

Project Concept: Ph.D. Dissertation

Research Question: “*“Finding out how young third country immigrants` transition to work looks like and comparison of activation policies towards third country immigrants”:*
The comparative case of Austria, Finland, and Czech Republic”

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Introduction

This dissertation seeks to explore the enabling of young third country immigrants' employment-related transition from unemployment to all types of employment and comparison of activation policies towards young third country immigrants". The purpose is to understand the implementation of activation measures through public and private employment service agencies enabling young third country immigrant employment related transition from welfare to work. The selected countries in this study are Austria, Finland, and Czech Republic. Hence, the ideas and investigation from this study is to enable new insights, offer policymakers with solution-based evidence, and contribute to research and societal development process.

This proposal begins with an overview of the research background about what is known about the problem and the conceptual and theoretical framework. Following this is the research methodology and methods how I plan to carry out this research

1 Research Puzzle

Since many years migration to all European Union Member's States is high and probably will stay high in the long run. Some are young third-country's nationals¹ voluntarily moving to join either their families or for other purpose (Treibel 2011, Hawkins 2017; Flahaux and De Haas 2016), In 2016, about 2 million third country's nationals immigrated into one of the EU-28 Member States (Eurostat). This figure has awakened series of challenges in most EU country's integration social protection systems and migration-related arena (Eurofound 2012). Generally, young third country immigrant who would like to settle down in these countries has to find paid employment to integrate, take part, and be members in the societies. Otherwise it is very complicated for the people, the community, and enabling state to enhance social cohesion. Couple with the unsustainable nature (Gilbert 2004: 42) of the welfare state still facing recovery problem since the 2007-8 global economic crisis, spending is outstripping taxes with insufficient jobs to absorb youngsters (ILO 2012). In times, of increasing racism, xenophobia perceptions, and an alarmingly unemployment rate of non-EU immigrants in comparison to their young national's peer (Werner and Kiehl 1999; EMN 2018).

¹ "A third-country national is a citizen of a state that is not member of the EU nor a citizen of Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway or Switzerland" (The Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2017)

However, Austria, Finland and the Czech Republic are modernizing the social welfare protection system implementing work-incentives legislature measures. The latter approach emphasizes on social benefits tied to incentives and repackaged in ways that increase the compulsion to work and meet one`s basic needs (the idea of welfare-to-work) to promote work and improve most disadvantaged people`s situations (Rehn 1985; Wilensky 1985) for social cohesion (Gilbert 2004). Therefore, reinforcing the recommodification of labour force like a commodity bought and sold purely in response to market forces (Gilbert 2004). Nevertheless, the implementation enabling hard-core unemployed people are disputable, considering that young third country immigrants are a heterogeneous group of people with different cultural background, working ethics and values. This shows targeting immigrants` and refugees` in combination is ambiguous and lacks a clear differentiation of the sub-units. This homogeneously rearrangements makes third-country`s nationals labour market integration process disputable, and need a dichotomy`s approach to focus on the subgroup`s transition to work.

Hence, Gilbert`s (2004) ideal-type model of the enabling state conceptual framework is use as the analytical lens to offer an in-depth generating dimensions, which rest on the promotion of work, subsidization of private activity, targeting social benefits, and emphasizing on individual responsibility in a way that alter the basis of social inclusion. Drawing on official documents, interviews, surveys, observations, and scholastic text, the researcher collected the data of this study and analyze with document and thematic content analysis for interpretation

This proposal begins with the aim and purpose of the study. Following this is the research questions, theoretical framework, and the methods how I plan to carry out this research.

2 The Aim and Purpose statement

Giving the discourse of welfare-to-work discourse and enabling states intervention in Europe (Van Berkel and Møller, 2002; Serrano Pascual, 2004; Zeitlin and Trubek, 2005), activation measures are playing vital role to promote work and improve most disadvantaged people`s situation (Rehn 1985; Wilensky 1985; seen in Wilensky and Turner 1987; Wilensky and Turner 1987) for social cohesion (Gilbert 2004). However, there are controversies around welfare-to-workfare discourse, because there are not enough jobs for young people, especially immigrants with million not transitioning into decent jobs and at risk of social exclusion (ILO

2012). In Ridley-Duff and Bull (2011) opinion, if employed it is mainly in mean low-paying jobs creating an underclass type of worker. Werner and Kiehl (1999) and EMN (2018) go so far as to suggest that youth unemployment is alarmingly high in European Union member's states with several young non-EU migrants affected.

In fact, research in activation measures implementation to enable young third country immigrant employment-related transition is emerging in Austria, Finland and the Czech Republic, when compare to research in other aspect of activation studies towards disadvantaged out-of-work population. Having said these, the purpose of this dissertation is unique because it approaches a comparative study on activation policy measure implementation in Austria, Finland, and the Czech Republic from the perspective of an active enabling state.

Above all, this dissertation is to fulfil following purposes:

- 1) To look at the role played by public and private employment service institution in activation measures implementation in Austria, Finland, and the Czech Republic to enable young third country immigrant employment-related transition;
- 2) To check the existing relationship which employment service agencies in Austria, Finland, and the Czech Republic have with the enabling or active state in activation measures implementation of the three countries;
- 3) To assess the similarities and differences implementing activation policy to enable young third country immigrant employment-related transition.
- 4) To find out how the dissimilarities could be possible and explain

In addition, this study focuses on the unemployment to any employment stages of legal young third-country immigrant's regularly living in the selected EU countries having right to get access to the labour market system or with restrictive labour market accessibility (students with acceptable working hours). The employment pathways of irregular/undocumented residence non-EU members aren't covered in this dissertation. These include undocumented young third country nationals and those who continue to stay and work despite the end of their residence permit or visa.

3 Research question

To shed light on this problem, the main research question was as follows: “Finding out how young third country immigrants` transition to work looks like and comparison of activation policies towards third country immigrants”.

To cover the different aspects of this main research question, the question was divided into four sub-research questions as follows:

- a. What role do public employment service and private employment agencies play in Austria, Finland, and the Czech Republic to enable young third country immigrant employment-related transition from welfare to work?
- b. What relationships do all relevant public and private employment service agencies in Austria, Finland and the Czech Republic have with the Enabling State in contracting for welfare to enabling young third country immigrant employment related transition from welfare to work??
- c. How public and private employment service agencies promote activation measures and individualised responsibility to enable young third country immigrant employment-related transition from welfare to work?
- d. What are the principles that guide the allocation and implementation of activation measures in Austria, Finland, and Czech Republic to enable young third country immigrant`s employment-related transition from welfare to work?
- e. How can the restoring of solidarity in the implementation of activation measures to enable young third country immigrant employment-related transition from welfare to work be explained in Austria, Finland and Czech Republic?

The contribution of this study

The rationale for undertaking this research involves the different employment service institutions and actors that open access to paid job and enable hard-core unemployed societal inclusion in Austria, Finland and the Czech Republic, the role of activation agents and the workfare has become a vital policy discourse among different stakeholders such as scholars, practitioners, and policy makers. In addition, the focus is due to my three² Master of Social

² Majoring in (1) Comparative Social Policy and Welfare State (from University of Tampere – Finland), (2) Joint Degree in Comparative Social Policy and Welfare State (Johannes Kepler University Linz- Austria, MRU Vilnius - Lithuania, and University of Tampere – Finland), and (3) Sociology (Johannes Kepler University Linz – Austria. In

Sciences (MSSSc) thesis on migration, welfare state, work and employment. The studies revealed findings of young people facing difficulties and disengaging from their civic duty and membership in contemporary superdiversity society and how different welfare production sub-regimes (such as the labour market and employment systems) are directly or indirectly excluding deprived group of the population such as young people with migration background from social inclusion . The present study is an extension of my Masters` research in that it falls in line with the role of employment and labour market institution as well as other private employment actors involve in employment and integration-related services to enable young third country immigrant social cohesion and inclusion process. To end, the dissertation is contributing as follows:

- First, this research offers an insights and in-depth generating knowledge to policy makers, practitioners and researchers in area of activation to enable young third country immigrant`s employment-related transition
- Second, from the insights and in-depth generating knowledge, beneficiaries will get a better understanding of activation policy implementation from public and private employment-related agencies particularly in Austria, Finland and the Czech Republic, which may help them to overcome the underrepresented knowledge in this area of research
- Third, this investigation contributes to existing third country national research on the role of the enabling or active state, employment-related actors in general and detail, on the role of public and private employment-related service agencies involved in activation measures implementation to promote and enable young third country immigrant labour market participation in the selected entities
- Fourth, the local, regional and national policy makers in Austria, Finland, and the Czech Republic could benefit in the findings of this research, for better policies formulation involved in activation measures implementation to enable out-of-work young third country immigrants of the three countries from welfare to work.

which Young people with migration background not in education, employment or training (NEET) and young migrants in Finland and Austria were the comparative entities, discussed (Master degree 1) "School-to-work transition process among (disadvantaged) young people and Youth Guarantee Policy in Austria and Finland", (Master Degree two) "How is school to work transition process shaped by the (active) labour market and structure of the educational system? Evidence and comparison from Austria and Finland", and (Master Degree three) „Welche Motive und Risiken begünstigen Jugendliche nicht in Beschäftigung, Bildung oder Ausbildung" (NEETs) zu werden? Ein biografischer Ansatz mit Fokus auf Jugendliche mit Migrationsbiografien in Österreich“.

- Fifth, due to the fact that this research represents first attempt to find out the role of public and private employment-related service agencies in activation measure implementation in Austria, Finland and the Czech Republic to enable young third country immigrants social cohesion process, I hope that this investigation`s contribution will extend the boundaries of findings in this area of research
- Furthermore, I equally hope that this research would stimulate further study in active or enabling policy measures implementation and governance with regard to employment-related service actors or agencies.

Overall, it is vital that the outcome of this research offers other observation and approach of the researcher about the implementation and governance of activation policy measures to enable young third country immigrant participation in the society as active members. Against this backdrop, I sum up that the most important contribution of this research is not the achievement, but the contribution to enable pathways for further research in young third country national research considering the distinctiveness of this heterogeneous group`s sub-category for a target or tailored specific enabling policy approach to enrich the real community and foster social cohesion

4 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

This section of the dissertation attempts to define and/or explain the core concepts and theories in this study. The theories are enabling state theory, activation theory, variety of capitalism theory, and welfare chauvinism theory

The main theory of this dissertation is the active or enabling state theory, which represents a new market-oriented governance that target benefits to promotes labour force participation and individualised responsibilities (Gilbert 2004: 44). In this case, the enabling state seeks to integrate the poor and needy into the market economy and to offer social services through market mechanisms in an era of triumphant market capitalism (Gilbert 2004), reshaping social policy to conform and compliment the logic and ethic of the market. An ‘enabling state’ assumes social networks supports and community-based participation as imperative to improve individual`s subjective wellbeing. In this process, the enabling state has a supportive and active role in maximizing social cohesion. Indicating the ‘top down’ service delivery of welfare state to enabling state approaches that give people and communities more control. Nevertheless, the shift of governance is occurring piecemeal, transformative language is being

co-opted by vested interests, and not all people and communities are equally able to take advantage of the opportunities and benefits offered by an enabling. Thus, assuming the enabling state is privatizing social welfare that involves financing the private delivery of social welfare goods and services through purchase-of-service contracts (Gilbert 2004). Assuming that outsourcing through the private sector performs more efficiently and offers greater consumer choice than the public sector (Gilbert 2004: 44). Also, it favours social welfare transfer in the form of cash and vouchers over in kind provisions (Gilbert 2004). The former stimulates competition in the market through goods and services provision that the government might otherwise produce or purchase through contracts (Gilbert 2004: 44-45). In addition, benefits in the form of cash can also be provided indirectly through tax credits (sometimes call tax expenditures) that enable, such as, hard-core unemployed to purchase training or employment service

Secondly, the enabling state emphasizes on promoting work through the fostering of social inclusion³ (such as education, participation in community, and voluntarily service), recommodification of labour and the use of incentives and sanctions to enable active participation in the labour market. (Gilbert 2004). Thus, an employment-related measure is to enhance human capital and to help the unemployed adjust to modern labour market requirements. Benefits are increasingly linked through incentives and sanctions to behavioural requisites (such as accepting work, performing community service and attending training sessions and clinics” (Gilbert 2004). However, the enforcement can vary even between countries with the same or very similar institutional framework (Grubb 2000). As a matter of fact, unemployed access to service delivery in promoting work take place through conditionality of following four prominent policy models (Gilbert 2014), which as (i) restrictive entrance and accelerating exit, (ii) segmentation of participants according to age and length unemployment that forecast their service needs and employability, (iii) introduction of quasi-contractual agreement or individualized plan which specify agencies and clients obligation and rights to take part in activation measures improving their chances for paid employment, and (iv) work-oriented incentives and service model, which is categorise into a design to increase work either directly or indirectly, reinforce work capacities by upgrading the skills of unemployed people, raising their level of motivation and helping them to overcome tangible barriers to employment, augment the reward of work

³ Social inclusion involves helping people to participate in the mainstream of community life through various measures, which encompass education, de-institutionalization, and voluntary service (Gilbert 2004: 45)

efforts and heightened the cost of refusing to take part in work-related activities as a tactful way of punishment and financial penalty to those who reject a job offers (Gilbert 2004).

Thirdly, the enabling state assumes that social protection seeks to check the rise of direct public expenditure and to foster an increased sense of fairness in public funds expenditures. Higher public expenditure over passing taxes for government revenue are common challenge met in most OECD countries with the onset of recent economic and financial crisis (Fiachra 2018) . Hence, activation policies implementations are to restrict the access to benefits. In Gilbert's (2004) opinion, to check on public expenditures for social welfare by selective targeting of eligibility to restore social equity, while allocating benefits to the needy and the deserving and not to all citizens as a universal right.

Finally, the enabling state assumes the form of social cohesion based on shared values about civic duties and affiliations of group membership (Gilbert 2004: 46). This approach of social cohesion governance is shifting away from the state and towards the private market and civic society, made up of voluntarily organizations and informal networks of family and friends restoring solidarity from citizenship to membership as a process to enable societal participation

Another suitable theory of this study is the activation theory that explains different active labour market policies origins and shapes (Bonoli, 2010: 10). The underlying aspect in an activation approach combines job placement services with stronger work-related incentives, time-limits on recipients, benefit reductions, and the use of sanctions. The later approach is also known as the workfare, distinguished as 'offensive' and 'defensive' (Torfing 1999) or 'positive' and 'negative' (Taylor-Gooby, 2004) measures to enable employment-related transition. The offensive or positive activation approach relies on improving skills and empowerment than the 'defensive' or negative approach, which emphasise on sanctions and benefits reduction (Taylor-Gooby, 2004). Furthermore, activation policy approach is either to improve human capital (human investment-based approach) or those which are using negative incentives to move people from social assistance into work (incentive-based approach). This is further distinguished between 'liberal activation', characterised by stronger work incentives, benefit conditionality and the use of sanctions, and 'universalistic activation', which is found in the Nordic countries and continues to rely on extensive investment in human capital essentially through training (Bonoli Barbier, 2004, Barbier and Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2004) to enable benefits claimant employment-related transition from welfare to workfare. In Clegg's (2005: 56) opinion, activation could combine policy mechanism of

circulation and integration. The former is to improve the chances of an unemployed person to enter in contact with a potential employer, through placement services, and latter refers to instruments that directly bring the jobless into employment such as benefit conditionality or sheltered employment (ibid). Despite the controversial approaches, Benoli (2010) emphasizes on following four different ideal-types of activation policy to guide out-of-work population employment-related transition for social cohesion: (I) incentive reinforcement – to strengthen positive and negative work incentives for people on benefit and increased work-related incentives in social protection or tax systems through Tax credits, in work benefits time limits on recipients, benefits reductions, benefit conditionality, and sanctions; (II) employment assistance – The removal of obstacle to employment and help (re) entry into work through placement services, job subsidies, counselling, coaching, and job search programs, (III) occupation – to keep jobless people or client active or occupy but not necessarily be orientated towards the regular labour market; and (IV) human capital investment to improve the chances of finding employment by up-skilling jobless people.

However, institutional contexts differ from one country to another, for instance in the model of their welfare state approach to regulate young third county immigrant transition to work

The next theory of this study is the dissimilar national model of capitalism or Esping-Andersen's "Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism" (Esping-Andersen, 1990). The national models of capitalisms differ in their institutional set ups across the main subsystems to regulate it agencies (Ebbinghaus and Manow, 2001). According to the Varieties of Capitalism, there are Coordinated (such as "Christian-democratic" Continental welfare states or the Nordic "social-democratic" Universalist welfare regimes) and Uncoordinated market economies (such as liberal welfare states) among nation states as well as a mixed case of divergence subsystems, regions or economic sector from the dominant model (Huber and Stephens 1999; Ebbinghaus 1999; 2001). Firms are emphasis as actor-centred and fundamental units to regulate the economy (Hall and Soskice, 1999:4). This is because the relations between economic actors are crucial for their strategic capacity. Esping-Andersen also distinguished three different ideal-typical welfare regimes (the residual model, the industrial-achievement or merit-oriented model, and the institutional welfare state model) focused along the dimensions of de-commodification, special stratification, and public-private mix (Ebbinghaus and Manow, 2001) to regulate its policies. For instance, they show the liberal conceptions of welfare state models that should not intervene in "free" market, the paternalist Conservative state traditions and Christian-democratic conceptions of "subsidiarity", and the social-democratic conceptions of an Universalist and redistributive

welfare (Ebbinghaus and Manow, 2001). These concepts are devices for comparison with empirical account of cross-national variation in different policy fields (Kohl 1993: 75). Furthermore, the labour market is part of the welfare state-economy nexus (Kolberg and Esping-Anderson 1991; Esping-Anderson, 1993) because they shape employment regimes and the possible transition pathways to work. In this case, different country`s government institutions interact with other private organisation in the delivery of activation policies through multi-actor policy implementation process (Lindquist 2006; O`Toole 2000). For instance, in federal system, the different level of policy action and implementation consist of federal, provincial, municipal jurisdictions as well as their agencies. Therefore, the policy actions of the variety of capitalism often consist of constellations within and outside the state to regulate labour market policy subsystem (Sabatier and Jankins-Smith 1993)

Lastly according to the theory of welfare chauvinism by Cavaille and Ferwerda, 2016, different countries have preference to specific nations. According to the theory government supports are generous but possesses a problem for immigrants as the effectiveness is limited to certain citizens with the distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Keskinen et al. 2016). For instance, Czech Republic prefers Slavic third country nationals or foreign-born citizens than other foreign members. In this view, the result could be conflicting that will lead to anti-immigration perspective and xenophobic perception that are contra productive to an inclusive society. This shows a low fact-based knowledge about immigration in several EU countries and policies likely to react to voter`s subjective perception with insufficient knowledge (EU, 2008). On the contrary, if public institutions and other organization offers equitable services without preferences the will be no deskilling and erosion of human capital.

5 Methodology and Methods

This qualitative research essentially rely on a constructivist philosophical position, about how the complexities of socio-cultural world are experienced, interpreted, and understood in a particular context and time (Bloomberg 2007). The aim of this approach is to look at a social situation or interaction by allowing the researcher enters the world of others and attempts to make a holistic and not a reductionist understanding (Bogdan & Biklen). The study is most suited for a comparative cross-country case study within the framework of a qualitative approach. The research strategy is the Most Different System Design (MDSD) (Pennings et al. 1999) and the “comparative-case strategy” (Lijphart 1971) is a “case-oriented strategy”

(Regan, 1987) of few selected cases (Lor, 2011: 8) from Austria, Finland, and the Czech Republic to offer an insight-generating in-depth understanding for the situation and meaning for those involved. In addition, there are articles included in this dissertation based on different methodological premises in which the researcher collects primary and secondary data for analysis. Meanwhile, some articles consist of different theoretical and empirical research data, others depend on theoretical discourse with different methodological approach. Hence, the researcher selected a cross-national comparative less case study design with a theoretical discourse as well as an interpretative approach because this study needed both qualitative and complimentary research approach.

The study site and investigation are from one city in Austria (that's Linz), one city in Finland (That's is Tampere), and one city in Czech Republic (That's is Prague). Firstly, these cities have several public and a variety of non-state firms delivering work-related measures to enable young third country immigrant's employment-related transition. Secondly, they are also representative and suitable of other similar service agencies in Austria, Finland and Czechia as a whole. Lastly, these cities are one of the fastest growth towns contracting-out employment service such as case management⁴ service delivery in Austria, Finland and Czechia with officials and suitable experts in the areas of employment advice to hard-core unemployed people.

This research sample is purposeful (Patton 1990, 2002) in selecting information-rich cases, with the goal of yielding insight and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The selection strategy is a "maximum variation" with the purpose to represent different diverse cases to fully display multiple perspectives about the cases. The intention is to describe a particular context in-depth, not to generalize to another context or population. Representativeness in qualitative research is secondary to the participants' ability to give information about themselves and their setting.

For the purpose of this study, the official employment-related legislative documents⁵, experts, public and non-state employment service providers are from the three selected entities. The criteria for selecting each of these official documents are according to the fact that they are documents of special importance with physical evidence that serve as a source for explaining

⁴ Case management services are job search assistant, counselling, job coaching, etc.

⁵ They are important sampling in this study especially when dealing with historical policy event such as the promotion of inclusion among hard to place unemployed young third country immigrants. This central area is derived from the criterions for the cognitive values of documents that are generally considered to be more secure with diversify material. They are incorporated in this study because of their non-reactive nature, which can serve to gauge the validity of other materials obtained (Mayring 2002).

human behaviour (Atteslander 1971: 53). The selection of the officials and experts from the three countries are due to their contextual knowledge in young third country immigrant employment related transition to all type of unemployment. Meanwhile, the non-state employment service provider agencies were selected to offer the study an in-depth multidimensional setting in terms of size, employment-related service potential, and the volume of their service to offer employment advice to hard-core welfare recipients in contracting out with the local government units.

5.1 Methods of collecting Data

The data collection method is a triangulation of mixed sources of official employment policy documents, official and experts` interviews to gather „context knowledge" or "interpretive knowledge" (Przyborski/Wohlrab-Sahr 2009: 134) relevant to the research questions, observation, an overview of existing scholastic literature, and a variety of combination of methods through surveys and guiding questionnaires to offer corroboration and/or supportive evidence. The official`s, expert`s, and welfare claimants` interviews are problem-cantered, open, with semi-structured and non-standardized questionnaire. It is to enable free speaking and an in-depth focus to explore the phenomenon (Mayring 2002). I find my target group through the help of supervisor, social institutions, migrant`s communities, and through my academics and personal networks. I will use a snowball technique to engage with more respondents and connect to existing partners in the field (Przyborski / Wohlrab-Sahr 2009: 180). During each interview, I use a tape to record the interviews conversation and write notes (Lamnek 2010: 402; Mayring 2002) and transcribed into a legible form for further analysis.

5.2 Methods for Data Analysis and Synthesis

I use a qualitative content analysis⁶ technique (Mayring, 1983) and document analysis method (Mayring 2002; Atteslander 1971). The collected data analysis will be systematically matched and gradually prepared in a chronological pattern (Mayring 2002; Yen 2003). This is to enable a systematic description of the data sources (Berelson, 1971) and show the latent structures of the text passages (Lamnek, 2010).

The use of content analysis is to interpret opinions and perspectives of various subjects.

⁶ "A research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" - Hsieh & Shannon (2005; p.1278)

The researcher use different modes such as transcripts of interviews, protocols of observation, and open non-standardized questionnaires for communication. The method of the analysis comprises following 8 steps: Preparation of data; defining the unit or theme of analysis; developing categories and coding scheme; pre-testing the coding scheme on sample; coding all the text; assessing the consistency of coding employed; drawing inferences on the basis of coding or themes; and presentation of results.

5.3 Method of Data Interpretation

The method of data interpretation relies on a theory-generating analysis from the interpretation of text or data through thematic coding (Flick 2010; 2007a; Glaser and Strauss 1967; 2005). In this case, I use a coding methods and categories, if necessary, with the help of computers (such as MAXQDA, ALMO etc.). The categories are to offer the analysing objects to understand the phenomenon under investigation in Austria, Finland, and Czech Republic. For this reason, they are specific extracted text passages and anchor examples from data sources corresponding to the categories with a unique agenda (Mayring, 2002; Flick et al., 2013).

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