

İSTANBUL BİLGİ UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY MASTER'S PROGRAM

FROM REFUGEES TO EMPLOYEES:
A COMPARISON OF THE LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF SYRIAN
REFUGEES IN TURKEY AND GERMANY

Laura Kunzendorf
117674005

Assist. Prof. Can CEMGİL

İSTANBUL
2019

FROM REFUGEES TO EMPLOYEES:
A COMPARISON OF THE LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF SYRIAN
REFUGEES IN TURKEY AND GERMANY

MÜLTECİLERDEN ÇALIŞANLARA:
TÜRKİYE VE ALMANYA'DAKİ SURİYELİ MÜLTECİLERİN İŞGÜCÜ
PİYASASI ENTEGRASYONUNUN KARŞILAŞTIRILMASI

Laura Kunzendorf

117674005

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Can CEMGİL

İstanbul Bilgi University

Jury Member: Assoc. Prof. Hasret DİKİCİ BİLGİN

İstanbul Bilgi University

Jury Member: Dr. Ayşe Ezgi GÜRCAN

Beykent University

Date of Approval: ..17 June 2019.....

Total Number of Pages: ..196.....

Anahtar Kelimeler

- 1) Mülteciler
- 2) İşgücü piyasasına erişim
- 3) Entegrasyon
- 4) Ev sahibi ülkeler
- 5) İstihdam durumu

Keywords

- 1) Refugees
- 2) Labour market access
- 3) Integration
- 4) Host countries
- 5) Employment status

FOREWORD

This thesis is an attempt to evaluate the labour market integration of Syrian refugees in Berlin and Istanbul from the perspective of the concerned persons themselves – the refugees. Thus, it could not have been written without the insights of my informants in Berlin and Istanbul. I would like to thank them for their time, openness and patience to share their experiences with me in lengthy conversations. I am also particularly grateful to Dr. Can Cemgil for his invaluable guidance and advice during the composition of this thesis.

Besides, a special thanks to Ibrahim for always having had an open ear to discuss my research and motivating me more than a dozen times.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-------------|
| FOREWORD | iii |
| ABBREVIATIONS | vii |
| ABSTRACT | viii |
| ÖZET..... | ix |
| INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| Relevance of labour market integration..... | 1 |
| Positioning of the thesis within the existing research..... | 4 |
| Applied methodology and limitations of the thesis..... | 5 |
| Structure of the thesis | 6 |
| 1. LITERATURE REVIEW..... | 7 |
| 1.1. The role of refugee labour market integration in the literature | 7 |
| 1.2. Human capital theory | 8 |
| 1.3. Social capital theory | 12 |
| 1.4. Ethnic capital theory | 18 |
| 1.5. Theory on institutional aspects and policies | 21 |
| 1.6. Combined theories and further theoretical perspectives..... | 25 |
| 1.7. Contribution of the present thesis to the literature..... | 27 |
| 2. LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS..... | 29 |
| 2.1. The German labour market | 29 |
| 2.1.1. The situation of the German labour market | 29 |
| 2.1.2. Employment possibilities for refugees in Germany..... | 35 |
| 2.1.3. Legal provisions for the labour market access for refugees | 38 |
| 2.2. The Turkish labour market..... | 39 |
| 2.2.1. The situation of the Turkish labour market..... | 39 |
| 2.2.2. Employment possibilities for refugees in Turkey | 44 |
| 2.2.3. Legal provisions for the labour market access for refugees | 45 |
| 3. ETHNOGRAPHY AS RESEARCH FRAME..... | 48 |
| 3.1. Definition of ethnography | 48 |
| 3.2. Research process..... | 50 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 3.2.1. Research preparation: finding informants..... | 50 |
| 3.2.2. Data collection: conducting in-depth interviews..... | 55 |
| 3.2.3. Data analysis: using grounded theory..... | 59 |
| 3.3. Critical engagement with the ethnographic method | 61 |
| 4. LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES IN BERLIN..... | 66 |
| 4.1. Tough life in Germany – from high expectations to harsh realities | 66 |
| 4.2. Struggling with language – German as cornerstone for integration ... | 73 |
| 4.3. Not working for the money – approaches to job search | 80 |
| 4.4. The Job Centre - support or barrier? | 83 |
| 4.5. Sticking to locals or newcomers? – the role of contacts in job search. | 92 |
| 4.5.1. “You can do it!” – building support networks with compatriots.. | 92 |
| 4.5.2. “When you don’t have vitamin B” – accepting help from natives | 94 |
| 4.5.3. “It is your home, too” –integration of refugees by the society..... | 96 |
| 4.6. Building a future – outlook and retrospective | 99 |
| 5. LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES IN ISTANBUL | 104 |
| 5.1. Searching opportunities – Turkey as more than a transition state ... | 104 |
| 5.2. Being competitive – skills and their transferability | 107 |
| 5.2.1. Turkish as “plus” but no “priority” – the need for language..... | 107 |
| 5.2.2. “They want the Arabic market” – the advantage of Arabic..... | 111 |
| 5.2.3. “They don’t look for your degrees” – making use of experience | 113 |
| 5.3. No bureaucracy, no institutional support? | 115 |
| 5.3.1. “I cannot sleep about that” – no career without registration..... | 115 |
| 5.3.2. “If you want it, you pay for it” – getting a work permit | 117 |
| 5.3.3. “We are jealous of guys in Germany” – relying on self-support. | 120 |
| 5.4. Networking and “knowing people” | 124 |
| 5.4.1. “I’m looking for human resources” – job search on- and offline | 124 |
| 5.4.2. “I was obligated to this job to survive” – being exploited..... | 134 |
| 5.5. Jumping to opportunities – the constant search for a better job | 138 |
| 5.6. Seeking a stable life – outlook and retrospective..... | 143 |
| 6. DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON OF LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION IN BERLIN AND ISTANBUL | 146 |

| | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| CONCLUSION..... | 167 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 177 |

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| BA | : German Federal Labour Office |
| BAMF | : German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees |
| BMAS | : German Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs |
| EU | : European Union |
| IHK | : German Chamber of Industry and Commerce |
| ILO | : International Labour Organization |
| IOM | : International Organization for Migration |
| İŞKUR | : Turkish Labour Agency |
| LaF | : German Regional Office for Refugee Matters |
| LaGeSo | : German Regional Office for Health and Social Affairs |
| NGO | : Non-governmental organization |
| OECD | : Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| UNHCR | : United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |

ABSTRACT

Germany and Turkey, the two European states hosting the largest number of Syrian refugees, are faced with the challenge to integrate these refugees into their labour markets on the long-term. However, the shortcomings and strengths in this process are disparate in the two countries, both struggle with aspects of labour market integration that are achieved in the respective other country. The literature is aware of several factors influencing the labour market integration outcome of migrants. However, there is no clarity on the relevance and influence potential of single factors depending on the specific conditions in the host country. One reason is that detailed case studies considering diverse influencing factors within a holistic approach and also giving weight to the experiences of the concerned persons themselves - the refugees - are missing.

With the help of an ethnographic approach, the present thesis shows that bureaucracy and institutional support, skills and experiences, as well as social networks, are the main drivers on the way into employment for refugees in Germany and Turkey. Yet, due to different national contexts, the degree and the way in which these factors shape the labour market entry diverges. While on the rather inflexible German labour market language skills are decisive and official certificates required to enter a job, social networks and the demonstration of practical skills are pivotal for employment on the Turkish labour market. Moreover, in Germany, high levels of bureaucracy and institutional support lead to a slow but eventually stable labour market integration of refugees. In Turkey, on the other hand, low levels of bureaucracy and institutional support push refugees into employment quickly but result in informal, unstable working situations. The results demonstrate that there is vast need and scope for improvement of labour market integration in both destinations by learning from already successful approaches adopted in the respective other country.

ÖZET

En fazla sayıda Suriyeli mülteciye ev sahipliği yapan iki Avrupa ülkesi olan Almanya ve Türkiye, bu mültecileri uzun vadede işgücü piyasalarına katılımı zorluğu ile karşı karşıya kalmaktadır.

Bununla birlikte, iş gücü katılımıyla mücadele eden her iki ülkede de bu süreçteki zaaflar ve güçlü yönler farklıdır. Literatürde, göçmenlerin işgücü katılımını etkileyen birçok faktör belirtilmiştir. Ancak, ev sahibi ülkedeki özel koşullara bağlı olarak bir tek faktörün ilgisi ve etkisi konusunda net olunamaz. Bunun nedenlerinden biri, bütünsel bir yaklaşım içinde, farklı etkileyici faktörleri göz önünde bulunduran ve ayrıca mültecilerin kendi deneyimlerine ağırlık veren detaylı vaka çalışmalarının eksik olmasıdır.

Etnografik bir yaklaşımın yardımıyla, bu araştırma; Almanya ve Türkiye'deki mültecilerin istihdamı için, bürokrasi ile kurumsal desteğin ve kabiliyet ile deneyimlerin yanı sıra sosyal bağlantıların da itici güç olduğunu göstermektedir. Bununla birlikte, ulusal şartların farklılığı nedeni ile bu faktörlerin işgücüne katılımı nasıl etkilediği ve etki dereceleri farklılaşmaktadır. Esnek olmayan Alman işgücü piyasası için dil becerileri ve resmi prosedürler belirleyici iken, Türkiye işgücü piyasasında istihdam için de sosyal bağlantılar ve yetenekler çok önemlidir. Üstelik Almanya'daki yüksek düzeyde bürokrasi ve kurumsallık, mültecilerin yavaş ama sonuçta istikrarlı bir işgücü katılımına yol açarken, Türkiye'de mültecileri hızlı bir şekilde istihdam eden düşük düzeydeki bürokrasi ve kurumsallık, gayri resmi ve dengesiz çalışma durumlarına neden olmaktadır. Sonuçlar, geniş bir ihtiyaç kapsamında, iki ülke birbirlerinin başarılı yaklaşımlarını öğrenerek, işgücü piyasasına katılımın iyileştirilmesine yönelik gelişme sağlayabileceklerini göstermektedir.

INTRODUCTION

Relevance of labour market integration

A few days after the 5th September 2015, the day when Merkel decided to keep the Germans open and allow the entry of thousands of refugees who came via Hungary and Austria, the Federal Minister of Labour, Andrea Nahles from the Social Democratic Party, stated that not even one in ten refugees would be qualified for the German labour market and that a great integration task lay ahead. She explained further: “Not everyone who is coming is highly qualified. Very clearly, this is not the case. The Syrian doctor is not the normal case” (Deutsche Wirtschaftsnachrichten, 2015). She implied that the labour market integration of refugees depends on the refugees’ skills. However, when I talked to a Syrian doctor in Berlin, I learned that he has not been able to find an employment for years despite being highly qualified, having had his certificates acknowledged, speaking the language and knowing about the urgent need for medical personnel in Germany. After all, refugee labour market integration might not only depend on the refugees alone?

Germany is by far not the only country that faces the challenge of assuring employment for the refugees on its soil. Among the European countries, Germany and Turkey are the ones hosting the largest number of Syrian refugees (Connor, 2018). Talking to some refugees in Istanbul, I realized that many of them struggle with their decision to have come to Turkey or plan to continue their journey to the European Union. They observe from afar how their countrymen in the EU are doing and not seldom wish themselves in their place. An exemplary statement is:

“Even though while you’re searching for a job, you’re getting paid...they’re working on you. And even if you don’t work, you will not be at the street [...] So, that’s why we- we are jealous of the guys there in Germany. They have everything, you have that facility in life. You have your own home, you don’t pay for anything, you don’t pay for your taxes, and you don’t do- you don’t do anything, that’s so wrong.”

But is life truly so easy for refugees in Germany or do their countrymen in Turkey receive a distorted picture of their reality? Indeed, other perceptions of refugee life in Germany exist:

“I’m seeing my friends in Europe, they didn’t do anything until now because they became lazy. Like, for example, I have a friend, he got married and didn’t find a job. It’s been like three years and a half. I came with him to Turkey together, but he went to Europe after six months. So, he’s like not successful now, he can’t speak German. [...] They don’t push them.” Moreover, some remarked that “in Europe, it’s not easy to find a job. Because in comparison with other people, they have much more skills, like much more languages, so they have more opportunities than you. But here [in Turkey], you have more.”

It seems that after all it cannot be so easily concluded that refugees in Germany are so much better off than their counterparts in Turkey, and that despite being situated in a welfare state, their work-life situation is not necessarily ideal. This is also suggested when consulting some official statistics on the work situation of refugees in Germany and Turkey: In Turkey, the large part of Syrian refugees is working, for example, but mainly channelled into informal labour (Kirişci, Brandt, & Erdoğan, 2018). Naturally, this entails a series of disadvantages for all economic actors: be it the native population feeling unable to compete with cheap labour, the state losing tax revenues, or the refugees themselves working without any insurance (Erdoğan & Ünver, 2015, p. 54 ff.). But not only Turkey struggles with an adequate integration of Syrian refugees into its labour market. In Germany, only 14 % of the Syrian working age population occupy jobs that allow them to sustain themselves. The rest is marginally employed, does not pursue a profession at all or is not part of the labour force so that their subsistence has to be assured by social welfare payments (BA, 2018).

In sharp contrast to these sobering numbers are the motivations of the refugees. Surveys show that the big majority of Syrian refugees in both destinations are willing to work and hope for a future in their host country, which will be easiest to achieve with stable employment (Brücker, et al., 2016, p. 9; Daily Sabah, 2017). Seeking the best possible life, it is therefore only natural that refugees evaluate their own situation by comparing it to the one of their countrymen in other destinations.

However, considerations about building a new life with a professional occupation are not only relevant in the everyday reality of the concerned refugees. For it is foreseeable that many of the refugees will not return to Syria in the near future, their solid integration, for which labour market inclusion is central, became a major issue for their host societies as well.

While Germany and Turkey are faced with the same challenge to integrate refugees in their labour market, the statements and employment numbers reproduced above suggest that both countries encountered different complications in this undertaking. Germany seems to struggle to bring refugees into employment in the first place, while in Turkey refugees usually work but find it difficult to enter formal occupations. The shortcomings and strengths in the labour market integration processes in the two countries seem disparate, both struggle with aspects of labour market integration that seem to be achieved in the respective other country. This dichotomy opens scope for learning and improvement from the labour market integration approaches of the other. To locate the elements of labour market integration which Germany could adopt from Turkey and vice versa, a comparison of the labour market integration in both destinations is suitable. Since Germany and Turkey seem to face difficulties in different points, the results of such an analysis will unveil inspirations for how the labour market integration approach in one country can be enhanced with the help of already successful strategies from the other country. On what exactly politicians, employers, the civil society and refugees themselves should focus to implement improvements and how the latter should look like is the essence of the matter. The relevance and need for such findings are confirmed by the above-outlined labour market participation of refugees which is to date not ideal in neither of the countries. But only a formal, widespread contribution of Syrians to the labour market allows for a low-tension integration into the societies of their host countries and creates a contribution instead of a burden for the host economies. To get there, it has to be looked for which factors determine the success of a migrant's job search to which degree. By identifying these factors and comparing their configuration and influence on refugee job search in two different destinations, useful conclusions for an efficient orientation of

labour market integration strategies can be drawn. Unfortunately, those factors have not been sufficiently explored yet even though refugee integration is part of a lively debate in the public and academic world.

Positioning of the thesis within the existing research

The literature explains the effectiveness of migrants' employment search with the help of three major theories. The first one focuses on the human capital of migrants and assumes that the level of skills and experiences, as well as the circumstances under which these were obtained, are decisive for the time which migrants need to assure an employment, as well as for the level of employment and the earned wage (Chiswick B. R., 1978; Kossoudji, 1989; Friedberg, 2000; Basilio, Bauer, & Kramer, 2014; Chiswick & Miller, 2007). According to this approach, a migrant on job search should train his host society's language skills, get as much information about the host country's labour market as possible and obtain work experience on the latter – in short, raise his host-country specific human capital. The second major theory suggests that the existence of exploitable bridging social capital is necessary to successfully find employment. Contacts to natives, especially if they are connected to relevant institutions and employers, are particularly crucial (Putnam, 2000; Lancee, 2012; Portes, 1998; Dustman et al., 2016; Gericke et al., 2017; Kaya & Kırac, 2016). The third major stance claims that the way in which national incorporation policies and the welfare state are designed and the availability of supportive integration measures determine the labour market success of migrants (Reitz, 2002; Castles, 1995; Freeman, 2004; Koopmans, 2010; Kogan, 2016; Rinne, 2012).

Certainly, the elements of all mentioned theories affect the labour market integration of migrants, the difference lays in the evaluation of the importance and relevance of single factors. Most studies supporting one or the other theoretical approach are based on the analysis of national statistics or surveys. What is missing are detailed accounts of the real-life experiences of the refugees on job search themselves. Eventually, no one will be able to give a more detailed insight into labour market integration, its stumbling blocks and door openers on the way there,

than the concerned persons themselves. Which factors do or did they experience as most influential for the success or failure of the job search?

Applied methodology and limitations of the thesis

Since the point of departure is an open question that requires mainly descriptive indications to be answered, it seems appropriate to adopt an ethnographic methodology. Instead of relying on prefabricated assumptions and theories, it descriptively refines concepts and relates phenomena to each other (LeCompte & Preissle Goetz, 2001, p. 102). At first, this may seem unconventional, since ethnography originates from the field of anthropology and is traditionally concerned with the close observation of different cultures. However, since the present thesis makes use of ethnography in the sense of means rather than purpose, it is a useful framework to reach the described target of understanding the factors influencing refugee labour market integration from the perspective of the concerned persons themselves. While the present thesis is not directly concerned with cultural notions, it still focuses on one specific target group, Syrian refugees in working age, in two different national settings, and inquires how they experienced their job search. The claim that so far the refugees' perspective has been ignored and shall thus come to focus fits the postulation that "ethnography tells a story that is new" (Josephides, 2012, p. 89). In ethnography, this is often done with the help of qualitative interviews which are seen as suitable means of so-called participant observation because they can bring to light what stays otherwise unnoticed (Hockey & Forsey, 2012, p. 70; Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. vii). One specific aim of ethnographic interviews which is congruent with the aim of the present thesis is to "understand the actor's understandings of his or her lifeworld, his or her interpretations, meanings and narrations" (Skinner, 2012, p. 9). To achieve this objective, in-depth interviews will be held with Syrian refugees in Turkey and Germany which underwent a job search. To make the results more amenable to comparison and to render the research area more specific, refugees from the metropolises Berlin and Istanbul will be questioned. On the one hand, this will limit the possibility to generalize the findings, particularly to refugees living in rural

areas. On the other hand, ethnographies are often accused of a lack of reliability and validity which makes it even more important to pay attention to the social context in which interviews are held (LeCompte & Preissle Goetz, 2001, pp. 100, 107). Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that due to the applied method of in-depth interviews, which creates a limited number of highly detailed and personal accounts, ethnography brings into light tendencies and does not allow for generalizations. It can also unveil aspects or mechanisms which were previously ignored in the literature. By relating the individual accounts of the informants to the larger context of labour market integration, it can help to fill mere statistics on the labour market performance of refugees with meaning and open up new perspectives for their interpretation.

Structure of the thesis

To present the various existing perspectives on the research topic, the following first chapter constitutes a literature review. Therein, the main theoretical strands from which researchers usually depart will be presented. These are namely human capital theory, social capital theory with the subsidiary approach of ethnic capital theory, as well as a theory on institutional aspects and policies that mainly aims at different incorporation regimes, types of welfare states and labour market policies. After having introduced the different theoretical backgrounds, it is imperative to depict the facts on the ground, on which the labour market integration of refugees takes place. Therefore, the structure of the labour market in Turkey and Germany is outlined with its size, main sectors, the division of labour and its needs in the second part. In the same chapter, the conditions under which refugees can enter the respective labour market, are briefly clarified with the help of the relevant legislation. The third chapter illustrates ethnography as chosen methodology and discusses its advantages and limits related to the research topic. Additionally, the utilization of in-depth interviews to establish the ethnography as well as the data analysis strategy are depicted. The actual results are consequently in the prime focus of the fifth and sixth chapter. They present the labour market integration of refugees in Berlin and Istanbul from the perspective of the refugees and are structured

according to thematically linked aspects. In order to convey the results more clearly and concisely, suitable interview passages are reproduced exemplarily. The presentation of the results is followed by a closer discussion and comparison of the findings for Berlin and Istanbul. The concluding chapter summarizes the most important findings, points out to further potential research areas and points out to the limits of the present work.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. The role of refugee labour market integration in the literature

In much of the empirical and theoretical literature, refugee labour market integration is only briefly touched upon as a secondary domain to immigrant labour market integration in general (see, e. g., Bodvarsson & Van den Berg, 2013; Borjas, 1994). Since, especially in Europe and the Middle East, refugee flows have become a growing phenomenon in the 21st century, public debate quickly evolved around the integration of newly arrived refugees into host societies. Against this framework, academia, often in cooperation with national governments or international organizations, likewise started to increasingly consider refugees as distinct group within the pool of migrants and thereby produced a number of studies (see, e. g., Konle-Seidl & Bolits, 2016; İçduygu, 2016; Degler & Liebig, 2017). Studies that concentrate on refugees generally address two separate phases of the refugees' experiences: the flight and the settlement (Kunz, 1973, p. 127). For the purpose of the present thesis, only the literature about the latter is relevant. Literature concerning the settlement phase, however, mainly covers the refugees' influence on host labour markets (see, e. g., Del Carpio & Wagner, 2015; Akgündüz, Van den Berg, & Hassink, 2015; Çeritoğlu et al., 2017). Studies notably dedicated to refugees' labour market integration in the first place are, after all, still not available in sufficient quantities. Therefore, the present literature review will be based on the literature under the umbrella of immigrant labour market integration and, if available, include the particularities related to refugees.

To begin with, the integration model of Ager and Strang (2004) offers a clue as to why the labour market integration of immigrants is particularly decisive within the integration process into society in general. Their model includes ten indicators of integration among which employment takes a key role together with housing, education and health. It serves as so-called marker indicating an already positive integration outcome as well as a means promoting even more integration successes (ibid., p. 3). Its special importance can be traced to its contribution to economic self-sufficiency, career plans, contacts to locals, (language) knowledge expansion and personal well-being aspects (Ager & Strang, 2008, p. 170). In a report of the Council of Europe, of which both Turkey and Germany are members, labour market access is likewise mentioned as a “main indicator” of integration (Coussey & Sem Christensen, 1998, p. 18).

While the importance of labour market integration is undisputed, the crux lies in the identification of the factors that contribute to labour market integration. To make these factors add up to more than a simple listing, it is also necessary to explore their direction – negative or positive – as well as the level of influence. Marquardsen and Söhn (2017) offered a comprehensive synopsis of labour market integration factors and their mechanisms. They indicate that the critical point of contention is the question if, among personal abilities, experience and language knowledge other aspects such as cultural characteristics and values shape the immigrants’ situation on the labour market (ibid., p. 10). Though they fail to point out all, they provide a hint that the theoretical debate is divided into four big strands to explain labour market integration of refugees, which are human capital theory, social capital theory, ethnic capital theory and one that focuses on institutional aspects, particularly policies, linked to migration.

1.2. Human capital theory

The oldest and most common approach to immigrant labour market integration builds on the neoclassical human capital theory. The theory’s pioneers provided the concept of “human capital” by emphasizing that investments in skills and knowledge of workers have a positive effect on productivity. Thus, human

resources should be treated as a type of capital (Mincer, 1958, p. 301; Schultz, 1961, p. 3; Becker, 1962, p. 9). They considered health, formal education, on-the-job training and further training and knowledge in professional fields as driving factors for skills and, subsequently, human capital (Becker, 1962, p. 9; Schultz, 1961, p. 9). Coleman (1988) brought these elements together in the definition that “human capital is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways” (ibid., p. 100). In that sense, human capital is the “value of a person’s productive, marketable skills” (Hartog, 2000, p. 7) what makes it a supply-side concept (ibid., p. 19).

Due to its disposition to influence a person’s employment prospects, the notion of human capital was taken up by economists in order to be able to evaluate migrant’s labour market integration more efficiently. With the help of this concept, Chiswick (1978, pp. 900, 919) linked the immigrants’ tendency to have much lower wages than comparable natives during the first years after their arrival to a possibly lower quality of education abroad. Moreover, he pointed to the propensity of employers to value human capital acquired abroad much less for being hardly verifiable and assessable. Having said this, he also mentioned that wages of foreign-born people adjust over time with those of natives and eventually even tend to be higher (ibid., p. 919-920). According to him, this could be explained by the self-selection of immigrants which mainly leads highly able and motivated persons to migrate who will acquire knowledge and skills comparatively quickly (ibid., p. 912). However, Chiswick ignored the fact that not all migration decisions are taken voluntarily. It can be assumed that refugees’ migration decisions are largely motivated by external factors so that this line of arguments might not hold true for their case.

An alternative explanation for the effect of migrants’ labour market assimilation with natives over longer periods was given by Kossoudji (1989). According to her, immigrants lack information about the market and relevant capabilities at the beginning, but systematically adapt over time. This adaptation takes place through income maximizing behaviour which leads them to be flexible, go through various job experiences and gain language skills. Additionally, their gathering of experience in the host country and thus of more reliable references contributes to

the fact that potential employers view them more and more as native workers (ibid., pp. 495-496). Though they offer different explanations for their observations, Chiswick and Kossoudji agree on the fact that host-country human capital is significantly more valuable than home-country human capital. In a study undertaken with migrants in Israel, Friedberg (2000) affirmed their findings by showing that human capital acquired abroad is not a substitute for human capital acquired in the host country. In fact, the former receives a lower return than the latter (ibid., p. 222). This means that education obtained in the host country is much more marketable than education from abroad. Moreover, schooling received in Western foreign countries has still higher returns than Asian or African education (ibid., p. 235-236). But while education, especially secondary and undergraduate classes, is at least to some level transferable to the host country, foreign work practice tends to be insignificant for employment in the destination country (ibid., p. 241, 246). It was also found that education from abroad brought about essentially lower returns to human capital than domestic education while foreign job experience offered no significant return at all (Basilio, Bauer, & Kramer, 2014, p. 21). The authors also explored that human capital from developed foreign countries was higher valued in the host country than human capital from developing countries due to more elaborated education systems and more sophisticated production processes which foster skill gains (ibid., p. 14). However, other studies diverge from the findings of Friedberg and his research colleagues Basilio, Bauer and Kramer. Byoun (2013, pp. 133, 148), for example, concluded from a study conducted in the US that foreign education is insignificant for the employment status in the host country while foreign work experience can increase employment chances significantly. Independent from the debate on which kind of foreign human capital is more relevant, there is a consensus that foreign human capital is less valued in host countries than host-country capital. Nevertheless, Friedberg (2000) draws attention to the possibility of migrants to make their human capital gained abroad more valued in the new destination by gathering host country-specific knowledge and experience (ibid., p. 238). In contrast to Chiswick and Kossoudji, Friedberg suggests that the return to home-country capital can be increased by obtaining more

host-country capital. In that sense, the utility of home-country capital is dependent on the migrants' ability to transfer it to the host market. Still, it is generally acknowledged that human capital from the country of origin can only be imperfectly transferred to the host country.

Here, Chiswick and Miller (2007) take the analysis a step further by asking how the transferability of human capital can explain the over- or under-education of migrants in their jobs. As can be anticipated from the discussed difficulty of migrants to fully exploit their human capital in the host country, recently arrived migrants are more likely to be overeducated in their job, while foreign long-term residents rather tend to be undereducated (*ibid.*, p. 22). This can be explained by migrants wanting to ensure employment in the initial arrival phase so that they first accept jobs beneath their education level but move up the job ladder in time. That way, they can replace non-recognized human capital from their home country by labour market experience in the host country (*ibid.*, p. 5-6). Borjas (2014), together with Chiswick belonging to the most renowned labour market and immigration researchers, even asserts that the lower return to human capital accumulated abroad is one major reason why migrants tend to be more motivated and gather new skills faster than natives. Since only parts of their human capital are "marketable" (*ibid.*, p. 54) in the host country at the time of arrival and they thus earn less than natives with comparable capabilities, migrants have an "incentive to catch up" (*ibid.*, p. 55). This should be particularly relevant for the host country's language and insights in the local labour market (*ibid.*, p. 41).

To sum it up, from the human capital theory's perspective on migrant labour market integration, migrants' chances to find employment depend on their knowledge and skills, which are mainly represented by their education and labour market experience. Considering that human capital earned in foreign countries is valued lower than domestic human capital, they face relative disadvantages compared to natives especially in the period after their arrival. Nevertheless, by obtaining skills relevant for the local labour market they can catch up with natives over time. But even if human capital gained abroad cannot initially be exploited in a relevant manner, a study conducted in Germany suggests that human capital gathered in the

home country can still serve as an indicator for a more successful labour market integration in the host country (Kosyakova & Sirries, 2017, p. 266).

However, human capital theory itself does not account for immigrants' labour market integration due to shortcomings within the concept of human capital itself as well as the disregard of other factors and forms of capital that play a part. By focusing on productive capabilities of immigrants, which consist of modifiable knowledge and skills, the concept ignores that employers also evaluate potential employees for innate characteristics such as race, gender or age. To pave the way for a comprehensive analysis, the concept of human capital should look at both congenital and acquired characteristics. Then, however, it will turn out that not all attributes are capital in the sense of bringing advantages for the labour market. Employers might favour some ethnicities, age groups or one gender so that the availability of non-favoured characteristics cannot be grouped under the label of capital. Therefore, when talking about the characteristics of the refugees in the empirical and analytical chapter, they will not be called "human capital" but directly referred to as for example education, skills or experience. The flaws within the concept of human capital itself together with the exclusive focus on personal attributes lead to an ignorance of the role that other factors might play. For instance, the social environment, ethnic backgrounds, cultural circles, the local labour market situation, legal stipulations and political policies all might contribute in positive and negative ways to the labour market access of migrants. Further theoretical approaches devote attention to some of these aspects.

1.3. Social capital theory

According to a study conducted by Potocky-Tripody (2004) in the US, shortages of immigrants of human capital-related assets, such as education, (language) skills, experience and residence status, could only justify about 30 % of the difference in the employment and income situation between immigrants and natives (*ibid.*, p. 61). Though the mentioned rate might vary in different study set-ups, this meaningful result suggests the consideration of further factors to explain labour market integration outcomes. In that sense, one approach to labour market integration

argues that relationships, which are framed as social capital, contribute significantly to one's success or failure on the job market.

While physical, financial and human capital had already established themselves as concepts, social capital arose as a notion after the 1960s. The perception of relationships as capital was highly influenced by Pierre Bourdieu's works, who argued that economic capital cannot be regarded independently from the privileges that arise from the social milieu to which one has access. According to him, it is "perhaps the most valuable form of accumulation" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 179) if one enjoys a status that comes along with being the member of a certain group, such as a renowned family, or if one can rely on established "relations of reciprocity" and "gift exchanges" (ibid., p. 171). With regard to the labour market, someone from an influential family, for example, will have comparatively higher chances to get employed thanks to his good name and can, furthermore, use family connections to get job references or even offers. While Bourdieu's discourse opened the way for the understanding of social relations as exploitable resource¹, it was Coleman (1988) who popularized the term "social capital" by defining it as "resource available to an actor" that emerges from the "structure of relations between actors" and "makes possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible (ibid., p. 98). Among others, this function is met by the facilitated access to information which social networks provide (ibid., p. 104). According to Coleman's understanding, social capital additionally even includes obligations and expectations that emerge from trustworthy social structures, as well as norms and the possibility to sanction others (ibid., p. 119). Coleman's interpretation of social capital is an important contribution to and even enhancement of Bourdieu's initial concept in that it considers everyone as a potential holder of social capital while Bourdieu saw it rather as a privilege available to elites.

¹ In his works, Bourdieu did not only focus on economic and social capital, but also identified cultural capital as third relevant category. However, his perception of cultural capital regards mainly a person's educational qualifications (Bourdieu, 1986). Those are already included in the human-capital approach so that the concept of cultural capital is usually not bestowed with an independent role in the literature on labour market integration.

Flap and Völker (2004), on the other hand, argue that this perception goes too far and that the notion of social capital should particularly be embodied in the idea of social networks and the resources it provides (ibid., p. 68). Aguilera (2002) tried to get at the heart of the issue by establishing the definition that “social capital refers to resources possessed by people as a result of their relationships with others, such resources being information and behaviour influencing economic action” (ibid., p. 854). In contrast to this interpretation, Snijders and Van der Gaag (2002) claim in their conceptualization that social capital is not in the possession of one person of a social network, but the sum of the assets of the members of a network of relationships which may at one point “become available to the individual as a result of the history of these relationships” (ibid., p. 3). This coincides with the approach of Flap and Völker (2004), who call for stressing the underlying potential of social networks and not their actual exploitation (ibid., p. 68). However, the mere availability of social networks alone does not bring jobless people into work. If a person does not use or not know how to make use of their social network, it is not relevant for their labour market integration. A resource becomes valuable only if it serves a purpose and if it is exploited in that sense. Therefore, the present thesis is not only concerned with the availability of social networks to refugees but also their actual utilization.

While Coleman (1988) had already mentioned in his work that social capital can serve the formation of human capital (ibid., p. 104), Aguilera (2002) specifies that social networks reduce the costs and time necessary to receive labour-market relevant information (ibid., p. 855), which can, as the previous chapter showed, be seen as human capital. This perspective, that considers human and social capital as mutually reinforcing, ignores that the establishment of human capital can also get in the way of the build-up of social capital and vice versa. In one of the first studies that intensively explored the interrelation between human and social capital in immigrant labour market integration, employment and human capital investment were treated as a trade-off in order to portray the effect of social relations on both of them (Battisti, Peri, & Romiti, 2015, p. 2). The results show that social networks help especially low-skilled workers to find a job more quickly after the arrival in

the host country, while at the same time they hamper their future occupational development (ibid., p. 24). The reason is that the existence of social networks might reduce the urge to obtain more skills in the host country, while the job search and following employment limit the time one has to engage in human capital improvement (ibid., p. 9, 20).

So far, none of the mentioned approaches distinguished between different shapes or qualities of social capital. In this point, Putnam (2000) complements the theory by introducing a distinction between bonding social capital, which refers to inward-looking networks with distinct identities (like families and ethnic networks), and bridging social capital, which relates to outward-looking networks which span over various social affiliations (like inter-ethnic networks) (ibid., p. 22). More concretely, bridging capital links people with others which were initially not included in their social circle (Lancee, 2012, p. 62).

According to Putnam (2000), it is the bridging social networks which mainly fulfil the function of information provision and connections to resources outside the network while bonding social capital rather works as a social and psychological support system (ibid., p. 22). He emphasizes that ethnic immigrant networks are the ones in which both employers and employees base their employment decisions and search the most on the resources, specifically the references, from social structures (ibid., p. 320). However, in places where those social connections might be most helpful, namely in poor and by minorities inhabited neighbourhoods, researchers observed a tendency for a lower prevalence of social networks as well as for less exploitable social contacts (ibid., p. 321). But this is mainly true for bonding capital, because bridging capital, in the sense of ties with natives, can help immigrants in reaching resources in the host country. To give some examples, natives can support immigrants during the application process, explain them the structure and workings of the labour market or refer them to job opportunities and employers (Lancee, 2012, pp. 63-64). Moreover, this can allow immigrants to avoid being discriminated for employers tend to think more positively about immigrants who are in close touch with locals and are consequently more willing to hire them (ibid., p. 65). While Lancee emphasises the benefits of bridging capital, he does the opposite for

bonding capital. This is because in rather closed networks, the provided information tends to stay the same and the potentially helpful native population stays excluded, which blocks the access to social and occupational advancement. The main idea which is transmitted by Lancee's work is that social networks as such are not necessarily profitable but can be made useful by the right type of ties (ibid., p. 155). While this holds true if social capital is only considered in relation to labour market access, it should not be forgotten that social networks are often built for several purposes and not only relied on for job search. Thus, every social tie usually serves a purpose and is thus profitable, be it only for the personal wellbeing. Moreover, it is possible that bonding capital ties do not directly lead to employment, but still provide emotional support during an onerous job search. Due to the different possible modes of action over which social capital can operate, an analysis of the impact on labour market integration should not exclude specific types of social links from the beginning.

One mode of operation of social capital that finds particular attention in the literature is referencing, which might not only open doors to new employment but also promote the climbing of the career ladder (Portes, 1998, p. 12). Thereby, Dustman et al. (2016) argue that the special importance of references is explained with their signalling function, making sure that employers receive information they would not have been able to get otherwise (ibid., p. 517). In their study undertaken in Germany, nearly half of all immigrants obtained their first employment in the host country by the help of referencing, whereby especially low-skilled workers relied on this mechanism (ibid., p. 522). Interestingly, the authors found that most of the references were by people from the same ethnic group as the recommended person (ibid., p. 522). This shows that in practice, bridging capital that provides contacts to natives might be used to a lesser extent than suggested by other authors. A positive effect of job referrals which the study also outlined is that workers who got into a job with the help of recommendations, better suited the needs of the company than workers employed externally through the normal application process (ibid., p. 536).

While the cited study – like most others – was executed among migrants in general, another one was accomplished in a qualitative manner solely with Syrian refugees in Germany (Gericke et al., 2017), thus filling a gap. Its major accomplishment was the concretization of the ways in which social capital could support refugees at specific phases of their labour market integration. In the early integration phase, social workers and volunteers (as bridging contacts) are beneficial for bureaucratic procedures, while family and friends (as bonding contacts) can share their knowledge about relevant manners in which ways work in the host country. During the preparation for an employment, bridging contacts can assist with the compilation and improvement of application files, while both bridging and bonding contacts can refer refugees to employers in the labour market entering stage. Especially relevant for Germany, where certificates are essential to find a job, is that social capital might help refugees to circumvent formalities of the application process. In some cases, bridging contacts like civil servants, social workers or employees at other institutions can themselves bring the refugee into employment by providing them jobs of translation or care-taking work for other refugees. Once the employment is secured, bonding and bridging contacts can assist the refugee with language-related tasks (ibid., p. 9-11). Beyond that, the study found, in contrast to Dustman et al. (2016) that refugees made more extensive use of bridging capital to get into employment, this being even more the case the longer the refugees have been staying in the country (Gericke et al., 2017, p. 12).

Also in Turkey, namely in Istanbul, a study touching upon social capital was conducted among refugees (Kaya & Kırar, 2016). Here, the importance of the information provision about available jobs in one region via social capital was stressed. However, jobs acquired with the help over networks also carried the risk of being underpaid, of being not paid in time and of working under bad conditions (ibid., p. 20).

Eventually, it must be noted that some authors strongly question the impact of social capital on employment outcomes. For example, a study by Cheung and Phillimore (2014), conducted in the UK, comes to the conclusion that bridging capital does not seem to be effective and if it is, only after migrants lived for a while in the host

country (ibid., p. 522). This, however, is in sharp contrast to most other studies and might be explained by the fact that the authors do not consider contacts to relevant institutions as part of bridging capital, but as a separate third dimension of social capital.

Potocky-Tripodi (2004), who initially stated that human capital and acculturation alone could not explain variation in labour market outcomes and thus considered social capital as additional potential factor, came after the completion of her study to the result that social capital had effects, but rather small ones compared to, for example, human capital (ibid., p. 86). Yücel (2016), who observed the employment participation of migrants in the Netherlands neither found an impact of social capital on labour market outcomes (ibid., p. 37). Others support the positive impact of social capital but relativize its potential. By this means, Lancee (2012) affirmed that the key role in explaining labour market integration belongs still to human capital while it can be complemented by social capital (ibid., p. 72). Another possibility which is neglected in the literature to explain the different outcomes of the studies on the impact of social capital is that generalizations might simply not be possible. If social networks can or cannot be used for assistance in the job search also depends on external circumstances. Thus, in some countries or industries, employers might rely on personal references before employing someone while in others they might only rely on bureaucratic recruitment procedures. Moreover, some social networks might be set up of many people with knowledge about the labour market and relevant references, while others might contain many unemployed people who themselves struggle with their own labour market access and thus cannot provide help to other network members. Since it seems to vary if social networks can or cannot be used during the job search, it is suggestable to not immediately label them as social capital.

1.4. Ethnic capital theory

Very closely related, and in some studies even used analogous to the term social capital, is ethnic capital. In contrast to studies like one conducted by Maani, Wang and Rogers (2015), where ethnic capital was conceptualized in the same way as

bonding capital, the present chapter will regard ethnic capital, inspired by Constant (2014), as a factor that accounts for the way in which ethnic identity influences the assimilation of immigrants to the host country (*ibid.*, p. 7). Underlying this perspective is the idea that a migrant who converges to the culture of the host country at the same time distances himself from his home country – the degree to which this takes place forms his ethnic identity (*ibid.*, p. 7). Apart from the aspect of belonging to an ethnic group, that was discussed under the heading of social capital, a person's ethnicity can influence both the person's behaviour and the way other labour market actors accommodate him or her. It has been established that migrants who cling strongly to their ethnic identity and do not absorb the host culture face more difficulties on the labour market, while stronger attachment to the host society increases the chances of finding work (*ibid.*, p. 11-12). A strong ethnic identity usually comes along with everyday conversations being held in the mother language, which in turn impedes the learning of the host country's language and complicates the job search (Bisin, Patacchini, Verdier, & Zenou, 2011, p. 86). A strong religiosity is also associated with lesser employment probability because it is often used to uphold customs from the country of origin and thus prevents integration (*ibid.*, 67-68, 86). However, while it is plausible that immigrants feeling strongly connected to their home country might refuse to devote themselves to a deep integration into the host country, the mentioned approach does not explain while it should at the same time not be possible to feel a strong tie with the home as well as with the host country. While one immigrant might see acculturation as a betrayal of his or her origins, another one might take a pragmatic stance, feel committed to his or her home country but at the same time accept that for a good life in the new destination integration is indispensable. Notwithstanding the above-explained ambiguity, it is unchallenged that immigrants can face various disadvantages on the labour market due to aspects related to their ethnic identity and suffer from "ethnic penalties" (see, e.g., Carmichael & Woods, 2010, p. 72; Kogan, 2010, p. 96; Koopmans, 2016, p. 2). Indeed, the opposite is possible, too and a distinction in ethnicity might constitute a unique selling point. The underlying logic is that homogenous societies are less inventive so that the actual strength of

immigrants lies in their bringing-about competences which are rare among natives. They allow them to stand out and diversify the labour market as well as raise its effectiveness (Constant, 2014, p. 11, 15). It can be concluded that integration to a certain degree is necessary, while it should not lead to an outright merging with the host culture. The best economic outcome is said to be reached when the host society welcomes immigrants as such but simultaneously urges them to adapt while the immigrants themselves try to preserve their ethnic identity parallel to integration efforts (Constant & Zimmermann, 2009, p. 26).

Apart from the influence of ethnic identity on the behaviour of immigrants, ethnic identity is linked in the literature to a change in the behaviour of employers towards immigrants compared to the handling of natives. For instance, studies in the US and Netherlands showed that African- or Arabic-named persons have an about 50 % lesser chance to be invited to a job interview than persons with names typical for the respective country that handed in identical application documents (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004, p. 998; Blommaert & Coenders, 2014, p. 967). While this only proves existing practices of race discrimination in the US and Netherlands, it also hints to the possibility of race discrimination in other developed countries. Such a discrimination is also supported by a study of Carmichael and Woods (2010), who, after controlling for human capital, personal attributes and geographical factors, could only explain the remaining differences in the labour market status between comparable members of ethnic minority and majority groups to the so-called “ethnic penalty” (ibid., p. 93). Despite the fact that he acknowledges the possible discrimination of immigrants (particularly Muslim ones), Koopmans (2016) claims that studies making “ethnic penalties” responsible for labour market divergences between natives and immigrants are not reliable. From his perspective, though controlling for human capital, demographic characteristics etc., these studies ignore the variable of sociocultural assimilation. He comes to the result that immigrants with sufficient language skills, wide networks within the host society and similar values have corresponding employment rates as comparable natives (ibid., p. 17). It is unquestionably indispensable to include assimilation as explaining variable,

though discrimination should not be ruled out as a factor either in order to avoid a biased approach.

What the discussions within the literature around the term of ethnic capital show is that ethnicity can indeed be used as an asset to differentiate oneself from other job applicants. However, in comparison with the potential advantages, ethnicity is even more strongly linked to disadvantages like assimilation difficulties, prejudgement, stigmatization or discrimination. Against this background, the term of ethnic capital is even more contestable than human and social capital. The term capital is positively connotated and alludes to assets, resources and advantages which is diametrically opposed to the potential disadvantageous effect of ethnicity. It seems that the term capital is not perfectly suitable to analyse the impact of certain factors on labour market integration since it automatically suggests a positive impact as well as the usability and actual utilisation of the factors under consideration, which are not necessarily given. In the same way that the present thesis will therefore refer to education, experience and skills instead of human capital and to social networks instead of social capital, ethnic capital will be addressed under the keyword of ethnicity.

1.5. Theory on institutional aspects and policies

The underlying idea of the literature focusing on institutional aspects and policies is that the relation between immigration and society, especially the economy, is not unilaterally forged by the attributes and capital of the immigrants but likewise by the properties of the host society itself (Reitz, 2002, p. 1005). Usually, countries try via immigration policies to offer preferential access to migrants whose influx would most likely bring about positive effects for a country's economy (ibid., p. 1013). While the causal relationship between immigration policies and economic opportunities receives far too little attention according to Borjas (1999, p. 1756), it shall not be further discussed here as a tool that might influence the labour market integration of refugees. The reason is that refugees are, in contrast to normal and particularly economic immigrants, theoretically given access to a country not based on economic considerations but depending on political and legal commitments.

Following the spirit of the Geneva Convention Relating to the status of Refugees (1951), this specific type of migrants has to be accorded shelter in a host state for reasons of protection. Consequently, economic interests of host countries have to be put aside in the decision of admission of refugees and a country cannot cherry-pick between higher and lower qualified refugees.

Instead, the framework under which refugees have to integrate into the host country after their arrival, the so-called incorporation regime, is worth focusing on. Incorporation regimes are no homogenous systems, but rather “multifaceted, loosely connected sets of regulatory rules, institutions and practices in various domains of society that together make up the framework within which migrants and natives work out their differences” (Freeman, 2004, p. 946). The concept of incorporation regimes is based on the idea of institutional economics according to which economic actors base their actions on incentive and penalty structures established by institutions (ibid., p. 494-950). Within the rough classification of incorporation regimes into total exclusion, differential exclusion, assimilation and pluralism (Castles, 1995, p. 294), Germany’s and Turkey’s approaches to refugee incorporation can be labelled as differential exclusion (Gürsel, 2017, p. 143; Castles, 1995, p. 295). Such a regime is characterized by the inclusion of refugees into some social spheres, like the labour market, and the parallel exclusion from others, like political participation. It is a typical manner to encounter refugee phenomena for the reason that they are only expected to stay in the country temporarily (Castles, 1995, p. 294). On the grounds that the distinction between incorporation regimes only gives a rough idea about the structures within which migrants can integrate, Freeman (2004) provides more specific reference points to focus on in order to get an overview of the economic integration of migrants in general in the context of institutions and policies. Central hereby are if and how governments make use of migrants to respond to changes on the labour market, if migrants are rather formally or informally employed, if their protection is identical to the one natives receive, how widespread self-employment is, to which degree illegal work is tackled and which measures are taken to counter discrimination (ibid., p. 954).

Apart from these fundamental properties of the incorporation regime, the peculiarities of the welfare state and active policies to bring migrants into employment are the factors discussed as being the most crucial ones for economic success for migrants² in the literature. In that sense, it is argued that the availability and level of social benefits for migrants as well as taxes related to labour impact the utility of work and thus the decision to take up a job (ibid., p. 955). Koopmans (2010) confirms this with the observation that limited existence or access to social services for migrants compel them to secure their economic survival to a large degree autonomously. This naturally works as an incentive to adapt and update one's skills to the needs of the host labour market (ibid., p. 21). According to this logic, generous welfare-systems counteract the motivation to look for a job. This is even more valid for migrants than for natives since the former will assess their economic situation based on a comparison and it is likely that the income from social benefits in the host country will surpass former earnings in the home country, even after having considered differences in living expenses. As a consequence, migrants will have no big incentive to improve their skills in order to get a job for even unemployment brings about an acceptable living standard if social benefits are available (ibid., p. 9). Even under the existence of very well-developed welfare systems like in Germany, the aim of bringing immigrants into work can be reached via so-called push factors (ibid., p. 8). Respective legislations could, for example, stipulate that employment and economic self-independence will have a positive impact on residence rights and prospects, while a demonstrated unwillingness to search for employment would in term impair the chances for permanent residence (ibid., p. 22).

What is problematic in these considerations about the relationship between the availability of a welfare system and the labour market access is that it considers work mainly as an activity pursued to generate income. While this is indisputably its most striking purpose, it is by far not the only one. Working can also convey the

² Although the literature on the impact of incorporation regimes, welfare states and policies on labour market integration focuses mostly on migrants in general, it can be used as theoretical framework for labour market integration of refugees, too, since they are also subject to them. However, the empirical analysis has to consider the specific regulations applicable to refugees.

feeling of having a purpose in life, offer possibilities to engage in social relations, prevent people from feeling bored or facilitate their self-fulfilment. By ignoring these functions, the approach focusing on welfare systems denies that immigrants might have an inner motivation to work which is independent of the amount of money they have available. Thus, policies based on this perspective might address the wrong issues. While trying to push immigrants who are already willing to work, resources and energy might be wasted. Moreover, these assumptions ignore that it can be useful for a more effective work placement if immigrants are not immediately pushed into employment. For example, welfare provisions can guarantee the subsistence level of immigrants while they are focusing on further education and experiences like language classes, internships or voluntary work. In relation to the earlier discussed literature, this means that welfare states should also be regarded as a potential facilitator for the transfer of human capital from the home to the host country. It seems that the positive role a welfare state might play in labour market integration is not only underestimated but largely ignored in the literature.

Despite the fact that the role of welfare states on labour market integration has not been analysed sufficiently and from different perspectives yet, the literature does study different labour market policies to integrate migrants into the labour market faster and more efficiently. Labour market policies are usually closely related to human capital theory since they aim at improving skills and knowledge demanded by employers in the host country. In parallel, they usually also enlarge the social environment of the migrants (Kogan, 2016, p. 339). According to Rinne (2012), those measures can be roughly divided into four groups, from which the first are so-called introduction measures which include courses with information about life in the host country, but also practical vocational training or help during the job search. Active labour market programs go a step further and comprise financial subsidies for the employment of migrants or their self-employment, as well as the pairing of employers and migrants and specific training. A third group refers to language training which is considered both elementary and powerful because language allows migrants to make their human capital acquired in the country of

origin also exploitable in the host country. Lastly, anti-discrimination policies can be mentioned (ibid., pp. 5-8). Although Rinne declares the mentioned mechanisms to be generally effective (ibid., p. 14), not all of them seem to be equally efficient. One study in four Western European countries, for example, came to the conclusion that job search assistance and counselling did not bring about significant positive outcomes, most probably because it indicates a lack of independence of the job seeker which employers do not appreciate (Kogan, 2016, p. 352). Another study conducted in Germany comes to the same conclusion regarding the effectiveness of job search training (Thomsen, Walter, & Aldashev, 2013). At the same time, it offers a promising alternative: aptitude tests in which the skills of a person are compared with labour market requests. This allows identifying for which jobs an immigrant is suitable and thereupon particularly foster the sought-after skills in that field (ibid., p. 14). However, it is also pointed out that measures like job searching assistance, active creation of employment etc. will be more effective, when they also exist as version exclusively tailored for immigrants, instead of being open to foreigners and nationals alike – a situation, which mainly benefits nationals and leaves migrants behind (Böhning & de Beijl, 1995, pp. 20-21). At this point, the importance of language classes, which are by nature designed for immigrants, is emphasized once more as necessary but not sufficient means to reach integration (ibid., p. 21).

Unfortunately, the role of institutions and policies on the labour market access of migrants, and especially of refugees, is not widely enough researched. Most of the attention is still devoted to immigration (admission) policies (Cangiano, 2012, pp. 46-47). This makes conclusive results hardly available and poses a major challenge when it comes to suggesting promising labour market integration policies to decision-makers.

1.6. Combined theories and further theoretical perspectives

A work in which the above-discussed approaches were brought together to give an overview of the aspects that affect the labour market integration of migrants was delivered by Biffl (2012) in a triangular model. Institutional ramifications, which

comprise the immigration regime³ and the welfare model of the host state, constitute the first edge of the model. The second edge is based on supply factors, which include the education, skills, language knowledge, ethnicity and the identification with the host country of the immigrants. In other words, this includes the discussed human, social and ethnic capital of immigrants. A third edge are the demand factors of the host country's labour market, or in other words, the structure of the labour market in terms of formal and informal work and in the diverse branches as well as work division between households and the technological standard and general situation of the market (ibid., p. 12). In the literature, no specific single theory for this aspect of Biffl's model is found but is often acknowledged as the general background against which labour market inclusion should be analysed. In a general sense, Biffl's work does not offer ground-breaking new insights, but it serves as a reminder that a holistic approach to labour market integration is possible and might be even useful. Instead of a fragmentation of the labour market integration factors into various theories, a view from above that tries to capture various influencing factors might unveil interconnections between the factors, different levels of influence of the individual factors as well as gaps in the sense of variables largely ignored in the literature so far.⁴ Against this background, the present thesis tries to follow Biffl's example and approach the labour market integration of refugees from a wide perspective. This is in contrast to the discussed individual theories which frame their observation fields narrowly. They have, of course, the advantage of

³ In contrast to other approaches in the literature, which consider the immigration regime (understood as rules under which immigrants are allowed to enter and reside in the country) to be distinctive from the incorporation regime (understood as policies that target the immigrants' integration into the country after their arrival), Biffl seems to see the incorporation regime as part of the immigration regime).

⁴ The attentive reader might be puzzled by the fact that the role of gender did not play a role in the present literature review. Indeed, gender does not play a paramount role in the discussed theories. However, logically and ideally it should receive more attention especially in the consideration of the impact of personal attributes on labour market integration. Concerning empirical literature, several studies on female labour market integration exist. They indicate, for example, that immigrant women tend to not only have lower labour market participation rates than their female native counterparts, but also than immigrant men (Biffl, 2012, p. 18; Preston & Tastsoglou, 2005, pp. 49-50). However, the discussion of the aspect of gender onto labour market integration contains so many aspects that it deserves a separate study. It would largely exceed the scope of the present paper and can thus unfortunately not be treated.

offering a deep focus but at the same time lead to the fact that they always only reproduce a fraction of the whole labour market integration process.

The purpose of the present thesis, however, is to understand which of the many factors impact labour market integration in the most decisive way and how they interact. To be able to do so, all factors mentioned in the different theories are considered as potentially relevant and even the discovery of new relevant aspects for employment is not excluded. Instead of entering the field with preformed assumptions, this thesis is guided by the narrations of the concerned persons themselves, refugees in or after job search, to be able to give an overall picture of their way into work.

1.7. Contribution of the present thesis to the literature

The present thesis contributes to the literature mainly in five ways. First, it does not treat immigrants as a homogenous group but focuses on a sub-group, namely refugees. This is insofar relevant, as refugees differ in their migration motivation, in the circumstances of their migration, in their residence and political rights in the host country as well as in their uncertainty of the length of their stay from other migrants (Marquardsen & Söhn, 2017, pp. 3-4). In most of the literature, the immigration decision is treated as a voluntary decision. As a result, it is argued that the most motivated or skilled people migrate (see, e. g., Chiswick, 1978, p. 912; Kossoudji, 1989, p. 496; Borjas, 1994, p. 1672). In times of widespread and long-lasting civil wars, for which Syria, Yemen and the Democratic Republic of Congo are only the most well-known examples, more and more people are forced to flee their country to secure their survival. This naturally challenges the assumption of a free migration choice and the arrival of the most motivated and skilled. Indeed, more and more literature focusing on refugees as a special group among immigrants is published, but the total number of published studies is not yet sufficiently satisfactory.

Secondly, the greatest number of studies relating immigrants or refugees to the labour market answer to concerns within the society according to which immigrants and refugees reduce the number of jobs available to natives and/or the respective

wages in the fields mainly absorbing immigrant workers. Those studies raise the question of the impact of immigrants on natives' employment and income. Noteworthy examples for Turkey are the studies of Akgündüz, Van den Berg and Hassink (2015), Balkan Konuk and Tümen (2015), Del Carpio and Wagner (2015), Çeritoğlu et al. (2017), İçduygu (2016) and Tümen (2016). Studies related to refugees' impact on the German labour market are still rare, examples are however a study of Fratzscher & Junker (2015) and Chatzichristou (2018). On the other hand, not working immigrants also place costs in the form of welfare payments on host societies, while working immigrants contribute to tax income and consumption. Therefore, it should not be forgotten to ask how immigrants find ways into employment in practice, where they are confronted with barriers to employment and how it can be assured, that their workforce is efficiently used.

Third, existing studies focus usually on one region or one country, comparative studies are rare. By this means, much useful input might get lost, since especially cross-national differences can point to relevant aspects which were so far not even considered in the discussion in another country (Reitz, 2002, p. 1007). In a comparative setting, analytical possibilities rise especially in regard to divergent labour market and other institutional structures as well as to policies (ibid., p. 1011). To this effect, it can, for example, be asked which aspects of the labour market and its related policies are so distinct that in Turkey informal employment among Syrian refugees prevails while on the other hand, refugees enter the labour market faster compared to their counterparts in Germany (Okyay, 2017, pp. 9-10). Moreover, such a comparative perspective can bring up new problems due to the observation of the divergent experiences of refugees (Reitz, 2002, p. 1007).

Fourth, existing studies mostly use statistics based on national surveys and other quantitative data. This is, of course, indispensable to develop theoretical and mathematical models and prove causal relations between variables. However, if the perspective of the ones concerned, namely the refugees themselves, is ignored this entails the risk of missing relevant aspects. Qualitative research in the form of in-depth interviews is necessary in parallel to the use of quantitative data to make sure that the research on labour market integration becomes not too abstract and

detached from the real-life experiences of refugees. After all, there is no better way to learn about the way into labour than to ask the ones who already walked it. Their narrations are relevant for politicians because they can point out to stumbling blocks, which should be removed by decision-makers or the civil society in order to facilitate the labour market access for future refugees. Moreover, they can identify useful door openers that speed up labour market integration and should thus be reinforced. But their experiences are also important for other refugees because they can tell them about dead ends and short cuts to get a job. After all, treating their experiences in academia helps to communicate what they have to say to the relevant actors.

Fifth and last, the approach of the present thesis does not become set on one theory or one factor that influences the labour market integration of refugees. Instead, it tries to identify in a holistic approach which approaches bear the most explanatory power and which variables have the strongest impact on the success or failure of securing employment for refugees.

2. LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS

2.1. The German labour market

2.1.1. The situation of the German labour market

The German labour market has been in a healthy state over the last decade. It is characterized by continuously dropping unemployment rates since 2005 as well as crisis-resistant employment growth (Vogler-Ludwig, Düll, & Kriechel, 2015, p. 72). This labour market stability is generally attributed to an “effective and unique combination of flexibility and rigidity” (Rinne & Schneider, 2017, p. 1). However, the labour market thereby also benefits from a generally favourable economic development. This notably includes attractive investment conditions due to low interest rates, increased government spending based on fiscal revenue growth and higher private consumption that interacts with lower unemployment rates (Fuchs, et al., 2018, p. 2). For an export nation like Germany, it is also important to mention the positive development of the world economy in combination with a rather weak

Euro and wage moderation that kept unit labour costs low as supporting factors for employment expansion (Schludi, Müller, Felde, & Kargus, 2018, p. 4).

However, the current stable labour market situation was preceded by severe labour market problems, especially a trend towards increasing unemployment. In the beginning of the 2000s, the country had higher unemployment rates than most other European Union members as well as the OECD average. Only since the 2009 crisis has been ranking among the countries with the lowest unemployment rates in both organizations (OECD, 2019).⁵ Today, it even shows the lowest levels of un- and underemployment since the German reunification (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2018, p. 17).

The reversal of the negative development in the labour market was made possible by far-reaching improvements in the first decade of the new millennial, the so-called “Hartz reforms”. Among their most significant innovations were lower unemployment benefits to reduce the reservation wage of jobless people, the conditioning of the benefits to an active job search and the possibility to sanction unemployed people if they decline a job as well as extended and improved training to upgrade the employability of difficult-to-place people (Akyol, Neugart, & Pichler, 2013, pp. 36-37; Schünemann & Boyle, 2011, p. 194). On the other hand, the reforms included public employment creation, subsidies for self-employment as well as for companies that employ elderly or long-term unemployed people and the exemption of marginal jobs from taxes and social security contributions. (Akyol, Neugart, & Pichler, 2013, pp. 37-38). While the positive effect of the reforms were higher working incentives and a better placement efficiency that resulted in a drop in structural unemployment, they also led to wage moderation since people receiving unemployment benefits were pushed to take up low-paid jobs (Hüfner & Klein, 2012, pp. 7, 9-10). Thus, the low-wage sector in general was extended (Vogler-Ludwig, Düll, & Kriechel, 2015, p. 72).

⁵ Although the German Federal Employment Agency as well as the Turkish Statistical Institute regularly publish their national employment figures, the present paper is based on OECD data (as far as it is available) to ensure a better comparability. As consequence of different measurement methods, the OECD numbers might slightly differ from the nationally published statistical data.

Over the last decade, the German labour force also underwent significant changes. Although the German society is subject to demographic change in the form of an ageing population, the labour supply increased. The labour force participation rate which stood at 71 % in 2000, reached 78 % in 2017 (OECD, 2018a). While the labour force potential is indeed declining due to the ageing of the workforce and the exit of older persons from the labour market, the propensity of women and elderly to work rises. Moreover, refugees who entered Germany in previous years now increasingly enter the labour market after having finished their language and integration classes (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2018, p. 16). For refugees, the bottlenecks in the German labour supply are actually beneficial since they open up space on the labour market they can fill, provided their professional profile fits the job openings. It can also be expected that against the background of the described Hartz system, the authorities assist but also push them to actively search for jobs and contribute to a trend reversal regarding the labour shortages.

The already growing labour force participation rate is paralleled by a low and continuously sinking unemployment rate that stood at 4 % in 2016 (OECD, 2019).⁶ However, what is not counted in the unemployment rate are unemployed people who are in training or education measures offered by the Federal Employment Agency. Nevertheless, these were nearly 900 000 persons in 2017 (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2018, p. 61). This means that while the official unemployment rate seems to be low at first glance, it should not be forgotten that it has been significantly embellished by not counting welfare recipients who receive some sort of professional training but are technically still unemployed. Moreover, 42 % of the unemployed population are long-term unemployed, which indicates major obstacles to escape unemployment and thus inefficiencies on the labour market (OECD, 2018b). This also hints to challenges that might await refugees on the labour market. If native nonworkers already have difficulties to escape

⁶ The mentioned unemployment rate is the so-called “harmonised unemployment rate (HUR)” as used by the OECD to internationally compare unemployment rates. It defines unemployment as numbers of people of working age without work but being available and looking for work as percentage of the labour force (OECD, 2018a).

unemployment, how much harder will it be for the ones newly entering the labour market and having foreign education and experience?

In contrast to the high long-term unemployment tendency, the youth unemployment rate is with nearly 7 % relatively low compared to the OECD youth unemployment rate of 12 % (OECD, 2018c). These are bright prospects for Syrian refugees in Germany since their average age is with 24 years rather young (Worbs, Rother, & Kreienbring, 2019, p. 3).

An efficient way to assure oneself against unemployment in Germany seems to be education. While people who did not finish the secondary education level show unemployment rates twice the average, those with a tertiary education degree have unemployment rates that amount to half the average unemployment rate (OECD, 2018d). It could, therefore, be expected that higher educated refugees likewise have better employment perspectives. It is also important to notice that the unemployment rates for foreign- and native-born persons differ. Among the native population, the unemployment rate amounts to 3.3 %, while it is 6.4 % for the foreign-born population. Thus, it can be expected that also the refugees to be interviewed will struggle more during the job search than their native counterparts. Women, both native and foreign-born, have slightly lower unemployment rates than men (OECD, 2018e; OECD, 2018f).

To get an idea in which sectors refugees might have good work perspectives, it is also relevant to consider the employment structure and distribution of employment over the sectors. For example, it is noteworthy that every fifth job in Germany is a part-time position (OECD, 2018g). Self-employment makes up for one out of ten jobs (OECD, 2018g). Thereby, self-employment as well as all other employment forms which are not subject to social security contributions, like marginal jobs or public employment, are losing importance while ordinary employment relations subject to social-security contribution are continuously growing (Fuchs, et al., 2018, p. 4). The dominant employment sector is the services, more than half of all employees work there. It is followed by the industrial sector and manufacturing which provide approximately every third job. Construction hosts 6 % of the workers, while agriculture only makes up for 1 % of all jobs (OECD, 2018i).

Decisive for employment possibilities for refugees are not only the respective sector sizes but notably their current and future labour needs. In general, growing demand for higher qualified workers is contrasted by a surplus of low-qualified workers on the labour market today (Vogler-Ludwig, Düll, & Kriechel, 2015, p. 43). This trend is expected to continue over the next years so that un- and underemployment for workers without completed vocational training or university degree might rise with the ongoing computerization and mechanisation. This might pose a problem for refugees arriving in Germany since even if they are experienced in one job, it might be that they initially have to enter the labour market via low- or medium skilled jobs due to a lack of official proof of their skills or missing language skills. But if there is already a large supply of low- and medium-qualified workers, it will be hard for refugees to compete.

At the same time as the need for low-skilled workforce falls, the number of academics is importantly growing due to an increased popularity of university studies. In contrast to the situation of low-qualified workers, however, the labour market seems well able to incorporate large quantities of academic personnel (Schludi, Müller, Felde, & Kargus, 2018, pp. 14-15). In practice, this means that until 2030 every third position for unskilled work will become superfluous, while the need for experts will increase by 22 % (Vogler-Ludwig, Düll, & Kriechel, 2015, p. 129). Parallel to the need for well-educated university graduates, there is an immense demand for high-skilled workers who underwent vocational training. But unlike university, vocational training attracts less and less people. Because of this and the fact that the requirements are set high, companies face difficulties to fill their training places. Thus, about every third training place stays vacant (Töpper, 2018). While it might be hard for refugees to compete with high-skilled natives immediately after their arrival, the oversupply of training places in companies offers them a chance for upskilling and subsequently becoming competitive.

Against this background of general developments, the following picture emerges for the individual branches: Manufacturing occupations in the industry and craft sector, employment in agriculture, forestry and the energy sector, as well as office occupations, undergo employment contractions (Vogler-Ludwig, Düll, & Kriechel,

2015, pp. 121, 126). On the other hand, the services sector, transport, engineering, natural sciences, social and cultural professions, law, business administration and arts might experience more severe personnel bottlenecks in the future (ibid. p. 45, 127). Special mention should be made of employment in the health and care sector that already experiences labour shortages which will worsen with the progressive ageing of society (Fuchs, et al., 2018, p. 5; Schludi, Müller, Felde, & Kargus, 2018, p. 14). Already today, the offered positions and the qualifications of the applicants often not fit together or cannot be matched due to regional distances (Schludi, Müller, Felde, & Kargus, 2018, p. 6; Fuchs, et al., 2018, p. 2). With the changing labour demand profiles this might lead to further difficulties to fill vacant positions in the future but at the same time provide good entry opportunities into the labour market for refugees if they focus on upskilling in these fields.

The situation on the Berlin labour market varies in some points from the overall German circumstances. As in the rest of Germany, employment increased in Berlin over the last decade together with economic growth. Thereby, employment in Berlin expanded faster than in the rest of the country due to a GDP growth rate that likewise exceeded the national average (Brenke, 2016, p. 626). The unemployment rate, however, did not fall faster than the German average since the labour force potential extended strongly at the same time (ibid. p. 635). After all, the average unemployment rate in Berlin of 9.7 % is still much higher than the national average, whereby foreign-born people are particularly strongly affected with an unemployment rate of 18.8 % compared to 8.2 % for native-born Berliners (ibid. p. 632). This gives reason to suspect that also refugees in Berlin will be affected above average by the risk of unemployment. The most striking divergence in the Berlin experience is that unemployment not only shifts towards low-skilled workers but also towards management positions and highly qualified specialists. This is simply based on an over-supply of academics since in no other region the share of university graduates is so high (ibid. pp. 629, 632, 634). Another Berlin-specific development is a slight upturn in self-employment compared to a downward trend in the rest of the country (ibid. p. 629).

After having gotten an overview of the situation of the German labour market with its shortages and oversupplies, it is now possible to more easily identify work opportunities for refugees.

2.1.2. Employment possibilities for refugees in Germany

Migrants in general play a major role in the German labour market. For example, half of the employment augmentation over the last decade was driven by foreign workers. Nevertheless, there are strong differences among foreign-born people in Germany. Particularly refugees find themselves in more difficult starting positions. While the unemployment levels for German nationals continue to sink, the unemployment rate of foreigners in the last years was subject to an intensification which is almost exclusively based on the immigration of refugees (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2018, pp. 14, 18). The unemployment rate among refugees in Germany amounts to 41.5 %, whereby the rate for Syrians is with 62.7 % even higher (ibid. p. 189).⁷ After all, refugees can potentially be an asset to the German labour market. First of all, their presence raised the labour force potential, which is an important contribution to the German labour market in the face of an ageing population (Fuchs, et al., 2018, p. 4). Secondly, a study among refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Iran showed that, in some fields in which the German labour market faces serious shortages, they tend to have professional qualifications at a higher rate than German nationals. These are namely professions in IT and natural sciences, the health sector, the social sector, arts and humanities, media and in teaching (Zika, Maier, & Mönning, 2017, p. 12). On the other hand, the majority of refugees do not hold a full vocational qualification at their arrival time in Germany and finish their vocational training in Germany (ibid. p. 13). Together with the fact that refugees have a rather young average age and high educational and professional aspirations, this could be a suitable starting point to educate them in occupations which are strongly needed on the labour market

⁷ This unemployment rate does not even count the refugees which are still taking language classes or participate in a measure offered by the Job Centre to improve their employment prospects.

(Schludi, Müller, Felde, & Kargus, 2018, p. 6). Despite these opportunities, it will take time and investments into (language) education to turn the potential of the refugees into real employment. Most of the refugees become part of the labour force potential only after having finished integration and language classes (Fuchs, et al., 2018, p. 4). Every migrant who arrived in Germany after 2005 is entitled to these classes and newly arrived migrants without sufficient language skills are even obliged to take them (BAMF, 2018a). The courses consist of 600 language lessons which are supposed to lead to the language level B1 and 100 lessons of orientation classes which comprise the most important information on German history, culture and law. These educational measures are a promising chance for refugees to facilitate their transfer of skills to the German labour market. With German skills, it will be much easier for them to put their home-country education and experience to the service of German employers.

Refugees who do not immediately find a job after the termination of their classes often can or are obliged to take part in measures designed by the Job Centre⁸ for unemployed people to support their job search. There already exist a variety of those labour market measures for unemployed German nationals. These measures also allowed to and were partly even extended for refugees with the help of policies aiming to disburden the labour market (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2018, p. 17). General measures directed at unemployed persons are counselling, the diagnosis of weaknesses that might hamper the finding of employment as well as the offering of educational measures to eliminate such weaknesses or placement support. Other schemes directly aim at the employers and offer companies subsidies for the employment of hard-to-place unemployed people or training that help low-skilled workers to be able to work in small and medium-sized enterprises (ibid. pp. 55-56, 58). The fact that German authorities can make use of already existing and proven structures to put job placement assistance at the disposal of refugees should render their labour market integration more efficient.

⁸ The Job Centres are institutions which are managed jointly by the Federal Employment Agency and municipalities. They are responsible for the payment of unemployment benefits as well as the supervision and support of the job search of the receivers of unemployment benefits.

On top of the general measures, several programs with support opportunities were developed under the guidance of the Federal Employment Agency to specifically help refugees to access the labour market. One type of programs is for example oriented towards young refugees who did not study or receive a vocational education yet. They can for example work in a company on trial or do an internship while they continue to receive unemployment benefits so that the company does not face any costs. Thus, they can find out which fields of work they find interesting and where their talents lay. Or, if they already know they want to work in a specific field, they can prove their practical skills to the company. After completion of such work experience, the refugee might be offered a regular job. For refugees it is often burdensome to obtain official recognition of certificates of graduation, others do not hold any certificates at all. By proving themselves practically in a company they might circumvent this obstacle (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2017a). Some programs do not only include work experience in an enterprise, but also application training and special work-related language classes (BMAS, 2012). For older refugees who already had a vocational training or work experience but are not sufficiently qualified or need further familiarisation, the Federal Employment Agency can pay so-called integration subsidies to the company employing the refugee. Usually, this is done for one year but can be extended to three if the refugee is over 50 (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2017b). For small and medium-sized employers it is also possible to request the Employment Agency to fund further training of employees (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2017c). Moreover, for refugees unable to find an occupation, public institutions, municipalities or NGOs can assign small tasks in fields of public interests like work in local kitchens, maintenance of public parks, reparation of bikes etc (BMAS, 2017). It seems that the German authorities recognized not only the necessity to integrate refugees into the labour market but also the contribution they can make to the economy. It is now interesting to learn from the reports of the refugees if the measures tailored to the needs of refugees and their potential employers turn out practical and effective in the application.

2.1.3. Legal provisions for the labour market access for refugees

The possibilities and conditions of the labour market entry for refugees depend on their residency status which can be divided into four categories. The first one constitutes a positive asylum decision⁹. However, when an application for asylum or refugee status is approved by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), the BAMF differs in its decision between persons entitled to asylum (applicable to persons politically persecuted by the state), persons entitled to refugee protection (applicable according to the Geneva Convention on Refugees for persons persecuted by the state or non-state actors) and persons entitled to subsidiary protection (persons which are not persecuted but would for other reasons face serious harm in their home country upon return). Regardless of the form of protection that the applicants are granted, they are entitled to work without restrictions. The only practical difference is that persons entitled to asylum or refugee protection receive residence permits valid for three years while persons entitled to subsidiary protection obtain residence permits for only one year before a renewed examination of the status that is to be awarded takes place (BAMF, 2018a; BAMF, 2018b; BAMF, 2018c). The refugees who are considered in the present thesis fall under the category of persons entitled to refugee protection according to the Geneva Convention on Refugees.

Refugees from the other categories, meaning they did not receive a decision yet or are faced with a negative decision, cannot enter the labour market so easily. For example, the second category implies an unfinished decision procedure. Applicants with an open procedure are granted temporary residence permits and are allowed to work under special conditions. The third category entails an asylum procedure that was terminated by a negative decision coupled with a prohibition of deportation. This means that the involved person can neither be granted asylum nor refugee status nor be sent back to their home country. Consequently, the deportation process is suspended, and the person becomes tolerated. Tolerance is valid for three months

⁹ Although applicants for refugee protection are not to be equated with asylum seekers, they go through the same application procedure as asylum seekers do. This is why the term “asylum decision” is used here.

and has to be revised after the expiration of that time. Tolerated persons are like asylum seekers and refugees allowed to work under special conditions, too. In such a case, the work permit is granted by the local immigration authorities in a case-to-case decision following legal prescriptions. However, this is only valid for jobs as employees, self-employment is generally prohibited for tolerated persons, refugees and asylum seekers (BAMF, 2018a; BAMF, 2018b; BAMF, 2018c; BAMF, 2018d). The fourth category includes a negative decision and means that the concerned person has no right to work or stay in Germany (BAMF, 2017). The recognition procedure is supposed to be relevant for the labour market integration of refugees since the length of the process directly impacts when refugees can start to prepare for and actually enter the world of work. For the present thesis, only refugees who had already received a positive decision about their refugee status were interviewed. However, since they all underwent lengthy decision procedures to get there, they were also able to report about the impact of the recognition process on their labour market integration.

2.2. The Turkish labour market

2.2.1. The situation of the Turkish labour market

The Turkish economy showed extraordinarily high growth rates after 2001 (with the exception of the crisis years 2008 and 2009) (OECD, 2018i). To the chagrin of its unemployed citizens, this expansion was not perceptible to the same degree at the labour market, so that the period of the 2000s is at the same time described as “jobless-growth pattern” (Yeldan & Ercan, 2011, p. 4). The consequences of such a low elasticity of employment become obvious when looking at Turkey’s labour market figures. Although the country improved its labour force participation rate from 52 % in 2000 to 58 % in 2017, it is still far below OECD average which lies at 72 % (OECD, 2018a). Furthermore, Turkey is until today confronted with high unemployment rates on an upward trajectory. In January 2019, the level has reached a peak of 13 % which is more than twice as high as the OECD average, which keeps decreasing (OECD, 2019). Such a high unemployment rate indicates that the labour

demand cannot allow for all job seekers to find a place in the labour market and that also refugees will be touched by this. In addition to that, it is estimated that the informal sector, in which work is not registered with the social security institutions, makes up about one third of the labour market (Duman, 2014, p. 50). It is especially low-educated workers who are affected by this since new low-skilled jobs are mainly established informally. The large majority of people employed this way have less or only primary education (Gönenç, Röhn, Koen, & Saygili, 2012, p. 10). Especially two factors aggravate the described employment situation. First, Turkey has strict and stiff labour laws which are accompanied by large tax obligations (Yeldan & Ercan, 2011, p. 1). Even though the social security contributions, which were before 2010 among the highest in the OECD, were reduced, they are still above the organization's average and constitute a burden. Second, Turkey increasingly has to compete with low-income countries (Gönenç, Röhn, Koen, & Saygili, 2012, p. 5). To circumvent labour-related payments and the legal minimum wage as well as to stay competitive by keeping labour costs low, employers resort to informal employment. It allows especially big companies to stay able to react to changing business climates because formal employment would be subject to strict employment protection laws combined with severance payments and limit the possibilities for temporary contracts (Gönenç et al., 2012, p. 12).¹⁰ Like this, particularly in sectors with fluctuating business such as textile, tourism or gastronomy, semi-formal employment has emerged. Thus, the enterprises dispose over a formal staff but parallelly offer informal jobs according to the business situation (ibid. p. 13). In this light, it can be assumed that employers will tend to hire refugees informally, too.

Besides high unemployment and informal employment levels, the Turkish labour market also shows some positive tendencies, especially in relation to its labour force. Despite the high unemployment rates, and in contrast to Germany, Turkey's long-term unemployment rate is with 22 % rather low, which indicates that the

¹⁰ Employment protection laws are rigid, though at the same time small and medium-sized enterprises with less than 30 workers are exempted so that it concerns mainly big companies. Furthermore, the application of the regulations is not so closely monitored (Duman, 2014, p. 50).

largest part of the unemployed are able to secure new employment within one year (OECD, 2018b). Furthermore, employment has increased over the last years even though it did not reach the OECD average yet and unemployment raised parallelly. The reason for this employment growth is an augmented labour force participation of women (Falco & Keese, 2017, pp. 1-2). However, women, together with older and low-skilled persons have still notably weak labour force participation levels and are regularly employed as unpaid family workers in the country (Gönenç et al., 2012, p. 9). The high number of refugees in Turkey is also likely to contribute to a rising labour force participation. Other positive developments are that more and more women undergo a tertiary education and that the number of well-educated persons, who are available for the labour market, grows (Ulucan, 2017, p. 1). However, so far it seems that higher education levels cannot be transferred effectively into equivalent advantages on the labour market. As opposed to the situation in Germany, where higher levels of education lead to lower unemployment rates, this effect is not observable in Turkey. All education levels have similar unemployment rates, whereby those of academic degree holders even are slightly above the ones of persons having not finished their secondary education (OECD, 2018d). That the unemployment prospect even grows with higher education levels shows a structural weakness of the labour market (Duman, 2014, p. 67). What plays an even bigger role for unemployment is the age. Thus, every fifth person under 25 is unemployed in Turkey (OECD, 2018e). Syrian refugees are likely to be strongly affected from this tendency since 19 to 24-year-old persons constitute the biggest age group within the Syrian working age population in Turkey (Kaymaz & Kadkoy, 2016, p. 3).

In terms of origins, the average unemployment rates between foreign-born and native-born population are similar. However, foreign-born women have slightly lower unemployment rates than native-born women, while foreign-born men have slightly higher unemployment rates than their native-born counterparts (OECD, 2018f; OECD, 2018e). Big differences are found when comparing men in their best age with vulnerable groups like mothers, young foreigners, elderly workers and disabled. The employment gap between them is with 47.5 % the highest in the

OECD (Falco & Keese, 2017, p. 2). Based on the apparent employment obstacles for other vulnerable groups, it can be guessed that refugees will also find themselves in a more disadvantaged situation compared to middle-aged men.

An overall report about the Turkish labour market concluded that among all OECD countries, the job strain was strongest in Turkey because of the above-described employment situation which is characterized by much insecurity and high risks of unemployment (Falco & Keese, 2017, p. 2). This situation happens in an environment with harsh rules on and a weak diffusion of trade unions, an immense informal sector and, despite increasing tendencies, rather low female labour force participation (Duman, 2014, p. 14). With the general job strain in Turkey being higher than the one in Germany, it can be supposed that refugees likewise will face harder challenges to enter the Turkish labour market than the German one.

Concerning employment structure and the distribution of labour among the different sectors, Turkey varies strongly from Germany. For example, part-time employment is not so widespread with only one out of ten jobs being registered as part-time contracts (OECD, 2018g). On the other hand, Turkey has an exceptionally high level of self-employment which amounts to one third of all jobs (OECD, 2018h). As in Germany, the largest employment branch is the services sector, which is responsible for nearly every second job in Turkey. With an employment decrease in agriculture as a consequence of urbanisation from the 2000s on, employment in the services has even more increased. However, the increase in urban-based jobs, which also centred around informal and low-skilled employment, could not completely compensate for the employment reductions in agriculture for a parallel augmentation of the working age population (Yeldan & Ercan, 2011, p. 16). Overall, and in contrast to Germany, where agriculture plays a very minor role for employment, this sector is still the second largest one in terms of employment in Turkey and provides 17 % of all positions. The dimensions of the industrial branches are similar like in Germany. Industry and manufacturing make up for about every third position in Turkey, too (OECD, 2018i). Over the last decade, many new small and medium-sized companies were set up Central and South-East Anatolia in that sector. They cover diverse fields like clothing, food, plastic and

metal production and absorbed, thanks to many low-skilled workplaces, to some degree the unleashed workers from agriculture (Gönenç et al., 2012, pp. 6-8). As to construction, 6 % of all positions are placed in that sector, so that Germany and Turkey resemble in that point (OECD, 2018i).

Formal and informal employment in Turkey is not evenly spread among the main sectors but informal work mainly occurs in labour intensive and low-paid domains. The biggest share, more than one third of the whole Turkish informal employment, lies with the trade sector. The other three sectors in which informal employment mainly occurs are manufacturing, construction and transportation. Thereby, it should be mentioned that in trade, construction and transportation informal employment even exceeds the number of formal jobs (Duman, 2014, p. 79). Consequently, taking a job in these sectors means a high likelihood of informal employment, that will also apply to the refugees finding work in those fields. Furthermore, unregistered employment is also largely spread in the domains of care services, entertainment and sex work as well as tourism (İçduygu, 2016, p. 9). High numbers of migrants, especially refugees, help preserve the unregistered activities due to their supply of more (vulnerable) labour force (ibid. p. 11).

Just as the economy and the labour market in Berlin differ somewhat from the whole German situation, so does Istanbul differentiate from the rest of the country. Concerning the socioeconomic situation, it is the most developed among the Turkish provinces. This is not surprising when considering that it is responsible for more than one quarter of the national GDP, largely more than one third of all taxes paid in the country and half of the foreign trade volume (İkcaracan, 2016, p. 8). Against this background, it is not surprising that Istanbul is among the Turkish provinces the one attracting the highest numbers of refugees in search for economic opportunities (UNHCR, 2018a). Being urban, agriculture does not play a major role for employment in Istanbul. Thus, the present thesis that is based on interviews with refugees in Istanbul will not be able to report on job entries of refugees via the agriculture sector.

The economy in Turkey's biggest city is mainly centred around manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, construction, accommodation and services, whereby

most of the vacancies can be found in services and sales, machine operation, assembling and crafts (INGEV, 2017, pp. 21, 23). As for services, it is mainly the financial services that are outstanding and that have their national centre in Istanbul (İkcaracan, 2016, p. 8). Istanbul also has lower informal employment rates than the rest of the country. While it is about 30.2 % for Turkish men on average, it is 15.5 % for men living in Istanbul and 19 % for women living in Istanbul compared to 52 % for Turkish women in average (ibid. p. 12). Like it was done for the German labour market, this overview of the Turkish labour market shall now serve as basis to identify where refugees might encounter work opportunities.

2.2.2. Employment possibilities for refugees in Turkey

So far, Syrians in Turkey have been working especially in construction, clothing and manufacturing, but it is expected that other fields also hold promising employment prospects for them. For example, younger refugees with an interest in technology could find jobs in the growing IT business or become salespersons in shopping centres to advise Arab tourists. Another opportunity might be the employment in jobs that usually undergo high fluctuations due to lower payment and difficult working conditions, for example in call-centres (INGEV, 2017, pp. 29-30). However, there are some obstacles for refugees before getting employed. The first one is that refugees can only work where they are registered. But many left the regions of their registration to find employment in more promising places like the big cities of Istanbul, Ankara or Izmir. The modification of their registration would be bureaucratically complicated so that for many, informal employment is the most pragmatic solution (Del Carpio & Demir Şeker, 2018, p. 11). Since not much data exists on the qualifications and experiences of the Syrian refugees in Turkey, their job placement is additionally hampered.

In 2017, the Ministry of Labour, İŞKUR (the Turkish public employment agency), the World Bank and the EU created two programmes to support the labour market access of Syrian refugees, the “Employment Support Project for Syrians Under Temporary Protection and Host Communities” as well as the “Strengthening Economic Opportunities for Syrians Under Temporary Protection and Host

Communities in Selected Provinces”. The aims of these programs are to raise the income opportunities of refugees by improving their employability as well as to support Turkey in identifying which skills are needed by employers, building new jobs and strengthening entrepreneurship for the Syrian population in the country (Delegation of the EU to Turkey, 2018a; 2018b). Within the programs, refugees can receive job search support, language, vocational and on-the-job training. In a cash-for-work scheme, women and younger people until 29 can start working while İŞKUR finances the work permit and minimum wage. Parallel to that, refugees can receive micro-grants as an incentive to create their own small, formal business or transfer their informal into a formal business by registration. Moreover, the programs include an analysis of some aspects of the Turkish labour market, in particular of barriers to employment creation and entrepreneurship, so that identified obstacles can be dismantled (ibid.). Apart from these measures that were set up especially for refugees, Syrians might profit from some of the general services of İŞKUR. If they register with the institution, they can receive counselling and training. Or, for example, profit from schemes like the Employment Mobilization Program which offers tax reliefs and financial assistance to companies that hire people from vulnerable groups or those who were jobless for more than three months (INGEV, 2017, p. 14). Despite the mentioned possibilities, the active Turkish labour market policies and support measures are still lagging behind most of the other OECD members (Duman, 2014, p. 56). And even though the support measures, especially the training offered by İŞKUR, raise employment prospects by around 32 %, the İŞKUR measures are not widely used and networking is still a more common way of job search in Turkey (ibid. pp. 57-58). The interviews conducted with Syrian refugees in the framework of the thesis will now show what the concerned persons themselves think about the measures and if they had an impact on their job search.

2.2.3. Legal provisions for the labour market access for refugees

In January 2016, the Turkish government adopted the Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners Under Temporary Protection that enables refugees to obtain work

permits. However, the Turkish state does not recognize Syrians as refugees but classifies them as being under “temporary protection” (Art. 1 Temporary Protection Regulation, 2014).¹¹ Within the legal framework of temporary protection, no specific standards on labour market access existed so that until the Work Permit Regulation in 2016 no other option than informal work existed for Syrian refugees due to the lack of clear provisions (Ünlütürk Ulutaş, 2016, p. 174). With the Work Permit Regulation, Syrian refugees now can work but are subject to several restrictions. They are exclusively allowed to work within the province in which they are registered and have to wait six months after their arrival before the work permit application (Art. 3 para. 1 lit. b, c Work Permit Regulation, 2016). This can lead to dilemmas since many refugees who are registered in regions close to the Syrian-Turkish border or other places in Anatolia might try to move to bigger cities which are economically more attractive. In this case, re-registration is a cumbersome procedure. Moreover, only 10 % of the workers in an enterprise can be refugees (Art. 3 para. 3 lit. a Work Permit Regulation 2016). After all, what might constitute the biggest burden is that the work permit application requires an official work contract as well as the employers’ willingness to undertake the work permit application on behalf of the refugee (Art. 3 para. 2 lit a Work Permit Regulation 2016). Doing this, the employer faces a fee per issued work permit but what’s more, he commits to pay the legal minimum wage plus social security contributions for the Syrian employee. Thus, it can be assumed that in the eyes of employers, Syrian refugees lose their competitive advantage as cheap labour compared to their Turkish counterparts. Moreover, it is reported that in practice not many work permits were granted at the end of application procedures by the authorities (Essex-Lettieri et al.,

¹¹Although Turkey does not officially recognize people from Syria as “refugees“, according to the definition of the United Nations’ Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951), the term “refugee” would still be applicable. It defines a refugee as a person “outside of the country of his nationality” for “well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” and who is “unable, or, owing to such fear, is unable to return” to his or her country of nationality (ibid. Art. 1 lit. A para. 2). Based on the stipulations of international law as well as to the fact it would be unclear why the same people who are recognized according to the Geneva Convention as refugees in Germany cannot be called so in Turkey, the present thesis will, for reasons of consistency, make use of the term “refugee” for Syrian people in Germany as well as in Turkey, following the international and not the national legal framework.

2017, pp. 21-22). It can be concluded that theoretically, Syrian refugees in Turkey can get formal labour market access via work permits, but in practice, this might be a difficult undertaking. Considering this, the interviews with refugees in Istanbul also serve the purpose to show how the described legal provision influenced their access to work.

After having familiarized with the labour market situation that awaits refugees in Germany and Turkey, it became clear that the circumstances under which refugees access the job market vary strongly in both destinations. In Germany, refugees come upon a labour market that offers generally favourable conditions. Noteworthy are especially the low unemployment numbers, or rather a need for foreign workforce, and the institutional network that provides support to enter into employment. Nevertheless, the relatively high share of long-term unemployment among the unemployed population hints to important obstacles. Considering that natives already face difficulties to escape unemployment, the challenges for refugees can be assumed to be even higher, particularly with regard to the fact that the German labour market requires good language skills and often very particular qualifications. Promising, on the other hand, is the demand for apprentices which companies preferably hire to train well-qualified junior staff. Especially for young refugees, this type of education offers a positive future perspective to prepare for the needs of the German labour market.

In Turkey, refugees are faced with a labour market in which a large part of the native population already struggles to find a job, as high unemployment rates suggest. Together with the large size of the informal sector and strict working regulations for refugees, it is to be expected that refugees will have a hard time to enter formal jobs but will rather be pushed into informal occupation. At the same time, refugees might circumvent those obstacles by profiting from the general flexibility of the Turkish labour market. For instance, there is much scope for self-employment, Arabic skills are a major asset in sectors such as tourism and commerce and Turkish employers rather rely on practically proven skills than official certificates. How the described different starting situations of refugees translate into particular labour market outcomes in practice, are inquired within this

thesis. For this purpose, accounts of the real-life experiences of refugees, gathered in in-depth interviews, are used. Before proceeding with their content and outcomes, the following chapter outlines the reasons for choosing such an ethnographic, interview-based approach and describes the course of action.

3. ETHNOGRAPHY AS RESEARCH FRAME

3.1. Definition of ethnography

Ethnography was used by anthropological researchers to describe communities and cultures since the 19th century (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 1). In the meantime, it was adopted as one means of qualitative research by many other fields, including mainly sociology but also education, marketing, management and politics (Murchison, 2010, p. 4). Despite, or perhaps because of the use of ethnography in several fields, its definition has not been clearly clarified. While some researchers define ethnography by the way it is conducted as a specific research method, others focus on the end result and define it as a descriptive or analytical research product. The former expect a “first-hand involvement” (Murchison, 2010, p. 4), meaning that the people to be researched and their ordinary activities should be observed in their natural setting, while the researcher himself becomes part of the setting (Brewer, 2000, p. 10). Consequently, a close relationship between the ethnographer and his research objects is typical for the data collection process (Gold, 2001, p. 289). The latter, on the other hand, expect an ethnography to understand the culture of people and the behaviour derived from it (Wolcott, 2001, p. 67; Frake, 2001). More precisely, an ethnographer should try to understand people’s belief system or, in other words, how they perceive their world or a specific context and act according to the meaning they attach to it (Spradley, 1979, p. 4; Rattenbury & Nafus, 2018). This intellectual effort should then take the form of a “thick description” (Geertz, 1973, p. 6).

Since the chosen research approach usually depends on the research topic – the method has to fit the question and not vice versa – it seems more appropriate to let oneself be guided by the second definition. If one considers ethnography as an

account of “what people are doing and why” (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 168), it is logical that, as a prerequisite to establishing this account, it has to be understood how people interpret their situation. To do that, their experience of reality, as well as the sociocultural context, are central (McHugh, 2000, p. 72). To get an insight into both, in turn, the method of participation in the research field, which is often stated to be the defining element of ethnography, can be the best way. It is evident that researchers should have close and direct contact with their research subjects if they are determined to learn to see the world from their view (Gold, 2001, p. 290). However, for this purpose, not only participant observation but also in-depth interviews, the analysis of personal documents and/ or discourses are commonly used (Brewer, 2000, p. 11).

Above all, one aspect of ethnography distinguishes it from other research styles and objectives: “[...] ethnography tells a story that is new” (Josephides, 2012, p. 89). The specific style of conducting an ethnography which is characterized by a particular attitude of “being open to everything unknown” (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001, p. 160), a “relatively open-ended approach” (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 3) as well as “descriptive practices with substantial ‘invention’ in terms of theory, contextualization and interpretation” (Josephides, 2012, p. 89) can be attributed to the claim of telling a new story. However, it should be noted that “openness” does not mean that the ethnographer enters the field completely ignorant. Usually, he or she has “foreshadowed problems” for a special aspect of life in mind and approaches them in an exploratory way (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 3). In general, ethnographies are characterized by the following properties: They investigate people and their behaviour in their natural environment, collect data from various sources in not necessarily structured ways, create categories only after the data collection during the analysis process, focus on a small number of groups or research subjects, analyse in an interpretative way and produce mostly profound descriptions and sometimes even explanations or theories (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, pp. 3, 161).

The previously discussed purposes and properties of ethnography make it a well-suited tool for the present research topic. Ethnography bridges theory and reality

since it tries to comprehend the world in the way the research subjects experience it (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001, p. 161). In that sense, ethnographies can help discover shortcomings in the labour market access of refugees and help to create policy measures that respond to the real needs of the refugees. Unfortunately, there exists a lack of ethnographies that target unemployment, not only in relation to refugees but to jobless people in general. As Smith (2001) shows, many researchers dealt with the job routines of all kinds of workers, so why not employ ethnography as a means to capture the reality of nonworkers, too?

While trying to use ethnography's advantages, my present research has the aim to modestly contribute to filling the mentioned methodological gaps in labour market research related to refugees. Consequently, its objective is to approach the topic of migration and integration from *a new perspective* by telling it from the angle of the refugees itself instead of with the pre-shaped mindset of the host society or economy. Furthermore, following the ethnographic tradition, it is interested in the *experiences* of refugees during their job search and the factors that they *perceive* to be most important for it. While doing so and trying to approach the field as unbiased as possible, I naturally had a *presentment about problems* that might play a role, such as language, racism or incompatible qualification. At the same time, I was anticipating and being open to *unexpected aspects* that might be revealed as central for the labour market access of refugees.

3.2. Research process

3.2.1. Research preparation: finding informants

The most common way to gather data in ethnographic research is participant observation. It is supposed that living with the research subjects over a prolonged period and becoming an insider will make it easier to study their behaviour and at the same time open the door to relevant discussions with the people being studied (Davies, 1999, p. 71). For practical reasons, it was not possible to undertake participant observation in the classic sense for the present thesis. Many of the interviewed refugees had already terminated their job search at the moment of the

data collection process, so for reasons of timing, it was not possible to accompany them during their search for employment vacancies, job interviews etc.¹² Refugees that were looking for employment during the time of the research, on the other hand, could not be accompanied to job interviews and other job searching activities either. This might have been perceived suspiciously by potential employers and hindered the employment search. Moreover, such an endeavour would have required such a high level of coordination and flexibility that it could not have been executed by a single researcher. Therefore, the choice of the appropriate data collection method fell on in-depth interviews. Certainly, a combination of participant observation and interviews would have been ideal to allow the data gathered from both methods to “illuminate” (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 102) each other. Even though this was not possible, the chosen method of solely intensive interviewing shall not be regarded as “poor but sometimes necessary substitute for participant observation” (Kleinman, Stenross, & Martha, 2001) but rather as part of it and in this role as “first among equals” (Skinner, 2012, p. 35). The fact that participant observation, understood as the involvement of the researcher in the field, might be the most effective way to produce a profound ethnography, does not mean it is the only or essential one (Hockey & Forsey, 2012). Moreover, it can be mentioned that past and ongoing intensive personal and professional contacts with (Syrian) refugees of the author add to the credibility of the interview analysis in spite of the lack of personal observation.

To be able to rely on interviews as sources for the ethnography, it is essential that there is a respectful, at best continuing, relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. Furthermore, a sufficient level, length and openness of exchange is required so that the interviewer can understand how the interviewee interprets certain events (Heyl, 2001, p. 369). To get there, the interviewees, or *informants* as they are typically called in ethnographies, first have to be found. In the selection of informants, the ethnographer has to meet the needs of the research and choose

¹² For the purpose of this research, it was necessary to not only interview refugees that are currently on job search but also those that were already successful. While refugees on job search naturally mainly provide information about obstacles with the labour market access, employed refugees can also point to effective instruments to overcome the personal experience of unemployment.

knowledgeable people with sufficient experiences. However, his possible selection might be limited by the accessibility and readiness of the potential informants to participate (Davies, 1999, p. 79).

According to the assumption that the suitable informants are spread randomly among the group of interest, one way to choose informants is statistical probability sampling. However, supposing that the people to be studied themselves know best who among them is knowledgeable or insightful, another way to choose informants is sociological sampling (Gold, 2001, p. 390). Thereby, so-called “gatekeepers” (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 104) can help the ethnographer by giving him clues about potentially interesting interview partners, by directly referring him or even arranging the access. It is worth mentioning that interesting interviewees not necessarily have to hold important positions or have special characteristics. Inconspicuous persons might, similar to the ethnographer, be more in a position of observers and thus have a good awareness for the dynamics within their peer group (Davies, 1999, p. 79). There are numerous other ways to choose the informants, for instance by selecting cases that illustrate a studied phenomenon very clearly and could be exemplary for it, or by choosing informants according to some predefined criteria or even by a very opportunistic approach that chooses informants whenever a good opportunity appears (Quinn Patton, 2001, pp. 108-114).

For this ethnography, I chose to use mainly snowball sampling and “gatekeepers” to combine the mentioned advantages of the sampling methods with practicality. In Istanbul, it was very easy to find a starting point for snowball sampling. Fortunately, I had two close contacts in Istanbul, Wissam and Ibrahim, who are not only well connected among the Syrian community, but also made intensive experiences with job search and working life there. Wissam even gained Turkish citizenship thanks to having had a work permit for a prolonged period of time (still an exceptional case among Syrian refugees in Turkey). Due to his success, he became a contact person for his Syrian peers, since they wanted to follow his example and benefit from his experience. When his friends talk about Wissam, one gets the impression he is a walking dictionary about life hacks for Istanbul. Naturally, he could refer me to many interesting interview partners and thus became my “gatekeeper”. To diversify

my selection of informants, I also contacted another researcher who had worked with refugees previously. He referred me to the NGO United Work that helps refugees to prepare for and to find employment in Turkey. While I visited the organization with the aim to get contacts for possible interviewees, one of the staff members, a Syrian refugee herself, directly became an interview partner and subsequently referred me to personal contacts. Nearly every interviewee was able to transfer me to further interview candidates so that with the time I could become more selective and chose cases that seemed more relevant than others or that were able to add a new perspective to the research.

In Berlin, the search for informants proved to be far more complicated, notably because of the geographical distance between the city and Istanbul, my place of residence. Because I travelled to Berlin expressively for the research interviews and had a limited period of stay, I did not want to rely completely on the snowball principle there. So, I decided to secure at least four interview partners before arriving there. My first address to contact was an Arab-German foundation from which I knew that it was closely linked to several economic and political actors within the Arab community. Unfortunately, their contacts seem to be of rather “high level” so that they could not provide me with any contacts, with the exception of one politician that was committed to the topic of refugees and work. Over two intermediate references, this politician led me to my first interview contact. Parallely, I had written to numerous language schools for refugees, NGOs, associations and companies that are actively engaged in the employment process of refugees. Most of them never answered and the ones that did told me they could unfortunately not help. One single organization, one in which refugees work as guides to show tourists Berlin from their perspective, answered and brought me into contact with one of their employees for an interview. Besides, I also entered into contact with the Berlin job centres. After my initial request, it took about one month to get referred to a person in charge. Unfortunately, this person was not allowed to transfer my interview request to potential candidates or to somehow bring me into contact with them. At one point, I began to be so afraid of not being able to find enough interview candidates that I even started to search on social media. Thus, I

found one person willing to talk to me. Though his language skills were not sufficient to use him as an informant, he could refer me to one of his friends who later became an interviewee. During the search for interview partners, I also reached out to a previous Syrian language tandem partner of mine in Berlin. Re-establishing the contact took some time since I had lost his contact data, but eventually, he was an ideal interview candidate and immediately agreed to my request of being interviewed. Over a relative of mine living in Berlin, I could also gain a Syrian ophthalmologist as “gatekeeper” for my search of informants. He had lived in Germany for more than 20 years and thus became a relevant contact person for newly arrived refugees in Berlin. Thanks to the introduction to him, I gained four new interviewees at one go who, in turn, also referred me to some other potential interview partners.

As a consequence of the snowballing and “gatekeeper” method, some characteristics were unequally distributed in both samples. For example, the average age in the Berlin sample was higher than in the Istanbul sample, which has to be considered in the analysis. Moreover, the regional origins in the Berlin sample were a little bit less diverse than in the Istanbul sample. While this also has to be kept in mind during the interpretation of the data, it should not distort the analysis significantly, since the institutional frame for the integration in the host countries is mainly built around the national and not regional background. One bias, however, that potentially influences the picture drawn in this ethnography a lot, is related to gender. With only a few exceptions, the interviewed persons were men. The first reason for that is the availability of potential female interview partners since in both locations the number of female Syrian refugees is lower than the one of men (UNHCR, 2018b; Statistisches Bundesamt, 2017, p. 15). The second reason is accessibility. It seems that women tend to less actively participate in the active community life or rather stay among each other so that they were hardly reachable. I usually asked every interviewee if he could refer me to some female contact person, but in most of the cases, the demand was unsuccessful. The reasons that were mentioned most were that the informant did not have (close) female contacts, that the women in his life were already so occupied with family and household

and/or work that they had no time for an interview, that they did not know English or German or that, if the respective woman was the wife of an interviewee, she would anyways tell the same story as her husband so that it was not understood why she should be interviewed. Eventually, I could talk to two women in Istanbul and one in Berlin and also obtain their views. However, since they were largely underrepresented in the sample, the data covers a wider male than female perspective and might ignore some aspects that play a role in women's but not men's job search.

Another bias of this ethnography results from the fact that due to missing language skills in combination with the lack of financial resources to hire a translator, I could only interview English or German-speaking refugees. The refugees that demonstrated good language skills also tended to be more easily accessible for this research and have a certain educational level. So, the reader should keep in mind that the present ethnography does by far not capture the experienced reality of all levels of the Syrian society in the two host cities but rather the one of educated, medium skilled refugees.

3.2.2. Data collection: conducting in-depth interviews

The typical ethnographic interview is often described as unstructured, whereas actually "flexibly structured" (Whyte, 2001, p. 163) is more fitting. The interviewer cannot enter the discussion with his/her informants unpreparedly and just see where it goes. He or she still has to cover the same topics with all participants, but can thereby adopt the order and wording of the questions, add inquiries and eventual omissions according to the situation of the individual interviewees to make the conversation run naturally (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 117). In this manner, I reflected beforehand (with the help of the literature review and considerations based on personal experience) which issues might influence the labour market access of refugees and prepared related open questions to guide the interview. This included predicting that refugees in different employment situations (employed, looking for a job and unemployed but not looking for a job) might be or have been preoccupied with different problems in their labour market access. I decided that

the interviews should at least cover the educational and professional background of the interviewees, their employed job search strategies, the influence and private contacts and institutions on their job search, their experience with discrimination, their experience with legal provisions as well as their career wishes and perspectives in the world of employment.

Since I was aware of the fact that this might not cover all relevant aspects or, inversely, include topics that in reality were not experienced as relevant by the refugees, I thought of questions that might lead me to those blind spots. Two of these, that also turned out to be extraordinarily informative and discussion stimulating, were: If a Syrian acquaintance of yours would soon come to Turkey/Germany as a refugee, what would you tell him is most important to build a new life here/ which advice would you give him? What could be done additionally/improved by the host authorities or the society to help you to find employment/ get along in the new country? As the interviews proceeded, I also adopted my questions to new insights I had gained. For example, I added questions related to the housing situation of the refugees after I learned that this was a highly decisive factor in the employment search of one of the interviewees.

Besides the interview preparation, the atmosphere during the conversations plays a central role for the research outcome. Since the ethnographic interview strongly resembles to a purposive “friendly conversation” (Spradley, 2001, p. 334), the richness of data it can create depends highly on the interview situation, the interviewee’s feeling towards the interviewer, their mutual relationship as well as on the interviewer’s skills (Whyte, 2001, p. 174; Heyl, 2001, p. 370). First, the interviewer has to communicate the interviewee that the purpose of the interview is to get to “know what you know in the way that you know it” (Heyl, 2001, p. 369). By listening well, acting ethically, being self-aware of his or her reflexive role in the interview, keeping in mind the social context of the interviewee and accepting that the conveyed information can never be fully complete, the interviewer can contribute and make it easier for the respondent to picture his or her view of the world (ibid. p. 370). To make sure that the depicted view refers to the research topic and not to a different, unrelated subject, the ethnographer should furthermore

explain the research's purpose as well as the interview process and style (including the type and reason for recording) to the interviewee. Moreover, the ethnographer can state his or her interest or unawareness of certain issues and use different types and repetitions of questions to encourage a more exhaustive account (Spradley, 2001, p. 335). It is also essential that the interview atmosphere is not too formal but rather relaxed since otherwise the respondent might feel expected to draw an idealized picture than to reproduce his or her experienced reality (Murchison, 2010, p. 104). This also includes that, despite the general control and guidance the interviewer should exert during the interview, he or she needs to enter the conversation open-mindedly, let the informant's narration direct the interview to some extent and stay flexible during the process (ibid. p. 105). It can be summarized that in an ideal interview, the researcher should allow the interviewee to narrate as freely as possible while directing the conversation as much as necessary. Sometimes, more than one interview might be necessary to retrace changes in a person's life and perspectives to it or to check and complete obtained information (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 106).

The described guidelines were put into practice during the interviews in several ways. To assure a friendly atmosphere, each interviewee was asked beforehand about preferences regarding the interview site. For some interviewees, it was most convenient to be interviewed at home for example for reasons of childcare, while others suggested meeting in cafes close to their workplace to make the interviews fit well into their daily schedule and again others preferred to be interviewed in my home office to be free from distractions. Before the start of the interviews, I informed the participants about my research and the role of their accounts in it as well as about the procedure, confidentiality and the voluntary nature of the interviews. Doing this, it turned out that one participant, for example, did not like to be referred to as a refugee. Upon reading the term in the information sheet which I had distributed additionally to my oral explanations about the interviews, he expressed that it gave him the impression of being interviewed in the perspective of someone who is vulnerable and needs help. As he understood from our following conversation and my explanations that it was not his vulnerability as refugee I was

specifically targeting at in the interviews but rather the value of his first-hand experiences as someone who has to build a new life within the given conditions of a host country and under special circumstances due to his legal situation as a refugee, he was reassured. Consequently, he understood his role as an expert who could contribute his information for a useful purpose and gladly shared his experiences. Most of the interviews also included small talk over a snack beforehand or coffee and cigarette breaks during the interview which helped to increase the comfort of both the interviewees and me in my role as relatively inexperienced interviewer.

Often, I left the interview scene with a feeling of satisfaction and even happiness because I was positively surprised by the openness of the interviewees and the fact that the interviews took so often unexpected turns. I considered especially the small surprises during the conversations to be most useful since they opened perspectives to me which I had previously ignored. While “collecting” so many stories and experiencing one aha-moment after the other, I started to change my way of thinking, too and became much more sensitive. From grasping the labour market integration process as an abstract concept, I came to see it as reality experienced by refugees in countless different ways, none like the other.¹³ While one could question the value of ethnography when it does not allow for generalizations, I understood that its value is just that it shows us what generalizations and statistical projections actually do not allow us to see: the unique experience with its individual circumstances and the role of chance. In non-ethnographic works, this often gets lost by only displaying the average or the sum of many experiences. Ethnography instead sensitizes the researcher to think out of the box, to consider numerous possibilities instead of only the standard ones. The role of interviews in those ethnographies is then to serve as “night-vision goggles, permitting us to see that which is not ordinarily on view and examine that which is often looked at but seldom seen” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. vii).

¹³ After having read about the role of reflexivity in ethnography a lot, I thus eventually understood its meaning.

3.2.3. Data analysis: using grounded theory

Ethnographic research usually creates huge and rather unorganized amounts of data (for example in the form of complete interview transcripts like those that were created for the purpose of this thesis) so that its analysis naturally involves some arrangement. The search for patterns, the grouping of the observations into narrative units, the formulation of categories and the retracing of connections between them is thus central to the analytical process. Thereby, the analysis not necessarily achieves to represent the reality but rather the social meanings of its components. Consequently, the objectivity of the final ethnography can be enhanced when the researcher particularly looks out for the subjective understanding of its interviewees (Brewer, 2000, p. 107). The most popular method to meet these special challenges and requirements of an ethnography is the grounded theory developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). They suggest applying a “constant comparative method of joint coding and analysing” (ibid. p. 102) with the help of which plausible categories, traits and hypothesis are established but not tested. During an iterative process, the data is coded and subsumed into categories, whereby the coded incidents are parallelly and constantly compared with other incidents of the same or different categories. Thus, the characteristics of the respective categories, their implications and the relations of the categories to each other are mapped out. In doing so, the researcher will also discover contradictions or alternative possibilities of coding, which should be captured in the form of memos. Moreover, another sorting can take place and less relevant categories and concepts can be excluded to sharpen the analysis. In the course of this procedure, the categories become integrated into the bigger picture (ibid. pp. 105-111). As indicated by the name, through grounded theory, this bigger picture typically emerges in the form of a theory. Despite the fact that my research can only render a humble contribution to the academic work related to the labour market integration of refugees and not develop an independent theory, the use of grounded theory is still legitimate to help discover determinants and patterns in refugees’ labour market access.

During the described process of grounded theory, the researcher should bear several points in mind. First, the codes applied to the data typically do not arise from

preestablished concepts but from the data itself (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001, p. 165). They are created by going through the data line by line, detecting the comprised issues and ideas, and determining what seems relevant (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2001, pp. 244, 256). In formulating the codes, the researcher can also be guided by terms that the interview participants used in their statements. Especially if they are unusual they might be useful to discover phenomena that are worth to be pursued (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 163). Nevertheless, it is possible that prior to the coding, the researcher also determined especially noteworthy topics and codes while taking these themes into consideration by identifying subthemes and looking for characteristics and distinctions of those (ibid. 260). If this is the case, the rule should still be to not “force data into pre-existing codes” (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001, p. 165). Second, the development of memos is central to advance from the arrangement of the data towards exploring it and drafting the paper. It contains the establishment, clarification and comparison of the categories and thus at the same time serves to substantiate generated arguments by evidence (ibid. p. 167). Third, the ongoing analysis should, if necessary, be complemented by a return to the field and the gathering of samples that complete gaps in the established categories as well as to advance the analysis of issues that were identified as relevant (ibid. p. 168). Fourth, the researcher should really engage in an iterative process, meaning that the data is not only grouped and described but used “to think with” (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 158). So, the data interpretation also requires the experience, judgement, creativity and imagination of the ethnographer to decipher what was said (or not) and what it means related to the research topic (whereby he or she can get inspirations from the literature) (Brewer, 2000, p. 122; Rattenbury & Nafus, 2018, p. 8).

The ideas that emerge from the data should be followed by going back to the data to seek for further clarification, inspiration and evidence so that a movement between idea development and data processing is set in motion (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 159). It therefore follows that the analysing and writing processes are also not separated during the work on the ethnography. This does not only mean that the analytical categories are embedded in the ethnography as

narrative components, but the analysis is also continued and developed during the writing process (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001, p. 169). Eventually, the ethnographer should not lose sight of the research purpose during the complex analytical procedure. If the aim is to explain a phenomenon or build a theory, the focus should be kept high and the level of abstraction low. On the other hand, if the target is a descriptive one, the ethnography can be designed more multi-faceted and introduce several perspectives (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007, p. 161). For the purpose of the present thesis and its exploratory nature, the latter guided the endeavour.

To facilitate the data analysis and be able to comply with the described method, I used the freeware QCAmap that provides a helpful tool for qualitative content analysis. It allowed me to code my interview transcripts line by line, keep track of the codes I previously used to ensure consistency, arrange the codes according to subthemes and compare incidents of same categories with each other. Since I had not preformulated categories and codes but let my coding be guided by the data in front of me, the software also helped me to adapt and develop categories when alternative codes seemed more appropriate. Subsequent to the coding, I extracted the information in the form of excel files. This allowed me to “play” and think with the data: identify most reoccurring issues, group the codes according to different categories, find interlinkages and intersections. While doing this, I also developed the memos which I had started to write during the coding and which became the basis for my draft work.

All things considered, grounded theory offered my research the benefit to systematically convert the immense, unorganized and unweighted interview into a coherent account that reflects which pieces make up the puzzle of labour market integration and which places these pieces take.

3.3. Critical engagement with the ethnographic method

Ethnographies are often critically assessed in the context of their reliability and validity. Due to the qualitative research process that typically includes non-statistical sampling and data evaluation methods as well as unstructured data from rather informal interviews, the reliability of ethnographies is problematic. However,

being conscious of reliability concerns and following a certain protocol can help to decrease doubts related to reliability.

The external reliability, or the repeatability of the research findings (Davies, 1999, p. 84), can be enhanced by comprehensively dealing with and describing the informants that were used for the research. This is necessary to become aware of and handle the bias that results from the choice of interview partners and allows access to people with certain characteristics while it leaves out people with other characteristics. In that respect, the relationship between the researcher and the research subjects as well as the (social) context in which the research took place needs to be described (LeCompte & Preissle Goetz, 2001, pp. 107-108). To facilitate an eventual reproduction of the study, the ethnographer also has to delineate the way in which the data was collected, and which categories were formed and how they shaped the analysis (ibid. p. 109). To this end, the selection of informants, the interview process and the chosen data analysis method were described in the previous paragraphs. The established codes are evident in the description of the interview outcomes in the following chapters. For the internal reliability, or the consistency of the findings, a discussion, comparison and affirmation of findings between several researchers (who work in the same or similar research) would be favourable. Should this not be possible (like in the present research), the ethnographer can discuss his or her findings hitherto with other informants to let them affirm or challenge them (ibid. p. 111-112). For example, I often confronted the interview partners with opinions expressed by previous interviewees and asked them what they think about it and how they would position themselves towards the mentioned matter. But the researcher does not only have the opportunity to cross-check information with other informants. He can also ask the respective interviewee about the same issue several times with other wordings and observe the coherence of the answers. Despite that, absolute consistency cannot be supposed in an ethnography since individuals are to some degree unsteady while at the same time the individuals within one group are never completely alike (Davies, 1999, p. 86). Eventually, the internal reliability can be further increased by the proper recording and preservation of the data in the form

of records, transcriptions etc. Notes should be taken as precisely as possible (LeCompte & Preissle Goetz, 2001, pp. 110-112). During the interviews, I always took two recordings, one with the computer and one with the phone, to assure that if audibility or technical problems would occur in one record, I could switch to the second one. The records were stored encrypted in an external hard drive and a cloud so that they were secure from loss and at the same time protected against access by third parties. Additionally, I took notes of the interviews in which also relevant details of the interview environment were noted.

In terms of validity¹⁴, interviews face the challenge that they might be very consistent but rather display what is considered as proper social behaviour than what is actually done or thought. However, ethnographic interviews at the same time allow minimizing such an effect since they provide enough room for informality and the development of a good interviewer-interviewee relationship. Furthermore, their intensity and lengthiness help the researcher to discover the way of thinking of the interviewee to improve the interpretation of what has been said (Davies, 1999, p. 84). The internal validity, or the accuracy of the results, is claimed to be rather high in ethnographies. This is because the research is conducted over a long period that allows for comparisons and refinements in the research, it takes place in the natural environment of the participants and it sticks close to their real-life experiences so that the level of abstraction is low (LeCompte & Preissle Goetz, 2001, p. 113). The internal validity can still be affected by the credibility and reactivity of the participants as well as by the biases of the researcher him- or herself. This can be countered by a diverse choice of informants as well as several research relationships and the consideration of the type of interviewer-interviewee relationship in the analysis (ibid. p. 116-117). To ensure a certain diversity, for example, I tried to include at least one or two representatives of the different central characteristics like gender, age group, education level, employment status, family status and residence time in the host country. Moreover, there were different types of interviewer-interviewee relationships. In both interview places, I kept a close

¹⁴ Defined as the truth and correctness of the findings (Davies, 1999, p. 84).

relation to some interview participants during the research period, while to others I had only sporadic contact within a friendly relation or limited the relation to the interviews. These different levels of relationship helped to get familiar with the realities of being a refugee and to have really intensive exchanges without taboos on the one hand, and parallelly staying sufficiently distant to be able to still perceive new impetus in the data on the other hand.

The external validity of ethnography, or the generalizability of the findings, naturally cannot meet the external validity of quantitative studies, but ethnography is also not so concerned with this aim (Davies, 1999, pp. 113, 121). Despite, or perhaps because of this, ethnography frequently has to defend itself against the question how ethnographers can “hope to make general arguments about anything other than their field site” (Fitzgerald, 2006, p. 13). One reproach is that researchers hardly obtain the necessary level of insight knowledge for ethnography. This can be rejected knowing that even without complete insight, a valid account can be generated as long as the analysis is transparent and includes the researcher’s reflexivity (Davies, 1999, p. 92). Coming back to the allegation that ethnographies do not allow to or even aim for transferring their findings to other cases and are thus not empirically generalizable, it can be stated that the ethnography’s findings should rather be understood as a contribution to particular theoretical debates (ibid. p. 91). Moreover, as I already mentioned before, it is maybe not a weakness of ethnography that it is hardly generalizable but, on the contrary, a strength. It lets us discover the particular in the general, and thus constitutes a necessary counterpart to quantitative methods, in which the particular gets lost in favour of the abstract whole.

Above all, the researcher’s self-reflection is elementary to the ethnography’s results. A sincere observation of his or her own behaviour in terms of the treatment of the interviewees and probity of the data collection interpretation are indispensable to discover and eliminate errors, omissions and biases. Therefore, the researcher has to question his or her attitudes, intentions and the subsequent behaviour, in short, his or her subjectivity. Greater sensitivity in that sense allows

for more exact and realistic conclusions (LeCompte & Preissle Goetz, 2001, pp. 253-254).

Even after having limited the mentioned problems of reliability, validity, reflexivity and subjectivity to the maximum, ethnography is still often faced with the accusation of not being scientific enough compared to methods based on quantitative data. Unquestionably, quantitative data, like labour market statistics, provide us with important information like the general employment situation or the situation of foreigners and refugees in host labour markets. However, figures alone do not speak, their meaning arises out of interpretation. In this light, ethnography can serve as a helpful tool to make sense of the data (Rattenbury & Nafus, 2018, p. 2). Still, ethnographers are not just “storytellers” (Brewer, 2000, p. 21), they are at the same time scientists. Their systematic use of codes and categories to create objective indicators to grasp subjective experiences and perspectives allows ethnography to come close to standards of quantitative methods (ibid. p. 107). In doing so, it can work out patterns of behaviour. While those discovered patterns cannot be supported by confidence intervals or the like, it can be differentiated for which circumstances they are applicable (valid) and for which not (Rattenbury & Nafus, 2018, p. 9). The comparative approach of the present research further supports this possibility since it helps to explain how the environment of the refugee’s host countries influences their economic patterns, like the labour market access. And while quantitative data often only permits to make statements about the existence and direction of a causal relationship between two variables, ethnography might even reveal the reason for this relationship by taking the mechanism linking two variables out of the black box. Furthermore, it also connects the macrostructures of the system, like the labour market laws and the labour market structure, to the micro-actions, like the behaviour and thinking of job seeking refugees (Fitzgerald, 2006, p. 12).

All in all, ethnography in topics related to aspects of migration can play the role of “a camera with a zoom lens that can both capture the wide context of structure and narrowly focus on agents in a way that shows their interactions with that structure” (Fitzgerald, 2006, p. 9). In the present research, the camera “ethnography” shall be

used to take a meaningful picture of the interplay between all the “structures” of the host country that are relevant to the labour market (e.g. institutions, policies, laws and actors in politics, the economy and the society) with the “agents” represented by the refugees. The picture that was taken with the help of ethnography is portrayed in the following chapters.

4. LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES IN BERLIN

4.1. Tough life in Germany – from high expectations to harsh realities

“Germany, Germany, Germany,” this was all Imad¹⁵ heard back in Syria when people were talking about their escape plans in the hope for more security and a better life. The conversations in his home town focused so much on this country that supports people when they lose their employment, where all children go to school and where everyone can easily find a job if he is just willing to learn, that Imad did not know anything else about Europe but what he had heard about Germany.

The narratives of nearly all my informants reflected that it was not only the aspect of security that led them to Germany but also the expectation of being able to find a job and build a good life. Everyone knew someone or at least someone who knew someone who had started a life in Germany and nourished with their accounts the expectations of his friends, relatives or acquaintances in Syria. Thus, the labour market integration process of my informants did not only start upon their arrival in Germany. Already back in Syria, they started to imagine and make plans about their work life in Germany. Malek selected Germany specifically to become an engineer by studying in the “country of cars and mechanics”. The pharmacist Rehab felt that Syria was economically “running in an empty circle” and that furthermore, in Syria the research background she needed to continue her studies was not available in the necessary quality. The ones that did not come with the express aim to study, however, also had expectations on their labour market integration. The general tenor of their anticipations was that in Germany, they would encounter a sufficient

¹⁵ All names in the present ethnography have been changed.

number of job opportunities that would allow them to find their place within the labour market. Even if there were difficulties during the job search, they would be supported by the authorities both financially to sustain themselves and organizationally to find employment. In the literature, the impact of the labour market access opportunities for the destination choice of refugees is highly disputed and, in some studies, even rejected as pull-factor (see, e. g., Mayblin, 2016). In contrast to that, the reports of my informants support the literature acknowledging that job opportunities play into the selection of destination countries (see, e. g., European Asylum Support Office, 2016; Clark & Maas, 2015). However, the aim of reaching employment was generally not an end in itself. My informants associated employment in Germany naturally with decent wages leading to a comfortable life. This becomes particularly clear in Oumr's report, who stayed one month in Istanbul, too. He would have had the opportunity to stay and work there but decided to come to Germany based on the following thoughts:

"I had the opportunity to go to Germany. And I thought 'Okay, that is better than here.' Because I saw my friends, with whom I lived together, go to work and work there 12 hours. Then, coming from work, they directly went to bed. So, they worked like a machine, and I am not like this [...] I thought, it is better here [in Germany] ...but it is really better than in Turkey, for everything. The life, the payment, everything."¹⁶

Yousseuf, an experienced ear, nose and throat physician had even more concrete notions:

"When I came to Germany, I had an idea...Maybe in five, six months I will find employment because I heard like this: 'Germany needs doctors.' and 'There are no doctors.' And 'There is always a need for doctors' and so on. And in the Job Centre, they told me: 'You only have to learn German. And when you speak German, all doors will be open to- to you.'"

All my informants shared the intention to work after being recognized as refugees in Germany. This is an essential aspect since in a welfare state like Germany it would be easy to lead failed labour market integration back to a lack of willingness

¹⁶ The interviews in Berlin were conducted in German. The quotations were translated as close as possible to the original wording.

to work. However, for my informants, such a simplified explanation cannot be applied.

Upon their arrival in Germany, refugees first need to endure the recognition procedure as refugee before they can turn their work expectations into reality. Though this process is by definition not concerned with the labour market integration of refugees, it can have an immense impact on their later success in obtaining employment. Decisive therefore is the duration of the decision procedure as well as the living situation in the early phase after arrival. A favourable refugee status decision automatically comes along with the right to work in Germany¹⁷ as well as with the entry into a support system provided by the authorities that sees to refugees taking integration classes as well as bringing them into the labour market¹⁸. However, in the waiting period for the decision of recognition as refugee, the possibilities of refugees to get official integration support are highly limited. And the waiting periods tend to be long. Most of the interviewed refugees arrived between spring 2014 and 2016 in Germany, which falls together with the general peak of refugee status applications in Germany. While most had to wait around six months for their recognition as refugee, some were stuck waiting for one or, in one case, even two years. This time was often perceived as wasted. Jamal, for example, felt like having “lost one year in Germany for nothing.” A time, in which he thought nobody cared about him, and also did not know whom he could address with his problems. Another informant felt this experience of not receiving answers for the questions that bothered him about his future so intensely, that he labelled it with his own term. As allusion to the phrase “master key” that opens all doors, Adnan described the period before the recognition as refugee as one in which refugees are

¹⁷ After a stay of three months, asylum and refugee status applicants can theoretically apply for a work permit. But since the acquisition of German skills, which are necessary to be able to find an employment, usually take much longer and since the procedure to apply for such a work permit poses another bureaucratic obstacle, this option seems to be of minor relevance. None of my informants even considered this step.

¹⁸ According to the official information of the Federal Agency of Migration and Refugees, asylum seekers and refugee status applicants are already informed about possibilities to take integration classes and enter the labour market prior to the refugee status recognition. According to the experiences of my informants however, employment counselling in practice took place only after a refugee status recognition, as did most of the approvals to join integration classes.

always put off with a “master answer” as a reaction to their insecurities and attempts to find out how their integration process will go on. This master answer is “nobody knows”:

“How long you will stay in the camp nobody knows...how long nobody knows. How we can move, what you can do, nobody knows. You just need to wait. In my situation, it was one year from the first [arrival] until I get my papers and everything.”

It is not hard to retrace that refugees experience this time of waiting for the recognition decision, in which one has not even a clue about his future, as a burden that conveys the feeling of disorientation which Jamal and Adnan described.

In this time, the living situation can play a decisive role in order not to lose the time spent waiting. Regularly, refugees are accommodated in reception facilities, which often take the form of camp-like homes, during the first six months of their stay or until the decision on the refugee status but can also be moved to other shelters during this time by the authorities (BAMF, 2019). Due to the already precarious living situation in Berlin, in many cases, refugees continue to be housed in shared accommodations even after having left the reception shelter. In the public debate as well as in some academic research those shelters are usually not regarded in a positive light and it is argued that a decentralised accommodation of refugees would have a more positive impact on refugee integration (Reuter, 2015; Bauer, 2017; Wendel, 2014). They are mainly criticized for bad hygienical standards and unpleasant living conditions, for overcrowding as source of conflict as well as for being a barrier for the access towards the native society. The typical instinct that it obstructs the contact between natives and refugees when the latter live together with each other on a relatively small area is not unfounded. However, these shelters, despite the justified criticism, also seem to bring about some positive socialization and familiarization effects. There, newly arrived refugees meet with those who already have been through the initial arrival phase and constitute a useful information pool. Or, as Adnan put it, “thousand people arrived before us,” so why not just ask them? Often, the socializing and exchange of information happen during meal time, since the meals are handed out and consumed in a central place

of the shelter. Doing so, the more experienced refugees brief the newly arrived ones about the relevant institutions and processes of the bureaucratic jungle, such as the need for an initial registration at the Regional Office for Health and Social Affairs in Berlin (LaGeSo)¹⁹ and the actual application for recognition as refugee at the Federal Agency of Migration and Refugees. In Berlin, where the authorities, as well as most other contact persons for refugees, are overloaded with work and overstrained by their own bureaucratic system, the first-hand information of other people in the same situation was essential for my informants. These initial encounters in the refugee homes frequently laid the basis for lasting contacts. Over time, they developed into social networks in which the refugees among others also informed each other about job opportunities. After having passed the recognition process and the integration classes, Imad, for example, worked in marginal part-time jobs in three different bakeries. He got into all three jobs due to the reference of other refugees dating back to his arrival phase. One of these encounters even led him to a business partnership. In the refugee home, he had met someone who wanted to become self-employed like him. To share the risks and burdens of this endeavour, they joined forces after their first job experiences and opened a bakery together.

Contacts to other refugees are not the only labour-relevant input the life in the shelters provides. When I heard the first time from Khaled “In my opinion, you can get to know Germans when you stay in the shelter,” I got surprised. It seemed to be a contradiction that though no natives live in these homes, natives and refugees could effectively be brought together via them. However, it turned out that the staff in the shelters regularly informs the refugees about offers, like free language classes. Living alone, most refugees might not have heard about those offers that, in contradiction to the official integration classes, not require a positive decision regarding the refugee status or money. Most of those offers were gladly taken by my informants. Every third tried the so-called “language cafés” where natives and

¹⁹ Since the LaGeSo was overstrained with reception of refugees, in summer 2016 a new competent authority was established, the Regional Office for Refugee Matters (LaF). However, all of my informants were still under the responsibility of the LaGeSo.

refugees meet casually to chat in German and practice the everyday language. Furthermore, native volunteers who want to provide support to refugees use the shelters as a contact point for their mission. They visit the shelters regularly, sometimes only to hang out with the refugees and socialize, sometimes to give basic language classes or help in the distribution of food. A research commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs also observed this effect (Söhn & Marquardsen, 2017). The authors agree that a decentralized accommodation of refugees in private houses is preferential in order to allow a quicker normalization of their lives. At the same time, however, they also pointed out to the potential loss of access to support and integration measures that might come about with the move out of the shared accommodation (*ibid.*, p. 34).

It is important to underline that the described positive benefits of accommodation in shelters only prevail provided that the stay does not exceed a couple of weeks or a few months. Otherwise, the effect reverses, and life in the shelter leads indeed to a delay in integration. Sami, for example, arrived in summer 2015 in Germany and presently still lives in a vast residential complex together with about 700 other refugees. Naturally, he reported that he struggles to learn German and to get into close contact with Germans because in his daily life he encounters only Syrian relatives or fellow refugee residents:

“[...] sometimes [I meet] with my uncle or relatives because they are all I know. Yes...this is sometimes also a problem because in this complex I am like in Syria. We always talk Arabic or Kurdish. That is our problem. We have no other contacts. We only learned [German] in school.”

Since most of the public support measures become active only after a positive decision on refugee status, refugees do not have many options to fill their lives with active integration measures in the months waiting for the decision. Thus, the living situation is the factor that influences their early familiarization the most and can lay major foundations for the later integration. Though the importance of the living situation tends to shrink once the refugees are recognized, start integration classes and the search for work, it can, in some cases be still decisive for the success or failure in the labour market. Oumr’s living situation for example directly got him

into a part-time job. His success story started with the owner of a privately-run kindergarten who offered the kindergarten to some refugees as shelter. So, while Oumr slept there in the nights, he started to work in the same place as a volunteer in the daytime while at the same time taking integration classes. Doing this, his colleagues were so impressed by the speed with which he learned German and by his work attitude, that they offered him an official apprenticeship there. He declined, though, since it was not a job he could imagine pursuing on the long-term. Upon his rejection, his boss asked him what he wanted to do instead. He wanted to study medicine. However, since he could not enter medical studies with his A-level based in humanities, he needed to finish an apprenticeship in the medical sector first for which again he needed German skills at the level of B2. Although he did not want to become an educator in the kindergarten, he was employed there part-time until he had learned enough German to start his medical apprenticeship. Looking back, he said that the moment he entered the kindergarten to find shelter there, “was when my life really started.”

Conversely, the need for a shelter can also obstruct the labour market integration. As long as refugees do not have their own employment, the Job Centre provides their subsistence, which naturally includes the housing costs. Being jobless, Bader is right now living in a hostel found by and paid for by the Job Centre. However, as soon as he enters into work, he will have to pay for his accommodation by himself. During his job search, he was offered a position as a storekeeper in a supermarket chain. While he is desperate to work and would have wanted to accept the offer, he had to decline because the salary was too low to cover the expenses for the hostel, food and other everyday necessities. So, before accepting the low-paid job, he first had to find an affordable flat which is incredibly difficult in the problematic housing market in Berlin. His search for a cheap flat, on the other hand, would be easier if he would already have a job and a proof of income which would make landlords less reluctant to rent him a flat. Getting professional help in the apartment search is also not possible, because without employment he could not pay for the commission. No job, no flat. No flat, no job. Bader is for now trapped in this circle and gets more and more desperate to get out of it, while there is no solution in sight:

“Maybe with a work contract, there is a chance. But without, you have to pay [the commission for the flat]. In Germany it is not so easy, you have to pay for everything. You cannot live when you don’t pay. [...] My head is... I have too many problems; I don’t know. It did not work with B2; I did not find work, nor a flat. Life is tough in Germany. You have to work; you have to find a flat. Okay, when you don’t have a work contract, why you cannot find a flat? Why?”

When talking to Bader about his situation and discussing all the options he might have, his despair was so apparent that I myself started to become upset about the situation. Before hearing his story, I had not even realized that the housing situation could impact the labour market integration. When I did, I got all the sadder that such a thing like having a shelter, which should not even be an issue in a European country like Germany, could cost so much useful time in addition to all the other obstacles on the way to employment.

The effects of the living situation on the integration outcome of refugees, in particular the ambivalence of the outcomes of living in public or private accommodation, so far has not been sufficiently researched, as was also criticized by Söhn and Marquardsen (2017, p. 11). A catching-up in this point is central since the accounts of my informants showed that the living situation of refugees poses not only the risk to hamper labour market integration through for example delaying the learning of the language. It also bears the potential to provide refugees with the access to central integration facilitators. At this point, research can help to demonstrate how the accommodation of refugees should be structured in order to guarantee the best possible outcome.

4.2. Struggling with language – German as cornerstone for integration

As individual as the job entry of refugees in Germany may be, the first step of the career path always leads through learning the language. With regard to the importance of the language for labour market integration, a strong consensus between the German employers, authorities and the refugees themselves seems to exist. Many of my informants who were eager to start working quickly were rejected by employers with the instruction first to reach a certain language level.

Ironically, some even reported that they had to be calmed down by the Job Centre, whose actual task it is to help people get into jobs because they demanded permission to finish the language classes earlier in order to get into work more quickly. Upon those demands, the Job Centre gently admonished them to only focus on language for the instant, since there would still be enough time to find an (even better) employment after the language classes. In retrospective, all of my informants agreed on the importance of language. When asked which activity, attribute or other things they considered to be most important in terms of labour market integration, the overwhelming majority mentioned language quick as a shot. In the same breath, they characterized it as “key,” “door opener” or “cornerstone.” The real-life experience of my informants has been confirmed by numerous studies on the impact of migrants’ language skills on socioeconomic integration in European countries and is generally acknowledged by economists (Dustmann & Glitz, 2012; Chiswick & Miller, 2002; Schuss, 2018; Zorlu & Hartog, 2018; Dustmann & Fabbri, 2003). According to the vast research, language skills do not only affect the employment probabilities positively but also raise the wage level. Likewise, a lack of language decreases the chances for professional success.

Based on the awareness of this significance of language, the German authorities impose on recognized refugees the legal right and obligation to participate in an integration class²⁰. While the BAMF issues the approval for the participation in a language class regularly only after the official recognition as refugee, most of my informants started learning German out on their personal initiative or after the encouragement of social workers, friends or other contacts well before that and continued to do so even after finishing the official classes. As described in the previous chapter, a popular - though by far not the only way - to do so are the language cafés. Unfortunately, they seem to be so popular that the foreigners joining them outnumber the natives by far, which in turn limits the possibilities to

²⁰ Those classes are composed of 600 language lessons as well as 100 orientation lessons in which the most important aspects of German history, society, culture, politics and legal structure are taught. While the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) bears the costs of the classes, the participants are also obligated to participate in a way that non-participation leads to the cuts of the benefits received by the Job Centre. Participants can chose their school freely.

talk German there as Sami bemoaned. Thus, he relied much more on German classes organized by a church initiative and taught by retired women. However, my informants not always relied on the numerous voluntary language teaching initiatives by natives, some of them also organized themselves in learning groups. Though not being fluent yet, Youssouf became sufficiently confident with his German skills to teach other Syrians once or twice a week, which, according to his friend Tawfeek, he does very well. Youssouf is not only passionate about helping other refugees with his German skills, but his investment into his own language skills is also impressive. For example did he not want to wait for the BAMF's approval for participation in a language class and thus spent his private savings to join one. Later, he took courses for medical German since he wanted to pursue his profession as a doctor also in Germany. In addition to language school, he reads German newspapers as well as medical textbooks every day to perfect his skills. What seemed the most successful way to learn German, according to the narrations of my informants, was when they tried to get along by themselves, without translators, in all matters of the organization of their lives. By forcing themselves to somehow communicate at the appointments with the authorities or formulating e-mails alone, they not only learned and practised German but also became self-independent and found their way into the German bureaucratic system faster. While most of my informants made a virtue of necessity and found some ways to learn the language before getting the approval to join classes, some entered into passivity. Fawad, for example, considered it the responsibility of the German authorities to enable him to learn German and was disillusioned that they did not do so while he was waiting six months for the decision on his refugee status:

“They gave us no chance to learn the German language.”

Eventually, all my informants got officially recognized as refugees and thus, the chance to learn German in taught classes. However, the benefit of these classes for my informants varied strongly. Many informants reported that their classes were mainly composed of people from the Middle East so that the participants tended to talk to each other in Arabic or Kurdish which obstructs the sense of German classes. Khaled, a Syrian of Kurdish origin, recounted the following:

“I could not speak Arabic super, not as good as my native language. My native language is Kurdish, but after I came to Germany, I can now speak Arabic perfectly. In every class there are so many, 13 Arabic people...always have to talk Arabic. I can now speak Arabic really perfectly.”

Other reported weaknesses of the language classes referred to the teaching staff. Some refugees were taught German by non-native speakers which led to pronunciation and understanding difficulties due to the accents of the teachers. In other cases, the teachers were no trained teachers, but came from other fields such as sociology or politics and thus had difficulties in transmitting the content to their students. Some teachers were even described as bad-tempered, impatient or unwilling to repeat the subject matters when the students could not follow. In one case, the teacher was said not even to have prepared the class for the final exam. On the other hand, some of my informants perceived their fellow classmates as bothersome. Especially concerning classes that contained many refugees, my informants remembered political and religious disputes, listlessness or a lack of respect for the teacher which led to a disrupted learning atmosphere. Firas, who experienced this intensely, traces the behaviour of his classmates back to the pressure of being in a position as a refugee. He spoke of classmates that had much stress because of factors like difficult apartment search, bureaucratic problems or depressions. According to him, being forced to learn German under those tough circumstances could be too difficult.

All the mentioned problems came only up when talking about classes that mainly contained refugees. In schools where the refugees were mixed in classes with people from various nations and people who paid for the classes themselves, like it is common for example in adult education centres, the assessments were largely positive. The more diverse the students were, the more they were forced to learn German. Moreover, in classes with privately paying students, the students were said to be more motivated what led to a generally better atmosphere. Firas experienced both. First, he went to a school with classes that were separated between refugees and other foreigners. When he tried to inquire about the reasons for this separation, he only learned that the teachers themselves were unhappy with the situation but

could not oppose the school's administration. The separation, however, led to the described problems to such an extent that Firas considered the class so ineffective that he purposely failed in the exam only to be able to repeat the class in another school. Effectively, his labour market integration was slowed down by bad language classes instead of being advanced. At least in the second school, he was so impressed by the teaching methods and got along so well, that he still keeps private contact with the teacher until today. Due to his experience, he concludes that some schools "just want to get the money" which the state pays them for the teaching of refugees. They neither care about a good organization nor about the learning success of their students since they do not pay privately. While Firas' experience might be extreme, all of my informants agreed in their wish of classes with students from diverse countries and backgrounds for a more productive learning environment.

Another point that my informants regarded unanimously as highly annoying were the waiting periods that passed between two classes. After taking the exam at the end of one class, they needed to wait two months for the results. After that, they needed to get an approval for a new class and then another one or two months could pass until a new class with suitable hours started in their area. These waiting periods create not only impatience but also a feeling of pressure for the refugees who want to integrate as quickly as possible but cannot because long waiting periods are imposed on them. Remembering this time, Bader reported:

"My feeling was terrible because I waited...but actually I have to learn, I have to learn the language. Because language is key for Germany. Or else I cannot work, I cannot make contact with German people."

Bader and his peers felt so pressured and rushed to learn German because they experienced it to be nearly impossible to find any job without proper language skills. Or, as Malek put it:

"You always need the German language, no matter which job you do. For example, even a mechanic has to record what he did, what he not did, which problem he worked on, etc."

Another of my informants, Tawfeek, confirmed this observation. He was working as a tax officer and at the same time as a repairman for electronics in Syria. Today, he is on job search and thinks that the only real reason for his ongoing unemployment is an insufficient level of German.

During the interviews with my informants, language was the point we discussed most intensively because it was the thing that concerned them the most for two reasons: It is a vital skill but at the same time one that is difficult to obtain²¹. For apprenticeships, an intermediate level of German is an imperative prerequisite; employers reject high-skilled workers when they are not able to communicate with their colleagues; and also to become self-employed, one needs to get through the bureaucratic process in German. Imad, for example, wanted to apply for financial aid to become self-employed, but the lengthiness of the process and the number of papers to fill made him shy away “because of the language.” He was not the only one giving up on something because of being afraid of the language obstacle. Oumr had started to study law back in Syria but did not want to pursue these studies in Germany since he anticipated the language level to be too difficult. Oumr’s German is already at the upper intermediate level; he expresses himself fluently in everyday language and practices daily with his colleagues. So, even though in terms of learning German he already is highly successful, and he is sure that he will be able to pursue a successful career path in the future, he is still afraid of failure:

“I only fear- I only fear the language. I already know that it takes long...Eight years or seven years, six years or I don’t know...But I am only afraid of the language”.

While he luckily did not get paralyzed by his fear, others, like Khaled did. Khaled’s anxiety about his German skills became so extreme that he does not go to German doctors and, what is more, during a four-year stay in Germany did not feel able to go to the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce to have his Syrian professional certificates as cutting machine operator acknowledged. Clearly, his

²¹ One of my informants reached the C1 level after studying German only one year. However, this highly successful case is rare. Most of my informants got stuck at intermediate levels even after stays of three or four years. Not surprisingly, there was a broad agreement on the fact that German is much more difficult to learn than other languages my informants knew, such as Turkish, English, Kurdish or Farsi.

case is extreme, but still relevant because he felt that in the German society, language skills were so important, and not-speaking would be judged so harshly that it made him risk his job entry.

While not speaking German can lead to extreme disadvantages, the same effect also works in the other direction. As described earlier, Oumr got additional support from his bosses when they observed how well he had learned the language. Another good example is Amir, who first struggled during his apprenticeship because he could not keep up with the classes. He repeated one year in his apprenticeship, took extra tuition and is now among the top students in his apprenticeship class. Meanwhile, he can, for example, explain everything about accounting in fluent German while he states he could not do so in Arabic.

Despite the described indispensability of German, some of my informants, especially the ones who came from Syria with much work experience and at a middle age, lamented this focus on language for two reasons. First, they reported it to be challenging to learn a new language for some people, like elderly or uneducated ones. In their opinion, only young or well-educated people should spend much time on learning German in order to be able to transfer their skills. However, the ones who are low-skilled, not finished school in Syria and already struggle with written Arabic should not waste time but instead enter into low-skilled jobs as quick as possible. While working, they could only learn some colloquial language since they would never learn proper German anyways. Second, some people gained vast job experience in Syria but have no talent for learning a new language. So, although being experts in their job, the focus on language by German authorities and employers may hinder them to work in a position that they would actually be qualified for just because of missing language certificates. Although it should not be the aim to manage life in the host country without language skills, whose value for integration has been frequently confirmed, the criticism of my informants suggests that more flexible approaches towards the acquisition of language might be useful. This is supported by a study among immigrants in Finland, which showed that early contact with the labour market is central for integration (OECD, 2018I). The workplace turns out to be a facilitator of learning the language so that refugees

who struggle in courses might profit more from a quick placement in employment than in classes. Inversely, an initially blocked labour market access impedes language learning and thus can lead to a vicious circle complicating the jobs search all the more (ibid., p. 31). So, it might be mutually beneficial if the Job Centre would make concessions to refugees that struggle in language classes and allow them to quit earlier if they are able to find a job.

Overall, the image that emerges from the accounts of my informants is that language is not only a form of useful capital for the labour market integration. It is, depending on the situation of the refugee, either a mandatory key to open the door for the transfer of skills and education obtained in Syria to the German labour market demands, or a necessary cornerstone based on which one can obtain further education and training in Germany which will afterwards enable the labour market entry.

4.3. Not working for the money – approaches to job search

In the mindset of my informants, work was continuously positively associated. Thereby, the meaning of work in Germany became detached from merely earning money as Jamal explained:

“I am a 100 % not working for money. Because if I not work, the Job Centre still pays me.”

Conversely, the interviewed refugees emphasized that work was important to them to be able to escape the control and the financial support from the Job Centre. In this context, they also talked about feeling ashamed, controlled or like a burden to society when they received help from the Job Centre. As opposed to that, work was linked to (financial) independence, self-responsibility and the opportunity to become responsible for others and, for example, establish a family or bring one's family from Syria to Germany. My informants also reported strong effects of work on their personal well-being. Not working was regularly associated with boredom and other negative feelings. Youssouf and Sami even talked about strong effects that being unemployed for a long term had on their health. In that sense, they experienced psychological problems like depressive feelings and compared the

condition of being unemployed to being sick and suffering from an illness. Having a job, on the contrary, was positively regarded, for example as physical exercise or a welcome distraction from homesickness. But what shone through most in my informants' narratives was that work would allow them to prove themselves and receive esteem. For Jamal and Rehab, this is true in the sense that they see work as a challenge. While Jamal wants to create something by himself that he can be proud of because it came from his "own power," Rehab gets happy when she can solve a problem and reach a satisfying work result. Khaled and Firas, on the other hand, observed that working people are considered as "big" in the sense of being important and exemplary and aim to achieve this kind of importance and respect for themselves, too. Adnan also links work in Germany to respect, but in the other direction. Out of respect and gratefulness that Germany accepted refugees, he wants to "give something back to Germany" so that in a couple of years the German society will not regret having accepted refugees. In general, it seems that since the Job Centre covers the basic needs of refugees in case of unemployment, work is to a large degree seen as a means to fulfil personal aims and expectations.

Subsequently, it is not only the German state, society, and employers that impose an expectation to work on the refugees, but the refugees themselves have expectations about their jobs, as well. For example, Oumr and Amir both declined offered apprenticeships with the explanation: "It was not my thing." Likewise, Oumr refused to work in a low-skilled job where he would be granted only an expense allowance instead of a salary since he preferred to invest his time in learning German and preparing for a higher-skilled job opportunity than to "waste time." As earlier described, he now aims to become a nurse first and later a physician, since he experienced situations without medical staff in Syria. For him, work should not just be work but have meaning.

Many of my informants remembered to have declined at least one job offer because it seemed utterly incompatible with their wishes. What might appear picky at first sight is actually a good sign. When my informants felt comfortable enough to decline a job offer while at the same time being highly motivated to work, it means that they had enough confidence in themselves and the labour market to find a

position in which they would not only be happier but in which they could also contribute their talents and skills more effectively. It seems that the financial security guaranteed by the Job Centre supports a more effective job matching for refugees because it takes away the pressure to accept the first position offered. Such a positive effect of welfare payments on the quality of jobs has also been affirmed by several studies investigating the link between the quality of employment matching and the availability of unemployment benefits (Centeno & Novo, 2006; Acemoğlu & Shimer, 2000; Nekoei & Weber, 2015). It should also be mentioned that while having declined inappropriate jobs, my informants were also ready to lower their expectations if they proved to be too high. Jamal, for instance, had the dream to become a pedagogue or therapist in Germany, but without any previous experience or even an A-level, he quickly learned that this was impossible and found work as a cook, in which he now feels well-matched. Only two of my informants after a long time of being unemployed talked about being willing to do any job if they just could find one.

After having learned about the motivation and expectation of my informants, it is now time to ask how they proceed in their job search. How do they turn their motivation into employment? During the interviews, I observed two general tendencies. Younger refugees that came without complete professional education to Germany start their professional training from zero after having learned the language. This way leads them either over classical university education or over practical apprenticeships. In both cases, they have good chances to find employment afterwards since they enter the German labour market with the same professional education that natives received. However, if university entry is possible, this seems to be the preference, as Malek said:

“For us, it was always like this: It is better to study than to do an apprenticeship because you will have more possibilities afterwards.”

Older refugees struggle more. In some cases, they cannot pursue their former profession in Germany due to a lack of certificates or a missing demand for their profession and experience in the German labour market. They have to become more creative in their job search and, if necessary, switch to other professional fields.

Theoretically, they could also start from zero again with an apprenticeship but often consider it difficult to go back to school again after being used to working and prefer to not “throw away” the experience they obtained in their old jobs, as Khaled explained to me. Studies conducted among refugees in the European Union also suggest that the employment chances shrink with age and that older refugees struggle more than younger ones to enter the labour market (Peschner, 2017; Dumont, et. al., 2016).

4.4. The Job Centre – support or barrier?

Whether educated in Germany or Syria, whether younger or older, in most cases refugees have to apply via the standard application procedure. In doing so, some refugees try to pass the application process mostly alone or with help from their private environment, but in most cases, the Job Centre accompanies the application process to a large degree. It becomes responsible for the financial support and the job placement of refugees once they receive their refugee residence permit, which is experienced as life-changing moment, as Jamal recalls:

“Then we come outside with this document [the residence permit], and after two or three days I go to register my name in the Job Centre with a translator. And then my life starts...right there. Where I will go from this point, anything, I know it after this moment.”

While some of my informants asked experienced Syrian or German friends or their German teachers for help in preparing their job application documents or even engaged professional translators, others were helped by the Job Centre from the beginning on, like Jamal²². During six weeks, a consultant was sent to him from the Job Centre twice a week. The consultant created together with Jamal on a one-to-one basis a profile of his skills, interests and work wishes. Based on this, he found out which jobs would fit his profile and where he could apply. The consultant then

²²The most widespread means of the Job Centre to help people get out of unemployment are so-called job creation schemes or labour market measures. They can take several forms, like application trainings, counselling or diverse trainings. They take between 6 and 12 weeks. The Job Centre does not only support unemployed with these measures but can also oblige them to participate.

also prepared Jamal's application with him and sent the finalized documents to some potential employers. Within one day, he got three invitations for job interviews which all led to job offers. He accepted an offer as a cook and works there until the present day. Now he is hoping that his fixed-term contract will be transformed into a permanent one in summer 2019. Another informant, Adnan, also received much help by the Job Centre and recalled his experiences very enthusiastically:

"This is great also in Germany and lots of people they don't know that, sadly. That in Germany in the Job Centre- Job Centre is not just the place to pay money to people that need it. Job Centre is always ready to support the people who want to be themselves. So as an example, you just need to go to the Job Centre and say to your advisor, because everyone has his advisor, who is responsible about him, you ask him: 'Hello, I have this experience. This is my certificate; this is what I did work. And I want to do something similar in Germany. I want to continue on this way, for example.' Or you choose another way that you want. Just explain what you want, and they will support you to learn anything about it. They support you to join any course, to make anything. Yeah, I think it's a great program in Germany."

As he goes on with his explanation, it becomes clear why Adnan is so impressed by the work of the Job Centre:

"And I have like -like a good eh memory with -with the Job Centre: One time, in the beginning, I feel that...I felt a lot that I am- I used to live in a very good situation, and I work, and always I have enough money, and I have a great life before, and now I get money as a beggar from the state. So, I feel it's difficult. So, I went- I tried to find any job and I- I went to the Jobcentre and I said: Please, I found this one as security just at some door or something like this and I want to do it. And she said to me: 'Please, you have enough ehm experience and you have your certificate, and you can find a better way than this. So, you don't need to work now. Just focus on your language, and after that, you can search. I feel now it was great because really, she pushed me to be successful.' And now I start my successful way already, and she was responsible for this. Really, she was great, because it was- Some people think that the people- the Job Centre just want you to work. No, they want you to be happy and useful and successful."

What Adnan means about his personal success is that he is now at the final steps of opening his own restaurant, which he plans to become a meeting place for natives and foreigners. In preparation for his self-employment, he was intensively supported by the Job Centre in the form of counselling for six months. Before coming to Germany, he had already gathered much experience in self-employment and trade, but with the help of experts whom the Job Centre provided, he learned to transfer his skills “to the German way.” He learned how to establish a business plan, calculate the future costs of his endeavour and receive financing for it, manage a business, lead employees and register his business. Because of this successful program tailored to his personal needs, he does not accept criticism against the Job Centre and considers every refugee to be responsible for his own success which he believes everyone can achieve because the Job Centre would be willing to help everyone. However, while being in general grateful to the financial support and services of the Job Centre, not all of my informants agreed to sing such high praises to the office.

Imad also became self-employed but had to rely much more on himself on the way there. He had more than 20 years of experience in self-employment as an animal farmer, truck and taxi driver and shopkeeper when he arrived. Since in Germany certificates are required even for the independent establishment of businesses in most professions, he had to find a profession where he could become self-employed even without formal proof of experience. Opening a bakery is such a possibility. So, he did internships in three different bakeries led by Arab owners to which he was referred to by Syrian acquaintances. After having gathered sufficient experience, he opened a bakery with another Syrian business partner. Unfortunately, the income of the bakery was not sufficient to sustain two partners and their families so that Imad retreated and tried to open a kebab store. While he received start-up financial aid, his description made obvious that he was not comprehensibly and sufficiently informed about other material or immaterial support possibilities and was indeed not encouraged in his self-employment plans. He reported having addressed the Job Centre in a time of a financial bottleneck in which he needed to invest in new material for his kebab store. Instead of being

informed about opportunities to apply for financial help or credits or other alternatives, he was simply rejected with the statement “No, we do not help you in that situation.” Even if financial help in this situation was not possible, he could have been informed more clearly about which kind of help was available and which was not in order to understand for which kind of support he could contact the Job Centre and which situations he would have to solve alone. However, this way, he was left alone and confused. According to his accounts, he addressed the Job Centre several times and, to his surprise, was rejected every time. Only one time it was explained to him that he could hand in a formal request for financial aid, though this explanation already included a discouragement:

“He [the Job Centre advisor] told me: ‘We can do a request, but it takes three months and much paper, a lot of work. And in the end, we might say: No, we don’t pay.’”

So, instead of being offered help with the forms for his request, the prospect of failure was immediately communicated to him. Consequently, he forewent the financing application. While Imad still praised the ample opportunity of support by the Job Centre, he does not join in Adnan’s unreserved praise in the efficiency of the office’s work. At the same time that Adnan received profound one-to-one counselling tailored to his needs, Imad was more or less fobbed off with the minimum standard procedure his advisor had to bestow him.

The opinions about the Job Centre also diverge regarding the degree to which it is perceived as guiding or patronizing institution. In the German society, some of the Job Centre labour market measures for unemployed are highly controversial and even have the reputation of being “useless classes to keep [people] occupied,” “improve the unemployment statistics” and “serve the careers of Job Centre employees” (Hoffmann & Honey, 2018). Some of my informants, especially higher skilled ones, confirmed this view. Youssouf, a qualified doctor, was obliged to participate in a training programme for labour market integration. However, the programme neither had a clear aim nor a structure. At least, Youssouf could not identify one. The class was composed of academic people like Youssouf but also of uneducated people not knowing the alphabet, for instance. In such a mixed class,

naturally, it is impossible to teach useful skills to all participants since everyone has different needs and starting levels. According to Youssouf, this measure was a “catastrophe” in which he spent weeks “without profit,” asking himself and the teacher “What am I doing here?”. The crux of the matter is that before starting this class, Youssouf had finished German classes at the level of B1 and precisely knew what he wanted to do next: German classes for the level B2. Instead, the Job Centre passed his legitimate wish, that would actually have been useful for him, and send him to a training programme in which he learned nothing. After complaining about this senselessness and after the teacher of the training programme also realized that Youssouf was out of place in this measure, she helped him to find a language class eventually. However, until then, more than a month of time and tuition fees got wasted. Amir and Bader told me nearly the same story. Both had ideas for their future and concrete plans how to realize them, one with an apprenticeship, the other one with further German classes, but both were forced by the Job Centre to participate in labour market measures in the form of training. Amir remembered that he was so bored in the class, in which he was supposed to learn how to write a CV and search for jobs on the internet, that he passed his time between trying not to fall asleep and assisting the teacher in helping his peers. He offered the Job Centre to give him a deadline until which he would find an apprenticeship on his own instead of taking classes for which, according to him, more than 1000 € were wasted. His request was declined with the remark that “the law is like this, this is bureaucracy.” In Amir’s eyes, it is nothing but a “waste of tax money.” Bader did not accept the obligation from the Job Centre, because he had found an advanced German course that coincided with the training programme from the Job Centre. He dared to not go to the training programme therefore and instead joined a privately financed language class, which led to a 30 % reduction of his financial support. This cut could only be reversed after a months-long quarrel with the Job Centre, the support of an NGO and a lawyer. To sum it up, sometimes the goodwill of the Job Centre leads to paternalism and obstruction of the job search of refugees. In extreme cases like Bader’s, self-initiative can even lead to punishment if the Job Centre does not agree with the chosen path.

This should not be understood in a way that the job creation schemes of the Job Centre are generally useless, but the training or counselling that refugees are sent to have to be matched to their education level and skills. In some of my informants' cases that happened indeed. In a similar way to Jamal, Tawfeek and Khaled learned in a labour market measure of the Job Centre how to find job offers, prepare application documents and pass a job interview. For them, the measure was a necessary step because they initially had no clue how to proceed in the application process in Germany. It was also the teacher in this measure that persuaded Khaled to overcome his fear of speaking German and go to the Chamber of Industry and Commerce to get his certificates acknowledged. Overall, it became clear during the narrations of my informants that they know themselves what is best for them. For maximum efficiency, they do not necessarily need counselling on what they should do but instead support in being enabled to take the offers they want to make use of. Research on the efficiency of labour market measures in Germany comes to a similar conclusion as my informants. They find that all measures of the Job Centre have justified reasons for existence and the power to support unemployed. However, the support measures only show positive results only when they are adapted to the profile and needs of the unemployed (Koch, Spies, Stephan, & Wolff, 2011). This means a labour market measure is not automatically beneficial for a refugee, either, but has to provide him with skills he does not already have. Otherwise, it will be nothing more than "occupational therapy". Therefore, Koch et. al. also supported the idea of giving the person responsible in the Job Centre more margin of discretion to be able to decide which measure an unemployed refugee should be sent to instead of being forced to send refugees in unnecessary training just because bureaucratic rules dictate so (ibid., p. 8).

Labour market schemes are not the only offer by the Job Centre provided to unemployed. It also proposes open positions or relevant labour-market related events to job seekers, like for example job fairs.²³ While in general, these efforts are positive, my informants identified many points to improve. Oumr, for example,

²³ The proposal usually comes along with an obligation to apply for the suggested position or to visit the suggested event.

explained that especially in the beginning, he received many letters from the Job Centre in German and did not know what to do with them, since he did not understand the language at that time. Also, many of the jobs offered to him did not correspond to his preferences, so that he preferred to find a job alone. Others, like Fawad, criticized that they were not sufficiently or even misinformed by the office. Fawad notified his Job Centre advisor that he would like to finish his A-level and continue with university studies. At that time, his advisor ignored his wish and told him he first needed to reach a certain German level. When he did, he was too old to resume high school in the regular way. He was shocked when he learned about this since his advisor had never given him detailed information on how he could fulfil his wish to study. He still has the possibility to receive his A-level with evening classes or adult education centres, but at the Job Centre “nobody helped” him to do so and he alone “was too young, I had no experience in this country.” So, for him, the problem was not a lack of possibilities but misinformation by the Job Centre. From now on, he does not rely on the Job Centre for information anymore but tries to get support from organizations like the Workers’ Welfare Association (AWO). A general impression that evolved during the conversations with my informants was that the employees at the Job Centre did not take enough time (or maybe could not take enough time due to high workload) for a profound consultation. A reason might be the fact of a tight staff-client-ratio, which does not allow advisors to spend extensive time with their clients and was already suggested for improvement in a study commissioned by the OECD (Tergeist & Grubb, 2006, pp. 21, 52).

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, my informants tried to a large degree to find employment on their own. Not surprisingly, the Internet played a central role in that. After arriving in Germany, Amir, for example, allowed himself a break of three months to get informed about apprenticeship and study opportunities in Germany. Many other of my informants registered on online job exchanges or used the Internet in other ways to check for open positions. Parallel to this, my informants needed to have their certificates translated and acknowledged which is a lengthy process that can take up to three months. Talking about certificates, driver’s licenses should not be neglected. Until now, the Syrian driver’s license is not acknowledged

for long-term stays in Germany so that Syrians have to repeat the theoretical and practical exam, which is hard to pass and accompanied by high learning efforts. At the same time, a driver's license is a useful tool since once it is available, it opens the way to many low or medium-skilled jobs such as postmen. All in all, the application process for medium to high-skilled jobs was described to be tedious. Until today, Youssef wrote more than 60 applications for positions as a doctor and was not successful yet, and also Amir recounted to have sent about 60 applications before finding a suitable apprenticeship position.

During this lengthy process until reaching a regular job, many informants tried to bridge the waiting time and make their skills more transferable to the demands of the German labour market by internships or voluntary jobs. However, this proved to be effective only in some cases and to limited degrees. One reason is that in Germany, as opposed to Syria, nothing works without certificates, as Sami laments:

“Let's say...for example, I'm a hairdresser. In Syria, I can work without papers, without training. Here, it's not possible. In Syria, I go to a salon, and when your work is good for one week, you work [...] The problem is: There are many Syrian people that work very diligently. They know many jobs, and they can work. But the problem in Germany is the papers, always papers, you know? For example, when I go to a German company like Amazon to work: 'You need a driver's license, you need an apprenticeship, you need...I don't know what else. There are many, many, many problems here.'”

Another problem in that sense is that even if refugees can enter internships and obtain more experience, many professions in Germany are so specialized that only experts can do them, while jobs that do not require great expertise are outsourced to low-wage countries like China. Tawfeek, for instance, repaired and mounted computers, printers and other electric and electronic devices in Syria for years. He traces his failure to find a job also back to the fact that in Germany, there is no demand for all-round-talents or certain professions but that mainly specialists are needed. The described problems of my informants to not find jobs because of strict requirements to prove skills as well as to potential skill mismatches are also identified in the literature as major labour market integration obstacles. Experts consider this inflexibility as one of the major challenges to migrants' labour market

integration in Germany and call for more flexible solutions to acknowledge or develop the skills of refugees to make them apt for the German labour market (Gehrsitz & Ungerer, 2017; Wößmann, 2015; Bofinger et al., 2015).

But even a combination of specialization, labour demand, and host-country language knowledge is not a guarantee for finding employment, as Youssouf's case demonstrates vividly. On the German labour market, physicians are among the most needed professionals and the "lack of doctors" is an omnipresent concern in the debate on the health sector. So, when Youssouf came to Germany, he expected to find employment quickly. However, after more than five years in Germany, classes in medical language, the recognition of his certificates in Germany and two internships in renowned hospitals, he could not attain a job. He also searched outside his specialization as ear, nose and throat (ENT) doctor, but that seems to have made it even more difficult since some employers confronted him with their worries that he might change his job at the first opportunity if they employed him in another field than ENT. Eventually, Youssouf concluded that his failure in finding a job could only be related to his age since all other of his characteristics, education, skills and experience, are impeccable. This suspicion was confirmed by his observations, as he explained. After he took a class in medical language and took an assessment test with a dozen Syrian colleagues, all young colleagues in their twenties or thirties found jobs within a few months. Only Youssouf and two others which were over forty struggled for four years or longer to get employed.

All in all, it seems that experience and internships are more useful at lower career levels. Oumr, for example, was offered an apprenticeship as an educator after a voluntary service in a kindergarten. But he declined, did an internship in a hospital and later easily found an apprenticeship position there. Another good example of turning experience into a regular job is Adnan. Before he prepared to become self-employed, he volunteered in an organization whose aim was to connect natives with refugees. There, he turned his refugee status into capital by developing a project in which refugees become tour guides who show Berlin to tourists and locals from the perspective of a refugee. This project was so successful that it became a regular source of income for him.

Though internships and other experiences do not seem to be a guarantor for employment, my informants valued them highly. For one thing, because it was considered better to do anything than to do nothing. Youssouf, for example, suggested that if no regular positions were available, people should still be made work in their regular jobs even without payment (the Job Centre should only continue to pay the regular unemployment benefits) instead of sending them into useless labour market measures. Others, like Firas or Khaled, called for more internship opportunities to give people an opportunity to learn, and expand or transfer their skills to the German labour market reality.

4.5. Sticking to locals or newcomers? – the role of contacts in job search

4.5.1. “You can do it!” – building support networks with compatriots

Struggles to settle in in the German system were common among my informants. In these situations, their first contact persons to address were Syrian peers who had lived in Germany an extended period and gone through the same integration process. Nearly all of my interview partners already knew some family member, a former neighbour, a friend or distant relative in Berlin. In the shelters and later in the language classes, they regularly extended their Syrian network further. Some, like Fawad, even reported that their social network only consisted of Syrian and other Arab friends.

Those networks were used in diverse ways, but mainly as emotional support and information source. Amir and Rehab, two siblings who came together with their parents, both spoke of the positive effects their close family ties had on their integration. When I asked Amir for the reasons he felt so comfortable and well-integrated in Berlin, he answered among others:

“I think one advantage is that my parents are with me...like this, I don’t feel so foreign. When I will go home now, I- I will find my mom and my dad. I have such a familiar atmosphere...and my parents are really open-minded and always support me, you know? Like: ‘You can do it!’”

The same was true for his sister. Though she underlined that her family could not help her a lot professionally, she confirmed that generally speaking, they were most important to give her the strength to build a new life in Berlin:

“You know, it’s maybe too emotional...but for me, I feel they are protection; they are my background. Like, when I’m not so good, I always have them. Like, sometimes when I’m depressed or stressed because my studies are not going well, only to have a cup of coffee with my dad will be able to make me feel better. I know it’s childish (laughs)...Like, I feel I am protected.”

Apart from providing emotional support, family can indeed play a role for the labour market integration, in the positive as well as in the negative sense. When I met Sami, he was busy preparing for his wedding with his Syrian fiancée in Berlin. However, the paperwork to pave the way for this marriage was so time-consuming, that he could not focus on much else during this time, neither on meeting Germans nor on the job search. Fawad also felt the consequences of the preoccupation with family issues. He came to Germany with his sister and mother, while his father initially had to stay in Syria. Therefore, Fawad began to feel responsible for his family; a role which he did not feel very comfortable with since he felt it gave him extra pressure as well as hindered him from studying and taking care of his own integration. Imad experienced this situation from the other perspective. He continuously struggled with the paperwork for the Job Centre, the insurance companies, the tax consultant and the tax office on the way to his self-employment. So, similar to Fawad’s role in his family, Imad’s son, who visits a high school in Berlin, undertook most of the paperwork for him or accompanied him to appointments with authorities as a translator.

In terms of self-employment, my informants tended to be reluctant to take the step into entrepreneurial independence alone and looked for potential business partners among their Syrian compatriots. Imad did so for his bakery, Adnan for his restaurant, and also Fawad and Jamal have ideas about opening own restaurants or shops with Syrian acquaintances.

When it comes to regular employment, another widespread mutual assistance between Syrians was the preparation and control of application documents and even

the practising of job interviews. In addition, my informants often received tips about open positions from their friends. Regularly, the contacts who informed about an open position had direct contacts with the employers and recommended my informants to the employer. On this way, the employers sometimes even dispensed with the formal application process and just required a trial period of a couple of days. It is important to mention, however, that my informants only mentioned this approach to get into low-skilled jobs and mostly not in full, but part-time positions. Only based on the reference of their friends, Rehab started to work in the warehouse of Zara, Imad, Khaled and Sami got jobs in bakeries, and Malek became a mover.

4.5.2. “When you don’t have vitamin B” – accepting help from natives

Naturally, Syrian and Arab contacts are not sufficient for successful integration in the Berlin society and labour market. It needs native contacts to really find one’s place in a new environment, or as Oumr phrased it:

“Well, I think here, the life in Germany, when you don’t have contacts, when you don’t have vitamin B so to say...then it is really very hard to find a job.”

Oumr always had vast contacts with natives, be it when he lived and worked in a kindergarten, when he worked part-time in a techno club or when he did an internship in a hospital. His native contacts practised German with him, referred him to job opportunities, to other German contact persons or helped him prepare his application to be accepted for an apprenticeship as a nurse. Not surprisingly, he is certain that without his vast network, he would not have come so far in less than four years in Germany. A similar case, in which the contact to natives was decisive was Amir’s way into apprenticeship that was at the same time accompanied by much personal initiative. When Amir was forced to participate in a labour market scheme and got bored so much, he searched on the internet for contact persons to help him out of his situation and into an apprenticeship. He found the Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK) and tried his luck calling there. After a short introduction of himself, all he said on the phone was “Please, help me find an apprenticeship!” His ambitious call left the IHK employee both laughing and impressed. Though she explained to him that the IHK actually did not have a

program to match refugees with apprenticeships, she transferred him to her colleague Mr. Voß, who was to become Amir's key to success. While Amir served his time in the labour market measure, Mr. Voß sent him every day five to six suggestions for positions in fields that Amir was interested in, such as graphic design, IT and trade. Before Amir went to job interviews, Mr. Voß even called the companies and stood up for Amir by explaining that he knew him personally, that he spoke German well and always performed strongly in school. While Mr. Voß' task was indeed to match migrants with positions on the Berlin labour market, Amir is sure that his support did not fall into his field of responsibilities and that he invested more into Amir than he was supposed to:

“He had another- another task. But at that time, he helped me, and he even was new in the programme [...]. I know that he helped me more than it was his task. He was really nice, and he also called me after the job interview: ‘How did it go?’ ...also as a friend.”

Later, after Amir received a commercial apprenticeship position in a big plant wholesale trade and struggled in the classes for his apprenticeship, Mr. Voß also helped him to repeat one year and to receive private tutoring. Both stay in close contact until today, and every time Amir has a sense of achievement, he lets Mr. Voß know, who is “really proud” of his protégé. Amir thinks that German references like Mr. Voß are also crucial because they can help to reduce employers' hesitations to hire refugees:

“He [Mr. Voß] explained to me that many companies, they- they are, I am not sure...afraid of foreigners. And I can understand that since they don't know from which culture this person comes. Can we stay with him for three years or not? Are we similar? Will we get along or not?”

Rehab confirms the importance Amir grants to references. After studying toxicology in her graduate studies and looking for a Ph.D., her professors, who were already highly supportive during her studies, called her attention to available positions and recommended her in their references. She easily found a PhD position. Thus, references of Germans, like Mr. Voß, offered for Amir or Rehab's professors for her, can alleviate employers' concerns. Without those references, refugees often have to prove themselves, which can take time, as Oumr experienced

once when, despite his big network, he could not rely on a reference. Among others, he worked in a marginal job at a techno club. However, his chef was reluctant to transfer him too much responsibility and only let him work sporadically. The boss was afraid a Muslim might not fit well into Berlin nightlife and make trouble. But the more Oumr worked there, the more responsibility and shifts he obtained until he was even offered a full-time job (which he declined because of the nurse apprenticeship he wanted to start). In contrast to these experiences, Youssouf declared not to believe that finding a position over contacts was possible in Germany. While he thinks networking and referring works well in Syria, he sees Germany as “state under the rule of law” in which it would be difficult to circumvent the normal application process. He tried, though. One of his contacts had a leading position in the Red Cross and referred him to a hospital director, unfortunately to no avail.

Not only Youssouf is sceptical about the ability of social networks to help refugees in Germany to get into employment. The literature on that point is also divided. However, there is a tendency to acknowledge the potential of contacts to natives while inter-ethnic contacts are said to be rather insignificant or only helpful in finding low-skilled jobs (Lancee, 2012; Dustman et al., 2016; Gericke et al., 2017). While the described events examine natives as direct intermediaries between employers and refugees, they can also be useful in playing secondary roles during the labour market entry of refugees. My informants for example consistently perceived it as beneficial to be able to enter into contact with volunteers, social workers or maybe neighbours to practice German, receive help in understanding official letters, get tips about potential employers or just become part of a community, as the following paragraph will show.

4.5.3. “It is your home, too” – integration of refugees by the society

Although having vast contacts to natives in one’s private life, like going to cafés or parties together, meeting in dancing or sport groups, does not seem to bring refugees closer to employment at first glance, Amir explained to me why it should not be left out in an analysis of refugees’ labour market integration. The reason is as simple as

it is clear, though in reality still hard for the German society to realize: To integrate refugees into the labour market,

“I have to give them the feeling: This, here...it is your home²⁴, too. This is the first thing. After that, I think about how they integrate into the labour market. When one does not feel that this country is his home, then he will not integrate, even when he stays 16 years. When he walks on the street, and he feels foreign, and many call him a foreigner...of course, he will not integrate.”

According to Amir, integration is two-sided. On the one hand, he considers himself an ambassador for his country who should transmit a correct image about Syria to the German society. On the other hand, Germans should get better informed about Syria as a country and about the possibilities that Syrians offer to Germany. Amir declared that the economic situation in Germany was not negatively affected by refugees. On the contrary, refugees can be an economic enrichment under the condition that they are accepted in the sense that they are not merely tolerated but really welcomed as an inherent part of the society.

Many of my informants shared the view about a two-sided integration which derived from many everyday racism²⁵ experiences they made. When a student is seriously asked if there are proper streets in Syria or if he had to ride to school by camel, when a girl is excluded from conversations about relationships because it is assumed that she cannot choose her husband freely anyways or when someone is told to not look like Syrian at all because he dresses well, then it is to no surprise that many of my informants called for more educational efforts and the promotion of tolerance in Germany. Ironically, the German authorities monitor closely that every refugee visits an orientation class to learn about the German culture, politics,

²⁴He used the German word “Heimat“, which has a slightly more intense meaning than the English “home“. In English, home refers first of all to the place where one lives and only secondly to someone’s place of origin, and can be used only for one’s current living place, without referring to his origins (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). In German, Heimat means the place in which one grew up or to which one feels he belongs to (Duden, 2019). So, it has an emphasis to the feeling of belonging and is not necessarily bound to one’s current living place.

²⁵Before the interviews with my informants, I expected that besides everyday racism, the reluctance of employers to hire refugees due to their ethnicity might play a role in the success of finding a job. But apart from Amir who was told by Mr. Voß that employers might be reluctant to employ refugees, none of my informants confirmed discrimination in the application process. Some experienced exclusion by colleagues once they were hired. But from the employers’ side, no one felt discrimination and thus also not able to give a judgement on that matter.

history etc. According to the narrations of my informants, however, I got the impression that also Germans should be obliged to learn about other cultures and countries. Outdated, distorted or simply wrong impressions of Germans about Syrians complicate the integration of refugees because, following Amir's argumentation, they do not feel fully accepted and cannot start to feel home. Moreover, those impressions, according to Malek, are easily reproduced by the media who tend to report only about extreme, negative incidences in which refugees were involved. Adnan joined their appeals for more mutual rapprochement. After all, Adnan dedicated his labour force to the creation of a restaurant in which natives, refugees, and other foreigners should come together. He emphasized that distinctions such as "locals" and "newcomers" should be used only cautiously since especially young foreigners tend to consider themselves as a natural part of Germany – a huge chance for the labour market, which should be used. Negative examples, such as Khaled's case who was too afraid to speak German and thus did not have his certificates acknowledged, show where rejection can lead otherwise. In the end, it was not only Khaled's fear of talking German but the fear of being rejected or mocked due to not speaking perfectly, that let him withdraw himself. Actually, it is so easy it should not even have to be written down: When refugees feel welcome, they will also be eager to integrate themselves and interact with their new home society. When they feel rejected, they will, in turn, withdraw themselves and not invest in integration. In this sense, a lot needs to be done in German society. Not considering the private initiatives that exist widely to support refugees, the majority of my informants expressed to have found a society that tends to be restrained, too rushed for small conversations and not naturally approaching strangers in daily life. Fawad pointed out that this might also be led back to the fact that Berlin as a big city always seems to be in a rush and people have a more individualistic focus in which close relations play a minor role than they do in villages. That makes it difficult for foreigners to approach natives. Imad, for example, feels until today shy towards his neighbours and is not sure how he can approach them without being considered strange. During the interviews, I realized that this problem mainly occurs for middle-aged persons. Young ones rather easily

join sports clubs, dancing associations, theatre groups or just network during parties. For older ones, this is often not possible, either because they have a family to take care of and spend their free time with or because they just feel too old to join those events.

4.6. Building a future – outlook and retrospective

After they have come a long way from being a refugee to being a member of the host-country labour market, it cannot be neglected how my informants themselves evaluate their labour market integration in Berlin and how, based on this judgment, they picture their future in Germany.

The overall impression that remained for my informants, whether their labour market integration was successful or not, is one of gratitude. The gratitude of being accepted to Germany and of never being really left alone. As Sami said, unlike in Syria, everyone is supported from childhood until work life. Whatever one wants to do, be it studying or working directly, there is some kind of support available to find a way into a career. Some of my informants even felt so humble, they would not be willing to openly criticize anything or give proposals for improvements because they thought as guests, they should respect the system. Out of those considerations, some also formulated incomprehension towards compatriots that have been in the country for years without learning the language, working or adapting to the culture. As Amir said:

“They always feel foreign here and moan that it is not good here. And I said to many of them: ‘Why are you here when you don’t like it? I am not a Nazi, but really, why are you here? Why do you get social welfare?’”

The interview with Amir left the strongest impression on me, because I may have expected everything but not that I could meet someone who, after less than five years, could leave the impression of being more German than most German-born people themselves. He has a safe work, he sings in a choir, he plays theatre, he joined a hiking group in which he became one of the organizers, he gives lectures about his own integration in Germany, met with the German president and gave him advice on what could be done better for the integration of refugees in Germany.

Last but not least, he says about himself “Ich bin ein Berliner” with even more enthusiasm than Kennedy. It is precisely because he feels home, as he credibly says, that he would never do something bad and tries all his best. It is this positive attitude and this personal initiative that many of my informants, like Amir, Oumr, Adnan, Firas or Rehab, stated to have been central for their success in finding a job: staying positive and open-minded, not giving up, trying hard and relying as much on oneself as possible. Adnan, for example, said that you can always see a bottle as half empty or half full. The same way, one could always say that bureaucracy is too difficult and give up just focusing on this point instead of just starting to try and deal with it. A question I could not answer, however, is if they can afford such a positive attitude because they were successful or if it was this attitude that brought them success. I also saw the desperation of Bader, who wants to work so badly but cannot until he finds an affordable flat which seems impossible to him right now. Or Imad, who tried self-employment twice and failed both times, the first time for financial reasons, the second time because there was an explosion in his kebab store and he could not fulfil the bureaucratic and legal requirements to open it again.

The experiences of my informants were so individual that it seems impossible to make a general statement about which factors (except for language which was mandatory in all cases) need to be present to assure labour market integration. Undoubtedly, they all play their role, the living situation, the education and experience, the support and bureaucracy of the Job Centre, the social network, the personal attitude, and even luck. However, for all my informants, a different factor was decisive in the labour market entry. Nevertheless, their experiences can be used to point out to some activities and measures which are promising to facilitate and accelerate labour market integration of refugees. In a joint brainstorming towards the end of the interviews, I tried to reflect with all of my informants which factors were key for them to get into the labour market. Later, I complemented our results with the input of my own data analysis so that the following summary can be made: The one imperative none of my informants could avoid in order to be able to enter the labour market was the language. There is not only a statutory regulation for refugees to familiarize with the language, but also employers are not willing and

due to the circumstances of the labour market not able to accept non-speaking workers. Despite the classes and diverse other means which are available to build up the language skills, the language hurdle was not only the most important but also the most difficult to pass on the way to employment. However, language and employment are mutually beneficial. Language skills open the doors to more and diverse jobs, while pursuing a professional activity usually effectively increases the former. Yet, since employment is usually not available in the early phases of arrival, my informants made the case for a large social engagement of refugees parallel to the initial language classes. With social engagement, not only networking is meant, but rather volunteering activities in social fields. My informants emphasized that thus, one would gather relevant social contacts, obtain many speaking opportunities and not lose working practice. Some of my informants even advocated for an obligation of refugees by the Job Centre to work unpaid until they would find regular employment. If such an obligation will be discussed by decision makers or not, there seems to be a consensus that work experience, especially in the beginning and in social areas, is beneficial.

Language and some form of activity are thus the first two cornerstones on which to build further integration measures. However, these two stones should be able to come along in different forms which are adapted to the refugees' needs. While for young people profound German learning and intensive education should be guaranteed to prepare for a successful career, for middle-aged and older people the focus could lie more on learning by doing. In their cases, language classes should be shortened if they struggle and be replaced by practical experience, even if this only means low-skilled jobs. To make such flexible approaches possible, two things are necessary: bureaucratic barriers have to be abolished by the Job Centre and the required work opportunities have to be created. The bureaucratic system, which was criticized to often lack "logic and sense" needs to be adapted to deal with the increased numbers of refugees by reducing its complex structures. Procedures like the acknowledgement of certificates, the publishing of language class results or the procedure to repeat the driver's license have also to be shortened. To make the necessary work opportunities available, two ideas were given: Refugees who want

to become self-employed should be assisted by the Job Centre more extensively and uncomplicated. Moreover, more internship opportunities should be created. Actually, there is much labour demand in Germany; however, my informants bemoaned that not enough internship possibilities or the like are available to adjust one's skills and gather experiences relevant to the German labour market.

But labour market integration of refugees is not just the task of the German authorities, it also requires the action of refugees themselves. In this point, my informants highlighted the importance of becoming independent quickly. Therefore, refugees should try to rely as little as possible on others but seek to solve paperwork, appointments with authorities and translations alone. The ideal is a combination of self-responsibility with the parallel gathering of as many contacts as possible, which in turn also has positive effects on the language practice. But according to the experiences of my refugees, integration should actually already start way earlier - ideally with an emotional, psychological and organizational preparation even before or upon arrival to Germany. My informants emphasized that in general, before coming to Germany, one should ask himself if one is prepared to learn, work and always stick to the rules even if facing obstacles²⁶. Such an attitude according to my informants would facilitate integration a lot and also help to tackle obstacles which might at first appear to be huge but become surmountable once one does not become demotivated and instead approaches them step by step. Related to this topic of motivation and not giving up on one's own integration, some of my informants also suggested the German authorities to push refugees more. Proposals were among others putting a deadline on the period in which refugees have to learn German and become independent. Until then, the Job Centre should support the refugees in their plans as good as possible, but afterwards, everyone should depend on himself, as Adnan put forward:

²⁶In this context, my informants also talked about not accepting illegal work. At first, I was surprised that illegal work did not come up as issue in the interviews, as the readers of this paper might also be. However, it should be noted that illegal work is in generally not widespread in Germany (apart from neighbourhood assistances which from time to time are paid but not declared). Moreover, marginal jobs until a monthly payment of 450 € are exempt from social security contributions anyways, so that this also lowers the scope for illegal work.

“You can push the people. Like anything in the world. It’s not like because we are living in a democracy. No, it’s not like this. Like in any school of the world in the end of the year you have an exam and if you don’t pass this exam, you will stay and the others will be successful and start with the new year... I mean, when they put this period, it’s a supportive period and a limited period...and then it’s maybe better to let the people face their difficulties, you know? But now, for example, I have time, and I haven’t enough motivation. For example, I’m going to learn something, and I say: ‘Okay, I will do this another time.’ So, I have no pressure, you know?”

On the other hand, it has been demonstrated that paternalism by the Job Centre can lead to the reverse outcome of what is actually aimed for. Thus, it can be said that the Job Centre should indeed challenge and promote refugees in becoming active and working towards their own labour market entry. However, it should not dictate the way of their labour market entry but rather provide support according to the needs of refugees. This support should also not stop immediately after refugees have found employment. A transition period should be granted, for example, to allow refugees to handle their housing situation once they cannot rely on the flat provided by the Job Centre anymore.

The picture that emerged is that a successful labour market integration becomes more likely when it is composed of personal initiative to work and learn and the practical implementation of this willingness in the form of voluntary work, internships or marginal jobs until regular employment can be obtained. This should be accompanied by the Job Centre in a way that does not place further obstacles in terms of complex bureaucratic processes in their path but rather gets some obstacles out of the way by informing, pushing, making education available and maybe even providing houses. During this process, the personal environment plays a supporting role in the form of emotional support, language practice - if the contacts are natives - and job references or general information about work in the host country.

Although my informants had to pass many steps on their way to labour market entry, from tedious bureaucratic registration processes over lengthy language classes, intensive internships, voluntary positions or marginal jobs, most of them successfully entered occupations. The main crux was how long it took them to do

so since regularly they had to be patient for at least one or two years before getting into employment. But once they entered regular jobs, they were usually financially secured, satisfied with the requirement level of their tasks and relatively safe in terms of job security. Although nearly all informants reported about major struggles, big and reoccurring failures were not the norm. Thus, most of my informants did not only become technically integrated but also emotionally. This is shown by the fact that nearly all of them see their future in Germany. Asked for the long-term perspectives, I heard answers like:

“I want to build my future here, since there [in Syria] there is no future anymore. Like in Iraq or so. The whole cities, the whole country is destroyed.”

Or:

“Maybe later I will visit Syria. But living there? No. Because I have this saying: ‘Home is not where you were born. Home is, where you are feeling embraced... where you feel accepted, this is your home. And I feel really good here, you know? I never feel foreign.’”

So, while some did not want to go back to Syria because they got so used to Germany or thought of Syria as a country without opportunities, others do not want to go back because in Germany they see more potential for their future, especially in terms of career opportunities and stability. They want to stay because they feel comfortable and safe in terms of living, work and finances. And is that not a good indicator of integration?

5. LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES IN ISTANBUL

5.1. Searching opportunities – Turkey as more than a transition state

My informants in Berlin came to Germany because they had high hopes in their future there, it was their first choice and express wish to arrive there. As opposed to that, most of my informants in Istanbul chose Turkey by an exclusion procedure. They reflected their options and Turkey ended up being the most pragmatic and practical choice. While the closest countries to Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, were reported to be economically unattractive and already too crowded with refugees, other Arabic countries like the Gulf States were described as too expensive or

requiring visas, and the route to Europe forecasted to be too dangerous. Five of my informants initially only came to Turkey as an intermediate stop on their way to Europe, Canada or the Gulf States but later decided to stay or were forced to do so due to the circumstances. Further reasons to come to Turkey were the geographic proximity to Syria and thus to the family that remained there, family connections in Turkey as well as expected cultural similarities. However, similar to my informants in Germany, economic and work considerations played a major role in most of the decisions. Nour and Saleh, a married couple, for example, compared the probable labour market integration process in European countries with the one in Turkey and came to the conclusion that on the Turkish labour market, they could make use of their skills quicker. As Nour, someone who describes herself as a real workaholic, said:

“We had like dozens of friends who like went to Germany or Belgium, not Belgium, Germany, Sweden. And back then, people were staying in a camp for six months or a year. So, you get paid from the government, you won’t do anything. You will do some classes but not intensive, like not in an intense way. So, you will spend a year in a camp, doing nothing, getting really like... It’s not about the money, it’s about you staying there not doing anything. You feel yourself really useless and we will get divorced...like, eventually.”

Saleh added that he would be psychologically destroyed in a scenario staying without work and that he was afraid of becoming lazy, dependent and finally unsuccessful. These descriptions demonstrate that, similar to my informants in Germany, work as activity, in general, was positively associated with a feeling of productivity from which one could obtain personal satisfaction or pride. Thus, it became important for my informants to be able to work in Turkey; or making oneself “feel human” by working is how Hamza described it. Realizing and working on one’s personal interests, becoming successful, contributing to innovation and building technologies for the future, all these were things my informants dreamed about and wanted to achieve by working in Turkey. Work was described by my informants as one of the most important things in life:

“Like, I mean, we all work because we need the money to live. But for some people work is also self-fulfilment, giving something...in the abstract sense. That’s that

for me, I agree with this idea. Because you spend your time mostly at work, not with your family. So, if you want to be glad at your job, if you want to be happy in your place, you need to do what you wanted to do or what you're good at.

Unfortunately, so far no one gave me that opportunity. Or like I didn't find it yet." Wissam's statement already hints to the fact that in some cases the refugees' expectations could not be met by reality and dreams often had to be put back for the sake of a job that would be sufficient for subsistence. But in his quote, he also mentioned another key phrase: "opportunities". While many of my informants entered Turkey without concrete ideas in mind for their work future, nearly all had big hopes. Ibrahim, for example, had the idea that "you can find whatever you want in Turkey" and furthermore, that, due to being young, he could learn, work and "build a life from nothing." Only few really had specific notions about their job aims. Wissam and Oday both studied tourism in Syria and therefore anticipated to easily find jobs in the country that attracts millions of tourists every year. Mouneer, who worked as a freelance graphic designer in Syria, informed himself about the job opportunities in Turkey and assumed that he could continue in his field in Turkey, too. To facilitate and speed up his labour market integration in Turkey, he even prepared a contact list composed of 90 % potential business contacts on site which he found on the internet and 10 % personal contacts before his arrival. Moreover, he started to work in a home office and prepare some graphic design projects for a Syrian acquaintance who already lived in Turkey in the hope to continue working with this acquaintance after his arrival. Unfortunately, he was exploited and deceived, since he never received the payment for his work and his employer vanished after his arrival in Turkey. While most of my informants did not start to look for work before their arrival in Turkey, Mouneer was not the only one to prepare his integration beforehand. Hamza, for example, called friends to get informed about living costs in Turkey as well as social and economic structures. Wissam, Ibrahim and Oday frequented Turkish culture centres and already started to learn the language. In general, my informants in Istanbul entered Turkey with fewer anticipations and much lower hopes than my informants in Berlin brought with them to Germany. Usually, they had no concrete expectations about the work

they would take up and were prepared to take things as they come. Yet, the aspect of labour was still decisive in their host country selection, which is demonstrated by the exclusion principle based on which they chose Turkey under consideration of factors like work. This is opposed to the rejection of labour as a pull factor by authors like Mayblin (2016) or Valenta, Zuparic-Iljic and Vidovic (2015). On the other hand, it corresponds to research that analysed the effect of specific labour market-related variables to the selection of host countries. Similar to the accounts of my informants, Aksoy and Poutvaara (2019) as well as Zimmermann (1994) confirmed that refugees tend to choose destinations in which they expect to be able to access the labour market quickly and find good economic opportunities due to factors such as big market size or low access restrictions. That my informants choose Turkey to a large degree for economic reasons but at the same time without too high expectations is interesting because it gives reason to assume that they would enter the labour market with a high preparedness and flexibility to adapt to what they would encounter. The question that then comes up is if this approach is leading to their success or exploitation in the labour market.

5.2. Being competitive – skills and their transferability

5.2.1. Turkish as “plus” but no “priority” – the need for language

As I mentioned in the previous paragraph, three of my informants started to learn Turkish before actually arriving. However, they also stated that this did not help them significantly and they had most of the learning still ahead of them at their arrival. While my informants in Berlin were given time and the opportunity to only focus on the language in the beginning, my informants in Istanbul did not have such a support. As a consequence, my informants expressed that language became one of their major worries in terms of integration. Even before coming to Turkey my informants were well aware of the fact that

“if you want to build something in any country, not only in Turkey, if you go to any country in the world, when you go to the country, if you’re planning to live in it: Learn its language...because that is the key for you to meet the people, to understand the culture, to find a job, find a social life, to find everything. Because

if you don't understand, you won't like the country no matter how lovely and beautiful it is...and no matter if the people are sweet and understand you.”

For this reason, some of my informants, like Mouneer, would go so far to state that, if possible, Syrians should prefer to go to places where Arabic or English are spoken. Since especially when they compared their experiences to their compatriots who found refuge in Arabic countries like Jordan or Lebanon, they saw language as main retardant factor. For my informants themselves consider language to be “a big deal” (Bassel) for integration, I also want to briefly reflect their experiences with language and labour in the following paragraph.

From my informants, the majority could only take short classes of two or three months to reach the A2 level. Generally, they financed their classes privately. Though free classes are offered by NGOs, they were not regularly frequented by my informants for several reasons. The offers for free classes are not nearly as widespread and diverse as they were for my informants in Berlin. In connection with the relatively small supply, classes are available only in some places at specific times so that often my informants could not match them into their schedule. What's more, many of my informants did not even know about the opportunity to participate in free language classes. The ones that did often had heard negative criticism about the classes and decided to not consider this option further or tried them but were not satisfied. Like Anas, who made the experience that the free classes were not sufficiently professionally taught.

“I had someone teaching from a Syrian NGO but it was a Syrian and his accent was not good.”

The fact that refugees are not convinced by the language classes offered by NGOs in Turkey and do not attend them for that reason has also been stated by refugees in other surveys and seems to be a common problem (Şimşek & Çorabatır, 2016). In that sense, Nour was really lucky. Although her job does not require Turkish but mainly Arabic and English, her boss hired a private Turkish teacher who taught all Syrian employees in his company the basic skills over two months. Still, among my informants, learning by doing was the predominant learning method. Only two, Abeer and Hamza, could study Turkish intensely and over six months up to the

advanced level. Abeer received a scholarship from a language school that allowed her to study Turkish, while Hamza had the financial means to do so. The others, who had taken short-term courses, explained that the need to work and the long working hours in Turkey did not leave enough time to take or continue classes. However, this leads to a trade-off which is difficult to solve, as for example Mouneer describes. He works in graphic design and wants to build a career in this field, which is difficult without an advanced level of Turkish. At the same time, in addition to his regular working hours in graphic design, he always has to stay up-to-date about the developments in his field and study a lot, which takes almost all his time so that no time is left for learning Turkish. This struggle was common among my informants. They realized that finding a good job without language is difficult but could not learn with professional help due to extended working hours. Subsequently, most learned Turkish by everyday life conversations or even at work. Ibrahim, for example, worked for some time in a shop for phone covers and was taught a lot Turkish by his boss in calm times. Another good example is Bilal, who never took any Turkish classes. For his first job interview, his future employer called a translator. Though not having any Turkish skills initially, he got the job and was forced to learn to speak the language quickly since the whole communication with his colleagues and customers was in Turkish. Like this, he became fluent within a couple of months. His experience underlines the general tenor that not only language positively affects the employment chances, but that employment also fosters language skills (OECD, 2018). In general, it can be said that the informants working in Turkish environments learned the language quickly. They tended to feel able for simple conversations after six months, for normal and comfortable conversations after one year and for fluent communication after two years. Compared to the experience of the refugees in Berlin, Turkish seems to be easier to learn even without classes. This is an important plus for labour market integration as the literature confirms the positive impact of language skills on labour market outcomes such as the ability to obtain employment, the wage level and skill level of the job (Chiswick & Miller, 2002; Dustmann & Glitz, 2012; Schuss, 2018; Zorlu & Hartog, 2018). However, those informants in Istanbul who worked in Arabic or

English and were forced to learn Turkish “from the streets” struggled a lot and, in most cases, struggle until today, simply because they did not feel the absolute necessity to learn. Ibrahim, who experienced this situation, suggested half seriously, half-jokingly, that in those cases, the best thing would be to find a Turkish girl- or boyfriend. At least this was how he learned Turkish in absence of other learning opportunities.

The fact that some of my informants only learned Turkish after having started to work shows a major difference compared to the experience of my informants in Berlin. While in Germany, it turned out to be nearly impossible to take up employment without language skills, in Turkey not knowing the language indeed restricts the employment possibilities but does not make it impossible to find a job. In terms of limitations, Oday remembered that in some places where he asked for jobs, people would not even talk to him when they realized he was a non-Turkish speaking Syrian. Anas painfully felt the value of language when in one interview he was told that he would actually be perfectly suited for the position if it would not be for his lack of language. Though he had tried to learn Turkish like many others by watching series and movies, listening to music and reading books in Turkish, he regrets to not have done better and focused more on language in retrospective. While not all jobs are available without Turkish, all of my informants found jobs rather quickly, especially because many job opportunities exist that only require English or Arabic, for example in sales. In some sectors, even a good career is possible without Turkish. Thus, within four years, Salah raised from a normal account manager in a service company for digital marketers to the top management team in which he is as retention manager responsible for risky customers worldwide. His wife, who made a similar career experience up to becoming department coordinator in another service company, summarized with regard to their experiences that language is “really a huge plus here” but “not really priority”. However, while these two cases should be seen as an example of what is possible, it should also be underlined that they are an exception. In general, my informants faced disadvantages if they had minor language knowledge. Rami, for example, worked as a machine operator under bad conditions at an extremely low salary for

years. Due to his language skills he had problems to communicate with his colleagues, could not negotiate better working conditions or a better salary with his boss and was unable to switch to a better job because, without Turkish, he would not be accepted as a machine operator in most other factories. Salim was in a similar situation. He planned to become an engineer, but without money and language needed to get into work first. Despite being very intelligent, he brachiated through numerous low-skilled, hard and poorly paid jobs because without language skills, he constantly found himself in an unfavourable bargaining position towards potential employers.

“The first thing, Turkish language, the first thing and the most important to do work, to do a good work. You can work in Turkey without language, but it’s difficult. Then, you must eh...carry this work...you must accept every work.”

His deduction from his experiences puts the relation between language and labour in Istanbul in a nutshell. Language is not a must to get employment on the Turkish labour market, but it is definitely an advantage. Without language skills, especially lower skilled refugees who cannot impress employers with other capacities become vulnerable. Thus, a deficit of language skills contributes to pushing refugees even more into the already widespread informal work (İçduygu, 2016). In general, language and the lack of language learning opportunities for refugees in Turkey are acknowledged as belonging to the biggest obstacles on the way to employment, which is why experts call on the government to especially intervene with state-funded offers in that point (Şimşek & Çorabatır, 2016; İçduygu & Diker, 2017).

5.2.2. “They want the Arabic market” – the advantage of Arabic

Above, I mentioned that in Istanbul Turkish is not a prerequisite for some jobs. Indeed, some employers care much more about foreign language skills and for example look specifically for Arabic speakers, since the Arab speaking population and tourism sector in Istanbul is large. In combination with English, Arabic is even more in demand. My informants employed these language skills mostly in the sales and trade industries. Wissam, for example, was addressed by someone who had remarked that he knew Arabic and Turkish in a shopping centre one day and asked

if he looked for a job. He did. One week later he started to work as a salesman in a Turk Telekom store. For his employer, he is a valuable staff member since with Arabic, Turkish and English skills he can deal with most of the customers. Other common jobs of my informants were in call centres, in fashion stores that are frequented by Arabic tourists, in hair transplant companies, in translation jobs and in companies that have sales departments for Arabic customers already or that want to expand to the Arabic market. In those companies, my informants were also widely employed for social media marketing. The job opportunities for speakers of Arabic and English are vast in Istanbul and my informants were well aware of this, as not only Oday confirmed:

“Now, in every place they want one speaker in English and Arabic.”

Abeer believes this point to be a major competitive advantage of Syrian refugees which Turkish people cannot match:

“In comparison with Turkish people, we are advanced. Because if you learn Turkish language, you have three languages...extra languages than Turkish people. So, you are better than them. You have more skills than them. So, you can find a good job, good opportunities and more opportunities than the Turkish people themselves. [...] the Arabic language is very important and they cannot learn it, it's not easy, you know?”

Being aware of this need for foreign languages, Anas specifically searched for job offers including Arabic and English as key points instead of looking for job offers in specific industries or positions. He also emphasized that in the face of language skills, other potential experiences or skills of refugees were put in the background in the employment decision of employers:

“Here's the catch: In Turkey, they are employing- they're employing us mostly if you are...eh for language, because they want the Arabic market, they want the Arab market. So, they want people who speak English, or Arabic, or English as well, to communicate with them. They want to use the language, you know? They don't care if you have a master's degree or whatever, they don't want you for sophisticated positions, they just want you for sales mostly. So- So mostly you know, it's a sales position.”

Despite this considerable demand for Arabic and English, it should not be assumed that it is easy for all Arabic and English speakers to obtain a job. My informants emphasized that this demand for foreign languages is limited to the above-mentioned sectors. Moreover, since the number of Arabic and English-speaking population in Istanbul is high, even these positions are competitive.

Nour also told me about how the combination of language skills and vulnerability as a refugee is tried to be exploited in phone-sex hotlines. According to her narrative, the Syrian accent is considered as one of the “sexiest” and “flirty” ones in the Arabic world. So, one day she applied to a job that was advertised with a vague job description but the very clear indication that only female Syrians living in Istanbul were required. Since the position was moreover supposed to be in the rather conservative neighbourhood of Fatih, she did not become suspicious when applying there. Only when she was offered the job, she got informed that she would be supposed to undertake intimate conversations with customers from the Arabic world, mainly the Gulf countries. She declined the job but also revealed that, under different circumstances, she could have imagined accepting. For her, these job offers are clearly taking advantage of Syrians, but what choice does a single refugee woman in a precarious financial situation have?

5.2.3. “They don’t look for your degrees” – making use of experience

For my informants in Berlin, it was difficult to transfer previous experience and skills to the German labour market. The reasons were that the employers asked for certificates which were not available or that certain skills simply were not demanded. In Turkey, this experience transfer proved to be more uncomplicated. Anas’ statement that Turkish employers are not interested in certificates was affirmed by other informants. Bilal explained that “they didn’t look for your degrees, they just look for what are your skills” or, as Abeer emphasized again, “how many languages you have”. In addition to not being important or crucial on the labour market, certificates do not even seem to be helpful in some situations, as Nour explained:

“So, the thing is, your degree is actually useless when you come to other countries. You will either have to restudy again or work in the black market. So, I was working at the data entry, I was 20 years old. And there was this guy who was 36 and who studied pharmacy and he used to be a professor in one of the private colleges back in Syria. But because of the situation, he had to leave Syria and right now he is working right next to me. Which I- I just graduated from high school. So, this is the concept. This is why I’m not really regretting not having continued my study.”

While German employers tend to put much trust in papers confirming knowledge via stamps and signatures, Turkish employers just asked my informants about their skills and, if those skills were required, let them be demonstrated. This way, Bilal, thanks to his experience with architecture programs he received during his studies in Syria, found a job in an architectural office, Anas was offered to create a marketing campaign for a newly build agency due to his studies of finance and marketing and Mouneer, who had worked in a photo studio in Damascus, was hired as graphic designer in Istanbul. Sometimes, the skills acquired in Syria even allowed for career jumps. Kareem was actually working as a salesman and later was used as a graphic designer, when his boss realized he was good in that field. The most impressive jump, however, was Oday’s. He was initially working as a janitor in an Iranian TV production company but got along well with his colleagues. When he talked to them in his breaks, his previous experience not only in tourism but also in photoshop came up. When one day a new video editor was needed in the company, he was asked if he was confident enough to do this job and acquire the missing skills to do so by himself. Within a couple of days, he turned from a janitor to a video editor. All in all, only one of my informants reported about the usefulness of his Syrian degree to find a job. Hamza studied translation in Syria and continued this work for NGOs after entering Turkey. He traces his professional success back to his university degree, which is understandable considering that he mainly works for European NGOs.

5.3. No bureaucracy, no institutional support?

5.3.1. “I cannot sleep about that” – no career without registration

After having illustrated in how far the language and skills that my informants brought with them from Syria could be used on the Turkish labour market, it should also be illuminated how they eventually got into their jobs. All of my informants in Istanbul entered the labour market quickly, it took them between one week and three months to take up a first employment. One reason this was possible, in contrast to my informants in Berlin who took several months or even years before getting employed, is the lax handling of informal employment. Before taking up employment, Syrian refugees in Turkey, according to the law, have to register for temporary protection and their employers have to apply for a work permit. In practice, however, the registration process, as well as the issue of work permits, can pose problems in terms of feasibility and bureaucracy. Nearly half of my informants did not get registered for temporary protection when they first entered Turkey. Some did not want to be considered as refugees and expected that this status might shed a negative light on their profile vis-à-vis potential employers, others did not see any benefit in the registration while some at the beginning just did not know anything about the necessities and process of the registration. In some cases, this led to major limitations in the job search, as Anas remembered about his application in a successful fashion start-up company:

“I send the CV. And it was a dream company because it’s like in commerce, big company and I am interested in the digital work always back in Syria, the digital space of mobile apps, these modern start-ups. And Modanisa is one of them. It came to Turkey and it’s coming up, it is really cool. So, when I send the CV, the same moment she called back again. She was like: ‘Okay, I am interested, can you come right now?’ I just dressed up and went. And we sat for two hours interviewing. She was like interested in my experiences...I had no digital marketing experiences. So, yeah, I did the interview. And she was like- I was going to a role of content editor and apparently this girl she was the head of eh...business planning. And she was like: ‘This department is new, are you interested? It’s a different thing, I might need your skills.’ [...] and she was like: ‘Do you have

residence permit?’ I said: ‘No.’ And she was like: ‘Okay, I have to speak to HR.’ She was supposed to get back to me within three days, she never did. [...] So, you can’t apply for work permit if you don’t have the residence permit. And I don’t have it at that time, I was so fresh here. So, she never went back. And I was really disappointed, I really wanted that job...I was really hopeful to get into that company.”

After this experience, Anas, like most of my other informants, became registered in order not to miss any other job opportunities for a lack of papers. Especially in big companies, my informants made the experience that it was difficult to be accepted without legal papers. Beyond that, neither an official work permit nor Turkish citizenship, both of which were aspired by the majority of my informants, could be obtained without prior registration. Therefore, the majority of my informants caught up on the registration during their stay in Turkey. Only Karem and Rami stay without any papers until today, which restricts their life seriously and leads to great worries, as Karem explained:

“I have nothing. I tried to make something about it but I didn’t find any result. It’s my issue actually and I cannot sleep about that. [...] I’m so disappointed.”

What aggravates their situation is that in Istanbul, the registration of refugees has been suspended so that no improvement is foreseeable. Furthermore, both cannot imagine living in another province, where they would have no contacts and even fewer work opportunities. On the one hand, it is understandable that Istanbul does not register further refugees in order to prevent overcrowding and attempt a more balanced distribution of the refugees over the country. On the other hand, non-registration does not seem to keep refugees from coming to or staying in Istanbul. What’s more, it complicates the situation since people like Karem and Rami are forced to stay in irregular jobs without the possibility of studying or climbing up the career ladder. Thus, they can neither improve their personal situation on the long-term nor contribute their full skills to the Turkish economy.

5.3.2. “If you want it, you pay for it” – getting a work permit

After the registration, another hurdle for legal employment is the work permit that refugees in Turkey have to get before employment. Together with the registration and the problems it brings about, the access to employment rights via the work permit procedure has been identified as largest obstacle for Syrian refugees in Turkey (Baban, Suzan, & Rygiel, 2016, p. 51). With the exception of Hamza, whose first job was for an international NGO, all of my informants started to work without a work permit. The majority continues to do so until today although naturally, all would prefer to have a work permit. My informants cited two major reasons for this: First of all, the work permit application process seems obscure not only to the refugees but also to their employers. One of my informants was also joking about the responsible officials themselves not understanding it and asked: “If you don’t know, who knows?” Moreover, many companies do not fulfil the legal impediment of employing ten Turkish workers in order to request a work permit for one refugee. Secondly, many do not want to bear the costs that come along with a work permit. Thus, my informants perceived it as a common practice that Turkish companies on principle do not provide work permits for their Syrian employees, as Anas’ statement about one of his employers shows:

“I worked there, no work permit for sure. They don’t give you work permit. They don’t give work permits, it’s a Turkish company. You can write that down (laughs).”

Indeed, only 7857 work permits have been handed out to Syrian refugees in Istanbul between January 2016 and September 2018 (Asylum Information Database, 2018). Anas’ declaration also conveys the idea that many Syrians accepted their employment situation without a work permit since their hands are tied in that matter, anyways. Not them, only their employers, can apply for a work permit. Since most of the employers do not give out work permits, they do not have to be afraid of losing their employees to companies that do and even less since the supply of Syrian workers is huge in Istanbul. That is why many of my informants did not even ask for a work permit despite viewing it as highly valuable. A good example is Oday, who said that even asking for it was senseless since:

“I know, they will not give us. Even the other foreigners there don’t have...but they will not ask for that because even the police, they knew everything about us.”

At the same time, he stated:

“Of course, it is important for me. You know, if I want to go out from Istanbul, I cannot go out now to another place. Like for Ankara or any place here in another city. If I have work permission, I can go. But now, no, I should take a permission from the authorities...And it will be very good for an insurance, you know, social security...And for, for example, nationality. It will be a big chance to take a nationality.”

The calculations of employers for providing or not providing their Syrian employees with work permits became really evident for Wissam, who received a work permit by his employer Turk Telekom, but was forced to pay for it himself. After working one year without work permit for Turk Telekom, in which they were testing his trustworthiness, as he thinks, they paid for his work permit in the second year. In his third year, however, his employer reclaimed the money which he had to pay for Wissam’s work permit. Naturally, Wissam got shocked and try to argue against this practice but only got as an answer:

“Take it or leave it. There is a lot of Syrians working without work permits. If you don’t want it, it’s okay. If you want it, you pay for it.”

At that moment, the good connection Wissam thought to have with his employer, became destroyed:

“I felt really mad and I felt that they don’t trust me or that I’m nothing. I felt like nothing. I felt that all the efforts I put into the job went for nothing. I was like not afraid, not scared. I was just like really mad. Because at that time I didn’t know what to say. I was like surprised: ‘I was not accepting that from you. I thought that after two years working with you that would make you like me more. And I didn’t do anything wrong, I was doing my job, you know? As you wanted. I don’t be late, I don’t have problems with anyone....Yeah, that is the most time that I felt discriminated.”

Wissam’s employer was not satisfied with Wissam paying his work permit by himself, yet. To comply with the minimum wage law that is valid to everyone with a work permit, he indeed transferred the required monthly wage to Wissam’s and

the other Syrian employees' accounts. However, being actually not willing to spend so much money on his employees, he forced them every month to hand back between 300 and 400 Lira of the transferred salary in cash. Thus, he assured the cheap labour force of his Syrian employees despite "complying to the laws" towards the outside. In autumn 2018, Wissam received the Turkish nationality and thus, does not have to worry about a work permit. He is also not forced to pay back parts of his salary anymore. However, he never felt loyal to his employer again and since then has been looking for a better job opportunity. Wissam's example shows that Turkish employers see Syrian refugees as cost advantage compared to native employees and are not willing to give up on this. Due to high competition and a lack of better alternatives, the refugees are forced to comply and are easily exploitable. Common practices like employing refugees illegally, paying them only a fraction of what a native would earn, or making them work 12 hours every day have been observed by many other studies (Baban, Suzan, & Rygiel, 2016; Yıldız & Uzgören, 2016; Kirişci, 2014). Although cunning methods like those of Wissam's employer might be difficult to unveil, the Turkish authorities should still try to protect this vulnerable group more, even more since they are promised to be under "temporary protection" from the government. Experts also argue that governments should not restrict the labour market access of refugees since more rights to work also make bigger benefits possible. According to that logic, work permit systems prevent skilled refugees to enter into formal work, obtain an efficient job matching and maximize their productive contribution to the economy (ILO, 2017). Yet, if work permit systems are maintained, they should be free of charge and independent from employers to impede the exploitation of refugees and improve their negotiation situation (Buffoni, Kataa, & El Khalil, 2017; Clemens, Huang, & Graham, 2018). Following this implementation might actually help to reduce employers' taking advantage of refugees which my informants describe and open the way to a labour market integration that not only benefits refugees but also the economy as a whole.

5.3.3. “We are jealous of guys in Germany” – relying on self-support

Although at first glance the bureaucracy level in Turkey seems to be low and indeed does at least not hamper the taking up of (illegal) employment due to low controls, registration difficulties and the prerequisite of work permits are a relevant barrier for legal employment which is not to be underestimated. While my informants lamented these and asked for improvements and better information campaigns on these points, they did not think the Turkish government could support them in their labour market integration. They observed how already well-educated and well-trained Turkish nationals have problems to find suitable jobs in the current economic situation and thus did not expect it to be able or responsible to help them. Moreover, the government was perceived as already “doing the best, as much as they can” for which “they are facing the fury from their own people”. So, if there would be more help “they will face a revolution” due to the resistance of the Turkish population.

All in all, I had the impression that from the circumstances for refugees in Turkey, namely the difficult economic and labour market situation as well as the low institutional support, my informants learned that they needed to take care of themselves and that they could not expect help from anyone. Most did not even try to ask or get informed about support possibilities by the government or non-governmental organizations. Thus, they also did not know about the opportunities to register with İŞKUR and/ or UNHCR partners and their right to receive vocational training and labour market counselling or participate in labour market measures. My informants’ experiences are in line with the official numbers, according to which until March 2018 less than 1500 refugees had been placed in jobs over the services of İŞKUR. Around 46 000 received skills or vocational training which is a relatively low quota compared to the number of refugees living in Turkey (European Council; Council of the European Union, 2018). If the offers from İŞKUR and UNHCR, which were described under point 3.2.2., would be advertised more, it would potentially help refugees a lot to see the whole range of their opportunities.

A support that enjoyed more popularity among my informants was the free service of the NGO United Work that takes part in the employee selection process of companies and tries to match their open positions with refugees. Moreover, it accompanies the work permit application process and offers training for refugees. More than a third of my informants were in contact with United Work and received job offers from the NGO. Two found work through this channel. After taking classes on how to apply successfully for a job, Ibrahim was addressed by one of the staff members from United Work and proposed a position in a call centre. After a similar training, Abeer was even offered a position directly as a consultant in United Work and now matches Syrian refugee women with suitable jobs. Nour did not receive employment assistance by United Work for herself but relies on the organization when she is assisting the hiring process in her own company. All three got to know United Work from different perspectives, as job seeker, as employee and as employer and all three agree on the efficiency and significance of the organization's placement work. Employers profit because they do not have to invest time themselves in the hiring process and get assistance in bureaucratic recruitment hurdles, while the referred refugees can be sure to enter a legal job with decent working conditions. Unfortunately, United Work is still the only big player on the job placement market and cannot cover it alone and needs to be utilized more widely by the employing companies, as Ibrahim deplored:

“United Work is actually doing their best to find jobs for the refugees, but they are not having too many chances with finding correct job offers from Turkish companies or sometimes people expect too high salaries and are not satisfied with the job offers.”

Obviously, there is potential for improvement. However, the concept itself seems to have proven itself, is promising for the future and thus constitutes an optimal starting point for further labour market integration efforts. Thereby, it should not only be supported by the government but also holds lucrative opportunities for companies.

As described, a part of my informants relied on United Work for help, while active government support for the labour market integration did not play a role in their

notions. Here, the Turkish employment agency could extend its offers to refugees and also advertise its activities more, since research shows that job placement is a promising labour market tool (Mousa, 2018). What was instead important for them and positively assessed was the opportunity to receive the Turkish citizenship for qualified Syrians or those with a work permit. Three of my informants already received it, one is in the application process for it and many others were declaring it as their ultimate goal to get it. The prospect of not having to renew the expensive Syrian passport anymore, of being able to travel freely and not being required to apply for work permits anymore was a huge motivation for my informants. Salim, for example, struggled a lot on the Turkish labour market. He went through nine different jobs, all of which were characterised by long working times up to 12 hours every day, by extremely low salaries and physically exhausting tasks. Despite this, he never stopped looking for better opportunities or thought about settling with a medium-income job but without a work permit. The reason was his hope for a job with a work permit, which would allow him to one day receive the citizenship and then, hopefully, also to get into university more easily and become a civil engineer. His example shows that if refugees are offered a perspective, as the Turkish citizenship does, they are willing to work for it and aim for higher positions.

So far, we saw that my informants negatively judged the bureaucratic efforts that come along with registration and the issue of work permits in Turkey. At the same time, they were indifferent about the government's role in supporting them to get into the labour market and for this purpose either relied on their own capacities or the support of an NGO. Over all, I got the impression that the only claim they had towards the Turkish authorities was to not place unnecessary obstacles in their way to labour. They looked to their compatriots in Europe and observed the different treatment of refugees there:

“Even though while you're searching for a job, you're getting paid...they're working on you. And even if you don't work, you will not be at the street [...] So, that's why we- we are jealous of the guys there in Germany. They have everything, you have that facility in life. You have your own home, you don't pay for anything, you don't pay for your taxes, and you don't do- you don't do anything, that's so

wrong (laughs a lot). I'm working a same salary- You know the same salary he gets for free, I'm working here for 30 days eh...to get it."

What is interesting is that though Bassel and many others described similar feelings of jealousy and injustice compared to their counterparts in Europe, they also were aware of the fact that despite better economic circumstances, refugees in Europe were not necessarily happier. What's more is that many critically evaluated the financial support in Europe in combination with a lack of pressure since people would not look for a work like this and instead think: "Why to work? I get the same salary?", as Bassel also explained. Thus, even after their comparison, my informants in Istanbul did not await the Turkish government to support them more but kept the belief of self-responsibility and self-reliance as Bassel's explanations again underline:

"Actually, it depends on the man's skills, even in Europe. Let's say- We shouldn't say that in Europe the life is much...eh simple or much reliable. No, I have some friends that they don't do anything, they have a bad mood, a bad mood, they want to make suicide (laughs shortly), they don't want to live, they feel boring. They don't have any- any aspire in life to do anything. Just sitting home and getting that salary from the government, I have that friends, I have those friends. So, in my point of view, I feel that it depends mainly on the man's seek."

This mindset of everyone being responsible for his own life and the government being in the role of ensuring the free economic activity of its people without necessarily offering support, is reflected in the great praise my informants gave to the government for giving them a free hand to become self-employed. According to Bilal

"in Turkey, we can make any kind of jobs, for example self-employment. But if I am in Europe now, I can't make my own job. My friend tried to do that, but he can't...They don't allow [...] There is a positive point in Turkey, which the government helps us to do many things like...eh to make an own job or to, for example, I'm driving a car with my Syrian papers. In Europe, it's denied."

Hamza, who is right now establishing a start-up, observed the same:

"The Turkish government allows Syrians to work. If they have a protection card which is given to refugees, or if they have a tourist work permit, or if they have a

regular work permit. Syrians are allowed to establish and found companies in Turkey by the law. I am a living example of that, with paying less than 1000 dollars to establish a company. It's very cheap compared to international standard. Without paying any bribes or any corruption you establish your company so easily by the law doing little bureaucracy [...] if you want to do work, you can get your company working in 3 days. Forget about 3 days, like maximum a week."

To sum it up, a high ambivalence in terms of bureaucracy and institutional support can be observed in the labour market integration of refugees in Turkey. The level of institutional support for my informants in Istanbul was low, but so were the bureaucratic hurdles to pass before entering a job. The registration and work permit requirement did not hinder my informants to get employed in the first place because the compliance with the labour regulations was not controlled. On the other hand, the registration and work permit barrier have to be evaluated critically since they pushed my informants into informal work without social security. The work permit legislation in combination with its low controls on compliance opened the door for employers to exploit refugees and by-pass the provision of work permits. Thus, it turns out that while in Germany there is a need for more flexibility of regulations and employers for a more efficient labour market integration of refugees, in Turkey it is a too high level of flexibility that makes refugees vulnerable (Tören, 2018, p. 26).

5.4. Networking and "knowing people"

5.4.1. "I'm looking for human resources" – job search on- and offline

As described in the previous chapter, my informants in Germany usually found jobs over the placement of the Job Centre, their own job search via the internet or by reference from contacts. The latter two were also largely employed by my informants in Istanbul. However, in the absence of a Job Centre-like institution, they were lacking a first contact and starting point for their job search. Thus, they often started their hunt by simply walking around in Istanbul and directly ask for jobs in the streets. Doing this, my informants chose spots that in general contained many factories or companies of sectors in which they considered their employment

chances to be high. Wissam with a degree in hospitality management, for example, started his search in neighbourhoods with a high density of gastronomic and touristic businesses. He did not have anything specific in his mind when he wandered along the streets of Taksim or Sultanahmet. He just entered every hotel, restaurant and café on his way to pose the two questions, which he had prepared beforehand with the help of Google translate in Turkish, to the first employee he saw: “I’m looking for human resources or the manager.” and “I’m looking for a job.” After three months of daily, unsuccessful strolling through Istanbul, he was close to giving up his strategy. He had gotten so far that in some high-class hotels he had even offered to work without any payment in exchange for experience and still, he was rejected. Mostly, he was told: “We don’t take foreigners” or simply “We don’t need anyone.” Until then, he also had extended his search radius to the outer districts of Istanbul, where he finally found a job as a barista in a branch of one of Turkey’s biggest confectionery chains. Others gave up on this method, either because they got so discouraged or because they realized that the only jobs they could obtain like this would be low-skilled, low-paid and under inhumane working conditions. After all, this way of looking for work puts the job seeker automatically in a bad negotiation position towards the potential employer because it shows the dire need for any employment. Oday felt this when he gathered daily with four other Syrian friends to encourage and accompany each other during a job search on foot in Istanbul’s neighbourhoods with a widespread textile industry. Despite the support of his friends he could not stand the rejection of the employers he faced during this kind of job search:

“I was so depressed because they [the potential employers] treated us like animals...animals, you know? Animals are better than us. So, I stopped that after two months.”

In general, my informants employed this method only for obtaining the first job when they felt really desperate to get into employment. They expected that walking around and directly asking employers for a job would be the quickest method to find a job. If the employers would have accepted, they could have started working without any further papers and intermediate process on the next day. But in practice,

my informants were not successful in looking for a job by walking around or obtained jobs that were physically bearable only for a short period.

My informants who made use of the “walking-around-looking-for-a-job-method” parallelly also intensely used a second method, the internet, to search more specifically for job offers. This method was generally largely employed by all my informants, though, as Salah explained to me, in Syria websites for jobs were not commonly used. He added that while not being used to these “new ways of looking for jobs” from Syria, he was quickly introduced to social media and career websites in Turkey. Since they are widespread and used in diverse ways, it did not take my informants long to get used to them. All of my informants seemed like real experts on online job search to me and introduced me to a job market in the digital media in which popular sites like LinkedIn or Kariyer represent only the tip of the iceberg. For example, a number of websites exist that propose jobs exclusively for Arabic speakers that live in all parts of the world and are very famous among expatriates, such as Dubarah or Adwhit. Moreover, networking in social media among Syrian refugees in Turkey seems to be exceptionally strong. It works to a large degree over Facebook, Whatsapp and Telegram groups in which the members inform each other about open job positions. I was astonished when Karem showed me a Whatsapp group on his phone that contained 648 members and had the sole aim to keep Arabic businessmen, self-employed individuals and anyone looking for business opportunities in Istanbul connected and up to date. The activity in this group is busy as in a beehive; freelancers offer their services, businesses ask for employees and services and unemployed look for job opportunities at minute intervals.

It seems that with the absence of institutional support during employment search, the importance of the internet as central mediation means between potential employers and employees increases all the more. The advantages described by my informants were not only the wide research possibilities but also the simplicity and chance to bypass normal application procedures. With Google, even websites that are only in Turkish can be translated, with the help of career websites a CV has to be uploaded only once instead of being re-send individually to hundreds of potential employers every time and with career sites that target especially Arabic persons,

my informants could easily discover positions that are tailored to their (language) skills. Moreover, thanks to contact information on websites and Facebook, my informants could directly call the human resources department or send the CV via Facebook messenger instead of sending a formal application that might get lost in a pile with hundreds of other applications. While in Berlin my informants relied mainly on institutional support like the Job Centre during their job search, my informants in Istanbul raved about the opportunities of the internet as major means of support. In the absence of vast support opportunities, they relied more heavily on other methods like social media, where they can organize themselves and use groups as information and job placement tool.

6.4.2. “Here, you need to have relations” – job search over references

Just as language was the decisive key for my informants’ labour market in Berlin, in Istanbul many doors seem to stay closed if one does not have a vast network of contacts to rely on. First, walking around and networking via the internet were used by my informants to introduce themselves to potential employers or to establish new contacts. Second, they extended or built on their already existent network to refer each other to open positions and to support one another in rough times. Nour explained:

“What’s actually, let’s say, helped us, of course, it was a really good network of people. Like we- we had the same circle of friends when we were in Syria and came here. And then we started to meet new people which helped us to make new connections, which is like actually the most important [...] This is one of the things I actually recommend someone coming to Turkey: have a network. Go to all these events, meet new people, go out, just like because even if you- like I’m not saying you’ll only have a network because you need connection for work. Like even for friendship...even for like knowing someone it’s really important [...] Like even for not workwise, you need them for like...to learn new things, to meet new ideas...you will start like thinking about stuff, let’s say, you never discussed before in your life. So, it’s actually even helpful for you, because you will go out from the atmosphere of work. You will put yourself in the attitude like: ‘I’m meeting new people and doing fun stuff.’ So, it is really important to have like a circle of friends.

Plus, it's- it's helpful for your mental health because after a while of working and all the pressure you have, you will have some days when you feel like really down and these could be your safety net. Actually, if you like, okay, I have Salah, I have a couple of really close friends, but if you're single, you will need someone to keep you stable, keep you out of all this pressure, the depression, the anxiety. Which is something like every- like every person out of his eh circle back home will actually, or she will actually, need it here."

According to Nour's husband Salah, however, one should pay attention not to randomly build any network but to mix it with people from different backgrounds instead of limiting oneself to a Syrian circle of contacts. He observed:

"The most...eh I cannot say unsuccessful but less wide going people at work are the ones that kept themselves in a Syrian circle, in a Syrian network. They didn't leave it."

Salah's assumption is also suggested by many studies which found a positive impact of social networking on employment in general, but also emphasized that migrants who socialized with natives had even better chances on the labour market than the ones who mainly mingled with compatriots (Potocky-Tripodi, 2004). Yet, in the interviews with my informants, I observed that most stuck to a Syrian network. The large majority either surrounded themselves with fellow countrymen or other foreigners, Turkish acquaintances stayed usually limited. An exception from that were some informants who got self-employed. Bilal, for example, started his career in Turkey in a Turkish architecture office with exclusively Turkish colleagues and customers. When he left the office to start his own architecture company, he relied on his former customers. Moreover, he extended his network in Turkish universities where he helped students to finalize their graduation projects. These Turkish students, in turn, served as agents for him and referred him to their Turkish contacts who could serve as potential clients for him. However, Bilal was my only informant deliberately establishing a vast Turkish network. The major reason for the lack of Turkish acquaintances which my other contacts mentioned was the following:

"It is really difficult to merge with them. They don't accept [...] They don't accept others, especially Syrians."

In some cases, the hatred my informants felt was so high that they did not dare to introduce themselves as Syrian but stated to be Lebanese or Qatari. One of my informants was bullied so much in a class for communication and application training that he left. Others were dropped out of taxis, openly insulted on the street, texted on Facebook and asked why they are living in Turkey instead of fighting for their country in Syria. The general tenor of the accusations was “You are not working, you steal our money, you steal our job and you ruined our life”. This is a symptom of securitization of Syrian refugees in the public discourse in which they are often represented as burden destabilizing the economy but also as danger for natives’ workplaces (Koca, 2016, p. 71). Ironically, Syrians seem to be perceived as having the superpower to be able of not working and stealing jobs at the same time. For my informants, as Mouneer further explained, it was difficult to bring this view together with their lived experiences and to explain to their Turkish interlocutors that “as employees we are- we struggle to find a good job. We struggle to find our insurance and our work permits and we struggle to find a good life without like having thoughts about ‘I can’t pay the rent that month’, for example.” What my informants also stressed is that racism is not openly discussed or admitted in the society, what makes it more difficult to defend oneself and often leads to surrender towards racism, as Bassel powerfully described:

“In Europe, people don’t hide racism, they demonstrate on the streets etc... Turkey? Here, no! We’re facing someone, you see the devil inside his eyes when he knows that you are Syrian. And on the other hand, when we- when we meet a kind person or a kind someone who deals with us like a human? Oh my gosh! He is really Turkey? He is really Turkish? How generous he is! What he is kind! He is so kind!”

Hearing this, it is obvious why most of my informants got mainly entangled in Syrian or international networks. This might also be the reason why, even though it is expected that native contacts are more valuable than ethnic ones, in practice refugees rely more on the networks with their compatriots during the job search, as also studies with refugees in Europe concluded (Cheung & Phillimore, 2014).

In general, they did not seem to look on this with great regret. Some, in contradiction to Shalak’s presumption, even considered Arabic contacts much more

important than Syrian ones. Naturally, they wished for greater acceptance in the Turkish society and observed that the less Turkish contacts one has, the harder it is to develop language skills. Moreover, since most of the job entries of my informants occurred over Syrian or international contacts, it is, due to the absence of examples, hard to tell if Turkish contacts would have been more efficient in locating decent jobs. Some experiences my informants made can be seen as indications against such a presumption. While my informants themselves did not rely systematically on Turkish contacts for their job search, some were head-hunted by Turkish employers. Wissam, for example, was randomly addressed and asked for his language skills by a Turkish woman while being shopping. When it turned out that he knew Arabic, English and Turkish, he was invited to work for Turk Telekom and, while the job was at least with work permit after the first year, he was not treated exemplarily by his employer but discriminated in his work conditions for being Syrian, as earlier described. Other examples are Ibrahim and Salim. Both were in employment when they were contacted by Turkish employers and offered a new job. Ibrahim was called by the human resources department of a call centre, Salim addressed by an artisan of his neighbourhood. They both accepted the jobs due to the prospect of slightly higher wages, but neither did their working conditions change significantly nor did they climb up the career ladder for higher skilled work. While I could not identify if the nature of contacts plays a role for the quality of the employment obtained via references, Syrian contacts were indispensable for my informants, in contrast to Turkish ones. This result affirms the findings of a study conducted in Germany according to which in practice most of the job references among migrants are realized over links to compatriots (Dustman et al., 2016). All of my interview partners were at least once referred to a job by their countrymen and most of them served themselves as agents, too. The mechanism works as follows:

“In Turkey, you must to know a lot of friends, to you ask him for a job or flat. When you have a job in this factory, you meet some people, they will be your friend. When you leave this factory, this people stay with you friends. And if you find any work, you tell him.”

Salim probably knows what he is talking about more than anyone else. In less than four years of stay in Turkey, he worked in ten different jobs, nine of them in Istanbul. He worked in coal, steel, furniture and plastic factories, in an orange plantation, a restaurant, a mobile shop, as perfume seller on the streets, as a craftsman and as a janitor. His shortest occupation was four days, the longest one one and a half years. Upon being asked how it is possible that he went through so many jobs in very distinct fields, his answer is simple:

“By my friends. Yani, in Turkey, I have a lot of friends [...] But when I came to Istanbul, I don’t know anybody.”

Salim was one of my few informants who, upon arrival, did not have any contacts to rely on. His network grew all the quicker after he found his first work by randomly asking in a factory. There, he bonded with the other refugees who found themselves in the same situation as him and started to pass information about other and better job opportunities towards each other. The way Salim talked about it, it occurred like a network that not only builds upon ethnic cohesion and mutual favours according to the logic “If you tell me about a good job, I will also keep my eyes and ears open for you.” This observation is in accordance with the role as a network of solidarity and access to economic opportunities that Lancee (2013) attributed to ethnic contacts.

This impression intensified when I went through the other interview transcripts. Wissam, for example, referred three other people to the first coffee shop in which he had worked, which was more than four years ago. At the time of our interview, he was just looking for a new job for himself and talked about interviews he had conducted thanks to the notification of two of the people whom he had earlier brought into employment. What impressed me about this mutual referring approach was the complete absence of competitive thinking despite the intense pressure to work in Turkey. On the contrary, I heard several times how my informants found a job offer, applied for it and still informed their friends about the position and motivated them to apply. In case they were offered a job but declined for some reason, in the same breath they suggested a friend for this position and vouched for him. Or, when they left for a new job, they usually did not leave their position

vacant but immediately suggested an acquaintance to take over. On the one hand, this system works impressively efficient and brings about advantages for employers, too. In the case of a handover of a job from one friend to the other, for example, the introduction of the new employee into his tasks can be done easily. On the other hand, this system does not contribute to the obtainment of more stable jobs. It keeps job turnover high since the refugees constantly keep each other informed about job opportunities and jump quickly to more promising jobs. But without staying in one job for a long time, they miss the chance to gather intense experience in one field or stay long enough in one company to climb up there. In this light, it seems legitimate when scientists emphasize that social networks can indeed have positive impacts but mainly in the initial phase in a host country while over the long term, they can even hamper the access to better jobs due to staying stuck and isolated within one's own ethnic circles (Lancee, 2013).

However, these networks do not only exchange news about jobs, but also all kind of information about life in Turkey. Wissam, for example, heard about the opportunity to receive Turkish citizenship by a Syrian acquaintance. Others heard about the services of United Work or general aspects, like transportation, price levels or Turkish classes this way. What is also important to mention is that these networks even operate over astonishingly long distances and loose ties. One of my informants had a Syrian acquaintance living in Malaysia. During some random conversation, it turned out that his nephew living in Istanbul was planning to hire a graphic designer. Shortly after that conversation, my informant started to work for him. In another case, the mother of one of my informants, of Ibrahim, was talking to a friend of hers in Syria. She told her how Ibrahim struggled to find proper work in Istanbul. Luckily, her friend had a nephew in the same age as Ibrahim in Istanbul, Wissam. So, Wissam's aunt back in Syria instructed Wissam to meet with Ibrahim and help him find a job. He did as he was told and until today, Ibrahim talks of Wissam as being "like a mother" for him whom he calls every time he has some problem. Not surprisingly, he concluded that "the most important, more important than the language: to know people too much." What most of my informants pointed out to is that those Syrian contacts are much more than sheer need-based networks.

They serve as emotional support in hard times and for mutual encouragement. Abeer studied with a Syrian friend for a difficult Turkish exam, Bilal took over writing job applications for a friend when she was despairing, and Hamza financially supports his brother-in-law so that he can learn Turkish while he did not give up talking another friend into learning to code with the help of online classes until he finally did. Others, like Anas and Karem, used friends as partners in order to dare to take the step into self-employment. Anas tried a hair transplant e-business and Karem a printing business. Both were not sufficiently successful to sustain themselves with their business, but due to not experiencing this failure alone and being able to share the risks and responsibilities, they did not get discouraged. Anas tried with another friend to open an online fashion store and Karem plans for the long term to open some new store with his future wife. How the enormous reliance by refugees on networking felt, was perfectly summarized by Bassel in one sentence:

“Here, you can’t live without relations”

The experiences of my informants in Turkey thus clearly point to an immense importance of social contacts for the labour market integration of refugees, while among researchers this effect is still disputed. But this might be traced back to differences in the labour market structures in different destinations. For example, my informants in Germany only reported about a limited influence of networks for their job search and at the same time stated to have the impression that referencing would not play a major role in Germany. On the other hand, my informants in Istanbul perceived referencing as a common mechanism on the Turkish labour market. Their specific experiences of the significance of networks were moreover confirmed by another study on Syrian refugee life in Istanbul. It came to the very same conclusion on how valuable social (ethnic) networks are as source of information and reference for jobs. Furthermore, it observed that references worked especially for low-skilled employment and thus pose a risk of being stuck in low-paid jobs (Kaya & Kırac, 2016). Consequently, it can be argued that the different observed impacts of social networks might be retraced back to different

circumstances in different locations. In Istanbul, however, social networks are highly exploited by refugees.

5.4.2. “I was obligated to this job to survive” – being exploited

In the previous paragraphs, it was described how factors like skills, experiences, the legal framework, and strategies such as online search, the direct approach of employers or networking can lead refugees into labour in Istanbul. However, with the entry into the first job, the labour market integration of my informants was still far from being completed. As already brought up earlier, the job fluctuation my interview partners described was immense. The reason for this is a chain of interlinked circumstances at the beginning of which job pressure can be found. Due to the absence of financial support and social security, Syrian refugees in Turkey need to get into employment quickly if they do not have a large buffer of savings, which they usually do not. “In Turkey, if you don’t work, you will die” is how Ibrahim put it succinctly. While as single quotation it might seem exaggerated, my informants made it really clear that upon arrival on Turkey, in many cases even during the whole stay, work was not at all related to professional self-fulfilment or building a career. When I went through the interview passages that were coded according to the pressure to work, it felt like a choir of voices murmuring “survival” in my head:

“I was obligated to this job to survive” – Wissam. “We can’t stay without work. So, I have to search for a job, for any job...just to live” – Bassel. “I’m not happy, you know? I’m just fulfilling this job because I’m making a living [...] “I’m trying to survive here, I’m on survival mode. I’m taking jobs. I’m taking jobs because I want money to survive” – Anas. “And it was tiring, you know? So, to get a job and I need to survive, as well. And also, I have a lot of responsibilities for my parents and fiancée.” – Kareem. “It’s a long time of work, the money is not a lot. It’s enough but you can’t- you can’t do another thing. You just need to bring the rent and food and other things. Don’t rest” – Salim.

This complete dependence on finding a job is naturally also known to employers in Turkey. Therefore, they are not shy to exploit the vulnerability of Syrian refugees.

Rami, for example, started to work as a machine operator in a furniture factory. At the time of his recruitment, his employer told him clearly:

“Because you are Syrian and you don’t speak Turkish, we can give you 1000 TL.”

At the same time, Rami’s Turkish colleagues earned 2500 TL for the same work.

Being aware of this, he tried to negotiate a better salary with his boss:

“I’m telling the boss: ‘If you don’t give me more money, I want to leave his work, I want a different one.’ He told me: ‘You can go to a different work, no problem for me, yes.’ Because he knew there is no work.”

Rami continuously tried to negotiate a better salary with his boss, who did not budge since he knew very well about Rami’s bargaining position that lacked alternatives. He kept telling him:

“You cannot go to a different work. Not any boss will allow you to work for the machine because you don’t speak Turkish, you are Syrian, you are a refugee.”

Thus, Rami had to accept the conditions his boss dictated to the extent that due to the physically hard work Rami’s health was heavily damaged. Not only too low wages or discriminative wage practices were a problem for my informants, but also wage fraud seems to be a common practice towards Syrian refugees. In some of the reported cases, the employers of my informants disappeared without a trace after the work was done and with them disappeared the wages my informants were to receive. In other cases, my informants received much less than what was previously agreed on. In those cases, there was nothing my informants could do except for learning from it and being more careful the next time. After all, they never had a work contract fixed on paper, money to pay a lawyer and a legal work permit when they were cheated out of their money. It was not only in terms of wages that my informants recurrently disclosed discrimination as compared to their colleagues. Rami’s experience is exemplary in this topic, too. While his Turkish colleagues had the right to two consecutive weeks of holidays each year, he had to fight for the comfort of holidays at all. When he asked for holidays at the first try with the justification of needing some rest due to health problems, his boss accused him of lying. It was thanks to the persuasion of the secretary of Rami’s boss that he eventually got three days of holidays. About one year later he had become a

valuable asset in the factory not only as a machine operator but also as the only person who knew how to fix the cutting machine. By building some self-confidence out of this, he could broker two weeks of holidays, which he could, unlike his colleagues, still not take consecutively. In retrospective, upon the question if he would decide to come to Turkey again, Rami summarized Turkish working conditions in a way that might express what many other of his compatriots in similar situations feel:

“I would stay in my country, I don’t come to Turkey. Yes, because this my country and in my country, everything different. Now, in the work everything very bad here. The home, the work, very different. The time for the work very, very bad. We work 11 hours, no any country works like this. We work this and no money, no money, no time to take a holiday. If you want holiday, no any person give you holiday. If you don’t go to work one day, you’re fired. If we see a different person, Turkish person, he don’t come to the work, he take 15 day holiday...I talk with myself, I tell: ‘What? What is this work? Why we do this?’ I see my life very bad. Like this all the time: work, work, work, work and no money, no holiday, nothing good.”

Salim, the one of my informants who changed jobs most frequently, was not prepared to put up with everything his employers opposed on him. When once, for example, he was forbidden to take the morning break like all other (Turkish) workers, he got into a loud dispute with his boss and quit. However, by not obeying everything his employers requested and, if necessary, even leaving jobs, he entered a situation of constant job changes. During all this job-hopping, he constantly stayed in low-skilled employment and could not climb up to higher positions. He got trapped in that circle and although he “felt so bad and not comfortable in any work” he could not leave it since, in the absence of other income sources, he “was working for money, to continue life”. His example shows that not accepting mistreatment by employers might be possible and valuable for one’s personal dignity. Nevertheless, in the Turkish labour market, it does not contribute to one’s career progress.

As a result of their vulnerability, most refugees submit themselves to the conditions set by employers. And it is just this submission and vulnerability that makes

employers value refugees so much. But while usually employers show their appreciation for their workers by better salaries and working conditions, it is the tragedy of Syrian refugee workers that their actual high value for employers, not as single workers but as cheap mass labour, is expressed in their unfair treatment. Hamza's insightful explanation underlines this point:

“So, the different treatment they are getting is a reflection of the treatment the Turkish people themselves are getting from the owners of the factories. So, imagine a factory owner would employ four people. If he is to employ four Syrians, he will not pay insurance, health insurance, he will not pay ehm...taxes, he will give less salaries, he would be able to fire them whenever so easily and if he gives them 3 dollars, they would feel more grateful. On the other hand, those other Turkish workers, who I call unfortunate in Turkey, who used to work in this factory, lost their job, not because of Syrians but because job owners, factory owners, preferred to do it the black market way, the illegal way. I think that there is a place for everyone in the market place. But it should be organized in a better way. “

Hamza's observation that the current organization of the labour market does not allow for an improvement of refugees' labour market situation points to an important weakness. With the absence of work permits and the large supply of Syrian workforce, it was an easy game for employers to keep the wages of my informants low and their working conditions below the standard. Experts also agree that the legal situation of refugees plays in the hands of employers to use them as cheap labour under working conditions that natives would not accept (İçduygu, 2016, p. 24). The employers are generally well aware of the dependence of Syrian refugees on work as well as with the relatively low supply of job opportunities for them. At the same time, the refugees themselves are conscious of their situation and know that most employers will not offer them equivalent salaries and work conditions as natives. Thus, they cannot threaten their employers with the notice of searching for a new job if the latter does not improve their work situation. One of my informants also mentioned prohibitions to exchange oneself with other employees about salaries whose disobedience was strictly punished with dismissal. Those practices naturally also intimidate workers and prevent that they join forces to fight for better work conditions.

5.5. Jumping to opportunities – the constant search for a better job

The submission of Syrian workers that I described earlier is only accepted by refugees as long as necessary. If experiencing discrimination and exploitation, my informants continued to search for better opportunities. In fact, “opportunities” was one of the buzzwords that ran like a red thread through the conversations with my informants. In case my informants saw the potential for better career opportunities within their own company, they first tried to follow this path, like Ibrahim:

“I feel like a gipsy, you know? I go where the money is.”

Thereby, this “going after the money” was not at all an end in itself, but a means to obtain the necessary financial security in order to be able to focus on other career aspects:

“I don’t care for money, actually. I care about what I’m gonna gain from the job. Like is it a good portfolio? Is it a good expertise? Is it going to be like good contacts or a step forward in my career? I also care about money, but I want money to not think about money.”

Many other informants underlined the importance of the quality of the job. However, unlike Mouneer who is still willing to follow job opportunities and change workplaces for that purpose, others like Anas, already arrived at a point in which they tried so many jobs that they got tired of it. Anas dreams of working in an innovative, big technology company where he could work in sales or marketing. He does not only wish for experience, but also for continuity:

“Just working with normal small clients will give you experience, but marginal compared to what you can get at bigger companies. So, I’m trying to achieve that. Even if I- I don’t want to start as an executive, I just want to start in the right place and stick around. So, that’s what I’m trying to achieve [...] I don’t want to take any job because I will stick for two or three months and then find another next job. I don’t want that anymore. So, I’m looking, so I know what I’m hunting kind of, but I don’t know if my hunt will work. I have visions. So, I found the best agencies in Turkey. I made a research and I am being qualitative in what I am applying to [...] So, yeah, I’m trying to find the next thing. But really, I want to be in a good

company, I don't want to move. For a while, at least three years, two or three years be in a good place. I don't wanna move."

Anas' statement does not only hint to the common wish for broad experience, success and stability in one company, but also to the difficulty to achieve this. Many of my informants could not reach higher positions in their workplaces. From that, Wissam, for example, developed the theory that "Turks mostly prefer to stay in their positions for a long, long, long time", so that there is not much leeway to move up within some companies. Not getting the chance to build up experience, improve oneself, receive more responsibility or being promoted was, besides the salary, the major reason for my informants to decide to change their employment. Ibrahim summarized it well:

"It is important like for me eh...usually, when I give like too much, I'm expecting to have too much even. For example, like in the work, if they don't give me a good salary and if I find like something good in another place, an opportunity, you can say, I will take it. So, I like good experience."

Other reasons for employment changes were the wish for jobs with work permit, mistreatment by employers²⁷, physically and psychologically too demanding jobs or work that was anyways limited in time. Most of the time, my informants quit their jobs themselves, they rarely reported about being fired. This is interesting because at the same time, the fear of losing a job seemed omnipresent in my informants' minds.

"I really need to be stable, you know? [...] We always have that fear to lose our old jobs. We always- We always say that maybe it is the last month of job for us."

²⁷ This paper is not supposed to leave the impression that all employers of Syrian refugees in Turkey exploit and mistreat their workers. I also had informants, like Nour, who reported about employers treating them equally to all other workers, defending them against behaviour and promoting their careers: "We were lucky to find companies that actually appreciate us for our experience, for our like work, not for like eh eh our nationality like- My company or his will never look at us as Syrian, they will look at us as hardworking person who are equal to the Turks, who are equal to the other people because he is putting the exact same effort, he or she is putting the exact same effort." However, this should actually be the standard and not reason for appraisal. Moreover, this positive behaviour was reported less by my informants and, if it occurred, also had a lesser impact on the career path so that it is not discussed further in this thesis. What is however important to mention is that the term "employers" refers to Turkish as well as to employers of other origins. Thus, my informants reported about exploitation from both Turkish and Arabic employers in Turkey equally.

Oday laughed while he said this, but it did not at all sound happy, rather desperate. So, while my informants frequently changed jobs without being fired, it can be argued that they did not leave deliberately. Rather, they saw themselves forced to do so in order to be able to maybe one day be better off and fall by chance on a good opportunity. That chance plays a major role and that it proved difficult for my informants to strategically structure their hunt for good jobs due to the outer circumstances was something that especially Wissam struggled with:

“The last years, the past five years didn’t let me decide what I want because I was always obligated to a job to survive. So, I don’t have anything in mind, I just wanna find something better. And I think that is also one of the things that does not help me to find a better job because I cannot focus on one place.”

Being asked how he was looking for a job when he could not focus on one place, he told me:

“Mhm-hm, I hear about an opportunity and I just jump to it.”

But what is such an opportunity?

“The good opportunity for me would be to use my skills: Use the language skills, use the selling skills. I have- I believe that when I’m willing, when I have the will and when I- when I feel like there’s a hope or something I give from all my heart. And when I see that I’m in an opportunity, I will take it.”

Similar to Wissam’s answer, my informants usually interpreted opportunities as jobs where they could get experience and work at a skill level appropriate to their skills. The search for it was however often perceived as tedious and tiring and, in some cases, even led to resignation. Wissam, after a while, got the impression that the jump from opportunity to opportunity brought him nowhere and eventually gave up trying many different jobs in order to wait for the one opportunity that would really allow him to go on with his career:

“I am done with just preparing opportunities. You know, like now, Ibrahim, for example, told me: ‘Go apply here, go apply there. Why you’re sitting here, why you’re staying there?’ And I told him like: ‘I don’t know why- Why do I have to change my place that I have already come to know and I know the people and they like me and I like them, to a place that I don’t know anyone and I don’t know how it’s gonna turn and it’s gonna be the same or maybe less. Like, why should I go

one step back? If I don't guarantee- If I have a 100% guarantee that one step back will help me to go ten steps forward, I will do it. But so far, all the people that I eh interviewed with, I didn't feel like anything. I feel they just wanna use me. That's normal in the field. I am kind of done with it [...] Because still, they're not offering a better thing. The thing is, I'm not looking for a job, I already have a job. I'm looking for an opportunity."

After experiencing constant onerous and stressful job changes, naturally, the desire for stability grows. It was one of the key issues in my informants' accounts, like Bassel's:

"That's what a refugee seeks for, the stability in life. Just we want to be normal. I don't want to be rich and have good money, I just want a stable life like others, like any normal one...I think it's not a- a- unusually ambitious."

This search for stability and the parallel chase of opportunities that my informants went through are not, as it might appear at first glance, contradictory. On the contrary, moving from opportunity to opportunity was used by my informants as means in the pursuit of stability. But as Wissam brought up, my informants could never be sure that their search would be successful and, in that point, also did not trust eventual promises of employers. Therefore, not few tried self-employment or prepared for it. Anas, for example, believes that "it is impossible to get a certain level of income in Turkey" as an employee. For that reason, he ventured into self-employment in two trials, both of which unfortunately failed so that today, he is again working as an employee. However, he was lucky to find a marketing agency according to his wishes, in which he expects to be able to work his way up. Bilal is currently still building his own architecture company, which for him means freedom for self-realization and living his dream. Four other of my informants indicated to be willing to get into self-employment at some point. Interestingly, the informants with the prospect of being self-employed were also the ones most optimistic about their future, such as Bilal:

"My long goal for many, many years is to make this company, which I'm doing right now. Just- Not just in Istanbul. My headquarters will be in Istanbul and many cities in Turkey, then many countries, global. I think it's easy, very easy, will be easy...because I believe [in] myself."

Karem has a similar vision:

“I am thinking in the future, when I will be a little bit rich, I can make my own company. I have a lot of ideas about that. I am now training about Google adverts and ad manager. I am thinking to make company for eh...marketing, marketing, yes, electronic marketing. I see myself there because my study is management information systems. So, I can make websites and graphic design. When I get nationality, it will be so easy. I can make my own company [...] When I talk with my wife about that, I said to her that it will be a small office. We will start together, just me and you. We will work. When we see that we need team, we will get. So, it's a matter of planning or dreaming maybe, I don't know. It's simple, yeah. Simple and we can do it.”

It seemed to me that self-employment was seen by them as an escape route from the feeling of subjection to the working conditions by employers in Turkey. Self-employment, in that sense, is a means to decide on one's own destiny on a labour market whose conditions are otherwise dictated by an oversupply of workforce and a free hand for employers in the treatment of their (refugee) workers. For these reasons, self-employment in general is popular among Syrian refugees in Turkey. In a survey among Syrians in South-Eastern Turkey, one out of two people stated to be willing to set up an own business if the necessary means were available (IOM, 2018).

In the end, I was left with the impression that for most of my informants in Istanbul the term “labour market integration” does not really get to the heart of what they really experience. They rather rotate from one job to the other, always in the search of better wages, more experiences, career chances and also recognition. However, while keeping jumping from job to job, it seemed as if my informants' chased dream, having a stable job with a sufficient income to allow for a comfortable life and maybe even creating or keeping a family, itself kept moving so that it rarely came into an achievable reach. Thus, speaking of a constant search for good job opportunities of Syrian refugees reflects reality more precisely than the term labour market integration. Integration implies that at some point employment is reached in which refugees find themselves in a job that meets their skills, experiences and financial needs so that they feel some employment stability. From my informants,

only a very small minority found themselves in such a situation. All of my informants found jobs within few weeks or months, however, at the time of our interviews, most were still in a search process. Due to dissatisfaction with their wages, treatment or work tasks, they could not settle in a specific job or their aspired work field. As a result, labour market integration for my informants in Istanbul was far from being able to be considered successful or concluded as soon as they found employment. Unfortunately, I could not find studies relating to this pattern of constant job search and fluctuation among Syrian refugees. But the interviews with my informants showed that there is clearly a need for that. While they wish for stability, they actually get trapped in constant hunt. Further research on that point might help to identify how they can be supported to get out of that trap.

5.6. Seeking a stable life – outlook and retrospective

Overall, work for my informants in Istanbul was in the first place a necessity defining the major aspects of life. Due to being essential for survival, my informants had to put aspects like self-fulfilment as connotations of work into the background. The impression that lasts is that though all of my informants found work and actively participate in the labour market, only the minority found their right place yet. The majority continues to move within the market in the search for a job that suits their salary expectations, skill levels and career wishes. Against this background, it is not surprising that my informants look with some uncertainty towards their future. Salah, for example, was cautious planning a future before he received his citizenship and was used to think like this:

“As a Syrian, I had dreams and it didn’t happen. And now I don’t wanna think a lot about the future. I just want a work, stable, which gives me work permit, gives me the ability to get the citizenship. Then, I will start to think about the future.”

Being asked about his imaginations for his future, Hamza answered similarly:

“It’s a difficult question for a Syrian because we Syrians cannot be sure about our future. We cannot, [no matter] what country we enter to or out of. Because we have a Syrian passport. We never know if we’re going to be expelled from Turkey. [...] If things stay the same, like the status will not get better, I will stay in Istanbul. I

have not planned, because planning can fail, it's hurtful. So, I avoid the planning for the future, for the long-term strategy or long-term plan, I avoid that."

While for the majority it's not an option to go back to Syria, many could imagine going to another country in North America, Europe or the Arabian Peninsula. The latter option, however, would be contingent on the condition to be able to go legally to these countries for my informants. Thus, my informants parallelly expressed to not bet on leaving Turkey and adopted an attitude of "seeing what the future brings and take it as it comes". In the case of staying in Turkey, receiving a work permit and the Turkish nationality, if not already available, were the major goals. After that, working in big companies with much potential for experience and personal development or self-employment as well as being stable were common aspirations. The fact that many of my informants kept dreaming about their future after the tedious trial-and-error process many of them underwent on the Turkish labour market left a big impression on me. Oday's aim for the future, for example? "Hollywood." While he is aware of the fact that this aim is, though not impossible yet hard to reach, he is not completely unserious about it. He still aims high, having his own production company for innovative films, working for major players like Netflix or producing video clips for superstars. And why not? Dreams and visions were maybe the most important factor to keep my informants looking for good opportunities instead of settling with unsatisfying, dull jobs. Salim derived his energy to pass ten unpleasant jobs from his dream to eventually become an engineer:

"Some people don't have any dreams in Turkey, just work, just work. But I have a dream, I want to do that. Because of that, I don't accept any work other than eh...engineering."

When I asked my informants towards the end of the interviews which advice they would give to refugees arriving after them in Turkey to settle down and find a job, I did not expect five of them to answer quick like a shot: "Don't come!" They justified it with the difficult circumstances in Turkey in which one is more or less left to its own devices as well as with the availability of other potential, more comfortable destinations especially in the English and Arabic speaking parts of the

world. In contrast to that, only two of my informants, Abeer and Bilal, clearly recommended Turkey as refuge country for being the “fastest country” in terms of development, offering many business opportunities and thus also allowing people to develop their skills and career very fast. Consequently, Bilal called Turkey a “million-dollar country” for everyone with a big dream and the ambition to fulfil it:

“If you want to make a million dollar, it’s from Turkey.”

The aim to make a million dollar in Turkey might be set too high to be realistic for everyone. But after all, what are the aspects that can increase the chances of finding an appropriate job for refugees in Turkey and which points hamper the opportunities?

The majority, however not all of my informants, considered language as first priority. For this purpose, it seems especially helpful not to rely on anyone for translations in order to learn quickly and also get independent. Parallel to the need for personal initiative in learning the language, there is a strong desire for a wider provision of qualitative Turkish classes by the government. Because otherwise, as Anas pointed out, “how would you get one to three million people, how are you gonna get them to settle in if they cannot communicate with the surroundings?” After language, good preparation for and information about the labour market in Turkey were identified as most essential. While trying to find a job before arriving in Turkey seems not reliable, it proved useful to reflect on and research job opportunities for one’s profile as well as identify potential employers. During the job search, social networks are also essential. While in generally it is argued that native contacts are more valuable, in practice ethnic contacts seem to be much easier and quicker to build and an effective source for job references. However, in social networks information flows very quickly and supplies its members constantly with new job opportunities. Thus, they also bring about the risk to get into “vicious circles” in which refugees leave their jobs too quickly and do not spend enough time in one position to build up sufficient experience to increase the chances for higher skilled and better-paid employment. But the most critical turned out to be the labour market structure as well as the legal provisions for refugees to enter the market. The widespread informal sector in Turkey together with the need for work

permits for refugees, whose compliance is rarely controlled, push refugees into informal work. Thus, their exploitation by employers is facilitated; whereby refugees are already easily exploitable due to the necessity of self-supply in the absence of social security. To strengthen the legal and bargaining position of refugees towards their employers and make them less vulnerable, especially a simplification of the registration and work permit procedure is necessary. In addition to that, it became clear that refugees in Turkey nearly exclusively rely on the support of non-state actors for support to become integrated into the labour market, if they receive any assistance at all. Since labour market measures like counselling or placement have already been proven in other places and since with the Turkish employment agency İŞKUR there is already a basic support service, the offered measures should be extended and much more advertised. Because if they exist but nobody knows about them, how should they be effective?

To conclude, there is still a long way ahead to integrate Syrian refugees into the Turkish labour market. So far, they participate in the market but are channelled to the informal sector and to underpaid work below their actual qualification levels. This creates a constant employment fluctuation since the refugees try to improve their job situation and switch from job to job without significantly undergoing improvements. What is supposed to be labour market integration, became for a large part of refugees a constant search of better labour within the market without ever really reaching a stable position.

6. DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON OF LABOUR MARKET

INTEGRATION IN BERLIN AND ISTANBUL

Before my informants decided on the country in which they would try to find refuge, they compared their options also in terms of the chances to find a suitable job, as described in the earlier chapters. After the arrival in their host countries, my informants continued to compare. Now, they contrasted their experiences in the respective host country with the ones of their counterparts in other countries in order to evaluate their destination decision and their life there. Since European and North

American havens are usually favoured and ubiquitous in the discourse about countries of refuge for Syrians, my informants in Istanbul placed more weight on this comparison than their counterparts in Berlin. Some, like Bassel, came to the conclusion:

“Oh gosh, we should have come to Europe, we should not stay here [...] What a wrong decision we made!”

Yet, many others do not envy their compatriots there. Bilal, for example, praised the illimited possibilities in Turkey to set up new businesses which are rather strictly regulated in Europe. Abeer thinks that a generally high qualification level in Europe makes it difficult for refugees to stand out and prove themselves on the labour market there, while in Turkey Syrian refugees would compete with a generally lower skilled workforce. Looking at the big picture, Ibrahim, Nour and Salah believe that the vast state support in Europe makes refugees not only dependent but also lazy and in turn pulls them away from the labour market towards failure. The perspectives of my informants on that matter were not based on representative studies but on reports from their contacts in other host countries or from the media. Bassel might have derived his sense to have made a wrong decision by coming to Turkey from reports of friends telling him about financial carefreeness and a dense infrastructure of free public services. At the same time, Nour, Ibrahim and Salah might have founded their assessment on the complaints from acquaintances about boredom related to the cumbersomeness of bureaucratic procedures. Though the evaluations of my informants cannot claim general validity²⁸, they shed light on labour market integration processes of which some aspects are carried out more or less efficiently in destinations other than their host country. Their contrasting represents, in essence, an approach from which researchers, as well as policymakers, can profit in their attempt to identify sticking points and catalysts of refugee labour market integration. Thus, it also helps to find remedies against the former and efficient ways of utilization of the latter. Comparative analysis is so valuable, because “example is the best means of teaching. We learn better ways of

²⁸ Neither can this thesis which is constructed around a limited, non-representative number of subjective, individual experiences.

doing things by exposure to foreign practices. This is the path to enlightenment and innovation: by keenly observing methods of others, we may find it possible to incorporate some of them and to experiment in our own domain.” (Caiden, 2007, p. 461). Making use of this technique, I now want to recapitulate the differences and similarities in the experiences of my informants’ labour market integration depending on their residence in Berlin and Istanbul, as well as discuss the consequential impacts. The comparison will thereby, parallel to the structure of the previous two chapters on the different aspects of the labour market integration of my informants, take up the following thematic focuses: The expectations and motivation of my informants toward their life in the host country; the influence of legal provisions and of the availability of institutional support on the labour market access; the transferability of skills and experiences on the host country labour market and the requirement of the development of new knowledge and the value of distinct types of social contacts in the host country. In the discussion, it is also shown which impact the configurations of these aspects have on the labour market mechanisms in the host country and, consequently, the job search strategies of refugees.

First of all, my informants entered their host countries with similar motivations to work, however with different expectations on how their employment might look like in their place of residence. All my informants consistently emphasized their willingness to work regardless of the availability of unemployment benefits in their host countries. So even while it is sometimes argued that generous welfare states might offer refugees incentives not to work (Koopmans, 2010; Bratsberg, Raaum, & Røed, 2007; Hansen & Löfström, 2001), this was not confirmed by my informants. However, I observed that the availability of the welfare state plays a role in the self-selection of immigrants (Borjas, 1987), even if it led to distinct outcomes in the considerations. The informants who deliberately chose Turkey as destination stated they were afraid that the welfare benefits in combination with labour market access restrictions in Europe would hamper their employment and negatively influence their motivation and opportunities for job search. In contrast to that, the informants who arrived in Germany did not consider welfare benefits as

a hurdle or negatively impacting their job search motivation but rather as a safety net should they not be able to secure employment quickly. Yet, it did not change their general willingness to work. What is reflected in both ways of thinking is that all informants associated working with positive outcomes. Those are among others the ability to achieve personal success, help others or give something back to the host society. In connection with these positive connotations, work also appeared as factor for personal pride in the sense of being independent and no burden to the host society, contributing usefully with one's skills to a bigger aim, like the success of a company or proving one's abilities to oneself and others in order to receive acknowledgement. So, my informants all had an intrinsic motivation to work that was by itself not influenced by the outer circumstances like the existence of a welfare state or a pressure to work due to the absence of the latter. In spite of the same attitude towards work of all of my informants, their labour market integration went quite differently in Berlin and Istanbul and led to different degrees to which my informants could turn their expectations towards work into reality.

In Berlin, it took my informants on average much longer to get into employment. At the time of the interviews, some of my refugees could still not take up a job. These informants reported to be suffering emotionally from idleness and boredom and described depression-like feelings. On the other hand, the ones who had found employment were satisfied with the tasks, working conditions and salaries that it brought about. As opposed to that, all of my informants in Istanbul quickly found employment but were in many cases primarily not satisfied with the income level and secondly not with the required qualification level for their job. What they shared with the unemployed informants in Berlin was their frustration about not being able to fulfil themselves and pursue their actual career dreams. However, on top of that, they suffered from much more stress and existential anxieties than my interlocutors in Berlin. One major reason for these patterns were the different forms of the legal system and state support which shaped their labour market access. While my informants in Istanbul constantly worried about losing their job and falling into poverty without any safety net, the German welfare state guarantees that everyone is always provided with the means to live at the subsistence level. Consequently,

my informants in Berlin could take time to prepare for the labour market entry and were even supported to do so. They were offered the means and time to learn German and to search for an appropriate job for themselves. Thereby, they received help from the Job Centre and could also do internships, voluntary work or marginal jobs in order to orient themselves on the labour market and gain the necessary experience to enter a proper job at a later time. The opposite was true for my informants in Istanbul. Since most entered Turkey without significant savings, they were exposed to the pressure of starting to work quickly. This is why they could not freely choose their employment in accordance with their personal wishes but had to enter a job that first of all would allow them to survive. Since the outer circumstances determined their job entry, their initial jobs were in low-skilled positions with equally low salaries. As these jobs also brought about long working hours, it proved difficult for them to parallelly improve their skills and knowledge in order to build a profile with which a jump on higher qualification and wage levels would be facilitated. This is why my informants in Berlin who had found employment usually felt that they could execute it in accordance with the demands they had for a fulfilling job. They usually worked in a job of their personal choice in fields they had an interest in and in a position that suited their abilities. These observations are in line with the assumption that the absence of a generous welfare state lowers the reservation wage by raising the costs of job search and thus channels more people into low-paid and low skilled jobs, as was the case for my informants in Istanbul. On the other hand, welfare benefits allow immigrants to spend time investing in skills valued on the host country's labour market and improve the job matching, as my informants in Berlin did (Klingenberg, 2011). Besides the organization of the welfare state that shapes the baseline situation in which refugees find themselves when they are looking for a job, the bureaucratic rules and procedures of the host country have to be followed during the labour market entry.

In Germany, a high level of bureaucracy significantly delayed the labour market integration of my informants. Months-long delays until the recognition of the refugee status led to unproductive periods in which my informants could neither

start to learn German efficiently, let alone start the employment search since the provision of German classes and the allowance to work are standardly subordinate to a positive decision on the refugee status. So, my informants in Germany entered work much later than my informants in Istanbul, yet they directly could start to work formally and under appropriate conditions. Since the level of informal work in Germany is generally insignificant, working conditions highly regulated and wages at least at a minimum wage, for my informants, excessive workload or financial worries were not an issue. A lower bureaucratic level in Turkey, more precisely the absence of strict controls of compliance with labour related laws, enabled my informants to enter work more quickly. However, difficulties with the registration for temporary protection and the work permit regulation complicated the entry into formal work. The work permit regulation in Turkey brings about costs for employers which they are not prepared to take. In combination with the lax controls on its compliance, this leads to the widespread illegal employment of refugees and paves the way for the exploitation of refugee workers which, without work permit, have neither social nor legal security. These findings coincide with other studies underlining the negative impacts of strict work permit regulations on the legal working situation and conditions of refugees (Buffoni, Kataa, & El Khalil, 2017; Clemens, Huang, & Graham, 2018; ILO, 2017).

What is underlying the described distinct legal approaches in the granting of labour market access to refugees are different labour market conditions in the host countries. Germany's dire need for more labour supply is explanatory for its automatic allowance of refugees to work. In Turkey, where the opposite is true, the underlying goal seems to be the prevention of an influx of cheap labour into its labour market that might crowd out national workers and drive down wages. However, studies have shown that under the current conditions, the impact of Syrian refugees on natives' wages in Turkey is ignorable (Çeritoğlu et al., 2017). Moreover, the effect on formal employment turned out to be somewhat positive, while on informal employment it was slightly negative (ibid., (Del Carpio & Demir Şeker, 2018). Therefore, I argue that in Turkey there is scope to facilitate the legal entry into the labour market for refugees that should be used. This could be done

by importantly decreasing the bureaucratic hurdles for work permits. Thus, the authorities would be relieved and even save money on processing costs. This could be translated again into decreased costs for work permits which in turn would make it easier for refugees to negotiate with their employers to provide them with work permits. Employers in Turkey already employ a large number of refugees, whether with or, in most cases without, work permits. The Turkish state should make use of this fact and widely distribute work permits so that the now informally working refugees would then pay social security contributions and taxes as formal workers. It might be argued that employers would not be interested in formally employing refugees due to the higher wages that come along with it and align the wage levels of refugees and natives. However, I argue that even above the minimum wage level there is still scope for wage differences between natives and refugees which would keep the employment of refugees profitable for employers.

At the same time that Turkey should learn from Germany in terms of facilitating formal employment for refugees, Germany should learn from Turkey in what I would call “bureaucratic serenity”. Why do refugees from Syria, that have an extremely high likelihood to be officially recognized as refugees, regularly have to wait long periods for a positive recognition decision before they are provided with the allowance to work? Since speeding up the procedures has been set as a target for years (Wissenschaftliche Dienste des deutschen Bundestages, 2016) but was never reached, the simpler solution might be to allow refugees with high prospects for the refugee status to work and take German classes immediately. Another point in which the German administration could learn from Turkey regards self-employment. My informants in Istanbul unanimously reported about the facility of self-employment in Turkey. Moreover, I had the strong impression that this possibility gave them motivation, optimism and perseverance since they were working towards the concrete aim of self-employment with the prospect of success. Moreover, self-employment promotes innovation since it is a way for talented and visionary people to realize their ideas in the business world. If Germany would lower the specifications, such as the requirement to hold a master’s certificate under the apprenticeship system, and also the amount of paperwork and authorizations

that are necessary before one can open his/her own business, much creative energy would be set free and contribute to the entrepreneurial spirit of the country. Motivating refugees to entrepreneurship and adapting some of the flexibility of the Turkish labour market are thus main points which Germany could pick up from Turkey (Palm, 2017).

At the same time at which Turkey places less bureaucratic obstacles for refugees on the labour market, Germany is far ahead in terms of offering them institutional support. First of all, it provides sufficient financial means so that refugees can fully concentrate on their preparation to enter an appropriate job. While receiving funds, refugees can engage in the acquisition of experiences during education programmes, voluntary activities or internships. If they are not receiving financial support from other sources, refugees in Turkey cannot do so because they are already busy to survive, as was already mentioned above in the discussion of the role of the welfare system. Directly entering the labour markets over low-skilled, low-paid jobs, refugees in Turkey often enter a vicious circle that turns around precarious labour. At low income levels, some hundred lira offer a sufficiently big incentive to change jobs. However, besides a slightly lower salary, the new job often does not come along with a higher position. Moreover, job changes motivated by higher income prospects are rather frequent so that refugees tend to not spend enough time in one company to build vast experience and climb up to higher positions there. Unfortunately, there is no sufficient research available yet to prove this point. However, there is a need for future studies to get engaged with the topic to show that it might be worthwhile for the Turkish administration to adopt some aspects of the German welfare state model and seriously consider supporting refugees financially in the first months of their stay.²⁹ With relative financial security, they would not be forced to accept the first job that comes along but could focus on a broad job search in which they would have time to evaluate all their options and wait for a good opportunity. As my informants suggested, such

²⁹ Support in the form of “one-time cash assistance, non-food items, coal aid, assistance for education, shelter, health, etc.” (UNHCR, 2018c) is already offered by the Social and Assistance Solidarity Foundations. However, it is far from being sufficient to keep refugees above the subsistence level.

considerations of financial funding might meet with the resistance of the Turkish society and be rejected with the argument of non-feasibility in times in which Turkey is already confronted with serious economic constraints. However, if the suggested financial support during the initial job search would be hinged on the participation in training programmes like internships or voluntary work and also limited in time, the benefits might outweigh the costs. Employers would receive free workforce in the exchange for the training of the latter. And if the number of interns or voluntary workers an employer can take in would be limited, too, it could be assured that the system and the refugees are not exploited. On the contrary, after having invested time in the training of a refugee, employers might be more likely to also hire him or her once the financial support of the government ends. The financial support would also give refugees more freedom in the choice of their employment so that it is more likely that they would enter jobs in which they are actually good. While it is still disputed if a better job matching due to unemployment benefits would outweigh the overall costs of those, it is recognized that the payments positively affect the job match quality, wages and job duration of the individuals who benefited from them (Tatsiramos, 2014). After all, refugees will produce a higher added value for the Turkish economy if they work in a position that suits their skill-level than if they work below their capacities. Thus, initial financial support of refugees might be a burden for the treasury on the short-term, but a profit for the economy in the long term. Alternatively, or parallelly, the state could establish financial incentives for employers to hire refugees formally. This might go hand in hand with a reduction or elimination of the costs for work permits as suggested by Clemens, Huang and Graham (2018). Moreover, while currently, a company has to employ five Turkish workers in order to be eligible to apply for one work permit, the same logic could be transferred in the other sense. For instance, financial subsidies for refugee working positions could be introduced if a company hires one refugee in ten or twenty Turkish workers. When these financial subsidies are linked to a maximum number of refugee workers that can be employed, it can be also assured that native workers do not suffer from this. At the same time, it would obviously be necessary to explain to the public that refugees

are not privileged over native workers and that it is ensured that refugee support on the labour market does not drive out native workers from the labour market. The society needs to be made to understand that refugees formally integrated into the labour market can contribute to the success of the Turkish economy while refugees left to themselves on the labour market will drift into informal employment, not pay taxes and eventually even slip into parallel societies.

Apart from financial support, public employment services, especially guidance and counselling, increase the positive outcomes of labour market integration (Sheldon, 2003; Crépon, Dejemeppe, & Gurgand, 2005; OECD, 2015). In that sense, Germany supplies refugees with a vast range of labour market integration measures coordinated by the Job Centre. These include job application training, training courses and coaching projects for specific job fields as well as labour market counselling and job placement. One programme for the apt placement of young people, for example, got around 5600 people into an apprenticeship or other position in 2018 (Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, 2019). While in its core all these measures proved to some degree efficient, they sometimes tend to overshoot their target and lead to paternalism in some cases. To prevent that unemployed persons take advantage of the welfare benefits, the Job Centre obliges its clients to participate in suggested training measures or apply to proposed jobs. However, when unemployed people have a clear concept for their own labour market integration and actively engage in training programmes or job search by themselves to fulfil it, the Job Centre should restrain its activities. In those cases, it should not force them to participate in other measures which are not beneficial for them and at the same time take precious time they would have put into more effective experiences otherwise. Stipulations that lead to the enforced placement of unemployed people in labour market measures without regard if the respective measure fits the person's needs or skills is actually a bureaucratic deficit that gets into the way of the target of efficient support, as accounts of my informants showed. So, while the system in general holds vast opportunities and offers to bring people with all kinds of capabilities into the labour market, the matching of the unemployed people with the right measures can be improved. Therefore, more flexibility within

the guidelines of the Job Centre as well as more say of the concerned persons themselves in the choice of the appropriate labour market measures is required.

Turkey, in contrast, is far from patronizing its refugees on topics regarding their job entry. However, it does not offer comparably vast support measures, either. As the Turkish equivalent for the Job Centre, the Labour Agency ISKUR reports helping Syrian refugees in the registration for work permits, with career counselling as well as job training and language courses (Fair Labor Association, 2016, p. 3). There is also information about joint employment support projects from ISKUR and international organizations like the World Bank (Delegation of the EU to Turkey, 2018a; 2018b). Yet the available description of these projects is rather vague, additionally, no data on the number of participants in these programs or their success rate is available. However, the fact that none of my informants had even heard about services from ISKUR provided to refugees suggests that their reach is limited. Support measures that actually seem to be used more widely and were positively evaluated were training and classes from Public Education Centres. For the most part, they are relied on for free language classes, whereby they usually only teach a basic level of Turkish. The possibility of taking other classes there seems to be known to some part of the refugees, however, is less appreciated in its effectiveness. Together with the already high workload refugees usually face, those job training classes do not seem to attract many participants among refugees. If the offers of ISKUR and the Public Education Centres would be extended and also more advertised, a wider public could become aware of and benefit from them.

On the German labour market, also private initiatives and NGOs engaged strongly in bringing refugees into work and are usually evaluated positively in their supporting role during the integration process (Palm, 2017; Odorige, 2018). Moreover, businesses recognized the value of refugees who could help to resolve bottlenecks in the labour supply and engaged in employment initiatives for immigrants and refugees (Baic, Rentmeister, & Strack, 2017). The list of those actors is long and reaches from nationwide organizations like the Worker's Welfare Association over local contact and counselling centres to the smallest possible unit, private sponsors. Those actors usually focus on one or few fields of support in

which they have profound expertise, are not subject to strict guidelines, usually oversee less people than public organizations and advertise their services target-group-oriented in places frequented by refugees or by word-of-mouth recommendation. Like this, they are familiar to many refugees, easily accessible and much appreciated due to their uncomplicated, hands-on assistance. They became valuable points of contacts especially where the support of the state reaches its limits or where refugees face problems with its opaque bureaucracy. This way of support in Istanbul is again, even though not completely inexistent, not sufficiently available and could profit from the German example (Palm, 2017). According to the accounts of my informants, the biggest and most competent point of contact for Syrian refugees seems to be the NGO United Work. By bringing employers and suitable refugees together and assuring the legality of new employment relationships it demonstrates how refugee labour market integration can be shaped successfully so that all concerned parties benefit. According to its own statements, the NGO matched 1000 refugees with employers between August 2017 and 2018 (United Work, 2018). While for a single organization this is a big milestone and proof for efficient work, the number also shows that there is still room for much more placements. The more the work of United Work is publicized, the more likely it becomes that it is taken as an example for the creation of further similar intermediary agents and that the utilization of its method is extended.

The success in finding an employment does not least depend on the skills of the refugees themselves. In Germany, the primary and indispensable requirement to get into employment is to know the language at least at an intermediate level. Without German, other available skills, no matter how sophisticated they might be, can hardly be used in the German work environment. Thus, language proficiency serves as means to transfer skills and, as consequence, significantly increases the chances of entering the labour market. Accordingly, not knowing German hinders refugees in their labour market entrance. This was not only confirmed unisonously by my informants but also by government reports and empirical studies (Brücker, et al., 2016; Battisti, Peri, & Romiti, 2015). The importance of language is reflected in the obligation of refugees to take language classes and the provision of the latter by the

state. While in the job entry of already experienced workers the expected language requirements depend on the employer, the precondition to enter university education or an apprenticeship is usually bound by an upper intermediate level. Although language classes are taken by all refugees and much additional assistance in the form of for example language cafés or tandem partners are available, language is one of the major hurdles to get into employment. German is perceived as being hard to learn. Besides, difficulties in making contact with natives lead to a lack of practice. However, if one wants to get into a proper job and build a good career, there is no way around it so that this factor depends mostly on the self-discipline of the refugees. The framework for learning is already provided via language classes. One more thing the authorities could contribute is an investment into more and better-trained language instructors since not a small number of my informants complained about teachers with a lack of pedagogical practice or talents. To fasten the language education further, the waiting times for language exam results and thus the period between two courses should be reduced.

In Turkey, language skills were also highly relevant for taking up employment. The language factor was not only considered by a majority of my informants but also by other studies as major barrier to access the Turkish employment world (Leghtas & Hollingsworth, 2017). At the same time, language proficiency in Turkey does not seem to be as decisive as in Germany and its lack might be compensated through other skills. Naturally, speaking Turkish increases the chances of finding good employment since it widens the options of possible jobs. But due to the availability jobs in tourism, trade, sales or factories that are either based on the mastering of foreign languages such as English or Arabic or that do not require much language skills at all, entry into work is also possible without solid Turkish. Actually, foreign language skills, especially of English and Arabic, are a valuable asset on the Turkish labour market since on the one hand, many English and Arabic-speaking people live in or visit Turkey so that these languages are essential for the sales field. On the other hand, Arabic speakers are needed for the numerous companies maintaining business relations with the geographically close Arabic world. Thus, in internationally oriented companies climbing the career ladder to high-skilled jobs

only with the help of Arabic and English proved to be possible, something that is hardly imaginable in Germany. So in some cases, Syrian refugees can rely on their mother tongue for their career. However, to open the job possibilities for Syrians further, an expansion of available free language classes should be considered. It is also conceivable that employers provide their refugee workers with language classes, as one of my informant's employer did. In those cases, the state should contemplate to subsidize them.

While my informants in Germany all had achieved at least a lower intermediate language level thanks to the language classes, nearly half of my informants' language skills in Turkey did not exceed a basic level. The reason is obviously that classes are neither mandatory nor vastly available and that the available amount of time to learn was extremely limited. However, the ones who had learned Turkish either with the help of classes or by themselves, did seem to find it much easier compared to their counterparts learning German. In general, they reported starting talking after about six months, feeling comfortable after a year and approaching a fluent level after about two years. In Germany, after reaching the intermediate level many informants were not able to improve further even after four years of stay. So, even though in Turkey the assistance in learning the language is limited, the experienced comparable ease in learning Turkish and the possibility to find a job even if one does not master it is a clear advantage on the labour market. This has a special significance in relation to the age of the refugees. While my younger informants struggled less with the language and also have comparatively more time to learn it, for some of my informants in Germany the language became the major stumbling block. First, because they experienced learning as more painful due to their advanced age. Second, they already felt pressured to find a job quickly because of their age and did not want to lose further time with language struggles. While age is something that cannot be influenced, refugees could take it into consideration in their choice of the destination country as far as possible.

Besides language skills, employers naturally look for competences. Thereby, not only the mere availability of skills and experiences is decisive, but also their transferability to the host country labour market (Chiswick & Miller, 2007). In

Germany, this proved to be more challenging for my informants than in Turkey. In Turkey, my informants described to just have demonstrated demanded skills during the first days of their work, which were kind of a probation period. Employers hired them in reliance upon their indicated expertise and if they would not prove themselves, the work relationship would simply be ended. This rather low fixation on certificates also brings about the advantage that refugees can theoretically work their way up even without university education. In extreme cases, this proved to be possible even until the management level. In Germany, however, employers tend to select employees according to abilities confirmed by formal certificates and references from previous employers. Moreover, for many positions for which specific degrees are prescribed by law, foreign certificates have to be acknowledged by the authorities. This acknowledgement is another time-consuming bureaucratic hurdle and does not only concern fields like medicine or law, but for example even driver's licenses. Another point is that the job profiles or the demanded labour in Germany are less compatible with the professional skills that refugees often obtained in Syria than the available jobs in Turkey. My informants, for example, were confronted with a large degree of specialization and rather low demand for all-round-talents in Germany. Thus, they sometimes failed to bring in their competences into a job effectively. It can be concluded that skills acquired in Syria tend to be more usable and valuable in Turkey than in Germany. This led many of my informants in Germany to start learning a new job right from the beginning either in university or as apprentices in a company. Official statistics confirm that apprenticeships are a popular way into the German labour market with 7.7 % of all positions being occupied by refugees (Kalkschmidt, 2018). This option is especially profitable for young people since, after the completed education, they will be of equivalent value to employers as natives. After having learned German, apprenticeships are the fastest way to enter the labour market and at the same time lay a solid basis for the future. To become an apprentice, no special knowledge is required because it will be build up during the traineeship. Moreover, apprentices receive an income from the beginning. After their formation, they are a valuable asset for employers, since especially in craft, care and industrial occupations, which

play a central role in apprenticeships, employers are constantly in high demand (Ulrich, 2017). Of course, it would be difficult to build up such an apprenticeship system in Turkey in a short time and from scratch. However, it can serve as an inspiration to set up, for instance, short training of few months in which refugees get trained in a certain job that they afterwards can execute independently.

To sum it up, Turkey would profit if it focuses more strongly on measures for and the support of the building of skills and experiences of refugees. At the same time, Germany would gain from more flexibility in regard to the acknowledgement of competences already present with refugees. It would save much time and energy if, in appropriate situations, the demonstration of skills would be at least as much trusted as some sheets of paper.

Eventually, not only the labour market conditions in the host country and the personal profile of refugees play a role for their professional success, but also their life circumstances, in particular their social network. In Turkey, the circle of friends and acquaintances, as well as social media networking, were a fundamental source of job opportunities for my informants. Thereby, they mainly relied on Syrian or Arabic contacts, close as well as rather distant ones, to spot positions. Since information about employment opportunities was transmitted quickly and reliably over these networks, my informants often entered situations in which they had to decide about a job change. Mainly for reasons of financial and work condition improvement, these offers led to relatively frequent job turnovers. This is why, on the one hand, Syrian contacts are precious in situations in which refugees are in acute need of any employment. On the other hand, by tending to pull refugees away from jobs at frequent intervals, they also prevent a profound practice in one position and an eventual advancement within one company. With too many job changes, settling and pursuing a promising career path was not possible for my informants. Instead, informants who stayed in a company for prolonged periods could more easily achieve promotions. Consequently, it can be suggested to refugees in Turkey to try to stay in one job if there is potential for career improvement. In case no such potential is recognizable, it might still be more promising to stay until a real opportunity turns up. Moreover, the jobs referred to by other Syrian contacts

concerned to a large degree low-skilled, to a lesser degree medium-skilled and basically never high-skilled positions. Therefore, Turkish contacts could be more advantageous, but those were also reported to be much more difficult to establish. This is similar to the experiences of refugees in Germany. In general, my informants had only small circles of German contacts but vast networks of Arabic and Syrian contacts. It was also over the latter, that they were in some cases referred to jobs. Then, however, the positions were usually marginal, part-time or student jobs. For references to formal, full-time employment, networking did not play a role. This tendency of social capital to be only helpful in obtaining lower-skilled jobs, which was observed by my informants in Istanbul and Germany alike, is also supported by the literature (Battisti, Peri, & Romiti, 2015; Dustman et al., 2016). Different explanations can be given for this: In Turkey, the already large size of the informal sector, which is made up of low- and medium-skilled positions, increases the likelihood that references will also point out there. And since the Turkish labour market regulations and the pressure to find a job tend to channel refugees mainly into low-skilled jobs, it is logical that refugees can refer one another only to those kinds of jobs, too. In Germany, the reasons for the limited scope of jobs that are made available with the help of networks are different: First of all, in Germany already other success-promising channels to find employment exist, like the Job Centre. Therefore, the reliance on mouth-to-mouth recommendations is much lower. Second, references to get into employment generally do not play a big role in the German labour market, in which labour is regularly obtained over the classic application process. This does not mean that contacts are to be underestimated. In general, they still serve as information source, emotional support or for rendering the mechanisms of the bureaucratic system and the labour market understandable. Still, both in Istanbul and Berlin, there was much scope for my informants to extend their social networks, especially to German or Turkish contacts. Native contacts often dispose of some insider knowledge, can give useful tips, practice the language with and foster the general integration of refugees. Broadening their networks with native contacts, however, does not only lie in the hands of the refugees themselves; the members of the host society also have to be willing to mingle with them. This

is a point that was perceived as difficult in both countries as my informants were not seldom encountered coldly. Therefore, more educational work for mutual acceptance, cultural tolerance and solidarity is needed in both countries to make integration work.

These factors that emerged as the most essential ones during my research correspond to a large degree to the focus points in the literature. Accordingly, bureaucracy and state support are discussed under keywords like “incorporation regimes” (Castles, 1995; Freeman, 2004) or integration and immigration “policies” (Kogan, 2016; Rinne, 2012) and “welfare systems” (Koopmans, 2010). Skills and experiences are widely discussed as “human capital” (Chiswick & Miller, 2007; Battisti, Peri, & Romiti, 2015; Friedberg, 2000) and networks correspondingly as “social capital” (Lancee, 2012; Potocky-Tripodi, 2004). What is reviewed in the literature as “ethnic capital” (Constant, 2014) was only relevant for my informants in Turkey in that it led to discriminations compared to natives and exploitation by employers. The informants in Berlin did not themselves report any special treatment on the labour market related to their origins. With the exception of this point, the reached intermediate conclusion is that the factors that played a role for the labour market integration in Berlin and Istanbul coincided to a large degree with each other and with the assumptions drawn from the literature. However, in the literature, authors are usually concerned with the impact of only one of the named factors on labour market integration. The clear advantage of this approach is that it allows for a profound analysis and the tracking of all ways in which the factor might exert influence. On the other hand, mechanisms that only operate due to the linkage of two or more factors might be left apart. But for the comparison of labour market integration in Berlin and Istanbul, these linkages of factors are what is actually essential. It was demonstrated that in both places the influencing factors are similar, yet their configuration and the degree to which they impact the labour market integration vary. Consequently, this led to equally diverging labour market outcomes.

In Germany, the entry of refugees into the workforce is delayed in comparison with Turkey, because of bureaucratic hurdles such as the lengthy procedure to become

recognized as refugee as well as the requirement to render competences apt to the German labour market. This necessitates building new skills such as learning the language or getting experience on the German labour market in the form of internships or voluntary work but also the formal acknowledgement of certificates. Due to often occurring divergences between the professional profiles of the refugees and the needs on the labour market, complete new formation in a job is often worthwhile and sometimes even needed. In Turkey, on the other hand, refugees could often directly employ their available skills without passing over bureaucratic procedures or transfer measures such as learning the language. Thus, the labour market entry in general took place more rapidly. Additionally, the pressure to take up work in Turkey in absence of sufficient financial support serves as pushing factor. Compared to that, it seems appropriate to speak of a pulling factor for refugees in Germany. It is the Job Centre that pulls refugees to the labour market, for example with the active encouragement of refugees to take part in formation measures and the sanctioning of inactiveness. Due to the prior participation in skill-building activities as well as the provision of welfare benefits, the process until finding a formal job works more slowly and with less pressure. Taken together, the focus on making skills efficiently exploitable on the German labour market and the available institutional support lead to stable and appropriate jobs once refugees take up employment. Still, this process could be speeded up if some superfluous focus on the compliance with bureaucratic standards would be skipped. Moreover, the aspiration to place refugees directly in suitable positions and the lacking necessity to work for subsistence lead to not few refugees staying unemployed.

To conclude, the way into formal employment in Germany is long and passes over several steps to make the refugee's profile appropriate for the needs of the labour market. But if a job is taken up, it usually bears the potential for long-term employment upon which a comfortable life can be built. In Turkey, as opposed to that, the path to employment is usually quick but initially tends to lead refugees to informal employment under precarious conditions. Attempts to leave this course and improve one's working conditions often results in a chase of opportunities

which, in the end, not seldom leads refugees to get stuck in a circle of precarious employment. Both described procedures bear major challenges and burdens. Since their experience is moreover dependent on individual perception, it is hard to say if labour market integration is more difficult in Germany or Turkey. In Germany, it might be harder to enter employment in general, but due to welfare benefits, this does not lead to existential fears. Moreover, favourable framework conditions lead to higher expectations for work, so that actually a job might be available but is not taken up because it is not perceived as appropriate. Especially in the beginning, refugees in Turkey do not even have the choice between taking up an employment or keeping searching for a better one. This is why quantitatively, if one only regards how many refugees found work and how quickly, it can be said that refugees in Turkey tend to be integrated stronger into the labour market. Qualitatively, however, in terms of formal employment, wage levels, qualification levels, working conditions and job stability, not to speak of welfare benefits, refugees in Germany tend to be better off. They can afford to wait for appropriate employment, while at the same time their counterparts in Turkey are still trying to escape informal employment.

With the two described patterns of labour market integration in Berlin and Istanbul, it was demonstrated that many factors play a role and eventually determine the individual outcomes. Obviously, labour market integration does not take place in a vacuum. It is subject to the structures and operating principles of the host labour market which stipulates the possibilities of the refugee's participation in this market. Besides the principles of labour demand and supply regulating the market, the two fundamental elements seem to be the bureaucratic regulations as well as the availability of institutional support for employment search. Upon this basis, obtainment of work by refugees depends on their profile, meaning the skills and experiences they brought along but also their ability to utilize them on the host labour markets. For this transferability, language is a central element, whereby its degree of importance is shaped by the structure of the host labour market. Additionally, the interaction of the refugee's profile and the labour market regulations and support structures is embraced by the social network in which

refugees were situated. All these factors taken together eventually frame the outcome of labour market integration.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the present thesis was to explore at first which factors to which degree determine labour market integration in Berlin and Istanbul according to the experience of the refugees themselves. To answer this open question that mainly requests a descriptive approach, an ethnographic methodology based on extensive interviews with refugees in Berlin and Istanbul was applied.

My informants in Berlin and Istanbul arrived at their destinations with equally high motivations to work but slight differences in the expectations. Still back in Syria, Germany was always highly praised and recommended in the conversations about flight plans. Therefore, my informants there had higher and partly more concrete expectations about their new work and daily life than my informants in Istanbul, who approached their destination with a readiness to take things as they come. Later, the same main factors shaped their way into work, which are: bureaucracy and institutional support, skills and experiences as well as social networks. In contrast to Berlin, where my informants could not confirm an influence of their ethnicity on their employment chances and conditions, the ethnicity of my informants in Istanbul played a role in that it made them more vulnerable and exploitable by employers.

Upon arrival, the process until finding employment for my informants in Berlin was long and dogged. Delays in the workforce entry occurred not only due to bureaucracy via lengthy procedures for recognition of refugee status or the official recognition of certificates but also due to great efforts to transfer skills and build experiences fitting the demand on the German labour market. Thereby, waiting periods inherent to the bureaucratic system were felt like a waste of time and filled with boredom. On the other hand, transfer measures like classes, internships or training programmes were perceived as efficient under the condition that they corresponded to my informants' needs and were not just imposed to answer a bureaucratic requirement. Transfer of capacities and often even the forming of new skills were a major issue for my informants in Berlin since they experienced the demands on the German labour market to vary strongly from the Syrian one in that it is more specialized, high-skilled and focused on formal qualifications. With

regard to this matter, learning German was acknowledged by all of my informants as the first and foremost condition to take root in the labour market. Nevertheless, it was also the precondition that took the biggest amount of time and that my informants struggled with most. The Job Centre's offering of language classes, counselling measures, job placement and training programmes was seen as great help. At the same time, its linkage of financial support to the participation in its prescribed programmes led in individual cases to paternalism and ineffectiveness when better labour market preparation measures would have been available to my informants. This means that as a supportive institution the Job Centre was held in high regards while its highly bureaucratic mechanisms led at times to frustrations and one worry more for my informants. This is why many of my informants in addition to the services of the Job Centre relied on the engagement of private initiatives, associations and NGOs to seek help. First, they did so when they could not await broad guidance by the German authorities due to not having attained refugee status yet. Later, they sometimes turned to this non-official support to cope with bureaucratic obstacles they faced from the authorities like for example the Job Centre. At other times they used the help as a supplement or even substitute when the actions of the Job Centre proved deficient. This comfort took diverse forms such as language development, consultation about further available support measures, help with job applications or legal counselling. Often, this support also constituted a fluent transition to building up a personal social network. It happened that the helpers became regular contact persons or even friends for my informants or that they brought my informants into contact with other refugees or natives. Talking about social networks, most of my informants in Berlin had weaved their close social web with contacts to other Syrians or Arabic persons since getting in touch with natives turned out to be difficult for them. On the one hand, they were themselves shy to approach natives or just did not know how to best meet new people and make friends. On the other hand, they experienced the society as rather reserved and life in Berlin as hectic and individualistic so that interpersonal relationships in general were not so much in the focus. This lack of native contacts was considered as disadvantage mainly for the aim to learn German. In terms of

finding a job over native references this was not regarded as significant since they observed that principally, the obtainment of employment passes over the formal application procedure and does not rely generally on references. For marginal or part-time jobs, however, references were used but they came usually from Arabic contacts. Arabic contacts were also a relevant factor for self-employment. While my informants generally were inclined to self-employment, in Berlin many recoiled from it due to much paperwork and exhausting confrontations with the administrative bodies it would bring about. In case that self-employment was still dared, usually this was done with a partner with similar backgrounds to share risks. Regular employment was preferred by my informants but also required patience during the job search. This patience paid off when employment was eventually achieved. Since informal employment is not common in Germany, a minimum wage is prescribed and labour law protects employees efficiently, working usually assures a certain quality of life. Since institutional support for improved job matching and financial support during unemployment is available so that there is no existential threat pushing refugees into work, the job search can be focused on an appropriate, satisfying work and be continued until such a position is found. Therefore, frustration usually does not arise from the type of work obtained but if no employment can be obtained. This is not only because refugees have expectations on their workplace but open positions also require skill profiles that many refugees cannot fulfil, especially if they cannot overcome the language barrier.

Labour market integration in Istanbul presented itself differently. There, my informants found work usually quickly which was mainly owed due to the absence of financial and institutional support as well as bureaucratic requirements, as in contrast to the German case. The immediate need to work for self-subsistence prevented my informants to be able to put considerable time and effort into the transfer of already present or the creation of new skills. This is why many of my informants failed to learn Turkish properly and their skills stayed at a rudimentary level even after a stay of a couple of years. However, those who actively engaged in learning Turkish in everyday life or even the job were usually successful and

could attain advanced levels after one to two years. In Istanbul, it proves difficult for refugees to expand their skills upon arrival due to the prompt obligation to work but instead, they can make use of their prior skills to a larger degree than refugees in Germany. For example, even though mastering Turkish was experienced as major advantage, it is not an indispensable prerequisite on the Turkish labour market. Many job fields exist in which refugees are wanted especially for their foreign language skills like Arabic and English. Another reason for the possibility to widely make use of existing skills is that both the state and employers usually do not require official certificates for a vast range of jobs but trust in the demonstration of the indicated skills during the first days of work. Although theoretically not needing to transfer skills via lengthy processes, finding a job suitable to the qualification level in Istanbul tends to be difficult for refugees. First, because they are under time pressure to find any job and cannot afford to search until finding a job fitting their expectations and skills. Secondly, not only the supply of refugee workforce in Istanbul and thus competition is high, the Turkish labour market in general is under pressure which is expressed by comparably high unemployment rates. Thus, refugees often find themselves in low-wage, low-skilled, informal jobs. A condition which is exacerbated by the fact that informal employment is widespread in Turkey, controls on compliance with labour law are low and many employers are not able or willing to adhere to the work permit stipulations for refugees and bear its costs. In the absence of state aid or other support networks, refugees do not have many means to defend themselves against exploitation. It is not least their weak position and preparedness to work for lower wages under worse conditions than natives that make them attractive for employers and guarantees that they find employment at all. Beyond that, the huge supply of Syrian workers does not give employers a reason to worry about running out of cheap workers if they do not offer comfortable working conditions. What is left to do for individual refugees finding themselves in underpaid, hard, unsatisfying jobs is to continue their search. Therefore, social networks are crucial. Similar to the experiences of refugees in Berlin, refugees in Istanbul struggle to build contact circles extending to native contacts. Yet, their Syrian and Arabic contacts prove all the more efficient as

support networks over which information about open positions and favourable references for applications can be obtained. Since job information over these channels spread quickly, the temptation to change jobs for better wages and potential career chances is high and induces frequent job changes. Nevertheless, they also bear the risks of bringing refugees into a constant opportunity chase in which refugees, instead of focusing on experience development and career improvement in one company, jump from job to job without actually scaling significantly better positions. As mentioned, support from state and non-state actors to prevent these employment fluctuations and bring refugees into stable jobs is not widespread in Turkey. Nevertheless, first promising developments by the Turkish employment agency and NGOs with the potential for much future expansion are made. Another popular way among refugees to evade the subjection to the conditions dictated by the labour demand side is self-employment. Being able to be set up uncomplicatedly, promising professional freedom and success, it enjoys great popularity among refugees in Istanbul. However, self-employment is also prone to failures and can eventually bring refugees back to employment search.

To sum it up, for refugees in Germany the job search is a lengthy process requiring patience and depending on the extent to which skills can be extended, transferred or newly built to be convenient for the labour market demands. This process has to pass bureaucratic buffers but is also accompanied by much support from state and non-state actors. Beyond that, refugees are not exposed to existential threats during unemployment so that they can fully focus on an effective employment search. The demands to enter the labour market are high, which is why many refugees struggle a long time or even fail to find employment at all. But those who do usually end up in relative stability. For refugees in Turkey, the period until job entry is due to outer, compellable circumstances minimal but employment starts usually in low-skilled jobs under precarious conditions from which an amelioration to higher levels is difficult. Refugees are not hindered by bureaucratic obstacles to take up work in the first place, however, strict work permit regulations impede the chances for formal employment significantly. The relative restraint of the state in terms of refugee employment also opens the door for exploitation by employers. To escape badly

paid jobs and overqualification, refugees are somehow dependent on employers not seeing them as cheap, exploitable workforce but as normal employees who can contribute best to a company's success if their skills are utilized to the maximum and rewarded appropriately.

In many areas, Germany exhibits weaknesses in its approach to labour market integration of Syrian refugees where Turkey shows strengths and vice versa. Therefore, both could learn from each other and complement their solutions with the help of inspirations from the respective other system. In that sense, Germany would benefit from rendering its bureaucratic system more flexible, manageable and less inflated. First of all, refugee status recognition either needs to be speeded up or the possibilities for refugees with high acceptance prospects to participate in language classes or start work search during the waiting time have to be extended. In general, processing periods, for example for the announcement of language class results or the acknowledgement of certificates, have to be speeded up. In addition, the focus on bureaucracy, especially in terms of job qualifications and self-employment should be dismantled in favour of an encouragement of refugees to pursue career dreams and own business ideas. The existing institutional support for those matters by the Job Centre should be transformed from patronizing supervision to reliable guidance. In that sense, regulations for labour market measures in which refugees should participate should leave more scope to be adapted to the needs of the individual and also grant more say to the refugees themselves on the selection of suitable measures. Administrative assistance should be uncomplicated to the degree that it is comprehensible for refugees which kind of support measures exist, to which they are entitled and how they can receive them. Measures that include trainings or courses, like language classes or application training should be provided by teachers who are not only well-trained in the subject they teach but also in pedagogical methods. Moreover, trainings and classes should be not only composed of refugees in order to avoid conflicts, the inclination to only mingle with people from the same background and speaking Arabic among each other. For the initial period after entering employment, refugees should still be assisted by the Job Centre or a similar institution to assure for a smooth transition from a life based on

state support to self-reliance. This is especially crucial in terms of finding an affordable home. Just like it is not the sole responsibility of the state to find employment for refugees and refugees themselves have to do their best to become independent and find a job, it is not only the task of refugees to participate with their skills in the society and economy. The society also has to reach out to refugees as it became really clear by the accounts of my informants. Refugees who feel welcome and at home will be much more motivated to contribute in the best possible way to their host society's development. While this is a point in which both Germany and Turkey still have to catch up, in Germany private initiatives to support refugees are more widespread. In that point, Turkey and Germany should also engage in more educational work to communicate their people the chances that refugees bring about for more cultural diversity but mainly economic productivity and innovation.

The flexibility the German system lacks, is in Turkey in some parts even too extensively present, as in the handling of informal work. More controls on the compliance with labour law would not only reduce the rate of informal employment and push employers to rely more strongly on formal workers, it would also prevent the exploitation of vulnerable workforce such as refugees. To really improve the labour market integration of refugees, this would need to be realized in combination with a facilitation for refugees to work formally. In Germany, the recognition of the refugee status goes hand in hand with the permission of work. While an automatic work permission might be a too drastic step for implementation in Turkey, the work permit stipulations should be simplified and the hurdles for its issuance significantly lowered. Otherwise, employers will not have incentives to regularly employ refugees formally. Turkey would also profit from the formal work of refugees since it would allow them to easier find jobs suitable to their qualifications, climb up the career ladder and contribute to the maximum to the economic development. ISKUR could also use the labour market measures of the Job Centre as well as its counselling and job placement as an inspiration to broaden its own catalogue of services. Already available support measures should be advertised so that refugees learn about the possibility to obtain assistance at all. A cooperation of ISKUR with

NGOs such as United Work is also imaginable to bundle resources, experience and knowledge in order to expand the range of their services. After all, job search guidance has to be made available to a much larger number of refugees. Other support, such as language classes, also has to be expanded and creative solutions have to be found to make it possible for refugees to find time to work on their skills. A potential solution might be to fund refugees for a limited period, such as three months, with the minimum needs so that they can focus on learning the language or building up other capacities. Alternatively, language teachers could be sent into companies that employ many refugees. Companies and employers are in general a focus point that should receive more attention from the state in the role of refugees' labour market integration. Incentives for employers to hire refugees formally instead of putting them into precarious work situations have to be established. The options for subsidies for refugee workplaces or financial participation of the state in the costs for the formation of refugees should be considered and their feasibility should be calculated.

Eventually, it is essential that in both destinations political decision-makers, employers and the society realise that there are two ways in which refugees can affect the country and its labour market: as a burden that needs to be alimented for a long-term if it does not become integrated into the host country's economy or as valuable contribution in the form of productive workforce that at the same time turns into spending consumers if decent wages are received. Naturally, the second option is the outcome of choice. However, to be able to reach it, both societies need to recognise that some investment is necessary. Naturally, it comes at a price and needs resources, but in the end, it can be worth it and be paid back in the form of more potential for production, consumption and innovations.

The present thesis contributed in so far to the topic of refugee labour market integration that it used a comparative approach based on the narratives of the persons concerned itself. Thanks to the comparison, it was possible to detect which elements that positively affect employment and are present in one place were missing or underdeveloped in the other. Thus, starting points for future improvement could be identified more easily. With the help of the respective

counterexample, it could also be suggested over which concrete measures improvement could be obtained. At the same time, the direct comparison also allowed for a demystification of Germany which is often presented as a paradise country in the discourse of refugees in more Eastern countries. Surely, refugees in Germany do not suffer from the same existential threat refugees in Istanbul risk to go through. Nevertheless, the difficult path into employment there creates negative potential for feelings of failure, insufficiency, desperation or even depression. At the same time, refugees in Turkey find themselves in a much harsher working environment, in which slipping into precarity is a constant threat but in which refugees can also become highly successful due to many business opportunities linked to the Arabic world, which are underrepresented in countries like Germany. In so far, the comparative approach allowed for a wider, more differentiated perspective on the topic. Another characteristic of the present thesis is that it did not limit itself to one factor of labour market integration. This opened free space to follow the narrations of my informants into broader directions to discover where they came upon hurdles or door openers for their job entry. Thus, an overly strong preoccupation with actually irrelevant topics was obviated while at the same time things that otherwise would have been left out were integrated.

In the same way that this approach was beneficial in the described ways, it contains shortcomings in other points. First, no generalizations can be drawn from this thesis. This is because the sample of informants was not representative, relatively small and the interviews did not strictly follow the same structure so that they would be directly comparable to each other. Due to the sample of interviewees not being representative, it is also possible that topics which are of particular interest for one group are unintentionally ignored. For example, it proved highly difficult to find women for the participation in the interviews, so that in the accounts a male perspective is overrepresented. Second, the research is based on the personal experiences and perceptions of my informants so that a certain degree of subjectivity always has to be considered while assessing the results. Moreover, in detailed interviews, the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is crucial. Although the atmosphere in all interviews was friendly and comfortable, it is, for

example, possible that my informants skipped points they felt shy to share. Third, the research combined exploratory and descriptive elements but included no quantitative design, so that suggested causal relations can only be affirmed by further inquiry. There is a need for more empirical research on issues such as the effectiveness of public employment services for the employment chances of refugees, the impact of certain regulations like the work permit regulation in Turkey or the effect of social networking on the frequency of job changes and the quality of obtained jobs.

Eventually, there are also many issues that the present thesis did not touch upon. These include the labour market integration of most vulnerable refugees like women or even children, the perspectives of employers on refugee's labour market integration, the role of factors like psychological and physical health on the job situation of refugees or the relation between labour market integration of refugees and their social integration into the host country's society. Since it is likely that many of the refugees that already arrived in the host countries are going to stay for a long term and that others from ongoing conflicts are yet to arrive, the research on issues in migration and integration in general should be upheld and intensified. Thereby, one of the main focus points should be labour market integration since it is not only the basis for the economic livelihood of human beings but also decisive for other parts of life, like social participation and psychological well-being.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Acemoğlu, D., & Shimer, R. (2000). Productivity gains from unemployment insurance. *European Economic Review*, 44, 1195-1224.
- Ager, A., & Strang, A. (2004). *Indicators of integration: final report*. London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate.
- Ager, A., & Strang, A. (2008). Understanding integration: a conceptual framework. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 21(2), pp. 166-191.
- Aguilera, M. B. (2002). The impact of social capital on labor force participation: evidence from the 2000 Social Capital Benchmark Survey. *Social Science Quarterly*, 83(3), pp. 853-874.
- Akgündüz, Y. E., Van den Berg, M., & Hassink, W. (2015). *The impact of refugee crisis on host labor markets: the case of the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey*. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor.
- Aksoy, C. G., & Poutvaara, P. (2019). *Refugees' self-selection into Europe: Who migrates where?* Munich: Ifo Institute.
- Akyol, M., Neugart, M., & Pichler, S. (2013). Were the Hartz reforms responsible for the improved performance of the German labour market? *Economic Affairs*, 33(1), pp. 34-47.
- Asylum Information Database. (2018). *Access to the labour market: legal conditions and obstacles to access in practice*. Brussels: European Council on Refugees and Exiles. Retrieved April 23, 2019, from <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/turkey/access-labour-market-0>
- Atkinson, P., & Hammersley, M. (2007). *Ethnography: principles in practice* (3 ed.). Abingdon, New York: Routledge.
- BA. (2018). *Auswirkungen der Migration auf den deutschen Arbeitsmarkt*. Nürnberg: Bundesagentur für Arbeit.
- Baban, F., Suzan, I., & Rygiel, K. (2016). Syrian refugees in Turkey: pathways to precarity, differential inclusion, and negotiated citizenship rights. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 43(1), 41-57.

- Baic, A., Rentmeister, H., & Strack, R. (2017). *How 300 companies helped 2500 refugees enter Germany's labor market*. Munich: The Boston Consulting Group.
- BAMF. (2017). *Zugang zum Arbeitsmarkt für geflüchtete Menschen*. Nürnberg: BAMF.
- BAMF. (2018a). *Ausländische Staatsangehörige*. Nürnberg: BAMF. Retrieved October 22, 2018, from http://www.bamf.de/DE/Infothek/TraegerIntegrationskurse/Organisatorisches/TeilnahmeKosten/Auslaender/auslaender-node.html;jsessionid=33F7216E0101E89FE4AC361FCBFEEAE78.2_cid286#doc1367488bodyText7
- BAMF. (2018b). *Asylberechtigung*. Nürnberg: BAMF. Retrieved October 22, 2018, from <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Fluechtlingsschutz/AblaufAsylv/Schutzformen/Asylberechtigung/asylberechtigung-node.html>
- BAMF. (2018c). *Flüchtlingsschutz*. Nürnberg: BAMF. Retrieved October 22, 2018, from <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Fluechtlingsschutz/AblaufAsylv/Schutzformen/Fluechtlingsschutz/fluechtlingsschutz-node.html>
- BAMF. (2018d). *Subsidiärer Schutz*. Nürnberg: BAMF. Retrieved October 22, 2018, from <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Fluechtlingsschutz/AblaufAsylv/Schutzformen/SubsidaererS/subsidaerer-schutz-node.html>
- BAMF. (2019). *Erstverteilung der Asylsuchenden (EASY)*. Nürnberg: BAMF. Retrieved February 12, 2019, from <http://www.bamf.de/DE/Fluechtlingsschutz/AblaufAsylv/Erstverteilung/erstverteilung-node.html>
- Basilio, L., Bauer, T. K., & Kramer, A. (2014). *Transferability of human capital and immigrant assimilation: an analysis for Germany*. Berlin: DIW Berlin.
- Battisti, M., Peri, G., & Romiti, A. (2015). *Immigrant networks, employment and human capital investment*. Berlin: Leibniz Association.

- Bauer, I. (2017). *Unterbringung von Flüchtlingen in deutschen Kommunen: Konfliktmediation und lokale Beteiligung*. Osnabrück: Universität Osnabrück.
- Becker, G. S. (1962). Investment in human capital: a theoretical analysis. *Journal of political economy*, 70(5), pp. 9-49.
- Bertrand, M., & Mullainathan, S. (2004). Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination. *The American Economic Review*, 94(4), pp. 991-1013.
- Biffl, G. (2012). *Labour market integration of low-skilled migrants in Europe: economic impact*. Berkeley: University of California.
- Bisin, A., Patacchini, E., Verdier, T., & Zenou, Y. (2011). Ethnic identity and labor-market outcomes of immigrants in Europe. *Economic Policy*, 26(65), pp. 57-92.
- Blommaert, L., & Coenders, M. (2014). Discrimination of Arabic-named applicants in the Netherlands: an internet-based field experiment examining different phases in online recruiting procedures. *Social Forces*, 92(3).
- BMAS. (2012). *Maßnahmen zur Aktivierung und beruflichen Eingliederung*. Berlin: Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales. Retrieved May 13, 2018, from <http://www.bmas.de/DE/Themen/Arbeitsmarkt/Arbeitsvermittlung/massnahmen-zur-aktivierung-und-beruflichen-eingliederung.html>
- BMAS. (2017). *FAQ Flüchtlingsintegrationsmaßnahmen (FIM)*. Berlin: BMAS. Retrieved May 13, 2018, from http://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Thema-Arbeitsmarkt/faq-fluechtlingsintegrationsmassnahmen.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=2
- Bodvarsson, Ö. B., & Van den Berg, H. (2013). *The Economics of Immigration: Theory and Policy* (2nd ed.). New York: Springer.
- Bofinger, P., Feld, L. P., Schnabel, I., Schmidt, C. M., & Wieland, V. (2015). Focus on future viability. In P. Bofinger, L. P. Feld, I. Schnabel, C. M. Schmidt,

- & V. Wieland, *Annual economic report 2015/16* (pp. 1-35). Wiesbaden: German Council of Economic Experts.
- Böhning, W. R., & de Beijl, R. Z. (1995). *The integration of migrant workers in the labour market: policies and their impact*. Geneva: International Labour Office .
- Borjas, G. J. (1987). Self-selection and the earnings of immigrants. *The American Economic Review*, 77(4), 531-553.
- Borjas, G. J. (1994). The Economics of Immigration. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 32(4), pp. 1667-1717.
- Borjas, G. J. (1999). The economics analysis of immigration. In O. Ashenfelter, & D. Card, *Handbook of Labor Economics* (Vol. 3, pp. 1698-1760). San Diego: Elsevier.
- Borjas, G. J. (2014). *Immigration economics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson, *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (pp. 241-58). Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Bratsberg, B., Raaum, O., & Røed, K. (2007). *When minority labor migrants meet the welfare state*. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor.
- Brenke, K. (2016). Der Arbeitsmarkt in Berlin seit 2005: starker Beschäftigungsaufbau bei weiterhin hoher Arbeitslosigkeit und geringen Einkommen. *DIW Wochenbericht*, 83(26), 625-637.
- Brewer, J. D. (2000). *Ethnography* . Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Brücker, H., Rother, N., Schupp, J., Gostomski, C. B., Böhm, A., Fendel, T., . . . Ehsan, V. (2016). *Forced migration, arrival in Germany, and first steps towards integration*. Berlin: Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.
- Buffoni, L., Kataa, M., & El Khalil, Z. (2017). *Periodic analysis of Syrian workers in Jordan*. ILO, World Bank, UNHCR. Retrieved April 22, 2019, from

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Periodic%20Analysis%20of%20Syrian%20Workers%20in%20Jordan%20-%20Factsheet%20Final.pdf>

Bundesagentur für Arbeit. (2017a). *Perspektiven für Flüchtlinge*. Nürnberg: Bundesagentur für Arbeit. Retrieved October 22, 2017, from https://con.arbeitsagentur.de/prod/apok/ct/dam/download/documents/dok_ba014364.pdf

Bundesagentur für Arbeit. (2017b). *Eingliederungszuschuss - Finanzielle Unterstützungsmöglichkeiten bei Neueinstellungen*. Nürnberg: Bundesagentur für Arbeit. Retrieved October 22, 2018, from https://con.arbeitsagentur.de/prod/apok/ct/dam/download/documents/dok_ba013242.pdf

Bundesagentur für Arbeit. (2017c). *Beschäftigen und Qualifizieren - Weiterbildung von Beschäftigten - Programm WeGebAU*. Nürnberg: Bundesagentur für Arbeit. Retrieved October 22, 2018, from https://con.arbeitsagentur.de/prod/apok/ct/dam/download/documents/dok_ba013242.pdf

Bundesagentur für Arbeit. (2018). *Der Arbeitsmarkt in Deutschland 2017*. Nürnberg: Bundesagentur für Arbeit .

Byoun, S. J. (2013). *The impact of human capital and social capital on employment conditions of immigrants in the United States; an examination of gender and racial/ethnic differences*. Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois.

Caiden, G. E. (2007). The value of comparative analysis. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 12(3), 459-475.

Cambridge Dictionary. (2019). *Home*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved February 21, 2019, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/home>

Cangiano, A. (2012). Immigration policy and migrant labour market outcomes in the European Union: new evidence from the EU Labour Force Survey. *Fieri Working Papers*, pp. 1-65.

- Carmichael, F., & Woods, R. (2010). Ethnic penalties in unemployment and occupational attainment: evidence for Britain. *International Review of Applied Economics*, 14(1), pp. 71-98.
- Castles, S. (1995). How nation-states respond to immigration and ethnic diversity. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 21(3), pp. 293-308.
- Centeno, M., & Novo, A. A. (2006). The impact of unemployment insurance on the job match quality: a quantile regression approach. *Empirical Economics*, 31, 905-919.
- Çeritoğlu, E., Gürçihan-Yüncüler, H. B., Torun, H., & Tümen, S. (2017). *The impact of Syrian refugees on natives' labor market outcomes in Turkey: evidence from a quasi-experimental design*. Ankara: Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey.
- Charmaz, K., & Mitchell, R. G. (2001). Grounded theory in ethnography. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Lofland, *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 160-174). London: Sage Publications.
- Cheung, S. Y., & Phillimore, J. (2014). Refugees, social capital, and labour market integration in the UK. *Sociology*, 48(3), pp. 518-536.
- Chiswick, B. R. (1978). The effect of Americanization on the earnings of foreign-born men. *Journal of political economy*, 86(5), pp. 897-921.
- Chiswick, B. R., & Miller, P. W. (2002). Immigrant earnings: language skills, linguistic concentration and the business cycle. *Journal of Population Economics*, 15(1), 31-57.
- Chiswick, B. R., & Miller, P. W. (2007). *The international transferability of immigrants' human capital skills*. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor.
- Clark, W. A., & Maas, R. (2015). Interpreting migration through the prism of reasons for moves. *Population, Space and Place*, 21, 54-67.
- Clemens, M., Huang, C., & Graham, J. (2018). *The economic and fiscal effects of granting refugees formal labor market access*. Washington, D. C.: Center for Global Development.
- Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94(Supp.), pp. 95-120.

- Connor, P. (2018). *Most displaced Syrians are in the Middle East, and about a million are in Europe*. Washington, D. C. : Pew Research Center. Abgerufen am 27. March 2019 von <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/29/where-displaced-syrians-have-resettled/>
- Constant, A. F. (2014). *Ethnic identity and work*. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor .
- Constant, A. F., & Zimmermann, K. F. (2009). *Migration, ethnicity and economic integration*. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor.
- Coussey, M., & Sem Christensen, E. (1998). Indicators of integration. In M. Werth, W. Stevens, & S. Delfs, *Measurement and indicators of integration* (pp. 15-22). Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
- Crépon, B., Dejemeppe, M., & Gurgand, M. (2005). *Counseling the unemployed: Does it lower unemployment duration and recurrence?* Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor.
- Daily Sabah. (2017, July 21). Majority of Syrian refugees in Turkey hopeful for future. *Daily Sabah*. Retrieved August 16, 2018, from <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2017/07/22/majority-of-syrian-refugees-in-turkey-hopeful-for-future>
- Davies, C. A. (1999). *Reflexive ethnography: a guide to researching selves and others*. London: Routledge.
- Degler, E., & Liebig, T. (2017). *Finding their way: Labour Market integration of refugees in Germany*. Paris: OECD.
- Del Carpio, X. V., & Demir Şeker, S. L. (2018). Integrating refugees into the Turkish labour market. *Forced Migration Review*(58), 10-13.
- Del Carpio, X. V., & Wagner, M. (2015). *The impact of Syrian refugees on the Turkish labor market*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.
- Delegation of the EU to Turkey. (2018a). *Strengthening economic opportunities for Syrians under temporary protection (SuTP) and host communities in selected provinces*. Retrieved October 22, 2018, from <https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/project/strengthening-economic-opportunities-syrians-under-temporary-protection-sutp-and-host>

- Delegation of the EU to Turkey. (2018b). *Employment support project for Syrians under temporary protection and host communities*. Retrieved October 22, 2018, from <https://www.avrupa.info.tr/en/project/employment-support-project-syrians-under-temporary-protection-and-host-communities-7005>
- Deutsche Wirtschaftsnachrichten. (2015, September 11). Nahles rechnet mit steigender Arbeitslosenzahl. *Deutsche Wirtschaftsnachrichten*. Retrieved Mai 11, 2019, from <https://deutsche-wirtschaftsnachrichten.de/2015/09/11/nahles-nicht-einmal-jeder-zehnte-fluechtling-fuer-arbeit-oder-ausbildung-qualifiziert/>
- Duden. (2019). *Heimat*. Berlin: Duden. Retrieved February 21, 2019, from <https://www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/Heimat>
- Duman, A. (2014). *Labour market institutions, policies, and performance: flexibility and security in Turkey*. Istanbul: TÜSIAD.
- Dumont, J.-C., Liebig, T., Peschner, J., Tanay, F., & Xenogiani, T. (2016). *How are refugees faring on the labour market in Europe? A first evaluation based on the 2014 EU Labour Force Survey and ad hoc module*. Luxembourg: European Union.
- Dustman, C., Glitz, A., Schönberg, U., & Brücker, H. (2016). Referral-based job search networks. *Review of Economic Studies*, 83(2), pp. 514-546.
- Dustmann, C., & Fabbri, F. (2003). Language proficiency and labour market performance of immigrants in the UK. *The Economic Journal*, 113, 695-717.
- Dustmann, C., & Glitz, A. (2012). Language proficiency and labour market performance of immigrants in the UK. *The Economic Journal*, 113, 695-717.
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2001). Processing fieldnotes: coding and memoing. In A. Bryman, *Ethnography: Volume III* (pp. 243-266). London: Sage Publications.
- Erdoğan, M. M., & Ünver, C. (2015). *Perspectives, expectations and suggestions of the Turkish business sector on Syrians in Turkey*. Ankara: Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations.

- Essex-Lettieri, D., Howzell, R., Rawson, B., Mirza, A., & Therkelsen, J. (2017). *Refugee work rights report: the Syrian crisis and refugee access to lawful work in Greece, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey*. Oakland: Asylum Access.
- European Asylum Support Office. (2016). *Significant pull/push factors for determining of asylum-related migration: a literature review*. Luxembourg: European Asylum Support Office.
- European Council; Council of the European Union. (2018). Assistance to Syrian refugees in Turkey: Conference document. *Supporting the future of Syria and the region: Brussels II Conference 24-25 April 2018*. Brussels. Retrieved April 23, 2019, from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/34146/turkey-partnership-paper.pdf>
- Eurostat. (2018). *Asylum decisions in the EU: EU Member States granted protection to more than half a million asylum seekers in 2017*. Luxembourg: Eurostat. Retrieved August 16, 2018, from <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/8817675/3-19042018-AP-EN.pdf/748e8fae-2cfb-4e75-a388-f06f6ce8ff58>
- Fair Labor Association. (2016). *Integration of Syrian refugees under Temporary Protection into the Turkish labor market: Challenges and Opportunities*. Washington: Fair Labor Association.
- Falco, P., & Keese, M. (2017). *Employment Outlook 2017*. Paris: OECD.
- Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. (2019). *Passgenaue Besetzung*. Berlin: Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. Retrieved March 22, 2019, from <https://www.bmwi.de/Redaktion/DE/Artikel/Ausbildung-und-Beruf/passgenaue-besetzung.html>
- Federal Statistical Office. (2018). *Migration und Integration*. Berlin: Federal Statistical Office of the Federal Republic of Germany. Retrieved August 16, 2018, from <https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesellschaftStaat/Bevoelkerung/MigrationIntegration/MigrationIntegration.html>

- Fitzgerald, D. (2006). Toward a theoretical ethnography of migration. *Qualitative Sociology*, 29(1), 1-4.
- Flap, H., & Völker, B. (2004). Academy colloquium on "Creation and Returns of Social Capital. The State of the Art". 81(1), p. Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique.
- Frake, C. O. (2001). Notes on queries in ethnography. In A. Bryman, *Ethnography: Volume I* (pp. 204-218). London: Sage Publications.
- Freeman, G. P. (2004). Immigrant incorporation in Western democracies. *The International Migration Review*, 3, pp. 945-969.
- Friedberg, R. M. (2000). You can't take it with you? Immigrant assimilation and the portability of human capital. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 18(2), pp. 221-251.
- Fuchs, J., Hummel, M., Hutter, C., Klinger, S., Wanger, S., Weber, E., & Zika, G. (2018). *Aufschwung auf dem Höhepunkt*. Nürnberg: Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gehrsitz, M., & Ungerer, M. (2017). *Jobs, crime, and votes: A short-run evaluation of the refugee crisis in Germany*. Bonn: Institute of Labor Economics .
- General Directorate of Migration. (2018). *Temporary protection*. Ankara: General Directorate of Migration of the Republic of Turkey. Retrieved August 16, 2018, from http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/temporary-protection_915_1024_4748_icerik
- Gericke, D., Burmeister, A., Löwe, J., Deller, J., & Pundt, L. (2017). How do refugees use their social capital for successful labor market integration? An exploratory analysis in Germany. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 105, pp. 1-16.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*. New Brunswick: Aldine Transaction.
- Gold, R. L. (2001). The ethnographic method in sociology. In A. Bryman, *Ethnography: Volume I* (pp. 289-303). London : Sage Publications.

- Gönenç, R., Röhn, O., Koen, V., & Saygılı, Ş. (2012). *Structural reforms to boost Turkey's long-term growth*. Paris: OECD.
- Gürsel, D. (2017). The emergence of the enterprising refugee discourse and differential inclusion in Turkey's changing migration politics. *Movements*, 3(2), pp. 133-146.
- Hansen, J., & Löfström, M. (2001). The dynamics of immigrant welfare and labor market behavior. *Journal of Population economics*, 22(4), 941-970.
- Hartog, J. (2000). Human capital as an instrument of analysis for the economics of education. 35(1), pp. 7-20.
- Heyl, B. S. (2001). Ethnographic interviewing. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Lofland, *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 369-383). London: Sage Publications.
- Hockey, J., & Forsey, M. (2012). Ethnography is not participant observation: reflections on the interview as participatory qualitative research. In J. Skinner, *The interview: an ethnographic approach* (pp. 69-88). London, New York: Berg.
- Hockey, J., & Forsey, M. (2012). Ethnography is not participant observation: reflections on the interview as participatory qualitative research. In J. Skinner, *The interview - an ethnographic approach* (pp. 69-88). London: Berg.
- Hoffmann, H., & Honey, C. (2018). *Das Milliardengeschäft mit den Arbeitslosen*. Der Tagesspiegel. Abgerufen am 20. February 2019 von <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/wirtschaft/kursangebot-der-jobcenter-das-milliardengeschaeft-mit-den-arbeitslosen/20800654.html>
- Hüfner, F., & Klein, C. (2012). *The German labour market: preparing for the future*. Paris: OECD .
- İçduygu, A. (2016). *Turkey: labour market integration and social inclusion of refugees*. Brussels: European Parliament.
- İçduygu, A., & Diker, E. (2017). Labor market integration of Syrian refugees in Turkey: from refugees to settlers. *The Journal of Migration Studies*, 3(1), 12-35.

- Ikcaracan, I. (2016). *Analysis of Istanbul labour market from a gender equality perspective*. Geneva: International Labour Organization.
- ILO. (2017). *Work permits and employment of Syrian refugees in Jordan: towards formalising the work of Syrian refugees*. Beirut: ILO.
- INGEV. (2017). *Istanbul labour market assessment*. Istanbul: INGEV.
- IOM. (2018). *Mutli-sector needs assessment of Syrians in Turkey's south-eastern provinces*. Ankara: IOM.
- Josephides, L. (2012). Finding and mining the talk: negotiating knowledge and knowledge transfer in the field. In J. Skinner, *The interview: an ethnographic approach* (pp. 89-106). London, New York: Berg.
- Josephides, L. (2012). Finding and mining the talk: negotiating knowledge and knowledge transfer in the field. In J. Skinner, *The interview: an ethnographic approach* (pp. 89-104). London: Berg.
- Kalkschmidt, K. (2018, September 8). So startet das Handwerk in das neue Ausbildungsjahr 2018/2019. *Handwerk Magazin*. Retrieved April 30, 2019, from <https://www.handwerk-magazin.de/so-startet-das-handwerk-in-das-neue-ausbildungsjahr-20182019/150/516/376931>
- Kaya, A., & Kırac, A. (2016). *Vulnerability assessment of Syrian refugees in Istanbul*. Istanbul: Supporttolife.
- Kaymaz, T., & Kadkoy, O. (2016). *Syrians in Turkey - The Economics of Integration*. Istanbul: Alsharq Forum.
- Kirişci, K. (2014). *Syrian refugees and Turkey's challenges: going beyond hospitality*. Washington, D. C. : Brookings Institution.
- Kirişci, K., Brandt, J., & Erdoğan, M. M. (2018, June 19). Syrian refugees in Turkey: beyond the numbers. *Brookings*. Retrieved August 16, 2018, from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/06/19/syrian-refugees-in-turkey-beyond-the-numbers/>
- Kleinman, S., Stenross, B., & Martha, M. (2001). Privileging fieldwork over interviews: consequences for identity and practice. In A. Bryman, *Ethnography: Volume II* (S. 367-381). London: Sage Publications.

- Klingenberg, S. (2011). *Immigrant integration and the welfare state: a survey of issues, problems and results*. Oslo: University of Oslo.
- Koca, B. T. (2016). Syrian refugees in Turkey: from "guests" to "enemies"? *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 54, 55-75.
- Koch, S., Spies, C., Stephan, G., & Wolff, J. (2011). *Arbeitsmarktinstrumente auf dem Prüfstand*. Nürnberg: Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung.
- Kogan, I. (2016). Integration policies and immigrants' labor market outcomes in Europe. *Sociological Science*, 3, pp. 335-358.
- Konle-Seidl, R., & Bolits, G. (2016). *Labour market integration of refugees: strategies and good practices*. Brussels: European Parliament - Directorate General for Internal Policies.
- Koopmans, R. (2010). Trade-offs between equality and difference: immigrant integration, multiculturalism and the welfare state in cross-national perspective. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 1, pp. 1-26.
- Koopmans, R. (2016). Does assimilation work? Sociocultural determinants of labour market participation of European Muslims. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 42(2), pp. 1-20.
- Kossoudji, S. A. (1989). Immigrant worker assimilation: is it a labor market phenomenon? *The Journal of Human Resources*, 24(3), pp. 494-527.
- Kosyakova, Y., & Sirries, S. (2017). Large-scale immigration and labour market integration: first lessons from the recent past in Germany. *Intereconomics*, 52(5), pp. 263-269.
- Kunz, E. F. (1973). The refugee in flight: kinetic models and forms of displacement. *International Migration Review*, 7(2), pp. 125-146.
- Lancee, B. (2012). *Immigrant performance in the labour market: bonding and bridging social capital*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press .
- Lancee, B. (2013). Social capital and labor-market outcomes for immigrants. In I. Ness, *The encyclopedia of global human migration* (pp. 1-4). Blackwell Publishing: Oxford.

- LeCompte, M. D., & Preissle Goetz, J. (2001). Problems of Reliability and Validity in Ethnographic Research. In A. Bryman, *Ethnography* (pp. 100-132). London: Sage Publications.
- Leghtas, I., & Hollingsworth, A. (2017). *"I am only looking for my rights" - legal employment still inaccessible for refugees in Turkey*. Washington D. C. : Refugees International.
- Marquardsen, K., & Söhn, J. (2017). *Erfolgsfaktoren für die Integration von Flüchtlingen. BMAS-Forschungsbericht 484*. Göttingen: Soziologisches Forschungsinstitut Göttingen.
- Mayblin, L. (2016). Complexity reduction and policy consensus: Asylum seekers, the right to work, and the 'pull factor' thesis in the UK context. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 18(4), 812-828.
- McHugh, K. E. (2000). Inside, outside, upside down, backward, forward, round and round: a case for ethnographic studies in migration. *Progress in Human Geography*, 24(1), 71-89.
- Mincer, J. (1958). Investment in human capital and personal income distribution. *Journal of Political Economy*, 66(4), pp. 281-302.
- Mousa, S. (2018). *Boosting refugee outcomes: evidence from policy, academia, and social innovation*. Stanford: Stanford University .
- Murchison, J. M. (2010). *Ethnography essentials*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Nekoei, A., & Weber, A. (2015). *Does extending unemployment benefits improve job quality?* Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor.
- Odorige, C. E. (2018). *The role of non-governmental organisations in the integration of third-country nationals in the European Union: German and Hungarian case studies* . Budapest: National University of public service.
- OECD. (2015). Strengthening public employment services. *Paper prepared for the G20 employment working group - Istanbul, Turkey*. Istanbul: OECD.
- OECD. (2018a). *Labour force participation rate (indicator)*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 17, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/emp/labour-force-participation-rate.htm>

- OECD. (2018b). *Long term unemployment rate (indicator)*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 17, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/unemp/long-term-unemployment-rate.htm>
- OECD. (2018c). *Youth unemployment rate*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 17, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/unemp/youth-unemployment-rate.htm>
- OECD. (2018d). *Unemployment rates by education level (indicator)*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 17, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/unemp/unemployment-rates-by-education-level.htm>
- OECD. (2018e). *Foreign-born unemployment*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 17, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/migration/foreign-born-unemployment.htm>
- OECD. (2018f). *Native-born unemployment (indicator)*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 17, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/migration/native-born-unemployment.htm>
- OECD. (2018g). *Part-time employment rate (indicator)*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 17, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/emp/part-time-employment-rate.htm>
- OECD. (2018h). *Self-employment rate (indicator)*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 2017, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/emp/self-employment-rate.htm>
- OECD. (2018i). *Employment by activity*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 17, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/emp/employment-by-activity.htm>
- OECD. (2018i). *Real GDP forecast*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved October 21, 2018, from <https://data.oecd.org/gdp/real-gdp-forecast.htm>
- OECD. (2018l). *Working together: Skills and labour market integration of immigrants and their children in Finland*. Paris: OECD.
- OECD. (2019). *Harmonised unemployment rate (HUR) (indicator)*. Paris: OECD. Retrieved May 10, 2019, from <https://data.oecd.org/unemp/harmonised-unemployment-rate-hur.htm#indicator-chart>

- Okay, A. S. (2017). Labour market integration of Syrian refugees in Germany and Turkey: challenges and prospects. *Global Turkey in Europe Working Paper*, 18.
- Palm, A. (2017). *What happens after finding refuge? The integration of Syrian refugees in Germany and Turkey*. Rome: Istituto Affari Internazionali.
- Peschner, J. (2017). *Labour market performance of refugees in the EU*. Luxembourg: European Union.
- Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24(1), pp. 1-24.
- Potocky-Tripodi, M. (2004). The role of social capital in immigrant and refugee economic adaptation. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 31(1), pp. 59-91.
- Preston, V., & Tastsoglou, E. (2005). Gender, immigration and labour market integration: where we are and what we still need to know. *Atlantis*, 30(1), pp. 46-59.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: the collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Quinn Patton, M. (2001). Purposeful sampling. In A. Bryman, *Ethnography: Volume II* (pp. 106-121). London: Sage Publications.
- Rattenbury, T., & Nafus, D. (2018). *Data science and ethnography: What's our common ground, and why does it matter?* Retrieved November 26, 2018, from <https://www.epicpeople.org/data-science-and-ethnography/>
- Reitz, J. G. (2002). Host societies and the reception of immigrants: research themes, emerging theories and methodological issues. *International Migration Review*, 36(4), pp. 1005-1019.
- Reuter, T. (2015, December 16). In den besseren Kreisen. *Zeit Online*. Retrieved April 21, 2019, from <https://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2015-12/fluechtlingsunterbringung-fluechtlinge-frankfurt-gesundheit-hygiene-zustaende/komplettansicht>
- Rinne, U. (2012). *The evaluation of immigration policies*. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor.

- Rinne, U., & Schneider, H. (2017). *The labor market in Germany, 2000-2016: The transformation of a notoriously rigid labor market into a role model of its own style is essentially complete*. Bonn: IZA Institute of Labor Economics.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing - the art of hearing data* (2 ed.). London: Sage Publications.
- Rubin, H., & Rubin, I. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: the art of hearing data*. London: Sage Publications.
- Schludi, M., Müller, J., Felde, I., & Kargus, A. (2018). *Zentrale Befunde zu aktuellen Arbeitsmarktthemen*. Nürnberg : Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung .
- Schultz, T. W. (1961). Investment in human capital. *The American Economic Review*, 51(1), pp. 1-17.
- Schünemann, W. J., & Boyle, N. (2011). Die vielen Gesichter aktivierender Arbeitsmarktpolitik. *Sozialer Fortschritt*, 60(09), pp. 189-196.
- Schuss, E. (2018). The impact of language skills on immigrants' labor market integration: A brief revision with a new approach. *The B. E. Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy*, 18(4), 1-19.
- Sheldon, G. M. (2003). The efficiency of public employment services: A nonparametric matching function analysis for Switzerland. *Journal of Productivity Analysis*, 20(1), 49-70.
- Şimşek, D., & Çorabatır, M. (2016). *challenges and opportunities of refugee integration in Turkey*. Ankara: Research Centre on Asylum and Migration.
- Skinner, J. (2012). A four-part introduction to the interview: introducing the interview; society, sociology and the interview; anthropology and the interview; anthropology and the interview. In J. Skinner, *The interview - an ethnographic approach* (pp. 1-52). London, New York: Berg.
- Skinner, J. (2012). *The interview - an ethnographic approach*. Berg: Bloomsbury.
- Smith, V. (2001). Ethnographies of work and the work of ethnographers. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Lofland, *Handbook of ethnography* (pp. 220-233). London: Sage Publications.

- Snijders, T. A., & Van der Gaag, M. (2002). *An approach to the measurement of individual social capital*. Groningen: Department of statistics and measurement theory Groningen University.
- Söhn, J., & Marquardsen, K. (2017). *Erfolgsfaktoren für die Integration von Flüchtlingen*. Göttingen: Soziologisches Forschungsinstitut Göttingen.
- Spradley, J. P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Spradley, J. P. (2001). Interviewing an informant. In A. Bryman, *Ethnography: Volume II* (pp. 331-343). London: Sage Publications.
- Statistisches Bundesamt. (2017). *Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit: Ausländische Bevölkerung - Ergebnisse des Ausländerzentralregisters*. Wiesbaden: Statistisches Bundesamt.
- Tatsiramos, C. (2014). *Unemployment benefits and job match quality: Do unemployment benefits help those seeking work to obtain better jobs?* Bonn: Institute of Labor Economics.
- Tergeist, P., & Grubb, D. (2006). *Activation strategies and the performance of employment services in Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom*. Paris: OECD.
- Thomsen, S. L., Walter, T., & Aldashev, A. (2013). Short-term training programs for immigrants in the German welfare system: do effects differ from natives and why? *IZA Journal of Migration*, 2(24), pp. 1-20.
- Töpfer, V. (2018, January 18). Warum so viele Ausbildungsplätze unbesetzt bleiben. *Der Spiegel*. Retrieved October 19, 2018, from <http://www.spiegel.de/karriere/ausbildung-warum-viele-lehrstellen-unbesetzt-bleiben-a-1184346.html>
- Tören, T. (2018). *ICDD Working Papers: Syrian refugees in the Turkish labour market*. Kassel: ICDD.
- Ulrich, K. (2017, December 22). Dem Handwerk gehen die Handwerker aus. *Deutsche Welle*. Retrieved April 30, 2019, from <https://www.dw.com/de/dem-handwerk-gehen-die-handwerker-aus/a-41888579>

- Ulucan, H. (2017). Recent trends in the Turkish labor market. *Anadolu International Conference in Economics V*. Eskişehir.
- UNHCR. (2018). *Syria regional refugee response*. Geneva: UNHCR. Retrieved August 16, 2018, from <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria>
- UNHCR. (2018a). *UNHCR Turkey: provincial breakdown Syrian refugees in Turkey as of 25 October 2018*. Ankara: UNHCR Turkey. Retrieved April 14, 2019, from https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1450595/1930_1542192601_unhcr-provincial-breakdown-syrian-refugees-in-turkey-november-2018-01.pdf
- UNHCR. (2018b). *Syrien regional refugee response: Turkey*. Geneva: UNHCR. Retrieved November 28, 2018, from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/113>
- UNHCR. (2018c). Ankara: UNHCR Turkey. Abgerufen am 27. April 2019 von <https://help.unhcr.org/turkey/social-economic-and-civil-matters/social-and-financial-assistance/>
- United Work. (2018). *About United Work: Milestones*. Eindhoven: United Work. Retrieved March 22, 2019, from <http://unitedwork.com.tr/about-us/>
- Ünlütürk Ulutaş, Ç. (2016). Syrian Migrants in Turkish Labour Market. *Journal of Life Economics*, 3(4), pp. 163-176.
- Valenta, M., Zuparij-Iljic, D., & Vidovic, T. (2015). The reluctant asylum-seekers: migrants at the Southeastern frontiers of the European migration system. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 34(3), 95-113.
- Vogler-Ludwig, K., Düll, N., & Kriechel, B. (2015). *Arbeitsmarkt 2030 - Die Bedeutung der Zuwanderung für Beschäftigung und WWachstum*. Bielefeld: W. Bertelsmann Verlag.
- Wendel, K. (2014). *Unterbringung von Flüchtlingen in Deutschland: regelungen und Praxis der Bundesländer im Vergleich*. Frankfurt am Main : Pro Asyl.
- Whyte, W. F. (2001). On making the most of participant observation. In A. Bryman, *Ethnography: Volume II* (pp. 162-175). London: Sage Publications.

- Wissenschaftliche Dienste des deutschen Bundestages. (2016). *Arbeitsmarktzugang von Schutzsuchenden in Deutschland*. Berlin: Deutscher Bundestag.
- Wolcott, H. F. (2001). Making a study "more ethnographic". In A. Bryman, *Ethnography: Volume II* (pp. 50-69). London: Sage Publications.
- Worbs, S., Rother, N., & Kreienbring, A. (2019). Befunde aus der Migrationsforschung. *Informationsdienst Soziale Interaktion*, 61, 2-6.
- Wößmann, L. (2015). *Ifo economist Woessmann calls for systematic registration of education levels of refugees*. Munich: Ifo institute. Retrieved April 20, 2019, from http://www.cesifo-group.de/ifoHome/presse/Pressemitteilungen/Pressemitteilungen-Archiv/2015/Q4/pm-20151204_Bildung_Fluechtlinge.html
- Yeldan, E., & Ercan, H. (2011). *Growth, employment policies and economic linkages: Turkey*. Geneva: International Labour Office.
- Yıldız, A., & Uzgören, E. (2016). Limits to temporary protection: non-camp Syrian refugees in Izmir, Turkey. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, 16(2), 195-211.
- Yücel, A. (2016). *The impact of human capital and social capital on the immigrants' employment participation in the Netherlands*. Nijmegen: Radboud University Nijmegen.
- Zika, G., Maier, T., & Mönning, A. (2017). *Auswirkungen der Zuwanderung Geflüchteter auf Wirtschaft und Arbeitsmarkt*. Bonn: Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung.
- Zimmermann, K. F. (1994). European migration: push and pull. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 8(1), 313-342.
- Zorlu, A., & Hartog, J. (2018). *The impact of language on socioeconomic integration of immigrants*. Bonn: Institute of Labor Economics.

**ETİK KURUL DEĞERLENDİRME SONUCU/RESULT OF EVALUATION BY
THE ETHICS COMMITTEE**

(Bu bölüm İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurul tarafından doldurulacaktır /This section to be completed by the Committee on Ethics in research on Humans)

Başvuru Sahibi / Applicant: Laura Kunzendorf

Proje Başlığı / Project Title: Labour Market Integration of Syrian Refugees in Germany and Turkey


Proje No. / Project Number: 2018-20029-111

| | | |
|----|---|----|
| 1. | Herhangi bir değişikliğe gerek yoktur / There is no need for revision | XX |
| 2. | Ret/ Application Rejected Reddin gerekçesi / Reason for Rejection | |

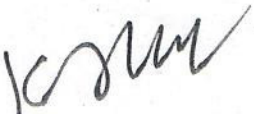
Değerlendirme Tarihi / Date of Evaluation: 22 Ekim 2018


Kurul Başkanı / Committee Chair

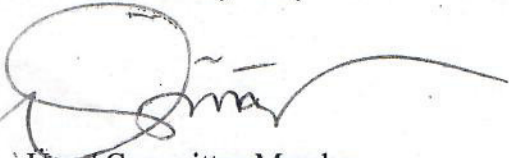
Doç. Dr. İtir Erhart


Üye / Committee Member


Prof. Dr. Hale Bolak


Üye / Committee Member

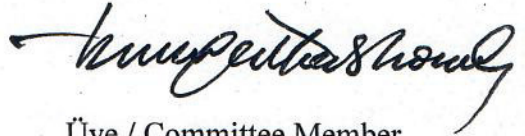
Prof. Dr. Koray Akay


Üye / Committee Member


Prof. Dr. Ayhan Özgür Toy


Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Aslı Tunç


Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Turgut Tarhanlı


Üye / Committee Member

Prof. Dr. Ali Demirci