How can you make a refugee employable?

A qualitative study into migrant employability projects companies in the Netherlands organize to educate refugees for certain professions

Masterthesis Business Administration
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Preface

After 4,5 months, I finally can say I finished my master thesis. I developed my research skills and extended my knowledge of qualitative research. But, more importantly, I learned more about my passions and where I stand for in life.

When I was younger, I learned the hard way that a woman needs to be independent and work hard to take care of her own. Being independent gives you a sense of freedom. For me being independent means to be able to earn your own money, and spend it the way you want to spend it.

Although I think that it is good that the Dutch government provides social support to persons who are not able to work, I don’t think these people feel totally free. Mostly, you still have to apply for jobs or undergo physical tests to prove you can not work. The allowances you get are rather low and are meant for a certain purpose such as your health insurance and rent.

Furthermore, I believe that working makes you a happier person since you have more purpose in your life and you will broaden your network. I wish everyone could have the opportunity to work, and to feel independent and free.

By performing this master thesis, I hope more companies will create opportunities for refugees to work. This way refugees can build up their lives in the Netherlands, and employers will have extremely motivated and loyal employees.

Lastly, I do want to thank everyone who supported me through this master thesis. Both my supervisors, Dr. Bücker and Dr. Poutsma, and my family and friends.

Laura Roetgerink
Arnhem, June 2020
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Abstract

**Purpose** – This study aims to add to the literature about migrants. There has been no research done towards the role of companies in the employability of migrants yet. Furthermore, this study aims to give an insight into the migrant employability projects organizations organize in the Netherlands and their role in increasing the employability of refugees. Lastly, this study provides practical implications to improve these projects.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This qualitative study took place in the Netherlands. Seven semi-structured interviews were held with coordinators, participants, and a recruiter involved with migrant employability projects. This data was complemented by six documents.

**Findings** – The projects organized were very successful. Every interviewed organization is going to organize another project to train more refugees. Training solved issues coming from the language barrier and cultural differences.

**Research limitations/implications** – The biggest limitation of this study is the generalizability. Since only seven interviews were performed the results are not generalizable. Furthermore, the results of the interviews with the participants are minimal due to the language barrier. Future research could ideally be done through a researcher that speaks Arabic.

**Practical implications** – This study provides several suggestions from coordinators and participants about how to perform these projects.

**Originality/value** – This study has been the first study towards migrant employability projects organized by organizations.

**Key words** Migrant employability projects, refugees, labor market integration, employability

**Paper type** Research paper
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1. Introduction

Today there is a mismatch apparent in the Netherlands. Due to the aging population, Dutch employers require employees (CBS, 2019a). At the same time, due to immigration, there are new citizens, but they stay often unemployed (SER, 2019). This unemployment has several reasons, but one reason highlighted by research is the refugee entry effect (Bakker, Dagevos, and Engbersen, 2017).

Bakker et al. (2017) point to the fact that there is a refugee gap, this means that refugees acquire fewer jobs than other groups. According to them, compared to other groups of migrants, refugees have a rough start due to their escape flight, followed by the long waiting when they seek asylum. Because of this, refugees often suffer from mental health issues, which is perceived as a risk by employers (Markusse, 2017; Mulder, 2017). Other causes that hinder the economic integration may be the lack of language skills and the accreditation of their diplomas obtained in the home country, although other groups of migrants also experience this (Bakker et al., 2017). All these factors create the refugee entry effect. Although this effect has been mainly researched in the Netherlands it can be assumed that it also occurs in other countries despite cultural differences and different perspectives towards working.

Looking from the perspective of organizations, vacancies seem hard to fill. Since 2013 the number of open vacancies increases. By the end of December, this number has risen to 291 thousand vacancies (2019a). Another trend is that the Dutch population grows, mostly due to high migrant figures (CBS, 2020). The United Nations (UN) (2001) sees migration as a short-term strategy to counteract the aging population. Besides that, by finding a job a migrant will become independent and this will become building ground for a future in the Netherlands. Moreover, the refugee will feel more purposeful which leads to better mental health (Stronks, 2016). This could be a win-win scenario for both the migrant and business if correctly performed.

Not only the migrants and organizations have a stake in this process. Also, governments will benefit from a greater working population since more tax will be paid. Besides, less “bijstandsuitkeringen” (social governmental financial support) need to be provided since these migrants will be able to support themselves. Figures from CBS (2019b) show that after three years slightly more than half of the Eritrean and Syrian immigrants have this financial support as their primary income.

Although the employment of migrants has benefits for organizations and the economy in general, in practice it seems to be difficult for migrants to find a job. The economic integration figures set the alarm bells ringing already in 2014 (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2014). Since then slightly more residence permit owners found a job. In 2019, around 25% had a job after 3,5
years (SER, 2019). However, this still means that 75% of this population does not find a job. Therefore, one could conclude that the employability of this population is rather low.

This study focuses on one special group of migrants, refugees. In 2018 more than half a million people sought shelter in an EU-country, 20,353 of them in the Netherlands. In the early 1990s, many refugees came to the Netherlands. Most refugees came from former Yugoslavia, then in the late 1990s from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kosovo. In 2008, due to violence in Somalia and Iraq, the number of asylum seekers rose again. From 2013 onwards, Syrians and Eritreans came with many to the Netherlands (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2019).

The definition of a refugee is found in Article 1 of the Convention of 1951 in Genève. “The term “refugee” shall apply to any person who (..) As a result of events (..) and owing to well-founded 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 the Netherlands, the asylum seeker first has the right to work up till 24 weeks per year. Before they can start working in the Netherlands they need a “tewerkstellingsvergunning” (TWV), this can be requested when the asylum seeker has been at least 6 months in the Netherlands. They need to find work themselves; the government gives advice but does not mediate between the employer and the refugee (Rijksoverheid, 2020). When the refugee gets a residence permit (either for a certain period or undetermined time), he or she has the same rights and duties as a Dutch citizen (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2020).

To increase the employability of refugees several companies in the Netherlands created projects to train refugees intern. Most of the projects work towards a license, diploma, or certificate (Ovpro, 2018; BAM, 2018). After these projects, people can occupy vacant positions. Examples of these organizations are Breng, BAM, and Alliander (Ovpro, 2018; BAM, 2018). This study aims to connect scientific literature to practice. Moreover, it will provide an insight into why and how these projects to train refugees for certain professions are organized. The study will contribute to the existing literature about employability and refugees and thereby broaden our current knowledge about migrant employability projects. There are no previously performed studies towards migrant employability projects organized by companies in the Netherlands. Although there were studies in other countries towards migrant employability programs organized by the government, such as in Sweden (OECD, 2018). Lastly, it hopes to contribute to solving the mismatch currently apparent in the Netherlands. The research question of this study is: “How do migrant employability
projects organized by companies in the Netherlands contribute to the employability of a refugee?"

The project should overcome the challenges that occur when hiring a refugee. Moreover, the projects should highlight and develop the benefits of hiring a refugee can bring to stimulate the refugees’ employability. Finally, the project could be considered successful when the participants are still working for the organization. Both the migrants and the organization can benefit from this study since it provides managerial implications.

First, this study will discuss the literature linked to this subject. Second, the methodology section will outline the way the research will be performed. The results are being found in Chapter 4. Lastly, a conclusion and discussion will be given, including an answer to the previously mentioned research question.
2. Literature review

Chapter two outlines the theoretical background used for this study by exploring different variables. Employability is the central concept of this study. The employability of refugees is challenged by language, culture, mental health, and capacity to learn. Training can make these barriers disappear. Also, training can be used to let someone develop competencies needed to obtain a diploma or eventually to fit a vacancy. Not only focuses this study on the employability of refugees, but also on the motives of the organizations to hire a refugee. Three different motives are discussed: filling vacancies, diversity, and corporate social responsibility (CSR).

2.1 Employability

Since the last few decades, there has been increased attention towards employability and individual development of employees. Because of changes in the internal and external environment of organizations, there is a need for flexible organizations with employees who are employable for several tasks. One implication of these changes is that employees became self-responsible for their career and job security (van Dam, van der Heijden, and Schyns, 2017). In an earlier study, van der Heijde and van der Heijden (2006) outline that employability is needed to enable both career success at the individual level and competitive advantage at the firm level. Multiple authors agree that employability has advantages for both employees and organizations (Fugate, Kinicki, and Ashforth, 2004; van Dam, 2004).

The definition of employability has changed throughout the years (Williams, 2015). One question that is under discussion is about employability being a distinct concept from employment. As Artes, Mellors-Bourne, and Hooley (2017, p. 10) put it: “it is possible to be employable but still unemployed”. Van der Heijde and van der Heijden (2006) defined employability as “the continuous fulfilling, acquiring or creating of work through the optimal use of competences” (2006, p. 453). However, in this study employability is defined as “a set of achievements – skills, understandings, and personal attributes – that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy” (Yorke and Knight, 2006, p. 8). This definition is chosen since this study focuses on the unemployed refugees who are seeking a (permanent) job whereas the study of van der Heijde and van der Heijden paid attention to the already employed. Therefore, they were able to research a broader range of HRM practices including job and career assessments, staffing, career mobility, and development practices. However, by having this broad perspective, their study created a five-dimensional conceptualization of employability, which is useful for this study too. The five dimensions are occupational expertise, personal flexibility, anticipation and optimization, balance, and
corporate sense (van der Heijde and van der Heijden, 2006). When the projects do consider these five dimensions, it is suggested that this increases the refugees’ employability.

It is believed that good training can stimulate the employability of individuals (Artess et al., 2017). But not only training is a determinant of employability, in accordance to van der Heijde and van der Heijden (2006), also current level of job-related skills, support for career and skill development and willingness to change jobs are proven to be significant predictors of perceived employability (Wittekind, Raeder, and Grote, 2010).

2.2 Motives and challenges organizations experience while hiring refugees

It is interesting to know what is the reason behind hiring refugees as an organization. Multiple researchers (e.g., van der Heijde and van der Heijden, 2006) argue that organizations gain advantages by having employable employees. Amongst others, employable employees make the organization more flexible. From the studies of Markusse (2017) and Mulder (2017), it becomes clear that hiring refugees can be done for other reasons, which will be clarified below. According to them, motives are: filling vacancies, improving diversity, and performing corporate social responsibility. Challenges to overcome when hiring a refugee are the language barrier, cultural differences, and mental health issues. There is a severe possibility that these motives and challenges are not exhaustive, especially because these studies only used qualitative research, with a small sample. However, it forms a good starting point for this study, since this study assumes these motives and challenges influence the employability of refugees.

2.2.1 Filling vacancies

As found by Markusse (2017) and Mulder (2017), most employers hire refugees because of their knowledge and skills. This means that employees have to own the knowledge and capabilities asked for.

One could see the migrant as a Third-Country-National (TCN) (Markusse, 2017; Pijpers et al. 2015; Reiche, Harzing and Tenzer, 2019). However, Reynolds (1997) defines the TCN as “an employee working temporarily in a host country who is neither a national of that host country nor of the country in which the corporate headquarters is located” (adapted from Selmer, 1992, p.102, emphasis added). After 5 years, refugees in the Netherlands can request a residence permit for unlimited time (Rijksoverheid, 2020). Since most refugees come to the Netherlands to build up a new life it can be expected that they will stay longer than these 5 years. Furthermore, often there is not even the possibility to return within these 5 years, for example, the war in Syria started already in 2011 (Vignal, 2018). Although the definition by Reynolds not completely applies, it has certain overlaps with the motives and challenges of hiring refugees. In the expatriate literature, there is a distinction between TCNs, Parent-
Country-Nationals (PCNs), and Host-Country-Nationals (HCNs) (Reiche et al., 2019). The difference between these groups and refugees is that refugees had to flee their countries. TNCs, PCNs, and HCNs have a choice in going to another country or eventually return. Edström and Galbraith (1977) distinguish three motives for international knowledge transfer; position filling, management development, and organization development. Although the motive of the refugee is to escape the home country, instead of management development, the capabilities and knowledge of the refugees can be useful for position filling (Markusse, 2017; Mulder, 2017). In sum, position filling could be a motive for organizations to hire a refugee. This seems logical because of the shortage of work capital on the labor market in the Netherlands, which results in many open vacancies (CBS, 2019a). This also corresponds with the fact that the employer primarily looks at the knowledge and capabilities of a refugee when hiring. Mostly, the knowledge and capabilities someone needs depend on the vacancy.

2.2.2 Improving diversity

In this study when referring to diversity, ethnic diversity is meant. Three important reasons for managing diversity are known: market competition, effective people management, and reputation of the organization (e.g. Agocs and Burr, 1996; CIPD, 2006; Cox and Blake, 1991).

Effective people management makes the workforce feel valued, this helps the organization to recruit, retain, and motivate the right employees (Reiche et al., 2019). Furthermore, diversity stimulates the innovativeness and flexibility of teams, this may increase productivity and ultimately the organizational performance. Stahl and Tung (2015) argue that cultural diversity enables exploration since divergent views can lead to better ideas and multiple solutions. A study of Fassio, Montobbio, and Venturini (2019) found that highly-educated migrants have a positive effect on innovation.

Due to the different backgrounds of employees, a diverse workforce helps the organization to understand diverse customer needs. This allows the organization to serve customers in different areas of the world. Detailed knowledge about customers can become a sustainable competitive advantage (Teece, 1998).

Lastly, a diverse workforce also contributes to the image of the organization. Managing diversity can be part of the corporate social responsibility strategy (Starostka-Patyk, Tomski, and Zawada (2015)).
2.2.3 Performing Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is tremendously important for organizations nowadays since the pressure for engaging in CSR is high (Porter and Kramer, 2007). The pressure of stake-and shareholders is not the only reason why organizations invest in CSR, it is argued that engaging in CSR increases the financial performance of the firm (Orlitzky, Schmidt and Rynes, 2003; Margolis and Walsh, 2003). Stronger employee commitment and a lower retention rate are also effects of a well-performed CSR strategy (Rebbas, Brik and Mellahi, 2009; Barbian, 2001). Lastly, CSR is believed to increase legitimacy (Werther Jr and Chandler, 2010; Caroll and Shabana, 2010; Porter and Kramer, 2007).

Refugees face the refugee gap, which means that due to their history it is complicated to find work (Bakker et al., 2017). Therefore, employing migrants can be considered as part of CSR since these persons have a distance to the labor market (CBS, 2016; Bakker et al., 2017).

Proposition 1 = Filling vacancies, diversity and corporate social responsibilities are motives for organizations to start a project to train refugees into a certain profession.

2.2.4 Language barrier

The language barrier was mentioned as the biggest barrier for hiring refugees from the perspective of the employer in the study of Markusse (2017). A lack of language skills is one of the reasons why misunderstandings occur and communication is difficult for migrants. Auer’s natural experiment (2018) found results that suggest that language course participation will benefit the economic integration process for refugees. Also, Vluchtelingenwerk (2020a) pronounces that learning the language is essential for the integration of refugees. Broadening your network, following a study, and finding a job is only possible when someone speaks and understands the language. Although multiple multinationals are located in the Netherlands, where English is the corporate language, knowledge of the Dutch language is often a prerequisite on the Dutch job market (Sukmana, 2019).

Migrants can follow different language courses, but when a company hires them, the issue of a different mother language will always be apparent. In basic language courses, one does not teach jargon (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2020b). Therefore, companies will always experience a certain language barrier when hiring migrants.

Proposition 2 = The language barrier of refugees makes it harder for a refugee to become employable.
2.2.5 Cultural differences

As described before, diversity can stimulate creativity and flexibility of teams and therefore the innovativeness of the organization. Unfortunately, there are also negative effects when people from different cultures work together. Stahl and Tung (2015) argue that cultural diversity enables exploration, but hinders exploitation. This hindering is due to more conflict, communication breakdowns, and inefficiencies.

In the literature, there is no consensus about what exactly culture is. There are broad and narrow definitions (Tylor, 1924 [1871]; Kluckhohn and Leighton, 1946; Geertz, 1973; North, 1990; Chai, 1997; Coleman in DiMaggio, 1994; Hofstede, 2001). The onion model of Hofstede summarizes that organizational culture is embedded in values, rituals, heroes, and symbols. These components are expressed by practices (Hofstede, 1991). Because of different norms and values, conflicts can arise at the workplace. Mostly, these conflicts are aggravated by bad communication skills and misunderstanding. These conflicts reduce the effectiveness of the employees. Intercultural contact is challenging (Spijkerman, Benschop, and Bücker, 2018). To overcome this challenge organizations can offer training programs in which the interaction process can be learned and practiced (Spijkerman et al., 2018).

Ghorasi and van Tilburg (2006) argue that Western refugees integrate easier than non-western refugees due to cultural similarity. This suggests that managers prefer employees that have a similar culture to the company and country. The findings of Markusse (2017) confirm this.

As argued by van der Heijde and van der Heijden (2006) corporate sense is a component of employability. In their study corporate sense extends organizational citizenship behavior. Employees participate more as members of an integrated team, accept collective responsibility for the decision-making process, and identify with corporate goals (Chapman and Martin, 1995). One could argue that understanding the culture of a country, as well as the corporate culture, is necessary before one can understand corporate sense. Although corporate sense seems to be mostly a predictor for promotions, it might also play a role in getting a contract for an undetermined period of time.

Proposition 3 = Cultural differences make it harder for a refugee to become employable
Proposition 3a = Corporate sense plays a role in getting a contract for an undetermined period of time.
2.2.7 Mental health issues

Refugees often face mental health issues, due to their escape and traumatic events they have experienced in their home country. 13 to 25% of all refugees face PTSS or depression (Stronks, 2016). Earlier research showed that some employers see this as a risk of hiring refugees (Markusse 2017; Mulder; 2017). Mental health issues cause absenteeism of employees, which is expensive since the salary must be paid anyway. Besides, when these employees are not able to work a long time due to their mental health issues the company must hire someone else to replace the employee. Then, the company pays two salaries (Markusse, 2017; Mulder, 2017). Although understandably, the organization perceives this as a risk, it is legally forbidden to reject someone for the job based on their (possible future) health (Art. 1, Grondwet).

Proposition 4 = The risk of mental health issues to occur hinders the employability of the refugee.

2.3 Competencies, learning and training

For an organization to hire a refugee, the refugee should possess certain competencies, just like any other potential employee. These competencies can be obtained by receiving training and practicing them. Also, the challenges of the language barrier and cultural differences can be lessened by the training. The last section covers the concept of learning and its relation to refugees.

2.3.1 Competencies

Recognition of diplomas is a problem many refugees face according to Markusse (2017) and Bakker et al. (2017). However, employers stated that this was not the biggest problem. They indicated that the appreciation of skills and a different professional experience were barriers for them when hiring refugees (Markusse, 2017). Evidence indicates that refugees’ skills were not appreciated in the country were one sought asylum as in their home country (Jonker, 2004; Houghton and Morrice, 2008; Guo, 2010; Mojab, 1999). The biggest motive for hiring refugees was filling vacancies (Markusse, 2017), for which competencies and skills are of importance.

Although not mentioned by Markusse (2017), Mulder (2017), and Bakker et al. (2017), it can be expected that refugees have fewer or different competencies as compared to Dutch citizens. As a result, companies always have to train new employees to completely fit into the vacancy. Refugees may for example be less experienced with computers or other technology. One reason for the difference in competencies is the long journey refugees had before they
arrived in the Netherlands, in addition to the long time they had to wait before they got permission to work (Bakker et al. 2017).

Van der Heijde and van der Heijden (2006) found that occupational expertise and adaptive behavior are elements of employability. Besides adaptive behavior, employability contains personal characteristics such as attitudes, personality, ability, and motivation (van der Heijde and van der Heijden 2006). Kluytmans and Ott (1999) also highlight the importance of adaptability as the eagerness to adjust in terms of job contents, employment, job locations, or conditions. Furthermore, Kolb (1999) found that adaptive competencies influence experiential learning. Some argue that employability is partly formed due to flexibility (e.g., Boudreau, Boswell, and Judge, 2001; Fugate et al., 2004). However, based on the results of the study of van der Heijde and van der Heijden (2006) the capacity to adapt easily does not seem to benefit every change in the external and internal labor market that is not in one’s job domain. In other words, the capacity to adapt seems to have less influence when switching to another job domain.

To sum up, expected is that refugees have a lack of competencies for many vacancies, due to their development halt during their flee and the often tremendous situations beforehand. This forms a barrier when entering the labor market, making their economic integration more difficult. Adaptability, in contrast, is believed to increase employability. Furthermore, occupational expertise is an important component of employability according to van der Heijde and van der Heijden (2006).

Proposition 5 = There is a discrepancy between the competencies and knowledge asked for the positions and the competencies and knowledge refugees currently have.  
Proposition 5a = This discrepancy hinders the employability of refugees.  
Proposition 5b = Adaptability and flexibility can increase the employability of refugees.

2.3.2 Learning
Nonaka and Takeuchi (1997) developed a spiral of knowledge. This spiral consists of four phases: socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization. Socialization consists of sharing experiences, imitating, observing, and brainstorming exclusive criticism. Externalization includes writing it down, creating analogies and metaphors, and modeling. Combination is about sorting, adding, categorizing, methodology creation, and best practices. Lastly, internalization is the access the codified knowledge and goal-based training. One has to move through these phases continuously to incorporate new knowledge. In this model, tacit knowledge becomes explicit and explicit knowledge becomes tacit.
Being a refugee is a source of deep learning since refugees need to change the structure and the purpose of their lives and adjust to a new social world. Furthermore, they need to reconstruct their identities (Morrice, 2013). Morrice (2013) furthermore identifies a gap in the learning literature, he suggests that there has been too little attention to the sociocultural context. His qualitative study in the UK aimed to fill this gap. Results showed that refugees (especially from a culture that was very different from the UK) experienced a disjuncture due to cultural differences, which triggered a disorientating dilemma. This dilemma is the first phase of the perspective transformation and relates to the culture shock in the intercultural competency models (Taylor, 1994). Participants in this study of Morrice (2013) said (informal) learning went faster when they had built diverse social networks within the UK. Responding to the culture shock refugees have to assess their assumptions, plan a course of action to deal with their new situation, and acquire new knowledge and skills to bring their plan to action. This corresponds with Mezirow’s (1994) understanding of transformative learning. Informal moral education (Lovell, 2007) was experienced by the refugees through the reactions they got from the English people, this affects both objective and subjective well-being (Morrice, 2013). In the study of Morrice, he did not research the effects on learning by refugees after this period of adjusting. Unfortunately, it was not described by literature which hindrances or stimulators occur when refugees learn other than the before mentioned challenges; the language barrier and cultural differences.

Besides cognitive learning, there is experiential learning. Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) offers a holistic model of the learning process (Kolb, Boyatzis, and Mainemelis, 1999). The theory emphasizes experiences as the basis in the learning process (Kolb et al., 1999). There are four basic learning styles: assimilating, diverging, accommodating, and converging (Kolb, 1999). These learning styles are shaped by different factors: personality types, professional career choice, current job role, and adaptive competencies (Kolb et al., 1999). Regarding the previous, one can suggest that the adaptive competencies of refugees can influence the experiential learning. Career adaptive refugees are likely to focus on network generation to overcome the discrimination threat and lack of language skills.

2.3.3 Training
As proposed by Spijkerman, Benschop, and Bücker 2018, training can overcome intercultural interaction challenges. Ecotonis is a proven tool that supports the development of cultural intelligence (CQ). Cross-cultural training helps to develop cross-cultural competence for international managers (Bücker, Korbzilius, 2015). Not only cross-cultural competence can be trained, but also language skills and other competencies can be trained (Van Dam et al., 2017).
Furthermore, not only formal training can lead to the development of employees, but the work situation itself can also be an important source of learning and development. Studies showed that informal learning has a bigger share in learning experiences than formal, structured learning situations (Jacobs and Jones, 1995; Marsick and Watkins, 1990; McCall, Lobardo, and Morrison, 1988). Informal learning experiences can take place during interactions with others, such as mentorship, collegial consultation, teamwork, feedback sessions or coaching (De Janasz, Sullivan and Whiting, 2003; Lankau and Scandura, 2002; Noe, Wilk, Mullen and Wanek, 1997), or through the work itself, for example by working on challenging or new tasks (Holman, Epitropaki and Fernie, 2001; McCall et al., 1988; McCauley, Ruderman, Ohlott and Morrow, 1994).

A distinction is made between informal and incidental learning by Marsick and Watkins (1990). Informal learning is intentional; the employee performs an activity with the expectation to learn from it. Incidental learning, on the other hand, takes place without intention.

Assumed is that working stimulates learning when there is a discrepancy between the knowledge and capabilities of employees and the knowledge and capabilities that are necessary for the task (Noe et al., 1997). In that case, the employee will be challenged to develop or to use the existing knowledge and capabilities in a different way (London, 1989).

Bond et al. (2007) researched young refugees in Australia and their education and training needs. Not only did this population have few literacy skills, but they also required assistance with basic living skills. However, the diversity of their needs challenged language programs for this group. Furthermore, the study found that language teachers did have an important role in providing help in settlement and health needs. Therefore, mental health promotion was covered in language training for young refugees.

As shown before there is extensive literature on training provided by organizations, however, there is no accessible information about intern training on/for the job regarding refugees. This research aims to fill that gap.

Proposition 6 = Training within the organization increases refugees' employability.

This study argues that if the advantages outweigh the challenges the organizations face when hiring a refugee, the employability of the refugee increases. This is because in this situation the refugees are an interesting population to train and eventually hire. Assumed is that the refugees are still working when this is the case. Then, their employability has increased.
3. Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology used to answer the research question is discussed. First, the type of research and the case selection are discussed. Subsequently, the sample will be described. Furthermore, the documents used for this study are to be found in this chapter. This chapter ends with a discussion on the data analysis and collection strategy, with at the end a section on ethical considerations.

3.1 Type of research

Qualitative research is performed since this study aims to gain detailed knowledge about the performance of migrant employability projects organized by different organizations. Also, this study hopes to get an insight into the experiences of multiple stakeholders of these projects. One characteristic of qualitative studies is that information is gathered through interviews or/and observations (Myers, 2019). Furthermore, as classified by Symon and Cassel (2012), this topic might be too sensitive to capture effectively through experiment studies or surveys. This is because making a distinction between refugees and others can be sensitive, moreover, the content of the interview was also about challenges refugees had to overcome, such as mental health issues. By interviewing one can critically ask the respondent how his or her experiences were during the project. It is expected that this detailed information gives a better overview than asking questions by a survey. Also, interviewing can shape a trust relationship between the interviewer and interviewee, therefore it might be expected that more reliable data is collected (Bleijenbergh, 2015).

Since literature is used to make the interview guides, it is a deductive study (Myers, 2019). The literature discussed in the literature review raises expectations about which motives and challenges will appear within migrant employability projects. But because of the lack of study done towards these projects, the effectiveness is hard to determine. Therefore, this study is exploratory. One way to conduct exploratory research is by conducting a case study (Myers, 2019). Myers’ (2019, p. 76) definition of case study research is as follows: “Case study research in business uses empirical evidence from one or more organizations where an attempt is made to study the subject matter in context”. For a case study, the researcher must be familiar with the latest literature on the topic in question (Myers, 2019). According to Myers (2019), case studies can be used for exploratory research to discover relevant factors, features, or issues that might apply in other similar situations. Furthermore, he indicates that one characteristic of case studies is the focus on asking ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions. This can also be seen in the central question of this study: “How do migrant employability projects organized by companies in the Netherlands contribute to the employability of a refugee?”. In this research, a multiple case study is performed, because more than one organization is under
study (Bleijenbergh, 2015). This study has collected data on 8 different projects organized by different companies. Yin (2003) argues that case studies can also benefit from the prior development of theoretical propositions to structure data analysis and collection. The propositions formulated in the previous chapter underline the deductive character of this study.

3.2 Case selection
A multiple case study was performed since it turned out to be easier to collect data on different companies than arranging multiple interviews within one organization. The advantage of a multiple case study is that the results can be compared with other organizations. When the same results occur within multiple projects one could say it is no longer a coincidence, but an expected phenomenon. By using multiple perspectives, from a recruiter, participants, and coordinators, a broad insight could be gained on why and how these migrant employability projects are set up by Dutch companies. Moreover, through comparing and contrasting views and meanings possible bias is decreased, and therefore the data can be interpreted in a more nuanced manner (Yin, 2003). By comparing multiple perspectives one can build construct measures, which define the construct and distinguish it from other constructs (Eisenhardt, 1989). This way construct validity can be warranted.

For the case selection, up to ten organizations were contacted, however, partly due to the coronavirus the response was rather low, even after sending follow up emails. Another reason why the response was low might be the caution of companies to talk about migrant employability projects. Two coordinators and the recruiter mentioned in the interview that they received negative responses regarding the project. These responses were mostly from unemployed persons originating from the Netherlands. Therefore, the recruiter asked to anonymize the company as much as possible. The strategy used after trying a few big companies was to contact the companies related to the projects, such as employment agencies. At the end of the interview, the interviewees were asked if they knew someone who could be interviewed next. This way the other interviews were arranged. This technique is also called snowballing (Myers, 2019; Bleijenbergh, 2015).

3.3 Sample
The goal of the data collection was to gain insight into how and why organizations organize migrant employability projects. Seven persons were interviewed of which three were participants in such a project. Three of the other respondents coordinated these projects, and one respondent was a recruiter for a project organized to train refugees to become a software engineer.
To substantiate the results gathered in the seven interviews some documents were collected. This way also triangulation arises since there were also documents available about the projects understudy in the interviews. These documents were found on the internet using search terms as “vluchteling opleiden tot” and “statushouders opleiden tot”. To determine if the internet source was reliable the website was checked. A website was considered reliable when they had multiple articles in well written Dutch with names of the authors (and interviewees) mentioned. Furthermore, the date of publication was checked, since only recent experiences add to the interviews taken.

| Coordinator 1, working for a profit organization for 16 years | A coordinator of a project organized to train refugees to become a bus driver. |
| Recruiter 2, working for a profit organization for 4 years | A recruiter of a project organized to train refugees to become a software engineer for a big consultancy firm. |
| Coordinator 3, working for a profit organization for 7 years | A coordinator of a project organized to train refugees to become a professional cleaner. |
| Coordinator 4, working for a non-profit organization for 2 years | A coordinator of a project organized to train refugees to become a truck driver. |
| Participant 5, working for a profit organization for 1 year | A Syrian male refugee who became a bus driver through the project organized by respondent 1. Previously this refugee was a pastry chef. |
| Participant 6, working for a profit organization for 1 year | A Syrian male refugee who became a bus driver through the project organized by respondent 1. In Syria, this refugee worked as a cook. |
| Participant 7, working for a profit organization for 1 year | A Syrian male refugee who became a software engineer through the project respondent 2 recruited for. This refugee is higher educated and worked in an international environment before. |

| Document 1, Newspaper article | Connexion wants to solve the shortage of bus drivers with asylum status holders |

Table 1 Respondent list
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Document 2, Website article |  | Connexion wil met statushouders schrijnend tekort aan buschauffeurs oplossen (Ad, 2019)  
| Document 3, Website article |  | From asylum status holder to BIM-engineer: ‘they are very motivated’  
| Document 3, Website article |  | Van statushouder tot BIM-engineer: ‘ze zijn tot in de haarvaten gemotiveerd’ (Cobouw, 2019)  
| Document 4, Website article |  | Education to driver for asylum status holders  
| Document 4, Website article |  | Opleiding tot chauffeur voor statushouders (TTM, 2018)  
| Document 5, Website article |  | Pilot with stucco asylum status holders  
| Document 5, Website article |  | Pilot met stucende statushouders (NOA, 2020)  
| Document 6, Newspaper article |  | Language is a crucial factor with a refugee in an agricultural firm  
| Document 6, Newspaper article |  | Taal is cruciale factor bij vluchteling in agrarisch bedrijf (boom-in-business, 2017)  
| Document 6, Newspaper article |  | Asylum status holders started in the healthcare: ‘Talk only Dutch to me’  
| Document 6, Newspaper article |  | Statushouders begonnen in de zorg: ‘Spreek alleen Nederlands tegen me’ (AT5, 2019)  

Table 2 List of documents consulted

### 3.4 Concepts
The concepts under study are employability, vacancies, diversity, CSR, culture, language, competencies, mental health issues, training, and learning. The key construct is employability. By formulating indicators, the transcripts could be coded.
### Key constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A set of achievements – skills, understandings, and personal attributes – that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy” (Yorke and Knight, 2006, p. 8).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motives organizations have for hiring refugees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Filling vacancies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this study, ethnic diversity is meant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate social responsibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges that occur when hiring refugees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Table 3 Overview of concepts and indicators |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Capabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adaptive behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Personality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Motivation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Open vacancies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Different ethnic backgrounds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Legitimacy increasing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Image</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Norms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Rituals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Heroes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Symbols</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Corporate sense</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Language course participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Language barrier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recognition of diplomas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Appreciation of skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adaptive competencies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Different professional experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lack of skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- PTSS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Depression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Absenteeism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.5 Data collection and analysis strategy

The interviews being held are semi-structured. Given the exploratory aim of the study, open questions should be asked, where after probing follows to gather more detailed information. This way, the chance that the interviewer put words into the mouths of the interviewees can also be reduced. A semi-structured interview is a perfect balance between an unstructured and a completely structured interview. By performing structured interviews it is relatively easier to compare the outcomes. Moreover, the structured interviews do fit the deductive research. However, by taking this approach there is fewer space to discover new variables. Unstructured interview outcomes are, in contrast, relatively hard to compare (Myers, 2019). The interview guides are to be found in appendix 1. Before creating the interview guides, the survey questions from the study of van der Heijden and van der Heijde (2006) into employability were consulted.

The interviews took place via Skype, Teams, or regular telephone calls, depending on the preference of the respondent. The researcher, however, always indicated that it had her preference to use a video connection. Due to the coronavirus, it was unfortunately impossible to meet the respondents physically. Every interview took about 35 minutes. The interviews were recorded since all respondents gave their permission to do so. One interview was conducted in English, and in another interview, English was sometimes used to clarify the question. The other five interviews were performed in Dutch. Only four interviews were conducted in the mother language from the participant, these interviews were more detailed since it was easier to express and explain themselves. Especially the two interviews in Dutch with refugees lacked thickness because of the language barrier. Furthermore, the non-verbal communication was hard to interpret since there were no physical meetings. The recorded audio was transcribed within 2 days after each interview was held, this way the chance that data would be misinterpreted was minimized. Moreover, transcribing adds to the transparency and reliability of the study (Myers, 2019). One respondent asked for a transcript and this was sent to her the next day. The advantage of this was that the interview became clearer due to helpful comments and further explanation the respondent sent back.

When the data is transcribed, the coding begins. The data is analyzed through 3 stages, following Creswell (2012). First, the interview transcripts and documents will be analyzed through categorical aggregation, this way themes within the interviews will be categorized. Therefore, the concepts mentioned in table 3 are used. By using a deductive approach operationalization of the key construct was allowed based on the knowledge gained in the literature review (Babbie, 2015). This knowledge provided guidance and focus by analyzing the huge amount of data qualitative research is known for (Bleijenbergh, 2015; Myers, 2019). The second stage is called direct interpretation, in this stage, one looks for meaning. Thirdly,
patterns between the interviews will be analyzed. This is the within-case analysis. The text is marked in the interviews and this way one can read the transcript or document and immediately see the context of the statements. Furthermore, it gives a clear overview of the codes apparent by the respondent or document. The researcher coded the interviews and the documents first, but after that, someone else was asked to check the coding. After discussing the coding together, the final coding was determined. The coding process belongs to a deductive way of doing research, however, while coding the data there is still room to interpret the data so unexpected variables can be discovered.

The mix of inductive and deductive coding was performed by template analysis. With template analysis one starts with defining codes at priori. During the research these codes might be change due to the gathered data. By these codes the data gets thematised (University of Huddersfield, 2020). Template analysis was used to organize and scan the raw data for means of interpretation. According to King (2012) template analysis creates a high degree of structure, which makes analyzing easier. Furthermore, template analysis offers remarkable flexibility which made it easier for the data that was not deductively coded to unfold. The coded interview transcripts and the coded documents are available upon request.

3.6 Reliability and validity

Face validity is reached when a case study based on empirical findings in an organization represents an authentic story that most researchers can relate to (Myers, 2019). Interviewees will be anonymized as much as possible. However, due to the snowball sampling, coordinators know who participated in this study. Interviews are transcribed to minimize the chance of misinterpreting. After the interview, the respondent is being asked if they would like to receive the thesis.

To increase the internal validity the constructs are divided into different concepts and indicators beforehand (see table 1). By comparing the answers from the different respondents and the documents triangulation can be reached. This means that validity increases because the chance grows that future research will have the same outcomes.

The reliability of the study is guaranteed by a detailed method section. This way it becomes clear for the reader how the results are found (Bleijenbergh, 2015). Furthermore, every data source is accessible to consult. The research can be redone by other researchers and as such is replicable to some extent.

3.7 Ethical considerations

While conducting this research the five principles for research ethics are respected. The five principles are: be conscious of multiple roles, discuss intellectual property frankly, follow
informed-consent rules, respect confidentiality, privacy, and tap into ethics resources (Smith, 2003).

This research is approached through a positivist lens. Positivist researchers often formulate propositions which consist of independent variables, dependent variables, and the relationships between them. Furthermore, this research is performed with the persuasion that it is a common goal to increase employability and that employers have a stake in this. However, not everyone might have this opinion and therefore it is of importance that the researcher stays objective.

Respondents are not obligated to participate in this study and they can withdraw at any moment. Answers are anonymized as much as possible so the respondents feel safe to tell the truth. Anonymity for the respondents is maintained to allow respondents to speak freely.
4. Results

This study aims to provide insight into how organizations help refugees to become employable. By conducting seven interviews insight has been gained on why and how organizations organize migrant employability projects. However, due to the coronavirus, it was difficult to find interviewees. Furthermore, by performing the interviews via Skype, or telephone, it was not easy to get a connection with the interviewees. For these reasons the results of the interviews with the participants of the projects are minimal. An insight into the feelings about the project itself was gathered, however, detailed questions about personal feelings were not answered properly due to the language barrier. Therefore, hypothesis 3a and 5b cannot be answered.

This chapter outlines why these projects were started. Second, this chapter explores how the projects were organized and the hindrances experienced before, during, and after finishing the project.

4.1 Motives to organize migrant employability projects

As predicted by Markusse (2017) and Mulder (2017), motives to start employability projects are position filling, diversity, and/or corporate social responsible organizing. First, all the respondents who were asked about the motive of starting the project indicated that there were open vacancies. This fits the aim of the projects, namely, training the refugees a certain profession so they can fill the vacancy. In the interviews, it was outlined that it is hard to recruit people to become a (fulltime) professional cleaner, bus-, or truck driver. Coordinator 4 explained that also foreigners, mostly from Eastern-Europe are hired to drive a truck, but these drivers are not often hired permanently since they eventually want to return to their home countries. By hiring refugees who are settled in the Netherlands, organizations hope to create a lasting workforce. In documents 2, 4, 5, and 6 it becomes clear that also in the building, agricultural and health sector vacancies are hard to fill. By offering training to refugees these organizations hope to fill the vacancies durable. The projects to train refugees for the before mentioned professions were designed to hire the refugee immediately after completing the program. However, for one of the interviewed organizations, the big consultancy firm, the refugee had to do an application interview after the project. When asking recruiter 2 about this phenomenon she answered that this was done so both the company and the participant could get a feeling about how well the job fits the participant. As she highlighted, the participant might not know beforehand for what he or she signed up for. By not making any promises before starting the project, both the company and the participant do not feel obliged to pursue cooperation when there is a mismatch.

This difference might have occurred since the consultancy company initiated the project mostly because of corporate social responsibility. Many organizations that hire the consultancy
firm do ask for a social return. For them, it is important that the profit the consultancy firm earns is spend responsibly. Before, these were mostly government institutions, but nowadays also commercial organizations do see the importance of social return. In the contract, it is determined that there must be a certain percentage of the deal spent on social investments. Not only the contracts make them invest in CSR, but also their big CSR department symbols their drive to help people and the planet. Although CSR is the biggest driver to invest in refugees, they train them to become a software engineer since software engineers are recruited all year round.

Also, coordinator 1 mentioned the social returns being important for a company. In the Netherlands, local public transport companies have to be granted permission by the government to run local public transport. He described that it is important for a public transport company to do something social because this can influence the government to permit them to be responsible for the local public transport. In document 2 the focus is also on corporate social responsibility. It states that being a big employer brings certain responsibilities. However, this might not only be the only reason to organize the migrant employability projects since also in the building sector there are a lot of vacancies to fill.

Coordinators 1 and 4 worked for a social organization, so also here CSR was apparent. However, this came more naturally for these organizations compared to the big consultancy firm. All respondents (1 to 4) acknowledged the fact that including refugees in their workforce is a form of responsible organizing.

Only coordinator 1 has touched upon the motive of diversity, but only after probing. What he said is that working with refugees brings another dimension to the workforce. However, bus drivers already have different nationalities so diversity was already apparent according to him.

These results indicate that filling vacancies, diversity and corporate social responsibility are motives to start a migrant employability project. What must be noticed, however, is that for most organizations filling vacancies will be the primary reason to start a project. Three of the four projects started because it was hard to fill certain positions. Although the primary reason might be filling positions, coordinators were well aware that it was also part of doing business social responsibly. Only the big consultancy firm started the migrant employability project because clients expected a social return. Diversity did not seem to be a big motive for organizations to start these projects. It was only mentioned in one interview after probing and then categorized as a positive side-effect.

So, considering proposition 1, position filling and CSR are motives to start migrant employability projects. This study showed that filling vacancies is the primary reason for an organization to set up migrant employability projects. Diversity is not one of the main motives to support refugees getting a job in these firms.
4.2 Challenges that occur during migrant employability projects

4.2.1 Language barrier

Based on the literature it was proposed that language would hinder the employability of refugees. Almost all respondents indicated that language was the biggest challenge during these projects. Coordinators 1 and 4 think their projects took more time because of the language barrier. Many organizations have discovered ways to tackle this challenge, such as extra language courses, extra guidance, or Arabic tools. In document 5 it is outlined that learning the Dutch language is crucial for the project to succeed. They state that it is not only the responsibility of the organization but also from the refugee. The refugee must have the willingness to learn the Dutch language.

In the Netherlands, it is common to have a diploma or certificate for the profession you work in. By having this diploma or certificate, employers (and customers) know that you can do your work according to quality standards. Besides that, for example, driver licenses are needed to drive a bus or truck. However, to obtain the certificate, diploma, or license one should understand the language well enough to pass the exams. Respondents 1, 4, 5, and 6 explained that exams with a translator are possible at the CBR, the Dutch organization that offers driver licenses. What is interesting is that organization 1 offered participants 5 and 6 the opportunity to do the exams in Arabic (with a translator), but after failing the exam the respondents decided to do the theory in Dutch since no translating issues would arise during the exam. The organization cooperating with coordinator 4 chose not to offer Arabic translation during the exams because the clients’ opinion was that the new colleagues had to learn the Dutch language to communicate better with colleagues.

Every interviewed company offered Dutch language lessons and also document 4 and 5 indicate that extra language lessons were offered to the refugees. Coordinators 1 and 4 explained that they chose for an adjusted language program, suited for the sector and the specific profession. Coordinator 3 integrated the technical terms related to the profession by linking a refugee to a colleague. This way there was more guidance, communication, and explanation for the refugee. Coordinator 4 expected that the theory would be harder for the participants of the project since reading and writing skills are needed to pass the exams. However, in practice, it turned out that the practical exams were harder. She thinks that this is because of the small nuances in language: “When the instructor says: “keep to the right”, someone might think he has to turn right”.

As mentioned before, language is considered to improve communication with colleagues, and that in turn helps to learn the language even better. However, in document 5 it is said that the agricultural sector has many Polish workers. Consequently, the company language became Polish. This hinders the development of the language skills of trained
refugees. Another interviewee in this document explains that the Polish workers are temporary workers and the trained refugees will stay for a longer time. So, he argues, eventually, the company language will be Dutch again.

Only the big consultancy company offered the project in English. But they still provided Dutch language classes with the local government of Amsterdam. Many of the participants already spoke English very well, since they were highly educated in their home country. Therefore, participant 7 indicated that language was not an issue for him. All the other companies provided the project in Dutch so communication with colleagues would be better. Furthermore, not many refugees selected for the projects did speak English.

For their next project coordinators 1 and 3 said they will select new participants more strictly on language skills. Coordinator 3 said she will only accept refugees when they have (almost) finished the “inburgeringscursus” (Dutch integration course). Otherwise, they can join a subsequent project. The level needed for the project will be at least A2 or B1. This means the participant has at least an elementary level or is an independent user (Council of Europe, 2020).

What was advised by the participants of the diverse projects is that language should be the priority for companies when training them. Without language skills, the learning will take more time and it will also become harder. In the interviews, it became clear that the refugees are eager to learn the Dutch language. Also in their spare time, they spend time improving their Dutch language skills. Their ultimate goal is to be able to start a fluent conversation in Dutch. In document 6 the refugee says: “Only speak Dutch to me. If you speak English to me, then I will speak back in Dutch, because I have to learn the language fast”.

Based on these results one can conclude, in line with proposition 2, that the language barrier makes it harder for a refugee to become employable. In almost every interview it is indicated that language is the biggest barrier within this project.

“Er waren veel lange en moeilijke woorden om te onthouden. Wij moeten het Nederlands echt leren.”

“There were many long and difficult words to remember. We had to actually learn Dutch.”

Participant 6
4.2.2 Cultural differences

Another possible barrier found in the literature is culture, therefore, it was proposed earlier that culture could hinder the employability of refugees. In the interviews and documents, it becomes clear that most participants have a Syrian background. This is due to the fact that this is the biggest refugee population in the Netherlands right now, besides, they are higher educated and highly motivated in comparison to some other groups. Cultural differences were mentioned frequently in the interviews and documents as an obstacle for training refugees into a certain profession. In document 2 it is even stated that 20% of the participants in the project fail because of cultural issues. Here one example of a cultural difference is given, namely: the Dutch encourage assertiveness where in Syria it is appreciated when someone is modest. Many coordinators mentioned small issues that occurred during the project. However, the participants of the projects said they had no issues adapting to the Dutch culture. Only participant 5 mentioned that he noticed that there are small differences in culture between Syria and the Netherlands. He gives a few examples such as: not mentioning your salary in the Netherlands and the difference in rules. In the Netherlands it is quite strict monitored how many hours a driver has worked and when he needs to have a break. For him, this was new since in Syria a driver himself decides to take a break or not. Being a bus driver it felt unnatural to him to first take a break at the bus station after arriving with a delay.

While the participants of the projects were steady in mentioning they did not have challenges during the project concerning cultural differences, coordinators thought differently. Coordinators 1 and 3 said that there was a difference noticeable in being on time. In the Netherlands being on time is something really important, especially in the public transport sector. However, participants had difficulties with this since it was more normal in their country to be a bit late. Coordinator 3 also experienced that a participant did not show up and later explained that he had an important meeting. But, in the Netherlands, this is not done. Furthermore, she noticed that participants of the project were more often calling in sick, even if they only had a headache or nausea.

Also, the work itself might be different than the participant would have experienced in their home country. Coordinator 4 explains that truck drivers in Syria also need to repair their trucks if they get broken on the road. This is normally not done by the driver in the Netherlands. But, there are other tasks. One of the things mentioned is that Dutch drivers need to fill out a lot of paperwork. Furthermore, as also goes for participants 5 and 6, the situation on the road is more challenging in the Netherlands. Roads in Syria or Iran are broader and there are fewer bikes and roundabouts. In document 6 a refugee explains that he was surprised that he, as a male nurse, had to wash someone. Although he was already educated back in Syria he had never washed someone at his work since in Syria family members take care of this.
To overcome the obstacle of cultural differences in educating refugees into certain professions coordinator 1 organized one training for team members about how to work with Syrian colleagues. There were also little adaptations to make the bus driver’s program more suited to non-Dutch persons. For example, they changed the psychological test because there were questions with typical Dutch mills involved, which were hard to understand for people not from the Netherlands.

Coordinator 3, and document 4 explain that extra guidance is needed to help the participants with cultural differences. Respondent 3 for example sent out a text message just before the holiday money was transferred to the bank accounts. This was done since it is normal in the Netherlands to have in May your holiday money, but in Syria the payment is every month the same. According to her, you can avoid confusion by telling someone beforehand what will happen, and what is the reason behind it. Coordinator 1 mentioned that after some time the cultural differences were less apparent since the participants adapted to the expectations.

As argued by van der Heijde and van der Heijden (2006) corporate sense is a component of employability. Unfortunately, it is uncertain if corporate sense plays a role in getting a contract for an undetermined period of time since there is too little evidence gathered by this study. However, Coordinator 3 mentioned the project ended earlier for one participant because he did not want to understand the corporate norms and values. He was sent away because he was too dominant.

Considering proposition 3, it can be said that culture and cultural differences make it harder for a refugee to become employable. Although for most participants it is a smaller barrier than the language barrier, document 2 assigns cultural differences as the primary reason participants sometimes fail the project. No statements about proposition 3a can be provided since there is not enough data.

“En toen ze bij ons met de kerst een kerstpakket kregen hadden ze zoiets van: Waarom krijgen we dat?”

“And when they got a Christmas package they were like: Why do we get that?”

Coordinator 3

4.2.3 Mental health issues

Mental health issues are a sensitive subject to talk about. In the interviews, it was mentioned that the project had to end early for some participants. However, the reason never turned out to be mental health issues. Just in document 6 it is mentioned that one participant had to be
sent away since he suffered from PTSS. All participants (28) that completed the project and were hired afterward are still working for the organizations, this indicates that mental health issues did also not occur after a short time.

Whenever the conversation touched upon mental health issues it was discovered that the coordinators of the project were well aware of this risk. Coordinator 1 said mental health issues can arise after a long time. They tried to manage this risk by rejecting potential participants when they were still in a grieving process or showed signs of bitterness.

Coordinator 4 organized multiple migrant employability projects. She declared that there are refugees who experience mental health issues, but not more often than other persons with a different background. What they did notice, however, is that sometimes mental problems manifested themselves in physical complaints.

These results indicate that the risk of mental health issues does not hinder the employability of the refugee. Although there is some evidence, it is not proven that refugees do have a higher risk of mental health issues than any other person. Therefore, proposition 4 is rejected.

4.3 Competencies, learning and training

As said before, licenses, diplomas, and certificates are important in the Netherlands. To obtain these documents, participants are trained in certain competencies, such as driving a bus or truck, programming, and, efficient cleaning. Every organization organized a formal education track. Some participants had to pass multiple exams, for others it was one final test in the end. Coordinator 3 linked the refugee to a colleague for extra guidance; in this way also informal learning was stimulated.

Refugees were carefully selected before the beginning of the project. So, every participant is expected to have a chance of completing the project. Coordinator 3 explained that understanding the current knowledge and capabilities of participants made it easier to adapt the training program to their needs. For most companies, it was of importance that the refugee (nearly) finished the “inburgeringscursus” (Dutch integration course). To become a bus driver the refugee had to have a Dutch car drivers license. Also, a driving skills test, attention test, and a psychological test were being held. In practice, most of the participants were higher educated.

The building company in document 2 focussed on highly educated refugees. This seems to be a logical choice since 75% of their workforce is highly educated. So, most positions in their organization require highly educated employees. The participants already did a construction/engineering education, but they needed to be trained in collaborating and working as a team.
The big consultancy company lets every applicant for any position do an assessment, so also refugees had to make this. In practice, many people fail the assessment since a high level is asked. The assessment was changed to a test without any language assignments, so the refugees would have an equal chance to pass. Respondent 7, participant of the program, gives as advice that the company could have selected more on IT-knowledge and skills. Since IT is a broad term, he experienced that some other participants struggled with the content. To him, it felt that this held him back from learning more intensively sometimes.

In every interview, it was mentioned that someone needs to have an affinity and interest in the job he or she wants to pursue. This was tested by interviewing the applicants. Coordinator 4 added that not only passion is important, but also capability. She emphasizes that it is a tough project, so someone has to be good at learning. In document 5 it is also written that the participant must be able to learn, but also, someone needs to be able to do the work, physically and mentally.

As every project does train a refugee to eventually work in a certain profession, one can conclude that through training the discrepancy between current knowledge and skills and needed knowledge and skills has disappeared. By reducing this discrepancy, the employability increases. This is measurable in diplomas, licenses, and certificates because only after obtaining them the refugees can fulfill the position. When a refugee can fill the position the employability increases. It is uncertain if adaptability and flexibility play a role in this process since there is not enough data gathered through the interviews. Moreover, as argued by van der Heijde and van der Heijden (2006) adaptability has less influence on employability when switching to another job domain, which was the case for all three interviewed participants. Finally, all three participant respondents confirmed that the project taught them enough to do their job properly.

To sum up, there is a lack of competencies for every participant at the beginning of the project. This lack of competencies hinders refugees to immediately fill the position. Training helps to acquire these competencies. It is uncertain if adaptability and flexibility can increase the employability of refugees since little reliable evidence was gathered on these topics. Therefore, proposition 5, 5a, and 6 are accepted. Unfortunately, the answer to 5b is still unknown.
5. Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter gives a summary of the results and eventually an answer to the primary research question: “How do migrant employability projects organized by companies in the Netherlands contribute to the employability of a refugee?”. Moreover, recommendations will be given which can eventually increase the outcomes of the employability projects.

5.1 Discussion

The results of this study indicate that most organizations start migrant employability projects to fill positions. For some organizations, the motive is to generate a social return. Organizations are sometimes asked to deliver a social return in turn for a contract. A motive that was not mentioned directly by the coordinators of the projects was diversity. Therefore, diversity can be marked as a side-effect, rather than a primary motive. This might occur since the positions refugees apply for in these projects are already performed by a diverse workforce. These findings have similarities with the forecasting of Mulder (2017) and Markusse (2017). These authors argue that the biggest motive for organizations is to hire someone to fill positions. This is in line with the findings of this study. However, Mulder and Markusse did not find any evidence that CSR is a motive for organizations to hire refugees, in contrast to this study. This might be due to a change in the market where a client asks for social return more often. Therefore, it is suggested that the CSR motive for training refugees will increase due to changing demands of clients.

The language barrier was by far the most experienced challenge, just as Markusse (2017) predicted. Many respondents stated that learning the Dutch language was essential for the project to succeed. By learning the Dutch language, it is easier for a participant to communicate with colleagues. Most projects were hosted by organizations with the Dutch language as corporate language. Due to a lower educated workforce, the English language is not mastered by every employee. Furthermore, many of the participants of the projects did not speak English. Mastering the Dutch language is also important for the theoretical exams that need be passed for most projects to eventually obtain a license, diploma, or certificate, which marks the end of the projects. Cultural differences did not give many problems according to the respondents interviewed. However, in document 2 it was indicated that when a participant withdrew from the project it was mostly due to cultural differences. Mental health could hinder the refugees’ employability. There was no evidence found that there is a higher possibility refugees will suffer from mental health issues than other groups. By participating in the projects the participants trained their competencies, which made their employability increase. All participants confirmed that the project taught them enough to perform their job well.
When participants of the project can fill positions, we could conclude that they have become employable. To fulfill the positions the refugee often has to complete training and pass exam(s) to obtain a diploma, certificate, or license. With this formal 'proven competency' document, one is ready to start working. As was outlined in the interviews and documents, everything starts with the selection process. Many organizations selected refugees who (almost) completed their “inburgeringscursus” (Dutch integration course). As a result, a certain Dutch language level was secured. Furthermore, it secured that the participants were fulltime available for the project. Other selection criteria were motivation and affinity with the job and its work field. The project is not easy and therefore someone needs to have passion to find the perseverance to complete it. Besides that, these projects cost a lot of money and the positions should be filled for a longer period, so investing in the right person is important. One organization indicated that they did not select people who did not progress the traumatic events that occurred in their lives yet. Depending upon the positions to fill there were tests taken to see if the participants could perform on the job in the future.

During the projects, every organization offered language classes. One organization hired an interpreter so the communication with the refugees was easier for the teacher. Another organization linked a refugee to a colleague, so the refugee could improve the language skills, but also had more guidance. This buddy program turned out to be successful. Most organizations gave more guidance to the participants of these projects than to other employees. One coordinator explained that it is necessary to explain everything carefully to this target group. In the interviews with the participants, it became clear that they valued this practice.

Every interviewed respondent confirmed that the project was successful. This corresponds with the fact that all participants who finished the project are currently still working for the companies. Striking is that every coordinator is planning a second project to train more refugees. To them, the advantages of hiring refugees outweigh the challenges and the potential risks that occur while hiring them.

5.2 Limitations

This study aims to give an insight into why and how projects are organized by companies to train refugees into a certain profession. However, this research has some limitations that should be kept in mind while interpreting the results.

The biggest limitation is that due to the coronavirus it was difficult to find interviewees. Also, the fact that organizations received negative responses via the media to their migrant employability project might play a role. The negative responses were mostly from unemployed Dutch citizens. Respondents did not want to have a repetition of this. The results are not
generalizable due to the low number of interviews. However, due to the detailed information, it still gives an impression of the phenomenon under study (Myers, 2019). By searching for triangulation by combining documents with the interviews the results got more reliable. In general, it was clear what the participants of the projects thought of the projects, but when asking detailed questions, answers sometimes did not correspond to the question. By performing the interviews via Skype, or telephone, it was not easy to build a trust relationship with the interviewee. As described before it was not possible to visit the interviewees due to the corona virus. For these reasons the results of the interviews with the participants of the projects are minimal. Do not underestimate the effect of a language barrier, which is not only a subject in this study but also something experienced during the interviews.

A second limitation will be the influence of the researcher. As a researcher, one still has an opinion about the subject under research. A personal aim is to get organizations enthusiastic about migrant employability projects since it could be beneficial for both the migrant and the organization. While performing the research there is a risk that the researcher gets blind-sighted. Although I tried to stay as objective as possible, I cannot fully guarantee that I might have overlooked things.

In the literature review, it was mentioned that there was a severe possibility that the motives and challenges covered were not exhaustive. However, this study did not find any new motives or challenges regarding migrant employability projects.

5.3 Practical implications

At the end of every interview, it was asked what one should advise other organizations who are willing to set up migrant employability projects. What was mentioned is that it is a different group of people and you need to make adjustments for them. If you are not willing to take an extra step for them, you should not start the project. Coordinator 3 organized a buddy system. By the guidance of a colleague, the refugee could build a social network within the organization and at the same time practicing the language and skills needed for the function. In document 6 someone says: ‘It is not that you instantly have one pair of extra hands, that is too easy”. It is important that the employer guides the refugees through the Dutch culture and providing language lessons is believed to have a positive effect on the time refugees need to finish the project.

One participant said that he would like to know better what exactly he was going to learn in the project, and in which order. This implies that besides guidance, clarity is needed. What coordinators would do differently the next time is to select the participants more strictly at the beginning of the project. The “inburgeringscursus” (Dutch integration course) needs to be (almost) finished, and the language level is also of importance. It is indicated that an A2 or
B1 level is required. This means the participant has at least an elementary level or is an independent user (Council of Europe, 2020). Since the biggest barrier turned out to be language future migrant employability projects might want to focus on this. There are many organizations, such as NLtraining, that offer language courses that fit the sector and company. In this way, the refugee immediately gets familiar with the job and company jargon. Furthermore, one should not underestimate the time it takes to educate a refugee properly. Many projects experienced a three to six months delay.

5.4 Future research

Considering the results and limitations of this study, recommendations for future research will be done.

Since this study gathered too few data to make generalizable conclusions more interviews need to be done. It might also be interesting to conduct the same study, but in another environment, for example, Germany or Belgium. Perhaps there is also a difference between the type of organizations that organize these projects. In this study, refugees were mostly educated in lower educated jobs. Moreover, it would be interesting to know if cultural differences play a smaller role in multinationals compared to local organizations for example. One way to avoid the language barrier in interviews is by conducting them in the mother language of the respondent. Although this might seem like a proposal hard to fulfill, there are many researchers who both speak Arabic and English very well.

One respondent mentioned that it is difficult to finance these projects since they are costly. Therefore, it might be interesting to research the motives and behaviors of the government and sector institutes who helped finance most of the projects. There might also be a role for the Dutch government in organizing these migrant employability projects. Sweden is a first-mover regarding these social movements. They provided fast-tracks for refugees that trained refugees in becoming a licensed teacher or nurse. This way they solved the mismatch between open vacancies for crucial positions and unemployed migrants (OECD, 2018). Exactly this mismatch needs to be solved in the Netherlands.

More research on this topic will enrich our understanding of these projects and their participants. Eventually, more research will improve the quality of the employability migrant projects and therefore generate a higher employability rate under refugees.

5.5 Conclusion

This study added to the literature since there was no earlier study into these migrant employability projects organized by Dutch companies. By conducting seven interviews it became clear that migrant employability projects do increase the employability of refugees by training them. Through training, refugees obtain diplomas, certificates, or licenses which make
it easier to fill positions. Moreover, during the training, their language and cultural skills are enhanced, which makes it easier to integrate into the Dutch culture.
References


Williams, A. M. C. (2015). Soft skills perceived by students and employers as relevant employability skills.


Goedemorgen, allereerst nogmaals hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking aan dit interview. Ik had u ook graag in het echt willen ontmoeten, maar fijn dat het onder deze omstandigheden mogelijk is het interview per Skype af te nemen. Het interview zal ongeveer een uur duren. Heeft u er bezwaar tegen dat ik het interview opneem, zodat ik het later nog terug kan luisteren?

Inleidend

- Zou u zich kort willen voorstellen?
  o Hoelang werkt u al bij dit bedrijf?
- U werkt voor een detacheerder, wat maakt haar anders dan andere detacheerders volgens jou?
- Heeft dit bedrijf eerder projecten gedaan met statushouders of andere groepen die het moeilijk hebben op de arbeidsmarkt?
- Op welke manier is het project, om statushouders op te leiden tot buschauffeur, begonnen?
- Welke redenen waren er om met dit project te beginnen?
  o Wat waren de redenen voor het bedrijf? (filling vacancies, diversity, CSR)
  o Wat waren de redenen voor u persoonlijk?
  o Zijn deze doelen bereikt?

Vragen over het project

- Hoe werden de statushouders die mochten deelnemen aan het project geselecteerd?
  o Was er veel animo voor dit project?
- Hoe was het project ingedeeld? Wat leerden de statushouders precies, en in welke volgorde?
- Wat voor begeleiding was er voor de deelnemers van het project?
- Wat waren lastige situaties binnen dit project? (culture, language, competencies, mental health issues)
  o Waren er hindernissen die door de statushouders genomen moesten worden?
  o Ik lees op de site van Connexxion dat dit een uitgelezen kans is voor de statushouders om de Nederlandse taal te oefenen, heeft de taalbarrière ook problemen gegeven?
- Merkte u in dit project dat statushouders anders zijn dan andere groepen werkzoekenden? (learning)
  o Zo ja, waar merkte u dat aan? (adaptive competencies)
- Hoeveel statushouders zijn er inmiddels opgeleid tot buschauffeur?
  o Weet u ook hoeveel statushouders op dit moment ook echt als buschauffeur werken?
  o Degenen die niet als buschauffeur werken, doen zij ander werk?
- Op de site van Conexxion las ik dat het project wordt uitgebreid, weet u op welke manier?

Afsluitend

- Wilt u zelf nog iets toevoegen aan dit interview?
- Tenslotte zou ik u nog willen vragen of u deelnemers van het project kent die ik zou kunnen en mogen interviewen. Ook (interne) documenten zouden mij helpen een beter beeld te krijgen van het project.

Hartstikke bedankt voor uw medewerking. Zou u het eindrapport willen ontvangen zodra dat klaar is?
Interview guide bus drivers (Dutch)

Goedemiddag, allereerst nogmaals hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking aan dit interview. Ik zou je ook graag in het echt willen ontmoeten, maar fijn dat het onder deze omstandigheden mogelijk is het interview per telefoon af te nemen. Heb je er bezwaar tegen dat ik het interview opneem, zodat ik het later nog terug kan luisteren?

Introductie

- Zou je wat meer over jezelf kunnen vertellen?
  o Hoe lang ben je nu in Nederland?

Vragen over het project

- Wanneer hoorde je voor het eerst van het project om statushouders op te leiden tot buschauffeur?
- Wat vond je van het proces voordat je kon beginnen?
- Was er genoeg begeleiding tijdens het project?
- Waren er moeilijke situaties tijdens het project? (culture, language, competencies, mental health issues)
  o Welke?
  o Hoe was het voor jou om de opleiding te combineren met je privé leven?
    ▪ Moest je ook dingen doen voor de gemeente?
  o Was het makkelijk om je aan te passen aan de verwachtingen die het bedrijf had van jou?
  o Denk je dat bepaalde persoonlijke kenmerken het makkelijker of moeilijker maakten? (experience, corporate sense, flexibility, adaptability, responsibility)
- Heb je het gevoel dat de opleiding je genoeg heeft geleerd om je werk goed te gaan doen?
- Ben je jezelf nog steeds aan het ontwikkelen?
- Ben je meer betrokken bij het bedrijf dan je zou geweest bij een andere organisatie die je niet had opgeleid voor een beroep?
- Wat zou je het bedrijf adviseren om de opleiding nog beter te maken?
- Wat zou je adviseren aan andere bedrijven die projecten willen opzetten om statushouders op te leiden?

Afsluitend

- Wil je zelf nog iets toevoegen aan dit interview?
- Tenslotte zou ik je nog willen vragen of je deelnemers van het project kent die ik zou kunnen en mogen interviewen. Ook (interne) documenten zouden mij helpen een beter beeld te krijgen van het project.

Hartstikke bedankt voor je medewerking. Zou je het eindrapport willen ontvangen zodra dat klaar is?
Interview guide recruiter big consultancy firm (Dutch)

Goedemorgen, allereerst nogmaals hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking aan dit interview. Ik zou je ook graag in het echt willen ontmoeten, maar fijn dat het onder deze omstandigheden mogelijk is het interview per telefoon af te nemen. Heb je er bezwaar tegen dat ik het interview opneem, zodat ik het later nog terug kan luisteren?

Inleidend

- **Zou je jezelf kort willen voorstellen?**
  - Hoelang werk je al bij dit bedrijf?
- **Op welke manier is het project, om statushouders op te leiden tot software engineer, begonnen?**
- **Welke redenen waren er om met dit project te beginnen?**
  - Wat waren de redenen voor het bedrijf? *(filling vacancies, diversity, CSR)*

Vragen over het project

- **Hoe werden de statushouders die mochten deelnemen aan het project geselecteerd?**
  - Welke nationaliteit hadden zij uiteindelijk?
  - Was er veel animo voor dit project?
- **In hoeverre was jij nog betrokken bij het project toen het project eenmaal gestart was?**
- **Hoe was het project ingedeeld? Wat leerden de statushouders precies, en in welke volgorde?**
- **Wat voor begeleiding was er voor de deelnemers van het project?**
- **Wat waren lastige situaties binnen dit project?** *(culture, language, competencies, mental health issues)*
  - Waren er hindernissen die door de statushouders genomen moesten worden?
  - Denk je dat bepaalde persoonseigenschappen er voor hebben gezorgd dat er bij sommigen minder hindernissen waren dan bij anderen? *(experience, corporate sense, flexibility, adaptability, responsibility)*
  - Ik heb in een artikel gelezen dat er een extra taalprogramma ingezet werd tijdens de training, was dit achteraf nodig geweest?
- **Merkte je in dit project dat statushouders anders zijn dan andere groepen werkzoekenden?** *(learning)*
  - Zo ja, waar merkte je dat aan? *(adaptive competencies)*

- Op de website van de gemeente Amsterdam zag ik dat het eerste project startte eind 2018, zijn hierna nog nieuwe projecten opgestart?
- Ging de selectie van statushouders daar anders?
- Op internet las ik dat na het opleidingstraject er nog een sollicitatiegesprek plaatsvond
voor een echte functie, waarom is hiervoor gekozen?
- Hoeveel statushouders zijn er inmiddels opgeleid tot software engineer?
  o Weet je ook hoeveel statushouders op dit moment ook echt als software engineer werken?

Afsluitend

- Wil je zelf nog iets toevoegen aan dit interview?
- Tenslotte zou ik je nog willen vragen of je deelnemers van het project kent die ik zou kunnen en mogen interviewen. Ook (interne) documenten zouden mij helpen een beter beeld te krijgen van het project.

Hartstikke bedankt voor je medewerking. Als je nog mensen kent die mij verder kunnen helpen met mijn onderzoek, zou je hen dan in contact kunnen brengen met mij? Zou je het eindrapport willen ontvangen zodra dat klaar is?
Interview guide consultant (English)

Good afternoon, thanks again for helping me out with my thesis. I would have loved to meet you in person, but I'm happy we can do the interview this way now. Do you have any objections regarding recording this interview? I will make the interview as anonymized as possible.

**Introduction**

- Could you please introduce yourself?
  - For how long are you in the Netherlands now?

**Questions about the project**

- When did you first hear about the project to train “statushouders” to become a software engineer?
- What did you think about the selection for this project?
- What their enough guidance during the project?
- What were hard situations for you during this project? (culture, language, competencies, mental health issues)
  - How was it for you to balance the project with your private life and other duties you had?
  - Was it easy for you to adapt to the expectations the company had of you?
  - Do you feel like certain personality traits had an influence on this? Did this make a difference in how these challenges were perceived by different participants? (experience, corporate sense, flexibility, adaptability, responsibility)
- Do you feel that the training taught you enough to do your work properly?
- Are you still developing yourself?
- Are you more involved with the company than you would have been with any other organization because of the project they offered you?
- What would you advise the company to do different in a next project?
  - Do you have any advice for other companies that do want to start projects to educate ‘statushouders’?

**Ending**

- Would you like to add something to this interview that we did not touch upon, or do you have any questions left for me?
- Do you perhaps know someone else that would like to help me out with interviews about this project?

Thank you very much for this interview. Would you like to receive the thesis in the end?
Interview guide coordinator migrant employability project – cleaner (Dutch)

Goedemorgen, allereerst nogmaals hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking aan dit interview. Ik zou je ook graag in het echt willen ontmoeten, maar fijn dat het onder deze omstandigheden mogelijk is het interview per telefoon af te nemen. Heb je er bezwaar tegen dat ik het interview opneem, zodat ik het later nog terug kan luisteren?

**Inleidend**

- Zou je jezelf kort willen voorstellen?
  - Hoelang werk je al bij dit bedrijf?
- Op welke manier is het project, om statushouders op te leiden tot schoonmaker, begonnen?
- Welke reden waren er om met dit project te beginnen? *(filling vacancies, diversity, CSR)*
  - Wat waren de redenen voor het bedrijf?
  - Wat waren de redenen voor jou persoonlijk?
  - Zijn die doelen behaald?

**Vragen over het project**

- Hoe werden de statushouders die mochten deelnemen aan het project geselecteerd?
  - Welke nationaliteit hadden zij uiteindelijk?
  - Was er veel animo voor dit project?
- Hoe was het project ingedeeld? Wat leerden de statushouders precies, en in welke volgorde?
- Wat voor begeleiding was er voor de deelnemers van het project?
- Wat waren lastige situaties binnen dit project? *(culture, language, competencies, mental health issues)*
  - Waren er hindernissen die door de statushouders genomen moesten worden?
  - Denk je dat bepaalde persoonseigenschappen er voor hebben gezorgd dat er bij sommigen minder hindernissen waren dan bij anderen? *(experience, corporate sense, flexibility, adaptability, responsibility)*
- Merkte je in dit project dat statushouders anders zijn dan andere groepen werkzoekenden? *(learning)*
  - Zo ja, waar merkte je dat aan? *(adaptive competencies)*
- Je vertelde dat je een nieuw project gaat starten binnenkort, wat ga je dan anders doen dan bij het eerste project?
- Hoeveel statushouders zijn er inmiddels opgeleid tot schoonmaker?
Op internet las ik dat er 9 statushouders opgeleid zouden worden, uiteindelijk zijn jullie met 6 de samenwerking aangegaan, waar kwam dat door?

Weet je ook hoeveel statushouders op dit moment ook echt als schoonmaker werken?

Afsluitend

- Wil je zelf nog iets toevoegen aan dit interview?
- Tenslotte zou ik je nog willen vragen of je deelnemers van het project kent die ik zou kunnen en mogen interviewen. Ook (interne) documenten zouden mij helpen een beter beeld te krijgen van het project.

Hartstikke bedankt voor je medewerking. Zou je het eindrapport willen ontvangen zodra dat klaar is?
Goedemorgen, allereerst nogmaals hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking aan dit interview. Ik zou je ook graag in het echt willen ontmoeten, maar fijn dat het onder deze omstandigheden mogelijk is het interview per telefoon af te nemen. Het interview zal ongeveer een uur duren. Heb je er bezwaar tegen dat ik het interview opneem, zodat ik het later nog terug kan luisteren?

Inleidend

- Zou je jezelf kort willen voorstellen?
  - Hoelang werk je al bij dit bedrijf?
- Wat voor bedrijf is dit?
- Op welke manier is het project, om statushouders op te leiden tot vrachtwagenchauffeur, begonnen?
  - Ik zag op internet dat er ook een project is geweest in 2018 voor 10 Eritreeërs in de agrarische sector waarbij dit bedrijf heeft geholpen. Is dat een aanleiding geweest voor het project om statushouders op te leiden tot vrachtwagenchauffeur?
- Welke redenen waren er om met dit project te beginnen?
  - Wat waren de redenen voor dit bedrijf? (filling vacancies, diversity, CSR)
  - Wat waren de redenen voor u persoonlijk?
  - Zijn deze doelen bereikt?

Vragen over het project

- Hoe werden de statushouders die mochten deelnemen aan het project geselecteerd?
  - Welke nationaliteit hadden zij uiteindelijk?
  - Was er veel animo voor dit project?
- Hoe was het project ingedeeld? Wat leerden de statushouders precies, en in welke volgorde?
- Wat voor begeleiding was er voor de deelnemers van het project?
- Wat waren lastige situaties binnen dit project? (culture, language, competencies, mental health issues)
  - Waren er hindernissen die door de statushouders genomen moesten worden?
  - Denk je dat bepaalde persoonseigenschappen er voor hebben gezorgd dat er bij sommigen minder hindernissen waren dan bij anderen? (experience, corporate sense, flexibility, adaptability, responsibility)
  - Ik heb in een artikel gelezen dat er een extra taalprogramma ingezet werd tijdens de training, was dit achteraf nodig geweest?
- Merkte u in dit project dat statushouders anders zijn dan andere groepen werkzoekenden? (learning)
  o Zo ja, waar merkte u dat aan? (adaptive competencies)
- Hoeveel statushouders zijn er inmiddels opgeleid tot vrachtwagenchauffeur?
  o Weet u ook hoeveel statushouders op dit moment ook echt als vrachtwagenchauffeur werken? (7 kandidaten, baangarantie)
  o Degenen die niet als vrachtwagenchauffeur werken, doen zij ander werk?
- Je vertelde dat er een tweede project komt, welke dingen zou je anders doen?
  o In een artikel las ik dat de prognose was dat het project in de eerste helft van 2019 afgerond zou moeten zijn, is dit ook gelukt?

Afsluitend

- Wil je zelf nog iets toevoegen aan dit interview?
- Tenslotte zou ik je nog willen vragen of je deelnemers van het project kent die ik zou kunnen en mogen interviewen. Ook (interne) documenten zouden mij helpen een beter beeld te krijgen van het project.

Hartstikke bedankt voor je medewerking. Zou je het eindrapport willen ontvangen zodra dat klaar is?