. There were enough possibilities to teach and learn, however during that time I was not really active, I just wanted to work and make money. I think my process went well because I was always honest and I think they believed me when I explained the things I went through. During that time, I only spend time with the same nationality and this is not beneficial for the integration as well I think. I learned mostly of other refugees what my rights were then really from an official organization. Not enough knowledge about the language to really understand things or sometimes ask for help. The civic integration course has helped me a lot to find employment and too further educate myself. Overall, I am very much integrated. In the begin, I haven't had the same chances as everyone, but now I do, I am on the same level and I have the same possibilities. So yes, I feel as most people do and I am integrated. I feel here like this is my home now - I feel more home here than in Bosnia. The integration process did really his job for me, I never

had a moment that I wanted to go back to Bosnia. I like the system which they implemented here.

Respondent 11 (male/52 years/1996)

The main reason for me to seek refuge in the Netherlands was that my girlfriend was already living here. The journey to the Netherlands was difficult, I was afraid to be captured. During that time, I really did not think that my future would be in the Netherlands, I expected that I would return back to Bosnia. Also, I felt like they were treating the refugees bad on purpose so that they would leave on their own. I think they wanted to get rid of us as soon as possible because we all knew what happened in Srebrenica, and that the government thought that we came here to make some problems or stuff like that. The whole process of integration began really negatively for me when I received a Serb has a translator during my interviews. The mistrust began then to be even worse. The time in the AZC was better than in the OC because I had more freedom and more possibilities to communicate with other people. However, I would have liked that they offered me some kind of education or employment during this phase. After I received my citizenship I was obliged to succeed the civic integration course. This was really hard for me, it had to be finished in a short amount of time. This course did not really help me to survive on my own within this society. I was still struggling mentally. There were some possibilities to ask for help, but I didn't want to because I did not trust the people. I though, would they really try to help me or are they just after some information regarding the war. I didn't believe their good intentions, this everything because of the war and the influence of the Dutch government. The trust in the Dutch people was lost because of the war and hard to gain in the begin. Regarding safety and security - I felt safe and secure in the different centres, I did not really have any situations regarding racism or discrimination. Just after I received a permit, then it was different when it came to employment and daily life. Employment was the most important factor when it comes to integration, this made me integrate much better. For me the whole integration system was more integration than assimilation, they did have respect for my past. I think that the refugees from Srebrenica were not really welcomed here, people were hostile and didn't really liked the fact that we came here. Did not really think about the things we went through. The whole process of integration I felt like that people who had certain qualities and something left in there were seen as a treat. They treat you differently when you know something about the world and have some knowledge. They were afraid of competition. Overall, after twenty years I do feel integrated. Still, even though I am integrated, my heart lies in Bosnia, so I am planning to go back.

Respondent 12 (male/54 years/1998)

I came to the Netherlands because life in Bosnia was very hard, I was a refugee in my own country and was afraid that the Serbs were still hunting us. We found out that people were searching for their happiness in other countries because they could not return to Srebrenica anymore. Some of these people went to the Netherlands – like them we expected a better life here, so that is why we sought refuge here. Also, because the Dutch battalion was present during the war I expected that they would help us more here. I was happy when we came to the Netherlands, I felt free, but this changed quickly. I saw that we did not belong here and that people were not welcoming us. Even though I felt safe I was afraid that they would send me back to Bosnia to start all over again. The life in AZC was hard, difficult times in an environment where people needed help but did not receive any. There were no possibilities for employment during the time in the OC, however, within the AZC, we could work and earn some money. I felt like I was in prison during my time in the AZC. You could not do anything, this was breaking me mentally. During this time, we could educate our self, but I was lacking with this because I was afraid to be sent back. The uncertainty was the hardest for me, this was taking his toll on my health. So, I asked for help and luckily, I did receive this. The health aspect of the integration system was good organised, I received help for my trauma because of the war. However, we had some bad experiences with the IND, with the interviews and the translators, they did not believe us - this was shocking. Every day the aspirations for the future were getting worse and worse because this uncertainty was killing me mentally. The language was the biggest barrier, they had to provide some education for this, this was lacking. Moreover, I did not know what the integration system was about, I did not know my rights. You could ask for some information but that was it. We had some bad experiences with the contact person of the municipality, this guy did not really want to help us because we were Muslim. The worst part was the long period in the AZC, this was not beneficial for my integration process. I really had some moments I wanted to leave the Netherlands. After twenty years I still cannot say that I am integrated, my kids however are. My future still lies in Bosnia and I am planning to go back.
