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# INTEGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Exploring the Labour Market Attachment of Refugees in Denmark

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**Master's Thesis**

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## Abstract

Figures on employment in Denmark show that refugees and persons family reunified to refugees are the two groups with the lowest labour market attachment, the lowest wages, and the highest rate of beneficial transfers in Denmark (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016:48). According to figures from the Danish Employers' Association (DA Footnote: Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening), only 14 % of the refugees were employed after three years of residence in Denmark (Fihl, 2015:75). Research argues that employment are the most contributing factor to integration of immigrants (Bloch, 2008: 23; Mayblin, 2013: 386; Phillmore et al, 2006: 1719-1720).

The thesis seeks firstly, to explore the connection between employment and integration and secondly to explore and explain the labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark

The thesis finds that employment is an important factor for integration. Not only does employment mean economical gain for the immigrant, it can also open for the possibility of immigrants to develop social relationships with the host population. In this way employment can improve knowledge of language, culture as well as labour market structures. In addition, employment can generate positive emotional health and well-being for the immigrants-

A lot of factors play in to the labour market attachment of refugees. The research points to 11 important factors to keep in mind when analysing the labour market attachment of immigrants in general, these are legal status, permission to work, reason for immigration /basis of residence, language, Demand of labour in the host country, Qualifications/recognition of qualifications, Network, Health, Age, Gender, the Pre-asylum period. Using the analysis framework to understand and explore the labour market attachment of refugees show that there are a lot hidden between the numbers. The thesis show that there are a lot of uncontrollable factors that influences the employment attachment in general, that also have an effect on refugees labour market attachment, and even maybe more so. Both the EU enlargement and the economic crisis starting in 2008, is showed to affect the labour market attachment of refugees quite a lot. The demand for labour in the host country and the basis for residence, does also have a lot to say. If the demand for a specific type of labour declines, a refugee has little other possibilities than to stay in the host country. Persons from most of the other immigrant groups have more mobility and can thus move to another country in the persuit for a job.

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# 1. Introduction

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In the recent years the world has experienced great conflicts and wars which have forced a massive amount of people to leave their homes to seek refuge in safer areas. In the European countries this has been evident with the greatest movement of refugees flows since the World War II (depending on how the figures are analysed). Especially the Syrian civil war, starting in 2011, has been a catalysator for the big increase of refugees and asylum-seekers in Europe, leading European media and politicians to refer to the situation as a European “refugee crisis”.

In Denmark too, the European “refugee crisis” has been a big theme in the public and political debates in 2015 and 2016. While a big part of the debate has revolved around how to house and welcome the stream of people seeking asylum, a growing concern has been on how to integrate and finance the refugees coming to Denmark. The themes of how to manage and integrate refugees and asylum-seekers in Denmark are not new, but have been on the political and public agendas for several years. One of the major issues in relation to refugees, and immigrants in general, is employment.

Figures on employment in Denmark show that refugees and persons family reunified to refugees are the two groups with the lowest labour market attachment, the lowest wages, and the highest rate of beneficial transfers in Denmark (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016:48). Several academics argue that one of the most contributing factors to integration of immigrants is employment (Bloch, 2008: 23; Mayblin, 2013: 386; Phillmore et al, 2006: 1719-1720). Employment is argued to open up for interaction with the host society, to increase the opportunities for learning the language of the host country as well as opportunity for the refugees to “build a future and to regain confidence and esteem” (Phillmore & Goodson, 2005: 1720). This could indicate that refugees are the least integrated group in Denmark.

The focus of this thesis is two-folded. First of all it aims at exploring the connection between employment and integration, and secondly it seeks to explore and explain the labour market attachment of refugees in the labour market age in Denmark. Thus the research question for this thesis is:

What is the connection between employment and integration, and how can the labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark be explored and explained?

In order to understand how employment and integration are connected it is first and foremost important to understand what the concept of integration entails and what factors affect the process of integration. This will be done by examining existing research, and from this extract the main points of what integration is. When the concept of integration has been defined this will lay the foundation to explain how integration and employment are connected.

The next part of the thesis aims at explaining the labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark. This is done primarily on the basis of three reports on labour market attachment of refugees and immigrants in Denmark. In order to understand and explain what more the figures say about employment integration of refugees a structure for the analysis is needed. This will be unfolded by looking into what research on employment of immigrants highlight as important for the employment integration.

## **1.1. Data**

In order to understand the basis of the results in the reports, a short presentation of the three reports is required.

### **The Schultz-Nielsen report**

The report analyses the labour market attachment of refugees and immigrants who have entered Denmark in the period from 1997 to 2011. In relation to looking at labour market attachment, income wage and transfer benefits the report focuses on persons who have between 1997 and 2004. The report compares immigrants staying in Denmark on the basis of different residence permits in relation to the duration of their stay, labour market attachment, wage income and benefit transfers. The different immigrant groups are: refugees, persons family reunified to refugees, persons family reunified to a person of Danish nationality, the rest of the persons family reunified, persons with residence on the basis of study, persons with residence on the basis of

work, persons with residence on the basis of EU/EUA regulations, and person on an uninformed basis of residence (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 17).

### **The Drescher et al report:**

The report from 2016 is based on the 6,200 persons who have immigrated from Iraq (3,400 persons), Afghanistan (1,900 persons) and Turkey (1,900 persons) in the years between 1999 and 2001 (Drescher et al, 2016:3).

The labour market attachment analysis in this report is based on a comparison between persons who have immigrated to Denmark from Iraq and Afghanistan from 1999 to 2001 and persons from Turkey who have immigrated to Denmark in the same period of time (Drescher et al, 2016: 3). The persons from Iraq and Afghanistan are staying in Denmark on the basis of either asylum or family reunification, while the persons from Turkey are staying in Denmark due to family reunification (Drescher et al, 2016: 3). All of the immigrants from Iraq and Afghanistan are in this report termed refugees. All of the persons in question are between 25 and 54 years old in the year of arrival (Drescher et al, 2016: 3). This age demarcation is made to prevent the labour market to be effected by the state pension which is available at the age of 65 in Denmark (Drescher et al, 2016:3).

### **The Confederation of Danish Employers (DA) report<sup>1</sup>**

This report explores the employment patterns of non-Western immigrants and their descendants in the Danish labour market. The non-Western immigrants include refugees, family reunified and immigrants with residence permits on the basis of work or studies from non-Western countries (DA, 2015: 12). The analysis is based on figures on immigration and labour market attachment from 1982 - 2014, with focus on the years 2013 and 2014. The analysis on labour market attachment of refugees is based on refugees who have been allocated residence permits from 2000 to 2013.

## 1.2. Conceptualisation

When exploring and understanding the labour market attachment and integration in general, it is important to differentiate between the different immigrant groups. Below is given an overview of the different groups of immigrants in Denmark:

*Immigrant:* A person who has moved to another country than the country in which the person have citizenship, with the prospect to settle there for a longer duration of time.

The literature review in chapter 4, which lay the foundation for analysing the labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark, mainly operates with the terms newcomers or immigrants. Even though the focus of the thesis is refugees and the Danish labour market, this is done in order to give an overall idea of the barriers or promoting factors influencing the labour market attachment of people taking residence in a new country. Only when specific factors are in play, e.g. the pre-asylum period, the term refugee or asylum-seeker are in play.

*Refugee:* The UN Refugee convention of 28/07/1951 article 1 (2), states that a refugee is a person who “*owing to wellfounded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.*”

In this thesis the term refugees includes all persons who have been granted asylum or who have been granted protection status.

*Asylum-seeker:* A foreigner who has applied for asylum and is awaiting the verdict to the asylum claim (Udlændingestyrelsen, 2015: 12). In relation to the this, spontaneous refugee/asylum are persons who have arrived to a country on their own, that is without help from UNHCR or other refugee organisations, and are applying for asylum.



*Migrant*: A person who chooses to move of their own will and not due to a direct threat, but in order to better their lives, for job or education reasons, to get reunified to their families etc. They are not, as refugees, at risk if returning to their home country (Edwards, 2016).

*Schengen*: Denmark is a part of the European Schengen cooperation . 22 countries are a part of the Schengen, these are: Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein

*The European Union (EU)*: In 2004 the EU extended with ten new member countries and since then three more countries have joined. When looking at immigrants from the EU, a distinction can be made between the “old” EU (EU15) countries and the newer member countries (EU10+).

The EU15 countries include: Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Finland and Sweden

The EU10+ countries includes: the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria and Croatia.

*Western and non-Western immigrants*: Immigrants are in some reports differentiated between Western and non-Western immigrants.

The Western immigrants include person from: The Nordic countries, the countries in the EU/EUA, Andorra, Australia, Canada, Iceland, Monaco, New Zealand, San Marino, the United States and the Vatican state.

The non-Western immigrants include persons from: all other countries in the world Often looked at together with the EU are the countries in the *he European Economic Area* (EUA), these include: Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

## 2. The connection between integration and employment of immigrants

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### 2.1. Integration

Integration is used in several contexts and describes the merging of separate units into one combined unity. One example is integration between countries, for instance in the European Union (EU) where *European Integration* refers to how the EU-member countries work together in an attempt to create a common ground of cooperation. Integration is also used when a new system is to be incorporated in daily routines in e.g. working places. From a societal perspective “*integration refers to the more general processes of adaption all individuals must go through if they are to become a part of a functioning society*” (Olwig et al, 2011:11). In this thesis integration addresses societal and social aspects, which relates to ethnic minorities’ integration into the Danish society and labour market, thus referring to *social integration*.

One of the main architects behind the classical notion of social integration is the French sociologist, Émile Durkheim (1858-1917). In classic social studies, integration concerns the unity of a society and deals with the question of how a society is held together (Jöhncke, 2011: 33). In the more recent use of the term, integration is the process of absorbing someone into a pre-existing whole (Jönche, 2011:33).

A society cannot exist through time if it only consists of individuals or groups who insists on doing everything their own way without regard for the welfare of the larger collectively (Olwig et al, 2011:11). Members of a society must come to some sort of agreement regarding how they are going to live together if a society is to function. The agreement of coexistence does not necessarily imply cultural conformity, but rather a mutual understanding of the existence of cultural differences and how and if this differences can be accommodated in the society (Olwig et al, 2011:12). Furthermore, what the social cohesion entails will change over time in response to the changing historical contexts (Olwig et al, 2011:12). In the light of this, social communities and

cultural ideas of belonging are to be seen as constructions that are constantly challenged, contested and attributed with new meanings (Olwig et al, 2011:12).

This thesis explores integration in relation to *integration of ethnic minorities*, and more specifically *integration of refugees*. There is no single agreed understanding of integration in this context, instead the understandings varies a lot depending on by whom and where the term is used (Castles et al, 2002: 112). Before exploring integration in the context of ethnic minorities, a more in-depth overview of the term and how it is used, will be presented.

## **2.2. Integration of ethnic minorities**

The aim of this thesis is specifically to explore the integration and labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark. In order to do this, it is relevant to look more into the process of integration of ethnic minorities in general.

As can be seen in the above, integration can be used in several different connections, and in very general terms it means that separate unites merge together to become one unity. This sounds rather simple, but when transferred to a social dimension where people are at play nothing is simple. Both the process and the endpoint of integration are disputed on and differently understood according to who talks about it. This raises the questions of how a person or a minority group can be integrated into a society, and when the integration process is fulfilled? In the research literature, integration is often explained as a two-way process, meaning that both the newcomers and the existing population have to adapt in order for the integration to be successful (Castles et al, 2002: 113). This is in somewhat contrast to attitudes in media and politics where integration is often portrayed as a one-sided process, where only the newcomers are to change and adapt to the situation and lifestyle of the host society (Castles et al, 2002: 113).

A process where only the newcomers have to adapt their lives to that of the host society and not the other way around is termed *assimilation*. Assimilation means that the newcomers not only have to copy the lifestyle of the existing population, they also have to abandon their own distinctive cultural way of living, their language, values etc.

(Castles et al, 2002: 116). Assimilation is often considered a long term process that might take more than a generation (Castles et al, 2002: 116).

However, if integration does not mean that the newcomers have to act and live like the host population, what does it then entail? In other words, what does it mean to be integrated, what is the process to reach a state of integration, and what affects this process? Below is given a review of how the research literature explain integration of ethnic minorities, and what factors impact the process.

First of all, the research literature argue that a *legal foundation* for the immigrants is required in order to able their interaction with and in the host society (Mikkelsen, 2001: 31; Ager et al, 2008: 170; Castles et al, 2002: 134). The legal framework includes access to employment, housing, health care, education and benefits, the possibility of family reunification, language training, citizenship, access to voting and candidature, and legal flexibility to accommodate cultural/religious customs (Castles et al, 2002: 133-134). In line with this it is argued that there is a need for a clear articulation of the rights related to citizenship and nationhood (Ager et al, 2002: 175). These rights include human dignity, equality, freedom of cultural choice, justice, security and independence (Ager et al, 2002: 175).

*Informal openness* towards cultural, religious, ethnic differences in the host society is another aspect that is important to integration (Mikkelsen, 2002: 33). If the host society excludes and stigmatises ethnic minorities due to their cultural, ethnic or religious differences this will affect integration in a negative way (Mikkelsen 2002: 33)

It is argued by Ager et al that what facilitate the process of integration are *language, cultural knowledge, safety and stability* (Ager et al, 2008: 170). These factors help remove the barriers of integration because they enable interaction with the host society and create a common ground of understanding (Ager et al, 2008: 177). This is backed by Mikkelsen who argues that norms, routines, habits, symbols and experiences are essential for the orientation in social contexts (Mikkelsen, 2001: 33).

*Language*, meaning the ability to speak the main language of the host society is identified as central to the integration process (Ager et al, 2010: 182). Language promotes a sense of belonging to the host society, enables friendships and facilitates everyday encounters (UNHCR, 2013: 124).

*Networks and social connections* are identified as being what drives the process of integration and at the same time works as an intermediary between the different domains of integration, in that the presence or the absence of family, social, and work networks impacts many areas of integration (Ager et al, 2008:177; UNHCR, 2013: 83). Castles et al argues that the process of integration involves a broad spectrum of social players including public officials, political decision makers, employers, trade union officials, fellow-workers, service providers, neighbours etc., and take place in all levels and sectors of society (Castles et al, 2002: 113). Ager et al identifies three levels of social connections: *Social bonds*, *social bridges*, and *social links* (Ager et al, 2008:181). Social bonds are the close and identity based connections of a group (e.g. family or national connections); social bridges describe the connection between the refugees and the existing population; and Social links describe the connections between the individual, in this context the refugee, and the state (Ager et al, 2008:181). Mikkelsen distinguishes between two forms of network, one with strong ties and one with weak ties (Mikkelsen, 2001: 32). Strong networks are the frequent everyday encounters, e.g. with family, close friends etc. (Mikkelsen, 2001: 32). Weak networks are encounters which are not as frequent, but can spread to a lot of people and provide valuable knowledge about jobs, markets, education etc. (Mikkelsen, 2001: 32). It is argued that while the strong ties are important for the structure of everyday life, the weak ties are essential in order to be able to compete in the political, economic and cultural fields (Mikkelsen, 2001: 32-33).

*Employment* is in the research literature presented as both an indicator and the key to integration (Ager et al, 2008: 169; UNHCR, 2013: 122). Income and economic capital play a big role in relation to mobilisation in the other part of society (Mikkelsen, 2001: 32). Employment is listed as being a promotor for economic independence, the ability to plan for the future, a possibility to interact with members of the host society, the

opportunity to develop language skills, restoring self-esteem and encouraging self-reliance (Ager et al, 2008: 170). Castles et al argues that individual topics such as identity, belonging and self-respect have a lot to do with the integration process (Castles et al, 2002:113).

*Health* is found to be an important factor for the ability to engage and interact actively in a new society (Ager et al, 2008: 172). Health influences the other domains of integration, for instance the ability to learn a new language and obtain employment (UNHCR, 2013: 130).

*Housing* affects the wellbeing in that it promotes a sense of belonging and feeling at home (Ager et al, 2008: 171). The ability to find affordable housing in a reasonable timeframe is identified to help facilitate social integration, in that it reduces stress and lay the foundation to build a new life (UNHCR, 2013: 126). Affordable housing might only be available in smaller cities, where jobs are often more scarce and there is a lack of ethnic networks (UNHCR, 2013: 126). In this way location can have both a positive and a negative effect on integration (UNHCR, 2013: 126).

*The pre-asylum period*, including the length of this time, is argued to have a big influence on the integration of refugees (Castles et al, 2002; Hainmueller et al, 2016). It affects the feeling of belonging, the feeling of being welcome, and the prospects for the future (UNHCR, 2013: 128). The pre-asylum period in the asylum center and the uncertainty connected to this can lead to mental suffering and psychological distress, which again affects the integration (UNHCR, 2013: 130).

Now that we have established which factors, according to the research literature, affect the process of integration, how can integration as a concept then be defined?

### **2.3. Integration: Defining the Concept**

According to the research literature, integration involves both the newcomers and the host society, in that it is a process that all individuals have to go through in order to become a part of a society (Olwig et al, 2011: 11). This means that while the

newcomers have to adapt to the social and cultural norms and ways of life, to the legal framework and the economic dimension of the host society, the host society also have to have a legal framework that includes the newcomers, to be open to different cultures and ways of living and to include the newcomers in the social spheres of everyday life as well as enabling the newcomers to participate in the economic sphere e.g. through employment.

The definition of integration used in this thesis is inspired by definitions presented by Castles et al. (2002) and in the UNHCR report on refugee integration in Europe (2013):

According to Castles:

*“Integration is a two-way process: it requires adaption on the part of the newcomer but also by the host society.” (Castles et al, 2002: 13).*

In the UNHCR report:

*“... integration is understood as the end product of a dynamic and multifaceted two-way process with three interrelated dimensions: a legal, an economic and a social-cultural dimension.” (UNHCR 2013: 14)*

In this thesis integration is defined as:

*a process with legal, economic and social-cultural dimensions, requiring adaption on behalf of both the newcomers and the host population, in order for the newcomers to become a part of the society.*

#### **2.4. Employment: an aspect of integration**

It has been established in the above that employment is to be seen as both a marker and a means to integration. It can play a big role in the mobilisation in society, both economically and socially as well as promoting a sense of belonging, self-respect and identity in the new society.

Employment is argued to affect integration on a number of parameters. Research shows that unemployed refugees have a harder time adjusting to the host society than refugees who are able to find employment (Phillmore et al, 2006: 1720).

Not only does employment mean economic benefits for the refugees, and for immigrants in general, it also opens up the possibility to develop social relations with cultural networks outside the family and closest ethnic network, in that it enables interaction with the host population (Fleay et al, 2013: 488; Phillmore et al, 2006: 1720). In this way employment can improve knowledge on language, culture, and how the labour market in the host country works which can lead to increased integration (Lundborg, 2013: 219; Phillmore et al, 2006: 1720).

The increased interaction with the host population through employment enhances language competences (Fleay et al, 2013: 488; Lundborg, 2013: 219).

In addition, employment generates positive emotional health and psychological well-being (UNHCR, 2013:80; Phillmore et al, 2006:1720). On the other hand difficulties in finding a job and barriers to continue professional careers will often catalyse stress, isolation and depression and might create a feeling of hopelessness and demotivation (UNHCR, 2013: 80). Thus unemployment can be a barrier to integration.

### **Summing up**

The above shows that employment promotes the process of integration on four parameters, these are: network and social interaction with the host society, language skills, psychological well-being and lay the economic foundation for a life in the host society all of which are factors promoting integration.

In addition it gives a sense of how the labour market in the host country works.



### 3. Analysis framework to understand the employment integration of immigrants

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When looking at existing literature there are a number of factors affecting the labour market attachment of immigrants. These factors can be categorised in ten categories: legal status; reason for migration/migration patterns; language; demand for labour in the host country; recognition of skills; network; health; age; and the asylum period. This is not to say that there are no other factors which affect the labour market attachment of newcomers to a society, but these are the ones this thesis focuses on. How these factors affect the labour market attachment will be further explored below.

**Legal status:** The first and basic factor of being able to obtain employment is the right to work in the host community. The right to work depends on the legal status of the newcomer, that is, what kind of residence permit he or she has been granted and the rights associated to this (Castles et al, 2002: 133-134)

**Reason for immigration/the basis of residence** In relation to the legal status of the newcomer, the reason for migrating in the first place is a factor that plays a big role in relation to labour market attachment (Phillimore et al, 2006: 1720). Refugees seldomly have a lot of influence on where they are granted asylum, meaning that they often end up in places where they have no pre-existing contacts and no or limited knowledge of the language of the host country (Phillimore et al, 2016: 1720). Other types of immigrants are most likely to have more knowledge about the host country. As can be seen below, both language skills and network are most likely to affect the labour market attachment and how to navigate in the system of the labour market in the host country.

**Language:** One of the major barriers to employment for immigrants is *language*, or more specifically lack of language skills. Inability or difficulties to talk and understand the language of the host society challenges the possibility to obtain employment, both because it can be a basic part of the job description but also because it limits the ability

to navigate in the job search in relation to work contracts and papers and online application forms (UNHCR, 2013: 79). This means that the newcomers have a hard time locating the jobs, and finding the ones they are qualified to if they do not understand the language both written and spoken (Phillmore et al :1720). Research show that language barriers might impact professional immigrants more than those with no professional training (UNHCR, 2013: 79). This mean that a part of being able to practice his or her proffession, a newcomer have to be able to understand the language, both written and spoken of the host country. If the language skills are inadequate compared to the job description there is a risk for downward mobility in relation to being able to obtain a job within the proffession of the newcomer. Research show that when language training and employment are linked it has a posetive effect on future employment (UNHCR, 2013:79).

**The demand for labour in the host country:** There is need for a match between the open vacancies and the skills and qualifications of the newcomer. If there is a low demand for the qualifications or services of the newcomers the effect will be low degree of labour market attachment (Lundbord, 2013: 219). Another factor in relation to demand for labour in the host country, is the economic situation. If the overall economic situaiton of the host country and the unemployment rate is high, this will also affect newcomers, unless their skills are remarkedly better than those of the existing population.

**Recognition of qualifications:** In order for the newcomer to be able to obtain employment according to his or her proffession it is essential that the professional qualifications are recognised (UNHCR, 2013: 80). A barrier to employment is if the qualifications obtained in the host society of the newcomer do not match the standards in the host society. Research show that informal and uncertified skilled is seldom recognised by employers, while formal certified skills are recognised to a higher extend (UNHCR, 2013: 80). But it seems that what is the key to acquire full labour market attachment is experience of working in the host society (UNHCR, 2013:80).

**Network:** In order to gain knowledge on where to look for jobs and news on open vacancies and meet and be introduced to potential employers, it is normal to use

networks in form of friends, colleagues and associates (UNHCR, 2013: 83). This means that there is a need for what Ager et al describes as social bridges, that is connection between the newcomer and the existing population (Ager et al, 2008:181). Without these networks the newcomers have only government employment agencies to rely on. The government employment agencies can be helpful in order to locate suitable jobs, but their services are not extended to a personal level (UNHCR, 2013: 84). In this way, a lack of weak ties or network make it more difficult to navigate in accordance to the structures of the labour market in the host society.

**Health:** While a better wellbeing and health can be the outcome of having a job, the health of the newcomer also affect the possibility of getting a job in the first place. The UNCHR report on refugee integration in Europa argues that “before refugees can begin to think about employment and building a future, torture, gender-based abuse, and injuries during conflict require medical attention and counselling” (UNHCR, 2013: 80).

**Age:** research show that age is a factor in relation to obtaining employment, in that younger newcomers will often find it easier to find a job than old (Bevelander, 2011: 42; UNHCR, 2013: 88).

**The pre-asylum period:** the pre-asylum period is shown to affect the psychological well-being and health of the asylum-seekers who are granted asylum. More practically the time spent in asylum centres, where the asylum-seekers have only limited or no access to the labour market, means a gap in the curriculum vitae (Hainmueller et al, 2016: 2; UNHCR, 2013: 87). The period without employment mean that skills required before the asylum process was initiated are most likely to erode making it difficult to join the labour market (Hainmueller, 2016: 2).

The research paper ‘When lives are put on hold’ presents data which show that the longer the pre-asylum period the lower the labour market attachment after asylum has been granted (Hainmeller et al, 2016: 4).

**Gender:** Even if the labour market in principle is as open to women as it is to men gender perspectives need to be taken into perspective when understanding labour

market attachment of both refugees and immigrants in general. Women from some immigrant groups are less educated than the men (Dahl et al, 2005: 58). Childcare possibilities in the host country affect the labour market attachment of especially women (UNHCR, 2013: 85). It has been shown that women from some minority groups find it difficult to combine having a job with their private life (Dahl et al, 2005: 65-66). Especially immigrant women with children in the age between 0 - 10 years are shown to have a low labour market attachment (Dahl et al, 2005: 66). In contrast, the opposite seems to be the case for immigrant men (Dahl, 2005: 66).

These factors which can be seen as independent variables to employment of immigrants, are put to use later in the thesis to help explain the labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark.

## 4. Context

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### 4.1. Immigration to Denmark in a Historical Context from 1954 - 2010

In order to understand the present context in relation to refugees, integration and employment, it is relevant to look at the historical currents of refugee and immigration influx and how this have affected the Danish economy, labour market and the immigration and integration politics. Denmark was the first countries to ratify the UN Refugee Convention of 1951, which came into effect in 1954 (Fenger-Grøn et al, 2004:9). This meant that refugees would be separated from other migrants and were given a special status and rights (Fenger-Grøn et al, 2004:9). The UN Refugee Convention was to a high degree an outcome of the big refugee flows in the aftermath of both World War I and World War II, and therefor also first and foremost intended European refugees (Fenger-Grøn et al, 2004:14). The first waves of persons seeking refuge in Denmark after World War II were indeed from European countries, fleeing Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Persons from Hungary (1954 - 1966) and Polish Jews (1966 - 1973) were the first larger groups to seek refuge in Denmark (Fenger-Grøn et al, 2004: 23, 57). These two refugee groups where rather well received in Denmark. In 1956 the umbrella organisation The Danish Refugee Council was, encouraged by the Danish Foreign Ministry, founded by The Danish Red Cross and other private humanitarian organisations (Kohl, 2015: 92). The Danish Refugee Council was formed in order to receive, find accommodation for and integrate the refugee groups in Denmark. From the end of World War II to the early 1970s Denmark, as well as the other most developed West European countries, experienced a concentration of investment and expansion of production, which meant an increased demand for labour (Castles et al, 2014:102; Mikkelsen, 2001: 39). To meet the demand for labour, migrant workers were recruited from the less developed countries in Southern Europe and the Mediterranean area, especially Yugoslavia and Turkey (Mikkelsen, 2001: 39). After 1970 migrant workers also came from Pakistan (Mikkelsen, 2001: 39). In this period of time it was rather easy for foreigners to travel to Denmark, find a job and get a work permit. It was expected that the migrant workers would only stay in the country for a limited period of time (Mikkelsen, 2002: 41). In 1973 this was put to an end with the launch of legislation prohibiting

immigrant workers from developing countries access to Denmark (Mikkelsen, 2001: 39). However, the law did not prohibit family reunification, which meant that immigration from the developing countries continued (Mikkelsen, 2002: 40).

The next major refugee waves were from Chile (1973 - 1978), Vietnam (1978 - 1983) (Mikkelsen, 2002: 40; Fenger-Grøn et al, 2004). These refugees arrived in Denmark during an economic recession in Denmark and the rest of Europe. The recession started with the Oil Crisis of 1973 which led to a recruitment freeze (Castles et al, 2014: 103).

The first waves of persons seeking refuge in Denmark after the ratification of the Refugee Convention (1954 - 1983) were all to a high degree well received and welcomed (Fenger-Grøn, 2004: 20; 48; 82; 116). Though there was a shift in the way immigrants were perceived in society, this did not seem to affect the view on refugees up until around 1983. One of the reasons for this were that most of the asylum cases up until then were evaluated in the light of the Cold War conflict between East and West (Kohl, 2015: 96). The fact that they had chosen to flee to the West showed that they shared the Western mindset and ideologies, and this became even more important than their individual motives for seeking asylum in Denmark (Kohl, 2015: 96).

Another factor was the relatively low amount of spontaneous refugees, which up until 1983 had an average of around 70 persons pr. year (Kohl, 2015: 95).

In 1983 a new Danish Aliens Act was put into force, (Law no. 226 of 08/06/1983). Among other things, the new Aliens Act meant a better legal position for refugees, including the right to family for persons who had been granted asylum reunification (Law no. 226 of 08/06/1983 § 9) and the right to asylum for the so-called spontaneous or de facto refugees (Law no. 226 of 08/06/1983 3 § 7, stk. 2) (Mielcke, 2016, Danmarkshistorien.dk).

In 1984 the first asylum centers were established in Denmark. The Danish foreign authorities began a partnership with the Danish Red Cross which meant that the Danish Red Cross was given the responsibility of operating the asylum centers in Denmark instead of the Danish Refugee Council (Kohl, 2015: 77). The Danish Red Cross were given the task because of the growing number of spontaneous asylum-seekers (Kohl, 2015: 78). The concrete situation in 1984 was an urgent need of

accommodations of 48 Iranian asylum-seekers (Kohl, 2015: 78). It turned out that the number of spontaneous refugees would continue to increase until 1985 where Denmark received 5000 asylum-seekers, due to especially Iranian as well as Iraqi refugees (Kohl, 2015: 95).

In addition to the growing number of spontaneous refugees, there was a stated discrepancy in the Danish Refugee Council in relation to the organisation's roles as both social care provider and provider of legal assistance to refugees (Kohl, 2015: 95). According to Kohl, the Red Cross took over the asylum task in a time of a paradigm shift in relation to the way refugees were viewed in a Danish context (Kohl, 2015: 96). The term "asylum-seeker" was not used in general terms before 1984, but after the establishment of the asylum centers the term was used to separate acknowledged refugees from the asylum-seekers who only potentially are entitled to asylum (Kohl, 2015: 97). In the 1980s up until 1992 most of the asylum-seekers were from third world countries outside of Europe and these "new asylum-seekers" were under somewhat suspicion of using the asylum system to achieve access to richer countries (Kohl, 2015: 96). The Iranian and Iraqi refugees were followed by refugees from Sri Lanka (1985 - 1990) and Palestine (1990 - 1992).<sup>1</sup>

The next big wave of refugees did not come from outside of Europe, instead they came from Bosnia, fleeing the war in the former Yugoslavia (1992 - 1995). Almost 20.000 Bosnians were given temporary asylum in Denmark in the beginning of the 1990s due to the 'Law on temporary residence permit to certain persons from the former Yugoslavia of November 1992', also known as the Yugoslav-law (Jugoslaverloven) (Fenger-Grøn et al, 2004: 259). The Yugoslav-law prohibited the Bosnians to integrate in the Danish society since they were not allowed to work, move into their own separate homes, or go to school, neither were they allowed family reunification (Fenger-Grøn et al, 2004: 272). The goal was non-integration in the hope that the Bosnians would return to their home country once the war was over (Fenger-Grøn et al, 2004: 272). In 1995 a new law came into force which made it possible for the Bosnian cases to be tried individually, with the possibility of permanent residence permit for those who got their asylum claims granted (Fenger-Grøn, 2004:280).

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<sup>1</sup> Stateless Palestinians

The next flows of refugees were Somalians (1995 - 1999), Kosovo-Albanians (1999 - 2001) and Afghans (2001 -) (Mikkelsen, 2002: 40; Fenger-Grøn et al, 2004). These and the refugees to follow have all been affected by a still more tightened foreign policy. In 2002 a new Aliens Act was passed (Law nr. 365 of 06/06/2002), in which the term de-facto refugees was abolished (Law nr. 365 06/06/2002, §7 stk 3), the family reunification rules sharpened (Law nr. 365 06/06/2002 § 9,1) and permanent residence permit only permitted to persons with at least seven years of residence in Denmark instead of the earlier demand of three years (Law nr. 365 06/06/2002 §11 stk. 2).

The next big immigration influx was not due to an increased amount of refugees, but instead the 2004 enlargement of the EU. In May 2004 ten new countries became a part of the EU, and in 2007 and 2013 further three countries were included. Among other aspects, this meant that citizens from these countries were allowed to take jobs in the rest of the EU countries and vice versa (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 11).

Since the term asylum-seeker, with the increasing amount of spontaneous refugees, entered the picture in 1984, asylum management has, according to Kohl, gone from viewing the asylum-seekers as someone in need of protection and accommodation to someone who above these needs most of all reminiscent the unemployed (Kohl, 2015:140). In other words, the asylum-seekers were seen as unemployed persons, who possibly would be in need of social benefits in the case they were granted asylum. In order to keep the asylum-seekers occupied and prevent passivation and clientisation the VUA reform (The reform of Adult Education and Activation efforts for asylum-seekers)<sup>2</sup> was launched in 2003 (Kohl, 2015:140). This will be explored further in the asylum chapter.

From 2000 - 2010, especially conflicts and war in the Middle East were the cause of the refugee flows to Denmark (Udlændingestyrelsen 2006; Udlændingetjenesten, 2011: 39; Udlændingestyrelsen, 2016: 13). As can be seen in model 1 below, the number of asylum-seekers were at it's highest in 2000 and 2011, respectively 12,200 and 12,512 asylum-seekers, in the period between 2000 and 2010 (Udlændingestyrelsen, 2005:

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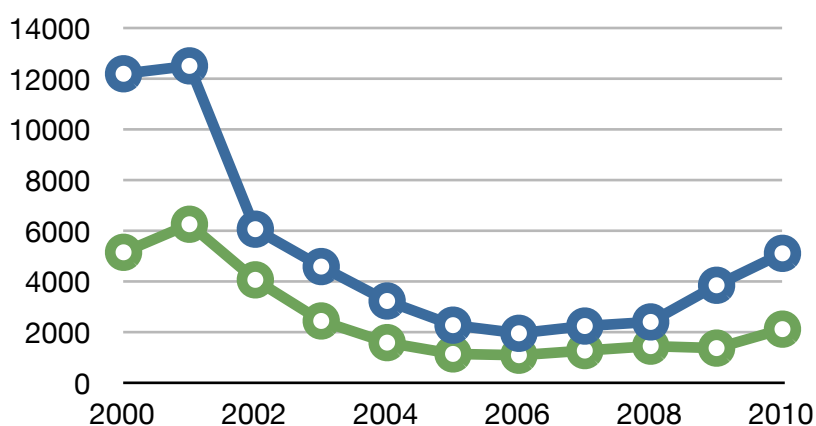
<sup>2</sup> Danish: Voksenundervisnings- og aktiveringsindsatsen for Asylansøgere (VUA)



30). Hereafter the number of asylum-seekers slowly decreased until 2006, with 1,969 asylum-seekers, after which the number of asylum-seekers slowly increased again (Udlændingesservice, 2011: 39).

Model 1: Comparing the number of asylum-seekers and residence permit granted asylum-seekers from 2000 - 2010

○ Number of asylum-seekers  
 ○ Number of residence permit granted asylum-seekers



Source: Udlændingestyrelsen/Udlændingesservice 2002 - 2011<sup>3</sup>

In model 1 the number of residence permits granted asylum-seekers from 2000 - 2010 also decreases after 2001. In average for the whole period, half as many asylum-seeker had their asylum claim granted as the number of asylum-seekers.

The conclusion conducted from this historical view is that there are several aspects that have influenced the way asylum-seekers and refugees have been perceived and received by the Danish society.

1. The economic situation in the country
2. The number of spontaneous refugees have played a big part in the legislation of refugees. In an attempt to prevent this number from increasing, the Danish Aliens Act has been restricted several times.

<sup>3</sup> Udlændingestyrelsen, 2002: 16; Udlændingestyrelsen, 2004: 15; Udlændingestyrelsen, 2006: 30; 33; Udlændingesservice, 2008: 40; Udlændingesservice, 2009: 49; Udlændingesservice, 2011: 39; 41

3. Which international ideological discourse the refugees can be written into, influences the way they are received
4. The economic situation in the country from which the person is fleeing.

#### 4.2 Figures of Immigration to Denmark from 2011 - 2015/2016

##### Asylum-seekers 2015

In total 21,316 persons applied for asylum in 2015. The largest asylum-seeking nationalities in 2015 Syria (8,608), Iran (2,331), Afghanistan (2,331), Eritrea (1,740) and stateless (1,734) (Udlændingestyrelsen, 2016: 2).

In 2014 and 2015 Denmark experienced the biggest influx of refugees since the beginning of the 1990s. Table 2 shows that the asylum claims in both 2014 and 2015 are significantly higher than the numbers in the previous three years.

Table 1: Asylum-seekers 2011 - 2016

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of asylum-seekers	3,806	6,184	7,557	14,792	21,316

*Source: Udlændingestyrelsen, 2016: 13*

By the time of the thesis numbers on immigration were only reported until the 30th of November 2016. But the number of asylum-seekers registered until the 30th of November 2016 (5,976) is significantly lower than that of 30th of November 2015 (18,574) (Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet, 2016: 5). The decrease in the asylum claims in 2016 might indicate that 2014 and 2015 were “special” years, and not a forecast of an increased influx of asylum-seekers in general.

##### Residence permits 2015

In 2015 a total of 84,693 residence permits were registered in Denmark. The largest nationalities allocated residence permits were Syria (12.785), Romania (6,385), Poland (6,019), The US (4,302), and India (4,012) (Udlændingestyrelsen, 2016: 2).

Of the 84,693 residence permits, 10,849 were allocated to asylum-seekers (Udlændingestyrelsen, 2016: 2). More than half of the asylum related residence permits were allocated to Syrian refugees (5,995) (Udlændingestyrelsen, 2016: 15).

The number of family reunification residence permits registered in 2015 were 11,645. 8,092 of them had family reunification to a refugee (Udlændingestyrelsen, 2016: 2).

As can be seen in table 1, the number of registered residence permits have increased from 2011 to 2015. One of the reasons for this is the rise in residence permits allocated asylum-seekers and in cases of family reunification to refugees. Furthermore, table 1 shows that residence permits non-related to refugees have also reached a high level in 2015 compared to the previous years.

Table 2: Registered residence permits granted 2011 - 2015

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Asylum	2,249	2,583	3,889	6,104	10,849
Family reunification to a refugee	181	183	1,193	2,400	8,092
Others given residence permit	55,357	53,216	59,480	63,838	65,752
Total	57,787	55,982	64,562	72,342	84,693

Sources: Udlændingestyrelsen 2012 - 2016 <sup>4</sup>

### **Comparing the numbers of asylum-seekers and residence permits granted asylum-seekers**

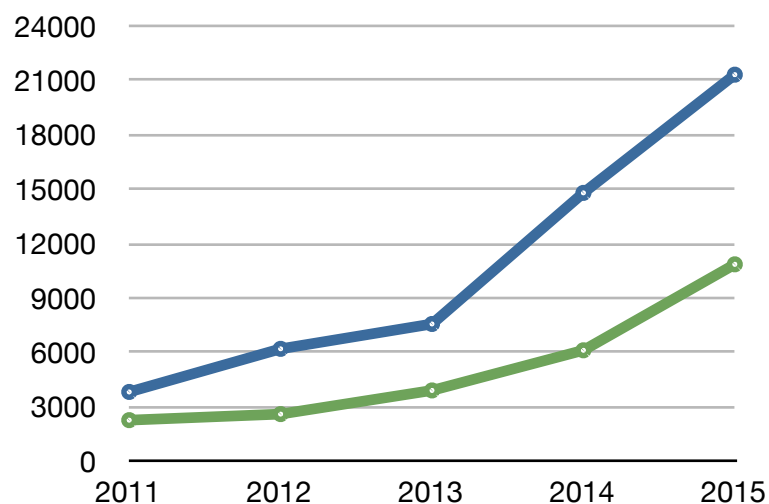
As can be seen from model 2, both the number of asylum-seekers and granted asylum claims have increased from 2011 to 2015. However, this does not mean that lower percentage of asylum-seekers have had their asylum claims granted. The recognition rate granted in asylum cases has increased from 2010 - 2011. In 2011 33 percent of the

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<sup>4</sup> Residence permits in relation to Asylum: Udlændingestyrelsen, 2012: 41; Udlændingestyrelsen 2014: 15; Udlændingestyrelsen 2016: 15

asylum claims were granted, whereas this had increased to 85 percent by 2015 (Udlændingestyrelsen 2016: 15).

Model 2: Comparing the number of asylum-seekers and residence permits granted asylum-seekers from 2011 - 2015



- Number of asylum-seekers
- Number of residence permits granted asylum-seekers

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This section analyses the labour market attachment of refugees in comparison to other immigrant groups. The analysis also takes persons family reunified to refugees into consideration. Refugees and person family reunified to a refugee are in some reports looked at together in one group, in some reports separately and in some reports the persons family reunified to refugees are categorized together with personsfamily reunified in general.

## 5. Exploring the labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark

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When looking at the labour market attachment in Denmark, only persons in the labour market age are taken into account, in this thesis the labour market age are from 25 - 64 years.

Below is given an overview of the labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark on the basis of three reports examining immigrants' employment patterns in Denmark. Though the figures in the reports are not extracted from the exact same period of time, they present a picture of the labour market attachment of immigrants who have been granted residence permits in Denmark from 1997 - 2014.

The main areas of examination are: 1. The employment rate of refugees; 2. The average wage income of refugees; 3: Social benefits. In all three reports time of residence is measured from the year of allocation of residence permit.

### 5.1. The employment rate

According to the Schultz-Nielsen report, when comparing the employment rates of the different immigration groups in the report, on the basis of residence status and duration of stay, refugees and persons family reunified to refugees are the two groups with the lowest labour market attachment (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 29).

34.3 percent of the refugees, who were granted residence permit between 1997 and 2001, were employed after five years stay, after ten years 42.5 percent, and after fifteen years 36,8 percent were employed (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 30). In the first year of residence 3,4 percent of the refugee in the labour market age were employed (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016:30)

When looking at persons family reunified to refugees, the rate of employed are lower than that of refugees. After one, five, ten and fifteen years of residence, respectively 3,7 percent, 21,6 percent, 33.8 percent and 34,1 percent of the persons family reunified to a refugee were in employment in Denmark (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 30). Compared

to persons family reunified to a person of Danish nationality, the labour market attachment is much lower for persons family reunified to a refugee. Persons family reunified to a person of Danish nationality have an employment rate at 65.8 percent after five years, 71.6 percent after 10 years, and 69,0 percent after fifteen years (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 30). Also for persons family reunified to others, that is others with immigrant background, the report shows that their labour market attachment are significantly higher than for persons family reunified to refugees (1 year: 21,8 percent, five years: 49 percent, ten years 58, 3 percent, 15 years: 34,1 percent) (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 30).

The Drescher et al report shows that for Iraqi and Afghan refugees who arrived to Denmark from 1999 to 2001, less than 10 percent were employed in the first year of residence in Denmark (Drescher et al, 2016: 4). The employment rate of both the Iraqi and the Afghan refugees increases, until the seventh year, concurrently with how long they have lived in Denmark, (Drescher et al, 2016: 4). At the seventh year almost 50 percent of the Afghan refugees and 37 percent of the Iraqi refugees are employed (Drescher et al, 2016: 4). After ten years around 30 percent of the Iraqi refugees and around 40 percent of the Afghan refugees are employed (Drescher et al, 2016: 10).

For the Turkish immigrants the employment rate after respectively seven and ten years was around 60 percent (Drescher et al, 2016: 10). The employment rate of the Turkish immigrants does not increase as much as for the Afghan and Iraqi immigrants, but is between 55 percent and 65 percent throughout the time period (Drescher et al, 2016: 4). But for the Turkish immigrants the case is also that their labour market attachment tops in the seventh year of residence (Drescher et al, 2016: 4).

The statement that persons with residence permit due to asylum are among the persons with the lowest labour market attachment is backed by the DA report. According to the DA report around 15 percent of the refugees who arrived between 2000 and 2003 were employed after three years of residency in Denmark (DA, 2015: 76). After ten years the employment rate for the groups was a little more than 25 percent (DA, 2015: 77).

When looking at both employment and education, 7 percent of the refugees from non-Western countries who have immigrated to Denmark between 2009 to 2013 were employed or in education in the first year of residence in Denmark (DA, 2015: 74). After two years the rate of refugees employed or in education was 14 percent, after three years the rate was at 27 percent, and after four years at 33 percent (DA, 2015:74).

## **5.2. The average Wage Income**

When looking at wage income in the span of fifteen years, the average wage income of refugees and persons family reunified to refugees increases the longer they have resided in Denmark (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 33). In this way refugee and persons family reunified to refugees do not differ from the other immigration groups since the increase in average income wage over time applies to all of the immigrant groups (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 33).

Persons family reunified to a refugee are the ones with the lowest average income wage at 79,000 DKK after one year and respectively 183,500 DKK, 217,000 DKK, 244,200 DKK after five, ten and fifteen years of stay (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016:34).<sup>5</sup> The average wage income for refugees are not much higher at 87,300 DKK after one year of stay, 215,800 DKK after five years of stay, 239,900 DKK after ten years of stay, and 245,800 DKK after fifteen years of stay (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 34).

In comparison the average wage income for EU-immigrants after one year of stay is 180,800 DKK, after five years 317,100 DKK, after ten years 349,400 DKK, and after fifteen years 373,000 DKK (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 34). Though the average wage incomes for both refugees and persons family reunified to refugees have a greater percentage increase over a span of fifteen years, the immigrants from the EU/EUA have an average wage income which is more then 100,000 DKK larger in all of the years (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016:34).

The group with the largest average wage income are the persons who are residing in Denmark due to employment. After one year the average income of this group is

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<sup>5</sup> All of the average wages are measured after 2015 prices

180,000 DKK, after five years 367,600 DKK, after ten years 442.400 DKK, and after fifteen years 450,500 DKK (Schultz, 2016: 34).

### **5.3. Social Benefits**

In the Schultz-Nielsen report the calculations on social benefits are based on a number of different types of transfer benefits, these are: unemployment support, rehabilitation support, student's support, housing support, children's supports and early retirement (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 34).

The calculations in the Schultz-Nielsen report show that the transfer benefits for refugees and persons family reunified to refugees are significantly higher than for the other immigrant groups (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016:35). For refugees the average transfer benefit after five years is at 120,200 DKK, compared to e.g. labour migrants (15,900 DKK after five years of residence in Denmark) the difference is significant (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016:36).

In the Drescher report, the public benefit includes different forms of unemployment support and early retirement support, but not the student support (Drescher, et al, 2016: 5).

In the first year after being allocated a residence permit almost 90 percent of the Iraqi and Afghan refugees received public benefits (Drescher et al, 2016: 5). After ten years respectively 55 and 65 percent of the Afghan and the Iraqi refugees received public benefit (Drescher et al, 2016: 5). Around 30 percent of the Turkish immigrants received public benefit in the first year, this percentage is more or less stable at between 25 - 30 percent in the first ten years of residence in Denmark (Drescher et al, 2016: 5)

According to the report, after ten years of residence around 45 to 50 percent of the refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan who were receiving public benefit, did so due to early retirement support (Drescher et al, 2016: 7). A person receiving an early retirement support is not available for the job market. In comparison around 10 percent of the Turkish immigrants received an early retirement support after ten years



(Drescher et al, 2016: 7). In this perspective a larger percentage of the Turkish immigrants were unemployed, but available for the Danish labour market, whereas around half of the unemployed refugees from Afghanistan and Iraq were outside the Danish labour market after ten years of residence (Drescher et al, 2016: 7).

In the perspective of all of the refugees included in the report, 31 percent of the Iraqi refugees and 24 percent of the Afghan refugees received early retirement support after the first ten years of residence in Denmark, and could thereby be considered unavailable for the Danish labour market (Drescher et al, 2016: 7).

### **Summing up**

In all three reports refugees and persons family reunified to refugees have the lowest labour attachment, the lowest wages, and the highest rate of social benefits when compared to other 'control' immigration groups in Denmark.

In all the three reports the labour market attachment for both refugees and persons family reunified to refugees increased concurrently with how long time they had had residence in Denmark. Or at least that seems to be the case for the first ten years in the Schultz-Nielsen report and for the first seven years in the Drescher report, hereafter the labour market attachment of respectively refugees and persons family reunified to refugees in general decreases.

The labour market attachment for refugees is remarkably lower after ten years of residence in the DA report compared to the two other reports. In the Schultz-Nielsen report 33,8 percent of the refugees were employed after ten years, in the Drescher et al report 35 percent<sup>6</sup> of the Iraqi and Afghan refugees were employed after ten years, but only around 25 percent of the refugees were employed after ten years according to the DA report.

How the differences in the figures can be explained will be explored later in the thesis.

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<sup>6</sup> The median of the employment rate of Afghan refugees (40 percent) and the Iraqi refugees (30 percent)

## 6. Explaining the labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark

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This section analyses the labour market attachment of refugees in comparison to other immigrant groups. The analysis also takes persons family reunified to refugees into consideration. Refugees and person family reunified to a refugee are in some reports looked at together in one group, in some reports separately and in some reports the persons family reunified to refugees are categorised together with persons family reunified in general.

### 6.1. Legal status

In order to understand the figures of labour market attachment it is important to clarify first, who are entitled to take residence in Denmark and second, who have the right to work in Denmark.

Five groups are entitled to or may be entitled to take stay in Denmark, these are:

*Citizens from from the Nordic countries.*<sup>7</sup> These do not need a residence permit to to enter and stay in Denmark (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 §1).

*Citizens from the countries in the EU/EUA* and their families (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 §2).

*Newcomers, who want to work or study and their families.* If the foreigner is from a country outside the Nordic countries and the EU/EUA are allowed to enter and stay in Denmark for three months, passport or other travel ID is checked before entering the country (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 §2 stk.2). In order to stay longer than the three months a residence permit is required. The residence permit can be granted to foreigners who want to work (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 §9a) or study (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 §9i) or though family reunification (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 §9 stk 1).

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<sup>7</sup> The Nordic countries include: Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

*Foreigners in the need of international protection* (through asylum or humanitarian residence) (Udlændingestyrelsen, 2016: 6). In Denmark asylum claims are allocated due to the UN Refugee Convention of July 28th 1951. Another way to be permitted refuge in Denmark is if the asylum-seeker meets the conditions for protection status or temporary protection status.

The UN Refugee Convention of July 28th 1951 states that a person is considered a refugee if: *“owing to wellfounded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it”* (The UN Refugee Convention of 28/07/1951 Article 1 A(2)).

The protection status is given in cases where the asylum-seeker does not live up to the conditions of the Refugee Convention but who *“at return to his or her home country are in risk of death penalty or of being subjected to torture, or degrading treatment or punishment”* (LBK 412 of 09/05/2016 §7, stk.2).<sup>8</sup>

The temporary protection status is given in cases *“where the asylum-seeker is in risk of death penalty, or of being subjected to torture, or degrading treatment or punishment because of a particular severe situation in the home country characterized by arbitrary violence and attacks on civilians”* (LBK 412 of 09/05/2016 §7 stk 3).<sup>9</sup>

Through *family reunification* (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 §9 stk 1). There are a number of regulations in relation to this. Among these are that the person to whom the foreigner is applying for family reunification has Danish citizenship, are a citizen in one of the Nordic countries, have residence permit in Denmark due to asylum or humanitarian reasons, or have had unlimited residence permit in more than three years (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 §9 stk 1). The person to whom the newcomer are seeking

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<sup>8</sup> Quote translated from Danish by author

<sup>9</sup> Quote translated from Danish by author

to get family reunification has to be able to support the newcomer economically (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 §9 stk 3). This supporting obligation is not a demand for persons who have refugee or protection status. However, a new law from 2016 states that in order for persons with temporary protection status to get family reunification, they have to have had residence permit in Denmark in at least three years (Lov no. 102 of 03/02/2016 § 1 stk 7-9).

## **6.2. Permission to Work**

First of all it needs to be established who have the right to work and under what conditions. Generally speaking a working permit is required in order to work in Denmark (LBK 412 of 09/05/2016 §13 stk 1). However, there are exceptions to this, which are: if the newcomer is from one of the Nordic countries, from the EU or the EUA, have unlimited residence permit, are family reunified or have a residence permit due to asylum, protection or for humanitarian reasons (LBK 412 of 09/05/2016 §14). In principle asylum seekers are entitled to seek employment in Denmark, if they have been registered as asylum-seekers for at least six months and meet the demands of § 14 a. in the Danish Aliens Act. Among the demands are that the identity of the asylum-seeker has to be established, the asylum case has to be approved for process in Denmark by the Danish Immigration Service, and the asylum contract has to be signed. In addition the asylum-seeker has to sign a departure clause (LBK no. 412 of 09/05/2016 § 14 a, 3). If the asylum seeker is able to self-supportive he or she are not entitled to a beneficial support from the state.

## **6.3. Reason for the Immigration/the basis of Residence**

The research showed that the reason for immigration plays a role in relation to how the newcomers are able to navigate in the new society, both economically and socially. In order to understand the low labour market attachment of refugee and persons family reunified to refugees it is therefore relevant to look at the reasons for migrations.

Comparing the figures on labour market attachment for persons family reunified to a refugee with persons family reunified to a person of a Danish nationality, showed that the latter group had a markedly higher labour market attachment rate than the first (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 30). The person to whom the family reunification is granted

might hold one of the keys of how to explain this difference, since this person are the core reason for the immigration.

As mentioned earlier refugees seldomly have a lot of influence on where they are granted asylum, which mean that they often end up in places where they have no pre-existing contacts and no or limited knowledge of the language of the host country, which are all challenges to getting a job (Phillmore et al, 2016: 1720). These challenges will most likely be the same for persons family reunified to a refugee. If the refugee experinces a lot of barriers to integration and emplyment, it is limited how much they will able to help their family integrate and obtain employment.

As mentioned earlier, one of the factors which facilitates integration is cultural knowledge. A person of Danish nationality is most likely to have great knowledge about the culture and structures of the society, which can be trickle down to the newcomer and serve as a factor for integration both socially and economically.

### **6.3.1. Basis for residence in relation to social benefits**

Both the figures in the Schultz-Nielsen report and in the Drescher report show that refugees and persons family reunified to refugees receive are more prone to receiving social benefits from the state compared to respectively other immigrant groups. In the Drescher report, Turkish immigrants are the only control unit. The basis for the residence permit is one way of explaining these differences. In order to get family reunification to all other than refugees, there is a supporting obligation on behalf of the person whom family reunification is granted. In order for persons family reunified to a person of Danish nationality or others to receive social benefits, the person to whom they have been reunified has to be unable to support them and themselves (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 10).

## **6.4. Language**

As mentioned in the research design, language can be major barrier to getting a job for immigrants. According to the DA report the Danish teaching was a big part of the integration programme for refugees in 2015 (DA, 2015: 81). This indicates that there is a good foundation for refugees to learn Danish. But the language needs to be

practiced in order to be learned. The language skills of the refugees therefor also depends on a Danish speaking network. According to the DA report the refugees and family reunified miss every fourth Danish class (DA, 2015: 82). Not attending the language class challenges the prerequisite for learning Danish.

## **6.5. The Demand of Labour in the host Country**

If the a person, who has a residence permit on the basis of work, already before arrival have reached employment in Denmark, this might have to do with the demand for a specific type of labour rather than cultural understanding or local network. The demand for labour plays a big role for the residences on the basis of employment (labour migrants). For persons who have obtained a residence permit on the basis of employment, and who are outside the EU/EUA, it is most likely that their residence permit will lapse if their basis residence ends (The Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration). The same does not apply for refugees or person who have a residence permit due to family reunification. This is reflected in figures in the Schultz-Nielsen report, showing that only 29 percent of the work permit immigrants are in Denmark after ten years (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 27). In comparison 90 percent of the refugees are still residing in Denmark after ten years (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 27). This indicates that if the demand for the labour that the labour migrant offers ceases, the labour migrant has to leave Denmark. As long as the refugee has protection, he or she are entitled to stay in the country.

Unlike the labour migrant, refugees and persons family reunified to refugees are entitled to social support if they are outside the labour market. This can be seen in the Schultz-Nielsen report which shows a markedly difference between the average transfer benefit of refugees and labour migrants after five years residence (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 36). This is not to say that refugee only stay in the Denmark due to the social welfare. First and foremost they stay because they are in need for protection. Where labour migrants in most cases can return to his or her home country, where there might not be a big demand for labour, but where they know the structures, system and the culture, refugees do not have that options. The mobility of a refugee is limited, and there are not the same possibilities of looking for a job in a country where

the demand for labour is bigger. If a refugees take residence in another country for a longer period of time their residence permit i Denmark will lapse (The Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration).

Another factor which needs to be taken into account in relation to the demand of labour, is the economic situation in the host country, including the general unemployment rate. According to the DA report the labour market attachment for the refugees who have arrived between 2000 and 2003 are not improved significantly over time (DA, 2015: 77). This is argued on the basis of the labour market attachment of refugees after three years are around 15 percent and after ten years at around 25 percent. In 2008 the world experienced an economic crisis which also affected the economy of Denmark, which also affected the unemployment rate in Denmark in general. The general unemployment rate went from 1,9 percent in 2008 to 3,6 percent in 2009 (Schultz, 2016: 13). From 2009 to 2014 the general unemployment rate in Denmark was at around 4 to 4,5 percent (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016:13). The figures on labour market attachment in the Schultz-Nielsen report show that the labour market attachment rate for refugees decline between year ten and fifteen of residence (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 30). The same applies to the Drescher report which shows a fall in the labour market attachment rate of both the Iraqi and the Afghan refugees as well as for the Turkish immigrants (Drescher et al, 2016: 4). This fall in the labour market attachment rate is, among other reasons, to be explained by the economic crisis starting in 2008 (Drescher et al, 2016: 4). This indicates that the general unemployment rate in Denmark has affected the labour market attachment of refugees. The focus group for the employment rate of refugees in the DA report arrived between 2000 and 2003, which mean that they after ten years residence in Denmark all have been affected by the economic crisis. This could indicate that the low labour market attachment after ten years to a high degree have been affected by the refugee crisis.

Another perspective which needs to be taken into account, is the EU enlargement in 2004. As mentioned earlier this allowed citizens from the ten new EU-countries to seek employment in the rest of the EU. The influx of these new EU immigrants are most likely to have affected the labour market attachment of the refugees in the years following 2004. Calculations made by Jan Skaksen, show that there were a quite big

correlation between employment types of immigrants from the new EU10+ countries and immigrants from less developed countries in 2008 (Skaksen, 2016: 7). As mentioned earlier, a large part of the refugees in Denmark from 2000 - 2010 were from the Middle East. Since none of the Middle Eastern countries are counted as more developed, I estimate that most of the refugees who have arrived from 2000 - 2003 (referring to the DA report) belong to the group of immigrants from less developed countries in the Skaksen calculation. This indicate that the refugees and the immigrants from the EU10+ countries have competed over the same jobs, thus making it more challenging to obtain employment.

### **6.6. Qualifications/recognition of qualifications**

The Schultz-Nielsen report looking at persons who was granted residence permit from 1997 - 2004 shows that for respectively 50,4 percent and 60,7 percent of the refugees and persons family reunified to refugees from their educational background was unknown (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 25). For the refugees and the persons family reunified to refugees whose educational background were known, the average lengths of education were respectively 11,1 years and 10,1 years. Compared to the other groups of immigrants these two groups had the shortest length of education (Schultz-Nielsen (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 26). A general factor which apply for all immigrants is that it is harder to use education from the home country of the immigrant to get a high qualified job (Gorinas et al, 2015: 10).

### **6.7. Network**

Refugees have little or no saying of where they are granted asylum. This means that their social network in the host society most likely is limited. The figures say little about the network of refugees in Denmark, but this does not mean that network does not play a role. Getting a job in the first place, is a factor that might generate social bridges to the host society. Since the figures in the three report show that the refugees have a hard time getting a job, it might be difficult for them to find other places to interact with the host society. This mean that they most of all have to rely on the government employment agencies to obtain employment.



## **6.8. Health**

Health is very likely to play a role in relation to labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark. The Drescher report shows that of the Iraqi and Afghan refugees who have been granted a residence permit between 1999 and 2001, and who received public benefit, around 45 - 50 % did so due to early retirement (Drescher et al, 2016: 7). The share of refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan on early retirement is shown to increase markedly in the first ten years of asylum (Drescher et al, 2016: 7). This could indicate that there are a big share of refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan affected by health issues. That this is very likely to be the case is emphasised, when looking at the refugees contact with the hospital. The Drescher report shows that for both men and women the share who have had contact with the hospital are higher for refugees from Afghanistan and Iraq than it is for immigrants from Turkey (Drescher et al, 2016: 8). For both the refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan and the immigrant from Turkey, the women had more contact with the hospital than the men (Drescher et al, 2016: 8).

## **6.9. Age**

In the Schultz-Nielsen report the refugees are a bit older than the average of the other migrant groups (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 26). The same applies in the Drescher report where the refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan are older than the immigrants from Turkey (Drescher et al, 2016: 8). According to the research age plays a role in relation to employment, and younger immigrants have a easier time finding a job than older. The fact that the refugees in the two reports are older than the other immigrant groups, might be a factor for the lower labour market attachment of refugees.

## **6.10 Gender**

The Schultz-Nielsen report show that the biggest share of refugees are men, while the biggest share of persons family reunified to refugees are female (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 26). Furthermore, the report shows that the average length of education of persons family reunified to refugees are the shortest compared to all other immigrant groups (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016: 26).

A study looking at female refugees who has been granted residence permit from 2009 to 2014, shows that only 5 percent were employed after five years (Poulsen, 2015: 1). Compared to the male refugees in the same period of time the employment rate for

female refugees are much lower. 20 percent of the male refugees who had obtained residence permit in the same time period were employed after four years (Poulsen, 2015: 1). The low labour market attachment for women is explained by limited to none working experience. According to the paper only half of the female refugees have working experience (Poulsen, 2015: 2)

## **6.11. The pre-asylum period**

The following section provides an insight to the process of asylum and the options the asylum-seekers have for mobilisation both in relation to activation and employment.

### **6.11.1. The process of asylum in Denmark**

When a person seeking refuge enters Denmark, it is most often without a legal basis for residency, but at arrival he or she can plead asylum due to the Danish Aliens Act § 7 which states that a residency permit can be provided if the person subject to the Refugee Convention of July 28 1951 (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012:26). This means that he or she registers as a asylum-seeker in Denmark. The registration gives the right to stay in the country on a so-called processuel stay, but it does not include the right to normal social benefits or to reside freely in the country (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012:27).

Besides getting covered the basic maintenance services, such as food and accommodation, the asylum-seekers receive a base economic beneficial support during the pre-asylum process in Denmark §42b, 2). is 39,05 kr/day for asylum-seekers living in marriage or in cohabitation, 49,32 kr/day for unmarried asylum-seekers not living in cohabitation, 49,32 kr/day for unaccompanied asylum-seekers under the age of 18 years (The Aliens Act, Consolidation Act nr 412 of 9th of May 2016, § 42 b, 2)

Asylum seekers in Denmark can be in three phases in the pre-asylum process: the Dublin phase, the Process phase, and the Departure phase (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012: 28)

The Dublin phase begins at arrival in Denmark. In this initial phase it is determined whether or not the asylum application is to be processed in Denmark, or if the asylum-seeker has to go back to the first country of registration (due to the Dublin Regulation,

which states that in the case an asylum-seeker is registered in another EU country he or she is to be sent back to the first country of registration). In the Dublin phase the asylum-seeker is placed at a receiving center, where the first phase of education and activation is initiated (Qvartz, 2015: 16). This means that all adult asylum-seekers are obliged to participate in a 30 hours introductory course to provide them with an initial knowledge about the Danish language, culture and society (Kohl, 2015: 130).

In the Process phase the asylum-seeker's case have been accepted for process in Denmark, and he or she is sent to an asylum center in a municipality in Denmark (Kohl, 2015: 130). In the following months the Danish immigration service will have one or more interviews with the asylum-seeker in order to determine the motives behind the asylum claim as well as wishes for where to be placed if asylum is granted (Qvartz, 2015: 16).

Due to the Aliens Act § 42 c all adult asylum-seekers have to make a signed agreement in cooperation with the asylum operator within the first week of the stay in the asylum center. This signed agreement is called an Asylum Contract (Qvartz, 2015: 16). The listings in the contract include operational tasks in the asylum center, participation in an asylum seeking course, and education and activation (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012:38). The individual skills and qualification of the asylum-seeker is to be taken into account in the asylum contract (Kohl, 2015: 130). If the asylum-seeker and the asylum operator cannot reach an agreement on the content of the asylum contract, the asylum operator has the last word as to decide the content of the contract (Kohl, 2015: REF).

The aim of the asylum contract is to strengthen the activation and education efforts for adult asylum-seekers (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012:38). As can be seen in the above section, several researchers argue that the pre-asylum phase generates both passivity and illness among asylum-seekers. On the 1st of July 2003 the Reform of the Teaching and Activation Efforts towards Adult asylum-seekers in the Danish asylum centres (the VUA Reform) was launched as a response to this. The aim of the reform was to remedy some of the negative side effects of staying in an asylum center and to create the prerequisites for a successful integration process for asylum-seekers in Denmark - as well as good conditions for a decent repatriation for the asylum-seekers who are not granted asylum (Kohl, 2015: 129). Kohl argues that the asylum-seekers with the

reform went from being perceived and treated as someone who were in need of basic care, kindness and a listening ear but not to be integrated into the society; to be perceived as economically rational actors whose problems most of all reminiscent that of the unemployed (Kohl, 2015: 140).

Apart from the mandatory tasks in the asylum center, such as cleaning, the asylum-seeker in phase II can participate in other forms of activation (Embedsmandsudvalg, 2012: 39). These can be divided into three categories: Internal activation which can be smaller maintenance tasks, administrative tasks and task in relation to take care of and teach children and teenagers (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012: 39); activation in an internal production company attached to the asylum center; or specially arranged internship of shorter duration or unpaid voluntary humanitarian work or other voluntary work (The Aliens Act § 42 e, 2; Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012: 39).

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Due to the Aliens Act §42 f, 2 a foreigner over the age of 18, who has been registered as an asylum-seeker, or who has been in Denmark more than three months after having applied for asylum has to participate in English lessons or other education. The aim of the education is to maintain and develop the general and professional competences of the asylum-seeker (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012: 39).

Asylum-seekers in the departure phase have the same opportunities for activation and education as the asylum-seekers in the process phase if they sign the voluntary departure clause.

As a result of the VUA-reform job centres were established in the asylum centres in order to locally administer the activation programmes (Kohl, 2015:130). The VUA-reform did not only mean dissemination of educational and employment offers, but also economical sanctions if the asylum-seeker refrained from participating in the planned activities (Kohl, 2015:131).

If the asylum-seeker meets what has been agreed on in the asylum contract he or she obtains the right to a supplementary benefit due to § 42 b, 10 in the Aliens Act. In the Dublin phase the supplementary benefit is 8,23 kr/day whereas it in the process phase and in the departure phase (for those who have signed the departure clause) is 28,78 kr/day. If the asylum-seeker does not meet the agreements in the contract, the supplementary benefits is withdrawn. An asylum-seeker is not entitled to cash benefits if the asylum-seeker can be self-supportive (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012:101).

Kohl argues that the aim of the reform programme is to make the asylum-seekers capable of handling their own future integration (Kohl, 2015: 132). In other words a sharpened control, embodied in the economic enticements and contract techniques is to make the asylum-seekers responsible and active (Kohl, 2015: 133).

### **6.11.2. Asylum-seekers access to the Danish labour market**

It has been established earlier in the thesis that the asylum seekers have the right to seek employment in Denmark if they have been registered as asylum-seeker for at least six months and if they in addition meets a number of requirements, which are listed in the Danish Aliens Act.

But, even if the requirements listed in the Danish Aliens Act are met, there are several challenges to asylum-seekers chances of getting a job. One of the challenges is that the asylum-seekers are very diverse and the background of the individual claim for asylum varies to a high degree, and the asylum-seekers can be affected by the conditions from which they have sought refuge, which means that some brings traumas and have the need of special help or support (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012:90). This is backed up

by Mathew, who argues that a mix of resilience and vulnerability may make it difficult for some asylum-seekers to get employed (Mathew, 2012:3). With resilience and vulnerability, Mathew means respectively that the asylum seekers has survived and escaped a persecutory place and that they are now in unfamiliar territory and face many barriers to participation in the host society (Mathew, 2012:3). In addition to possible traumas, the educational level and language qualification varies too, and only few of the asylum-seekers will be able to get because the educational and professional levels in many cases is rather low (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012:91).

Should a company decide to hire an asylum-seeker, there a number of practical challenges connected to paying wages. In order to pay the wages in Denmark, most jobs require that the employee has a transaction account in a Danish bank. In order to set up a transaction account most, if not all, Danish banks require that the person setting up the account has a Danish personal number - a CPR-number. All Danish citizens are allocated a CPR-number, and persons with the various kinds of Danish residence permits can get a CPR-number if they fulfill §16 and §17 in the CPR Act, which among other things require that the persons have a place of residence. As was established earlier in the thesis, people who are in asylum-seeking system in Denmark are either considered as legally still outside the border (phase one), in a processing phase (phase two) or their asylum application have been denied, and they await repatriation (phase three). None of the three phases provides the rights of a CPR-number, and therefor not a Danish transaction account either. This means that companies in Denmark have to find alternative ways to pay the wages, which means they have to make an extra effort even to be able to hire an asylum-seeker in the first place.

If the asylum-seeker manages to find a job, there is a possibility of very positive outcomes. Not only can the personal, professional and labour skills of the asylum-seeker be maintained and strengthened, access to the labour market also gives the basis for a more successful integration if asylum is granted, as well as the possibility of a proper repatriation if asylum is denied (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012: 89-90). Paid employment is shown to affect the self-worth of the asylum-seeker and can thus be a significant source to empowerment (Fleay, 2013: 483).

Though employment can be a positive factor for the asylum-seeker and affect later labour market attachment in the case asylum is granted, Hainmueller et al. argues that more importantly than giving the asylum-seeker access to the labour market it is reduce the transition period of the asylum-seekers (Hainmueller et al, 2016: 4). It is argued that asylum-seekers who have not access or attachment to the labour market are maintained in a position of welfare dependency (Mayblin, 2014: 379).

A lot seems to be gained from looking at the asylum period, both in relation to length and making it easier for asylum-seekers to join the labour market. From a national economy aspect there are both advantages and disadvantages of a liberal access to the labour market.

*Disadvantages:* If the labour market is made accessible for asylum-seekers from day one, it might lead migrants who are in look for a job, but not in right to asylum, to register as asylum-seekers. This means that they can use the asylum-seeking position to enter the labour market, even if it is only for a short period of time (Embedsmandsudvalget, 2012: 91). Asylum-seeking could in this way become a pull-factor for labour migrant (Valento et al, 2013: 462). In addition to this, a large influx of asylum-seekers might pressure the welfare system (Valento et al, 2013: 462).

Another disadvantage due to a more liberal labour access, can be worsened condition for the host society's labour force because of increased competition for jobs (Valento et al, 2013: 462). One effect of this could be wage pressure, which can occur if one type of workforce experience an increase in supply (Skaksen, 2016: 2). This means that the better the immigrants can substitute for the labour force of the host society, the more likely the immigration is to pressure the labour market, including the wage income (Skaksen, 2016: 2). In relation unlimited access to the labour market and how this may attract persons with no basis for asylum into this system, I argue that this might affect the wage income. The persons who are trying to use the asylum system in this way, are probably very desperate to find a job, and therefor also willing to accept a lower wage, which may lead to downward pressure of wages.

*Advantages:* On the other hand, there is a lot that indicates that the economy will be positively affected if the labour market attachment of refugees are formed as as soon as in the pre-asylum period. This will mean lower degree of welfare benefits when asylum has been granted. Furthermore employment in the asylum phase will most

likely also affect the general integration of the asylum-seeker (Valento et al, 2013: 462)

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### **Summing up**

From the above, I conclude that one of the most important factors to take into account when trying to understand the labour framework of a group, is the context in which it take place. All though it is important to understand the factors that can be changed, it is just as important to understand the uncontrollable factors, such as the economic crisis in 2008.

Another important factor is network. Even though the reports say very little about network, by reading between the lines there are indicators telling something about the meaning of network. For example, when looking at persons family reunified to refugees in comparison to persons family reunified to a person of Danish nationality, the figures show that the person family reunified to a person of Danish nationality had a much higher labour market attachment from year one. This could indicate that the relationship to a Danish person helps provide a job

Another important factor is the pre-asylum period, which can lead to stagnation of the asylum-seeker, and eventually refugee if asylum is granted.



## 7. Conclusion

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In relation to the connection between employment and integration, the thesis found that there was quite a big cohesion between the two. First of all, employment means that the newcomer can be self-supportive, which is shown to be a major factor for the well-being and self-confidence of him and her which in turn also promotes integration. In addition, employment can, in the case that there is some social aspects to it, facilitate social bridging between the host society and the newcomer. In this way the workplace can function as a place of integration both economically and socially. The social aspect of employment might trickle down other aspects promoting integration. Among these are improved language skills, improved health and well-being

Using the analysis framework to understand and explore the labour market attachment of refugees show that there are a lot hidden between the numbers. This is not to say that there are not other factors that could be taken into account in relation to the labour market attachment of refugees. What can be concluded in relation to labour market attachment of refugees in Denmark? First of all, all three reports, which lay the basis for the analysis, show that refugees - including persons family reunified to refugees - have the lowest labour market attachment of all immigrant groups in Denmark (Schultz-Nielsen, 2016; Drescher et al, 2016; DA, 2015). One way to understand the low labour market attachment could be that the refugees have the possibility of receiving public benefits from the state, and therefor are less motivated to get a job. This is an element not explored in this thesis is the economic incentive for refugees to seek employment. It could be argued that possibility for refugees to receive welfare support from the government makes them less eager to find a job. This might also be the logic behind the newly introduced integration benefit (law no. 1000 of 30/08/2015).

Even if some refugees feel they have no incentive to find employment, there are many other factors that play in. Among these are health issues. The research show that unemployment only make the well-being of a refugee worse.

The thesis also show that there are a lot of uncontrollable factors that influences the employment attachment in general, that also have an effect on refugees labour market attachment, and even maybe more so. Both the EU enlargement and the economic crisis starting in 2008, is showed to affect the labour market attachment of refugees quite a lot. The demand for labour in the host country and the basis for residence, does also have a lot to say. If the demand for a specific type of labour declines, a refugee has little other possiblities than to stay in the host country. Persons from most of the other immigrant groups have more mobility and can thus move to another country in the persuit for a job.

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