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Establishing Change, Determining Responsibility:
Policy ideology and implementation in the
Swedish reform for the establishment of newly
arrived refugees

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the new policy reform for the establishment of newly arrived refugees in Sweden from a welfare policy perspective. The *establishment reform* aims to further integration of newly arrived refugees into Swedish society by transferring responsibility from local municipalities to the Public Employment Service and by introducing a private actor in the process. In the thesis I analyse the ideology of the policy as well as the implementation process in a local municipality. The study is based on documentary analysis as well as observations and interviews with local civil servants during the preparation process in the autumn 2010. By using the theoretical perspective of activation I situate the policy in a broader context of restructuring of the welfare state and labour market participation. Moreover, by using organization theory and implementation theory I consider the policy process and institutional change in relation to this reform. By linking civil servants' discourses to the political purpose of the policy I show that the dominant political ideology is used and accepted on a local level. However, structural gaps of the policy which have not been solved at the political level as well as the local organisational framework which emphasise a broader policy ideology in terms of integration may be impediments to implementation. On the other hand, interpersonal contacts can act as bridges between and within the organization to enable problem-solving.

Key words: integration, activation, establishment reform, implementation, organization theory, social policy.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	2
1.3 OUTLINE.....	3
1.4 LIMITATIONS	3
1.5 BACKGROUND.....	3
<u>2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</u>	5
2.1 ACTIVATION	6
2.2 IMPLEMENTATION THEORY	8
2.3 ORGANIZATION THEORY	10
<u>3. METHODOLOGY</u>	12
3.1 DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH	14
3.2 OBSERVATIONS	14
3.3 INTERVIEWS	16
3.4 ANALYSIS.....	17
3.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY.....	17
3.6 ETHICS	18
3.7 METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS	18
<u>4. ANALYSIS</u>	19
4.1 CREATING A POLICY MODEL	19
4.2 POLICY DISCOURSE	21
4.3 POLICY STRUCTURE.....	26
4.4 POLICY MANAGEMENT	30
4.5 DISCUSSION	35
<u>5. CONCLUSION.....</u>	37
<u>6. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</u>	38
<u>7. BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	41
<u>8. APPENDIX: INTERVIEW MATERIAL</u>	46

1.1 Introduction

The responsibility of a state for its citizens and residents is one of the most fundamental questions regarding welfare policy and sociology. The ways in which states organise institutions on a state and local level as well as providing a social safety net structure relate to how state legitimacy is perceived in advanced welfare states. Does the state fulfil the functions expected by its citizens and residents? How are responsibilities divided? These questions are part of the legal framework which defines these responsibilities as well as dividing them between authorities. However, they are also actualised in the practical implementation of these functions. Understanding social policy thus requires both an understanding of the ideological and political implications of the welfare state as well as an examination of the practical realities of policy administration.

In this thesis I will examine a recent policy reform both in terms of (1) the ideological values of the policy and (2) the implementation process in the case of preparations in a local municipality and the main implementing agency, the Public Employment Service. The policy I have chosen is the recent “establishment reform” (*Etableringsreformen*) in Sweden concerning newly arrived refugees. This policy is of interest as it concerns aspects both of integration and labour market policy, but also redefines the responsibility for this policy area through a recentralisation and privatisation process.

Examining the politics and ideology of advanced welfare states requires a somewhat different perspective to that of policy implementation. For the former, a discussion of advanced welfare states and the transformations that have taken place in the last few decades is imperative. For the latter, a theoretical approach on organisations and implementation highlights the practical implications of social policy issues. Moving between these different perspectives is a challenge, but I consider this important in to be able to discuss the two different sides of policy-making. Furthermore, I believe that this approach will enable me to understand the particular policy at hand more completely.

The topic of integration and labour market policy is highly relevant as many states are facing questions as how to manage immigration and achieve a successful integration of refugees and other immigrants in society. Often, integration is seen as connected to issues of unemployment, while on the other hand, certain immigrant groups are welcome as guest workers under special legislation. In Sweden, evidence that many immigrants failed to quickly get established at the labour market (see for example Integrationsverket 2004; Åslund 2006) prompted a reform concerning newly arrived refugees. This law was introduced by the Swedish government from the 1st December 2010 regarding newly arrived refugees¹. The main responsibility for this group will move from local municipalities to the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*). The idea is to emphasise what the Swedish government has called “the work line” and to put focus on employment from the start, i.e. directly after the individual refugee has received a residence permit. This applies to those with a work capacity of at least 25% and a special benefit is introduced which is conditional upon participating in certain activities which are decided together with an official at the Public Employment Service. Activities include for example language training and community information.

¹ See SFS, 'Lag Om Etableringsinsatser För Vissa Nyanlända Invandrare.', (2010: 197).

Local municipalities will still be involved as they will be responsible for paying out complementing benefits to those who cannot participate full-time in the introduction, but may also pay benefits to those who are not able to work the minimum 25%. The reason for reducing the municipalities' responsibility is to achieve a more similar system nationally and thereby reduce local differences in the quality of the integration programmes and other related services.

Another important part of the reform is the introduction of an external actor, a private coach (*etableringslots*) who will support the individual refugees in their efforts to find employment. The individual refugee will be able to choose a private agency which best suits their needs. This part of the reform is thus an attempt to increase choice and diversity in the system. Remuneration for this service is also to be result dependent in order to increase the incentive for these agencies to speed up the integration process.

1.2 Purpose and research questions

In this thesis, I am interested in this integration reform in relation to other transformations in advanced welfare states, particularly in relation to labour market issues. The reform can be seen as a way for the state to determine responsibility for a certain group of residents. In this way, it is an interesting development as it entails both a recentralisation and a privatisation process. Furthermore, I am concerned with how the reform itself is being implemented in the preparation process. By following the policy process in this way, the state's responsibility and ability to produce desired changes resulting from policy initiatives can be discussed. The purpose of the thesis is thus both to analyse the reform from a perspective of welfare policy, and to analyse the implementation process which is the practical side of policy change.

In the thesis, my starting point is the following research question:

How can the reform be understood from a perspective of welfare policy?

Starting from this broader question I have constructed the following two subquestions which are more specific:

How can the political purpose of the reform be understood?

How is the reform being implemented in a local municipality?

In the first question, I am interested in the reform from a perspective of welfare state transformations and the political motivations which influence the reform. In the second question I am looking at the reform from a more practical perspective in terms of how the reform is managed in a local municipality. The implementation process is important for understanding how the motivations of the reform are dealt with in practice, as the implementation period is a part of the political and policy process. This is especially important as the reform concerns the issue of responsibility between the central state and local municipalities. The recentralisation of responsibility for this group of refugees is a way for the state to regain control of an integration process which has been deemed a failure in the hands of local municipalities. However, the local municipalities remain responsible for the last resort of financial help to its residents in the form of social assistance and thus continue to be an important actor. By looking at the two levels of ideology and implementation, I am thus interested in two different parts of the policy process which in turn require different theoretical and methodological approaches.

1.3 Outline

After introducing the topic, purpose and research questions I now want to move to the structure of the thesis. In the next section, I will briefly examine the limitations of the thesis. Thereafter I provide a background of the issues at hand, primarily the integration process in Sweden. In part three, I present the theoretical framework for the thesis. I use activation theory to examine the policy ideology of the reform. Thereafter I review implementation and organization theory to consider the second subquestion. In the third part of the thesis I discuss the methodology, namely documentary analysis, observations and interviews. Part five consists of an analysis of my material which is concluded by a discussion. In the conclusion I draw together the threads and point to possibilities for future research.

1.4 Limitations

The research approach I have chosen can be considered problematic in different ways. Firstly, my approach requires a broad theoretical and methodological perspective, as I am interested in both political and ideological concerns as well as organisational policy issues. Secondly, my empirical research deals with the preparation of the policy reform. Because of this, I cannot draw any definite conclusions about the results of the policy process. Instead, I am considering how the tensions in the preparation process can be important for understanding the political and organisational issues inherent in this policy reform. From this strategy, it may be possible to discern certain indications for the future of the policy, but these indications will only be speculative. It is therefore important to separate the results in this thesis from the actual policy outcomes of the reform.

1.5 Background

In this paper, I do not have a focus on migration or integration theories, but the establishment reform is mainly considered from a perspective of welfare state changes and the policy process. However, in order to understand the background to the policy, I want to briefly discuss integration and immigration in Sweden. I will do this by give a short overview of the recent changes related to immigration, after which I will point out some different theoretical approaches to integration/immigration research. Thereafter, I point out some developments on the European Union² level to contextualise the Swedish reform.

1.5.1 Immigration patterns in Sweden from the 1950s

In the post-war period, the Swedish economy experienced high growth rates and a great demand for labour. As a result, a great number of labour market immigrants entered Sweden in the 1950-1960s. Along with the opening of a common Nordic labour market, Sweden also actively recruited labour immigrants from other European countries. From the mid-1960s, however, the Swedish economy was slowing down and unemployment increased among non-Nordic immigrants (Lundh and Ohlsson 1999: 69). This led to more restrictive immigration politics in the late 1960s, which severely restricted non-Nordic individuals to enter the Swedish labour market. In the 1970s, Sweden continued to experience slower growth and labour market immigration was severely reduced due to a lack of employment opportunities.

² Due to the limits of this thesis I have chosen only to include developments of the European Union, although other regional comparisons would have been interesting. However, as Sweden is a member of the EU, I consider the European context as the most relevant for understanding the Swedish case.

From the 1970s, refugees have made up the largest immigrant category entering Sweden. In the post-war period, the majority of refugees were individuals who, after receiving a special refugee status by the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR, were transferred Sweden in line with the Geneva Convention (UNHCR 2011). However, from the late 1960s, refugees who travelled to Sweden independently of the UNHCR agreement increased and made up more than 80% of the total number of refugees. Moreover, many immigrants have received residence permits through family reunification, especially from the mid-1980s. Thus, the immigration patterns into Sweden have changed vastly from labour market immigration to refugee and family reunification immigration. These changes have also influenced the integration politics.

1.5.2 Swedish integration politics

In the 1950s, language learning was provided for certain immigrant groups, but there were no major integration policies in Sweden and the politics were mainly assimilative. During the 1960s, however, various minority groups demanded increased support for their cultural heritage. In the 1960-1970s, resources were directed towards language support, civic information and financial support to immigrant and cultural organisations. In 1974, a government investigation was published which argued for a “cultural plurality” perspective on integration. As opposed to the assimilation perspective, the cultural plurality approach aimed to respect minority cultures with the hope that this would enrich the majority society and to “smooth” the integration process (Lundh and Ohlsson 1999: 109).

During this time, the state had the main responsibility for immigrants. In the 1980s, however, the responsibility for newly arrived immigrants was shifted from the state to the local municipalities. The group of refugees was considered in greater need of societal help than labour market immigrants had been, and local municipalities were seen as better suited to provide this than the state. A key issue was to provide labour market support for immigrants. Municipalities were reimbursed by the state for taking over this responsibility. From 1991 municipalities were given a standard lump sum for every refugee (Lundh och Ohlsson 1999).

Municipalities were required to offer individual introduction plans for refugees, aiming to get the individuals into employment. The introduction plan included a review of the individual’s education and employment history as well as language education and labour market services. In these last few decades, the results of integration programs have been widely debated and the focus for several government reports and investigations (Integrationsverket 2004, 2007b, 2007a; SOU 2003). Frequently discussed issues include non-participation in the labour market, as well as difficulties to learn Swedish through municipality language programs. Furthermore, the services of local municipalities have differed greatly, resulting in unequal access for refugees in different municipalities.

1.5.3 Immigration and integration research from a European perspective

Research on immigration and integration has been conducted from various perspectives. Some studies have categorised different migrant groups, such as refugees, sans-papiers, irregular migrants³ whereas others have focused on establishing different “push and pull factors” to explain migration patterns (Madrigal and Mayadas 2006; Zimmermann 1996). The topic of assimilation in contrast to more integrationist or multicultural policies has also been discussed (Brubaker 2001). Similarly, much

³ See Collyer and de Haas (2010) for an overview.

recent works have focused on the success or failure of “multicultural” policies and/or on the philosophical implications of multiculturalism (see Joppke 1996, 2004; Kymlicka 1996, 2010; Vertovec 1996). Other studies have focused on the cultural practices of ethnic communities and diasporas (Clifford 2010; Lewis 2010; Ryan 2010) or on different subcultures of minority groups (see for example Drissel 2007). Another perspective is the social exclusion of these groups from the mainstream labour market due to possible discrimination by employers (see Blackaby et al. 2009; Carlsson and Rooth 2007; Kogan 2011; Reyneri and Fullin 2011; Rydgren 2004; Støren 2011) and problems with regards to language learning (see Boyd and Xingshan 2009; Rooth and Åslund 2006).

These debates within the European Union can also be noted in the political arena. For example, stricter immigration politics through border controls and partnerships with emigrant countries which emphasise the link between development and migration have been implemented on a European Union level (European Commission 2005a; Geddes 2005). Popular support for anti-immigration parties in several European Union member states has also made migration a sensitive topic in national politics (Bale 2008; Rydgren 2008). Moreover, countries such as the Netherlands and Germany have introduced citizenship and language tests (Etzioni 2007; Orgad 2009; Peucker 2008), while most EU member states have some type of introduction programme (European Commission 2007). These developments are also supported on a European Union level through more general “soft policy” recommendations regarding introduction programmes and a focus on civic training and language learning (European Commission 2004, 2006, 2007). Employment is also discussed as “a key part of the integration process” (European Commission 2007: 6). The Swedish reform is thus connected to trends of activation and integration policies on a European level.

By discussing these issues I have tried to situate the current reform by addressing some contemporary issues of integration. Due to the limits of this paper, all of these issues cannot be followed up. However, they provide a background to contextualise the reform. In the following theoretical part I will further discuss those perspectives which concern my research question, namely the ideological and institutional framework of the policy.

2. Theoretical framework

In order to examine the establishment reform I will use various theoretical perspectives, both to discuss the policy reform from a perspective of ideology and from the implementation side.

For the first question, the most relevant theoretical perspective is activation. For the second question, I use implementation and organization theories. The issue of state responsibility can be seen throughout the perspectives, but in differing ways. The theoretical perspective activation considers responsibility specifically in relation to labour market policy, but also relates to broader changes which I am not able to consider in full in this thesis. This perspective enables me to discuss ideological and normative considerations which are related to welfare state transformations and thereby provides a way to examine the recent policy reform in this light. Crucial to these ideological and practical shifts is the discussion of which areas of responsibility should be managed by the state.

The theories of implementation and organization are also concerned with the issue of responsibility and legitimacy. For political reform to be successful, successful implementation is required on a local

level. This part of the policy process concerns issues such as organisational change and institutional practices. Responsibility at this level both concerns the ways tasks are structured by central government for implementation and the practical work carried out at the local level. Thus, these theoretical perspectives enable me to focus on the practical side of policy management. First, however, we turn to the ideological discussion.

2.1 Activation

From the 1980s neoliberal reforms have been promoted in advanced welfare states to greater or lesser extent. These reforms promote deregulation, privatisation, limited state spending and increased efficiency in the public sector through methods such as New Public Management (see Baines 2004; Fenger 2006; Pierson 2007; Whitfield 2001, 2010).

Related to the concerns of inefficiency and stagnating growth which prompted these changes were concerns of the number of individual welfare claimants and growing social expenditure. As a result, 'activation' policies, which aimed to move citizens from a passive role as welfare recipient to active participants in society through taking part in the labour market, were introduced in many advanced welfare states albeit with shifting focus (see Goul Andersen 2005; Hvinden et al. 2001; Larsen 2005).

In the US, single mothers on benefits were identified as a particularly problematic group, which did not sufficiently participate in the workforce. The New Right⁴, viewed this as evidence of a society with disintegrated family structures (see for example Murray 2006) and 'motivation problems' (Mead 2006: 107) among welfare recipients. Moreover, "welfare dependency" was seen as a key problem which kept individuals and families in poverty. The advocated solution was the "Work First Approach" which would push unemployed individuals into a job as quickly as possible, not considering the quality of the job or the skills of the individual (Daguerre 2008: 366). Work was thus seen as the route out of poverty and into self-sufficiency. This activation approach became part of President Bill Clinton's welfare reforms through the *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act* in 1996 which introduced time limits to welfare benefits and a requirement to take up available work (Stryker and Wald 2009).

Similarly in the UK under New Labour, Welfare to Work programs were introduced. Aimed firstly to young unemployed individuals, the programs were then extended to other unemployed groups. These programs required individuals to participate in job-seeking activities to be entitled to continue claiming benefits (Evans and Millar 2006). This approach symbolised Tony Blair's new social contract, which emphasised "no rights without responsibilities" as the moral dimension of the welfare state under the Third Way (Giddens 1998: 65). In this way, New Labour to a great extent accepted the moral assumptions of the New Right by using social policy as a tool to "reward worthy citizens and discipline irresponsible ones" (Dwyer 2000: 80). Important in this perspective is also the tool of re-skilling, as individuals should be prepared to be flexible and skilled for a competitive labour market (Jordan 2006). The activation approach is also evident from a European perspective, articulated for example through the Lisbon Strategy, which emphasised an active individual and society as key for achieving high employment and sustaining welfare (European Commission 2005b).

From a Swedish perspective, active labour market policies have had a long tradition. In their original form they were part of the Rehn and Meidner economic model which aimed to achieve both full

⁴ See Green (1987) for an examination of the New Right

employment and economic stability. Here, labour mobility through training and relocation possibilities was seen as one way to maintain high employment figures (Petersson 2009). Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, government expenditure on labour market programs remained high. However, as unemployment increased sharply in Sweden in the 1990s, labour market programs were no longer effective in reducing unemployment. Instead, reduction of the benefit levels was implemented and the idea of unemployment insurance as linked to income levels abandoned (Bergmark and Palme 2003; Salonen 2009).

These trends have continued after the 1990s, as stricter eligibility rules and reductions in benefit levels have been introduced both by Social Democratic and Conservative governments (Runeson and Bergeskog 2003; Sibbmark 2008). Furthermore, as the income support system in Sweden is based on previous participation in the labour market, individuals who have not previously participated in the labour market, such as youth or immigrants, are not entitled to state unemployment benefits, but are directed to the social assistance provided by the local municipality as the agency of last resort (Salonen 2009; Ulmestig 2009). In this sense, the Swedish system has developed into a stronger 'dual welfare model' (Marklund and Svallfors, cited in Hedblom 2009: 159) where an increasing number of individuals are referred to the municipality social assistance system. As a result, many local municipalities have introduced their own labour market programs where participation often is a requirement for receiving social assistance (see for example Angelin 2009; Ulmestig 2009) and a disciplining moral approach is more important than a labour market politics which emphasises citizens' rights.

In recent years, activation policies in Sweden have thus become more similar to those of other European countries. Moreover, these changes are also related to other transformations of the welfare system. For example, in the social security system a time limit on benefits has been introduced, after which individuals are referred to the Public Employment Service to be tested against employment towards the whole labour market (Hägglund and Skogman Thoursie 2010).

In summary, activation can be seen as a more disciplining trend where individuals are pushed towards the labour market and the responsibility to find employment is shifted from the state to the individual. As Seeleib-Kaiser (2008: 7) notes, the specific mix of "carrots and sticks" ultimately determines whether the activation policy in question is merely a privatisation of risk or a support system where the state enables the individual to find employment. However, the inability and unwillingness of many European states to pursue an expansive macroeconomic policy means that there is little room for governments to create jobs, focusing instead only on the supply side of the labour market and attempting to create a flexible workforce (Apeldoorn 2009; Helleiner 2008). Considering these changes of activation are important as they are related to a changing ideology of "individualisation" (Giddens 1991), where individuals are required to take a greater responsibility for their own life situation and choices. Consequently, unemployment primarily becomes an individual rather than a macroeconomic problem and is also related to broader welfare state transformations.

When considering the reform at hand, it is necessary to examine the ideological assumptions that influence policy-making. From the activation perspective we can see how a transformation has taken place in terms of the relationship between the state and the individual. While governments no longer engage in macroeconomic policies to achieve full employment, more disciplining measures are directed to unemployed citizens. The moral assumptions of this ideological perspective are likely to

constrain and influence policy-making in terms of framing both the problems and solutions, and in the analysis I will discuss how this ideological perspective can be used for understanding the establishment reform.

2.2 Implementation theory

In this section of the thesis, I will move from ideological and political theories to theories grounded in the practicalities of policy. As we will see, however, there are links between these theoretical perspectives, as ideology and organisations influence one another. First, I want to note that implementation and organization theory in many ways overlap. However, I have chosen to separate them in order to discuss implementation theory as part of the policy process and use organisation theory to examine the more specific topic of change within organisations.

I will begin by examining the reasons for studying implementation; thereafter I will briefly outline some of the historical works within implementation research. After this I discuss two different implementation models as well as arguing how I consider implementation theory in this thesis.

Legitimacy in the political arena can be related to whether citizens can trust the government to carry out the proposals on which basis they were elected. This is dependent on a system where the government can trust its civil servants to carry out their assigned tasks. In the “strong state”, once a policy becomes law, civil servants should implement it in a way consistent with the law and the policy makers’ intentions (Lindvall and Rothstein 2006). In this ideal type case, citizens have a clear view of political responsibility in relation to policy practice. However, this is seldom the actual case, as policy implementation tends to be less straightforward. Following the “policy process” from problem formulation to results is therefore a way to examine how policies succeed or fail to live up to the government’s intentions. Understanding the implementation of public policy therefore becomes important for discussing political legitimacy.

Before discussing implementation further, a definition of the term is required. As noted by Pressman and Wildavsky (1984: xxii), a separation of policy and implementation is necessary in order to study policy implementation at all, but at the same time, defining the relationship is slippery. For the purpose of this paper, I will use a fairly general definition of implementation as the “carrying out of a basic policy decision” (Mazmanian and Sabatier, cited in Hill and Hupe 2009: 7), which here includes the stages of preparation and feedback.

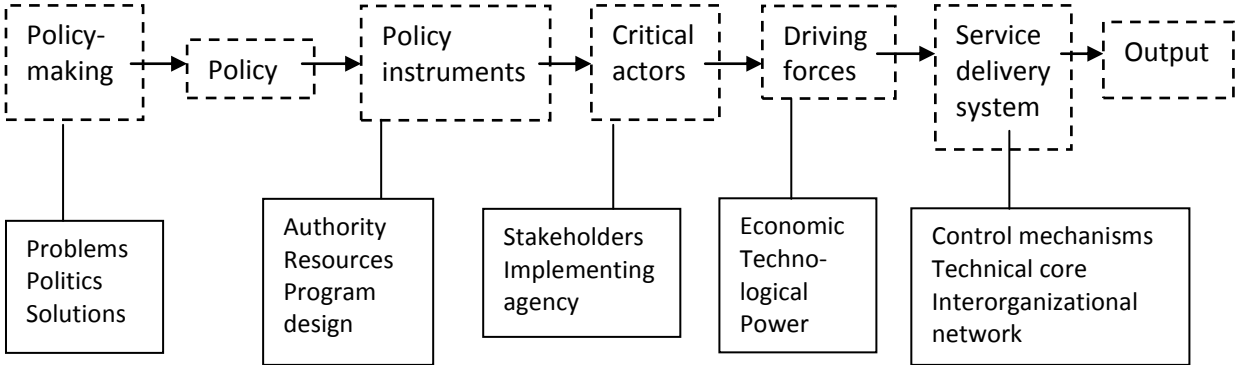
Implementation studies can be related to classical sociological works such as Weber’s discussions on authority and bureaucracy, where a strong bureaucracy was seen as essential for guaranteeing political legitimacy (see Hill and Hupe 2009). In more recent years, Pressman and Wildavsky’s (1984) classic book on implementation has been seen as a starting point for a plethora of implementation studies. Pressman and Wildavsky deal with the local implementation of a specific federal program in the US, and focus on the various barriers to successful policy implementation. Their work can thus be defined as a “top-down” study. Top-down studies are typically “concerned with how the implementation process is structured to accomplish policy objectives” (Hasenfeld and Brock 1991: 452). Hence, a structurally complete policy program is seen as a condition for successful implementation at the local level.

Later implementation studies have often focused on bottom-up approaches, where implementation is considered from the organizational and actor level. For example, local civil servants' abilities to influence policy practice are examined, indicating that governmental policy goals or programs are not the most important determinants for successful policy outcomes. For example, Lipsky's (1980) study of what he labels "street level bureaucrats" has been important for understanding how professionals such as social workers who work with clients use their professional discretion to make decisions. The issue at stake is whether policy can be effectively implemented if front-line staff fails to make decisions in line with the policy intentions. However, this problem may be exacerbated by politicians, who often produce unclear policy documents to avoid thorny issues or due to other reasons. In these cases, problems that are not fully solved at the policy level are reproduced in the implementation process (Brodkin 2006; Hasenfeld 2010).

A third approach is labelled "iterative" by Hasenfeld and Brock (1991: 453), as it "assumes a recurring flow between policy-making and implementing activities". These studies assume that both policy-making and bureaucratic activities are important for understanding policy implementation, and often also focus on the "feedback loops" between policy-makers and organisations. This approach can thus be considered a synthesis between the top-down and bottom-up perspectives (Winter 2003).

Hasenfeld and Brock (1991) make an attempt to create a policy model which can synthesise the most important factors from previous implementation studies. Through categorising methodological approaches, units of analysis, driving forces and modes of explanation, they use the most popular findings to synthesise into a "political economy model". They argue for an iterative model which can focus on the interaction between policy-making, policy instruments and organisation (1991: 465).

This model can be illustrated in the following manner:



Adapted from Hasenfeld and Brock (1991:465)

Policy-making is defined as the identification of a problem, formulation of alternatives and an authoritative choice as a specified solution. Other external factors such as the political or economic climate can also be included here. Here, we can note that policy-making is not necessarily seen as neutral and based on scientific agreements (cf: Lindvall and Rothstein 2006), but as a narrative containing various moral and ideological assumptions regarding both the problem area and the preferred solutions to the problem (Considine 2005).

When the policy itself has been formulated, different policy instruments are constructed. Hasenfeld and Brock (1991) define these as *authority*, *resources* and *program design*. Authority refers to the legal power conferred to the implementing agency for enforcing policy compliance. The area of resources relates to the availability of money, staff, expertise and similar factors. The program design is the policy specification and concerns the clarity and consistency of policy objectives.

Critical actors consist of firstly the *implementation agency* whose interest in the policy implementation along with other factors such as internal structure and expertise is important. Secondly, *stakeholders* are organisations and interest groups with an interest in the policy whose participation and cooperation are needed for the policy implementation.

The driving forces are used to explain patterns and consequences of implementation. These driving forces are by Hasenfeld and Brock considered to be *economic*, *technological* and *power*. Economic driving forces relate to the costs of implementing policy and the resources available. Technological driving forces are the specifications of policy and whether these are considered rational and coherent with the policy goals. Power relates to conflicting values and interests.

The service delivery system is the practical delivery of policy and is made up of the interrelated components *the technical core*, *the interorganizational network* and *the control mechanisms*. The technical core is defined as the “program components which are directly responsible for producing the desired changes in the target population”. The interorganizational network refers to the relationship between the stakeholders and the coordination needed for implementing policy. The control mechanisms are the specific controls such as adequacy of certain facilities or number of clients processed in the program. Finally, the policy is also affected by feedback loops which can be major societal changes which affect the environment of where the policy implementation is taking place.

This model can thus be used to analyse different parts of the policy process, and a main benefit is that it takes account of both the structural makeup of policy and the interorganizational level of implementation. As we will see in the next section, the model can also be criticised from a perspective of organizational sociology. Furthermore, in this paper I do not yet have access to the policy results. Moreover, as the study concerns the preparation process it is not possible to make any final conclusions about the service delivery system and especially the relations between policy actors and clients. However, in a modified form the model can still be useful in order to structure my analysis and mode of thinking about policy. I will return to this in the analysis.

2.3 Organization theory

Organizational sociology has been an important discipline, building for example on the works of Weber on bureaucracy. In terms of this thesis, organization theory is important for understanding certain aspects of the policy process. For new policies to be introduced and implemented at a local organizational level, organisations are required to change certain practices and introduce new ones. Thus, in one sense the policy process assumes that organisations can easily adapt to new policy proposals. However, as we saw above, this assumption of an unproblematic implementation process has been refuted by research and it is therefore essential to examine organisation theory in relation to policy reform.

While organisation theory can be used for many purposes, in this section I therefore concentrate on examining the use of organization theory as a way to understand the implementation process. Using Hasenfeld and Brock's (1991) model as a starting point, organizations as implementing agencies and stakeholders were both considered important for the implementation process. Here, we will thus focus more specifically on this particular part of the policy process.

When discussing policy reform in organisations, essentially we are examining organisational change. Change within organisations has also been an important topic for organization theory. Within organization theory, classical studies were concerned with the rationality of institutions and individuals. As a response to these perspectives, sociological theorists of organisations sought to provide a fuller picture of institutions by emphasising cultural and cognitive aspects rather than rational choice (Scott 1995: 40).

An important contribution to is made by Granovetter (2001) from a perspective of economic sociology. He criticises the economic version of new institutionalism for failing to take account of "embeddedness" in social relations, while also arguing that certain sociological works overemphasise the importance of embeddedness. Embeddedness here refers to the social networks of personal relations and structures which influence behaviour. Granovetter argues that transactions and relations between organisations are often influenced by personal relations between individuals rather than determined by the formal rules of the organisations. To understand organisational behaviour and change, it is therefore important to consider the interaction of individuals within organisations.

Ingram and Clay (2000) also use the theoretical perspective of new institutionalism to discuss organisational behaviour. They argue that the institutional framework of organisations, which includes "beliefs and shared understandings of individuals" (2000: 540) is essential to understand why change is not always easy to achieve. This institutional framework can in fact be a barrier to change, because existing organisations have an interest in maintaining the status quo. Rather than always pursuing a rational economic interest, ideological foundations of the organisation often influence the organisational behaviour. The shared understandings and beliefs within organisations are related to the perception of institutional arrangements as more or less legitimate and can therefore be barriers to change. Furthermore, when change occurs at an organisational level, distributional consequences necessitate bargaining between actors, a process which also determines the outcomes. Moreover, Hertzler and Eriksson (1983) argue from a perspective of sociology of law, that uncertainties and practical conditions within organisations can impact staff's practical policy decisions.

From these arguments, we can draw two important conclusions related to the policy model of Hasenfeld and Brock (1991). Firstly, the interaction between stakeholders and implementers is emphasised through the theories of new institutionalism as an important part of any organisational context. Secondly, the model by Hasenfeld and Brock may not take full account of the problems of achieving institutional change.

First, I will briefly discuss the theme of interaction. Hasenfeld and Brock assume that power relations and the interaction between stakeholders and implementers can cause problems at the organisational level. Similarly, embeddedness and the institutional framework of organisations are seen as essential for understanding organisational behaviour. In this sense, power struggles as well

as cooperation and participation strategies are important parts of the policy process. Following Ingram and Clay (2000), if the different agencies have a similar institutional framework in terms of ideology and behaviour, cooperation could be hypothesised to be successful. Within the public sector, interorganizational cooperation has been lauded as essential for efficient management, although in practice, cooperation strategies may not always improve policy output (Jennings and Ewalt 1998). An empirical study by Martin Lundin (2007) of the Public Employment Service and local municipalities regarding two different labour market policies suggests that cooperation between agencies was helpful in the case of complex policy, but less important in regards to a more simple policy. Thus, considering the issues of organisational practices and relations between organizations becomes paramount for researching implementation.

Hasenfeld and Brock acknowledge that many issues need to be resolved at the organisational level for implementation to be successful. Nevertheless, it could be argued that they fail to take account of an important new institutionalist argument, namely that change is difficult to achieve due to the institutional framework. Instead, an interpretation of Hasenfeld and Brock's model may be that they assume implementing actors to be positive towards the policy and, furthermore, that achieving institutional change to implement policy is unproblematic. Thus, the proposition that implementing actors and stakeholders have diverging interests of maintaining the status quo as opposed to actually implementing the policy successfully may not be fully emphasised in the political economy model.

However, it would also be possible to use Hasenfeld and Brock's components of driving forces and the service delivery systems as areas where the problems of organisational change can be positioned. Thus, for example, in a political economy model where the interorganizational network of an implementing agency is examined, the analyst may also take account of the "institutional framework" of the organisation. In this manner, it would also be possible to see whether a lack of change can be attributed to the institutional framework or if other aspects such as the technical rationalities in the political model have a greater explanatory power for the case at hand.

After examining the links between organisation and implementation theory, I want to make a quick note on the link between the ideological and institutional theoretical frameworks I have discussed.

As Blyth (2001) notes, ideology can be a key for understanding policy choices, particularly in relation to policy paradigms which carry certain broader ideals. Moreover, these ideologies often have an influence on organisational levels, as staff are required to implement new changes in line with certain moral assumptions related to policy (Brodkin 2006), and may also be expected to accept these specific policy discourses to secure their own position in the organisation and to "avoid being stigmatized as yesterday's news" (Considine 2005: 68). Conversely, as Brodkin (2006) shows, organisational dilemmas such as the perceived inefficiencies of bureaucratic practices in the 1950-1960s opened up for ideological and practical changes articulated in New Public Management reforms. In this sense, linking ideology to policy practice can be important for understanding the area of policy reform in a more comprehensive manner.

3. Methodology

After discussing the theoretical framework of the thesis, I want to turn to the methodological aspects of this work. This will set the foundation for the analysis as well as forming a discussion of the limitations of the thesis.

For this thesis I have used three different methodological tools: documentary research, observations and interviews. In this chapter of the thesis I will discuss the three different methods, as well as reflect on their uses and the limitations of the research. Qualitative research can be used in order to research phenomenon which are unexplored or require a certain focus which cannot be achieved by using quantitative methods. Using different qualitative methods, also defined as triangulation, can give a fuller picture of the topic as the methods complement each other (Flick, 2009: 25-26). For this research, I believe that the three different methods have allowed me to focus on different aspects of the topic at hand.

My research is grounded in the government investigation *Egenansvar – Med professionellt stöd* (SOU 2008), which sets out the political intentions of the new law regarding newly arrived refugees. I have also participated in meetings, as well as conducting interviews with civil servants. While the documents have been used as a starting point, participating in the meetings and conducting interviews have also influenced my ways of working with the government investigation. Moreover, while I have considered theoretical material throughout the research, the empirical data has affected my thinking in this area. In this sense, the research has moved between theory and empirical data, and I see the research process as a discussion between theory and empiricism. Furthermore, the different methods have complemented each other in terms of providing new ways of thinking about the topic.

Before discussing the three methodological perspectives further, I want to start by discussing how I came to choose the research topic, theories and methodology. When starting out with this research, I had an interest in labour market policies such as activation as well as an interest in changes in contemporary welfare states. I wanted to find a practical way to research these topics, and I was considering different labour market programs in local municipalities or state agencies. When I was thinking through my options, I came across the policy reform of establishment. This policy interested me from a labour market perspective, and hence I already had a theoretical perspective in mind when approaching the idea. After reading more documents relating to it, such as the government investigation, I realised that this perspective was firmly grounded and explicit in the policy documents as well. My idea then was to start from this perspective, and focus on how the reform preparations were carried out.

During this time I was doing an internship in Malmö municipality, and I was able to discuss my ideas with some of the staff there. Malmö thus became the case for my study through a choice of convenience (see Flick, 2009). However, Malmö is also a purposeful choice, as discussions regarding immigration and integration have been prominent in this municipality, due to a large influx of immigrants (see for example Scuzzarello 2008) and therefore provides an important arena for researching these issues. The contacts in Malmö informed me of certain meetings that were taking place in relation to the reform. Through these contacts, I was given access to the meetings and was able to attend as an observant. At these meetings, the activation perspective remained important to me, but I was also interested in how the staff discussed the changes and the cooperation between the authorities. Developing my ideas from the meetings, I constructed an interview guide based on my understanding of the government report as well as the topics discussed in the meetings. I was also able to arrange interviews with certain individuals who participated in the meetings and with their contacts. In this sense, the research topic was built up and complemented along the way as an interaction between empirical material and theoretical understandings. For example, while I had a

previous theoretical knowledge of activation policies, I had not studied organization or implementation theory. Rather, these theoretical perspectives were used as a way to understand and interpret the empirical material that I was gaining access to through the meetings and interviews. After this short background to how I conducted my research, I want to discuss the various methods more extensively.

3.1 Documentary research

The method of documentary research is widely used in the social sciences to investigate different types of written material. Documentary research “refers to the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon we wish to study” (Mogalakwe 2009, citing Bailey). Thus, this method can be used to examine different types of documents. It is important to treat this research method as other methods in terms of considering whether documents are, for example reliable, representative and authentic.

May writes that “Documents, read as the sedimentations of social practices, have the potential to inform and structure the decisions which people make on a daily and longer-term basis; they also constitute particular readings of social events” (May 2001: 176). To conduct documentary research, the researcher therefore needs to “ ‘engage’ with ‘meanings’ which are embedded in the document itself” (May 2001: 183). In this way, documents need to be contextualised, to account for the different historical and political factors that impact the document itself (Becker and Bryman 2004: 30). Furthermore, a theoretical framework is necessary in order to analyse and interpret the document (May 2001).

In terms of my research, I have used the government investigation *Egenansvar – Med professionellt stöd* (SOU 2008), for my documentary research. I see this as the basis of the reform regarding newly arrived refugees. In the text, the previous system of “introduction” was specified, as were the reasons both for changing the system and for choosing to make these particular changes. In this way, the text will be analysed according to the different assumptions and values set out to promote this policy reform. Furthermore, the ideology and political purpose of these assumptions will be considered by using my theoretical framework to guide the analysis.

This document must be seen in the context of its characteristics as a government investigation which suggests certain legal reforms. In order to achieve policy change, certain assumptions are set out. When observing meetings and interviewing civil servants, I wanted to see whether these assumptions are accepted or rejected. Naturally, I cannot give any explanation for why these values are used or rejected by civil servants, but I can show in what ways they are being used.

When analysing this document I have paid attention to how certain political values are made explicit in the text in order to justify policy change and reform. The use of these values in a local context is one of the bases for my empirical work as I am interested in how the intentions of the policy can be considered by local civil servants, as well as how the preparations are carried out to implement the reform.

3.2 Observations

Observation is a method which traditionally has been used in fieldwork practices, where the researcher enters the “field” to engage with the local population and get immersed in the specific

culture (Anderson 2006; Clifford 1988), but it can also be used in other more local environments (Flick, 2009: 229-230).

For Denscombe (2003: 192) observation “draws on the direct evidence of the eye to witness events first hand”. This method is thus appropriate when the researcher is interested in experiencing an event, rather than relying on secondary data in the form of documents or other sources. Compared to for example interviews, observations “[occur] in situations which would have occurred whether or not the research would have taken place” (ibid). Observations can therefore be a suitable method to study situations which the researcher would not otherwise have access to. As my research topic concerned the policy process in local organisations, the observation method was a way for me to study this process first-hand, and gave me access to data which would not have been available through secondary material.

My observations took place in meetings which specifically concerned preparations of the reform within the local municipality as well as one meeting between representatives from the local municipality and the Public Employment Service. The meetings focused on how to provide support for newly arrived refugees when the Public Employment Service is unable to and to establish a system for how to receive newly arrived refugees in the process of integration. In one way, the meetings can be described as providing information to the different city administrations and their social services departments. Furthermore, the meetings clarified the different responsibilities of the local municipality and different state authorities. The meetings can also be seen as an attempt to create a “safety net” for this group of refugees during the times the Public Employment Service could not work with them. This often concerned “policy gaps” identified by civil servants or others.

I attended five different meetings during October and November in 2010. Four of these meetings were between civil servants from different administrations in the municipality of Malmö. One meeting was between a civil servant from the local Public Employment Service and two civil servants from Malmö municipality.

There are some key issues related to conducting observations. For example, gaining access to the field can be difficult and a lack of access can make the research very difficult to carry out (Flick, 2009: 106). In my case, I was granted access very easily, due to contacts which acted as ‘gatekeepers’ to the organization. Another important aspect of observations is whether the presence of the researcher affects the situation itself. In my case, I do not believe that my presence influenced the meetings to a great extent. The meetings had a clear purpose of resolving certain issues, and this would have been carried out regardless of my attendance. In a few instances, however, some of the meeting participants commented on my presence, although not in a negative way.

Another important issue is the skill of the researcher. I have not previously conducted first-hand empirical research, and my inexperience in this area is likely to have influenced the research process. During the meetings, I was taking notes of the different conversations. After the meetings I typed up my notes as well as my impressions and thoughts about what had been said and expressed implicitly. Note-taking should ideally be written up as soon as possible after the observations, as the researcher will remember the events more clearly soon after the event (Denscombe 2003: 204). In hindsight, I believe that trying to record the meetings to be able to have a transcript of the discussions would have been a better choice than to only take notes. At the time, however, I felt that the presence of a recording device may be viewed negatively by the meeting participants and may alter their behavior

(May 2001: 137-138). Of course, this is always something that should be considered in these situations. When going through the notes after the meetings I have tried to ensure the validity of the comments by omitting any sentences where I was in doubt what the participants were saying.

3.3 Interviews

Interviews as a method are used extensively in the social sciences as they allow the researcher to gather information on a wide range of topics. The interview can be seen as “a conversation that has a structure and a purpose” (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 3). According to the purpose of the interview, there are different types of interview methods. Semi-structured interviews are often used to combine a certain structure to the interview by utilising specific questions, while also having the freedom to ask additional questions and to retain a flexibility in the interview situation (Flick, 2006: 149; May, 2001: 123). In this way, interviewees are able to express their opinions more freely than in for example a questionnaire. Expert interviews are interviews where the interviewees are chosen due to their expertise in the interview topic (Flick, 2006: 165). These interviews can be difficult in certain cases, as the interviewees may provide the interviewer with too much information on the topic, assuming that the interviewer does not have previous knowledge, and the interviewer may be forced to try to steer the conversation more strongly (ibid).

Interviews were relevant for my research as I saw them as a chance to be able to follow up points of interest that had arisen both from the government investigation and from the observations. Furthermore, I would be able to discuss these topics more deeply in the interviews and thus gain a different perspective to that of the observations. In this way, the method of interviewing complemented my other methods.

Based on my points of interest which had arisen from my reading of the government investigation as well as from the observations in the meetings, I constructed an interview guide, based on Kvale and Brinkmann’s model of organising the guide by considering both research questions and interview questions⁵ (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 132). This was used for all interviews, but modified slightly depending on which questions I deemed suitable considering the interviewee’s expertise as well as based on the experiences I had from early interviews.

I conducted six interviews with civil servants in Malmö. Out of these interviews, one interview was with two participants and the remaining were individual interviews. In one interview I interviewed a civil servant from the Public Employment Service, whereas the other participants were from different departments of the local municipality.⁶ As mentioned previously, selection of these interviewees was made firstly as a result of my participation in the meetings. Here I was able to identify the different roles of the individuals and to approach those who I thought were relevant for my topic. This could thus be called a ‘purposeful sampling’ meaning that the researcher “selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (Creswell 2007: 125). Additionally, I was able to contact other interview participants through getting contact information from interviewees or meeting participants. As a result, I met some of the participants both in meetings and in interviews, whereas others I only interviewed or met in meetings.

⁵ See appendix.

⁶ See table in appendix.

The interviews were held at the interviewees' work places. They were recorded with an mp3 player and thereafter transcribed. In one of the interviews, the recording failed and I was therefore forced to try to take notes after the interview as I did not have a transcript. I have abstained to quote from this interview, but the knowledge and impressions from the interview has still been part of my tacit knowledge of the topic. This situation can be common in qualitative research when, for example, additional information is given after the tape recorder is turned off, and albeit not part of the final transcripts becomes part of the researcher's understanding and knowledge of the topic (see for example Angelin 2009).

When transcribing the interviews I became aware of some of my limitations as an interviewer, which may have affected the research process. In a few instances, for examples, I noticed that I was asking "leading questions" to follow up a comment. Kvale and Brinkmann note, however, that leading questions may not always be negative, but can serve a purpose of checking the reliability of the interviewee's answer. Furthermore, the interviewer can influence the interview subject in other ways as well, for example by body language or in the choice of following up questions and responses (2009: 172). Nevertheless, in the cases where I deemed the questions inappropriate, I have not used the replies of the interviewees as part of the data I have analysed. Reflecting on these shortcomings during the research process is important in order to respect both the interviewees and the research field.

3.4 Analysis

During the analysis of data, it is also important to follow the ethical guidelines of the research process. During the research process, I had already formed an understanding of the data into a preliminary analysis. This method of analysing data as it is gathered can aid the process of analysing data (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Silverman 2010). Another part of the process is the categorisation of data depending on "aims of [the] research and theoretical interests" (May 2001: 139). When structuring the data and trying to make sense of the empirical material, I also tried to see whether there were other possible ways to consider the material, than my preconceived notions. In order to analyse the material, I considered different themes which I could make out from the data. I then re-read the material to see whether an alternative interpretation or categorisation was possible. In the end, the three themes I chose were considered most illuminating in responding to my research question. In one way, however, I want to point out that these themes were, to some extent, present already when I constructed the interview guides, as the observations gave me some hints as to what aspects were interesting to me. An important issue in terms of the analysis was to structure the material in order to make sense of the research question and to present the material in a coherent way. In this part of the research process, the researcher always makes certain choices which are important for the research results, by choosing what to include and exclude. In this sense, the interpretation lies with the researcher, and could not necessarily be replicated.

3.5 Validity and reliability

Validity can be defined as that researchers "see what they think they see" (Flick 2009: 387) or, in other words, that the researcher's version of the result can be grounded in the empirical material. Throughout the empirical part, I have attempted to discuss any problems arising in the research, to convey the research process in an open way. Another important way to deal with the disadvantages with qualitative research is for the researcher to remain reflexive regarding the research process, in order for others to be able to judge the material. Furthermore, I have tried to follow the guidelines in

the research process by respecting the collected material and by trying not to misrepresent the participants' meanings in the analysis of the data. However, I would like to add one final note related to validity of the research process, namely the issue of language. My empirical material in terms of documents, interview transcripts and meeting notes have all been in Swedish, while the final thesis is written in English. In the research process I have therefore been required to translate quotes I have used, something which inevitably means that some of the original meaning and subtleties are lost. I have tried to balance the translations between conveying the original meaning as far as possible while trying to ensure that they are readable in English. Nonetheless, I believe that this issue should be considered.

In terms of reliability, the traditional concept refers to the research being able to replicate. Naturally, this is not possible to such a large extent in qualitative research where the researcher is part of creating the research process. However, I have tried not to misrepresent any of the findings or make interpretations which are not supported by the material.

3.6 Ethics

Representing the interview material is also an ethical aspect which entails respecting the integrity of the participants. In the first observation meetings I attended, I presented myself to the other participants at the start of the meeting and explained my purpose of attending the meeting in terms of writing a thesis on the topic of implementation of the reform. Thus, my observations were always open, although it is possible that not all the participants in the meeting had a very clear idea of my research topic, if someone for example arrived late to the meeting.

When conducting the interviews I started by stating the purpose of the research, as well as that the interviewees would be anonymous and that they were not required to answer any of my questions. The issue of confidentiality is also important when conducting qualitative research (Flick 2006: 50). After collecting the material, I have kept my notes and transcripts out of reach for anyone else. I have also removed the participants' names from any documents. In some of the interviews, interviewees' have referred to the department where they work or to certain co-workers or other participants in the meetings. In these cases, I have not included this information which could identify the interviewee in the transcripts.

While analysing the data, I noticed that there was a noticeable difference between how interviewees from different parts of the organisations considered the topic. I therefore considered making a map showing the relation of the interviewee's position in the organisation to their views on the reform. However, I decided against this as I feared that this may identify some of the participants.

3.7 Methodological limitations

One of the limitations of qualitative research is that the researcher's interpretations affect the results of the study. Furthermore, a serious limitation to my research is that my interview subjects mainly represent the staff from the local municipality. Ideally, more meetings would have been attended with staff from the Public Employment Service and further interviews would have been conducted with their staff. Time limitations as well as accessibility are often aspects which limit research. Another limitation is the time period for my collection of empirical material. Following the policy process in the preparation process makes it difficult to make any conclusive judgement in terms of the success of policy or even of the implementation process. Nevertheless, discussing this level of

policy making and trying to make sense of the different issues involved in this area is an interesting area to explore further. Therefore, any limitations in this study may be overcome in further studies on the subject.

4. Analysis

4.1 Creating a policy model

The analysis is built up by an examination of three main aspects of the policy process, what I label policy discourse, policy structure and policy management. In the policy discourse part I consider political and ideological aspects of the policy, as well as how these discourses are discussed by civil servants. In the policy structure I examine practical “policy gaps” in the reform to consider how structurally complete the reform is. Under policy management, I consider some organisational aspects such as organisational responsibility and cooperation. I will start by discussing the model I use for the policy analysis based on the theoretical discussions earlier in the paper. Thereafter I discuss the three parts of my analysis in greater detail.

In the theoretical part of the paper I discussed the implementation model constructed by Hasenfeld and Brock (1991). I consider this model useful as a starting point for my analysis, but I also see it as an ideal type model for implementation research. In practice, it is not always possible to follow the whole chain of events from policy-making to outputs while also examining all steps in between. Therefore, I will adapt the model to fit my purposes of my research, while also acknowledging that this paper does not attempt to provide a complete overview or evaluation of the policy at hand.

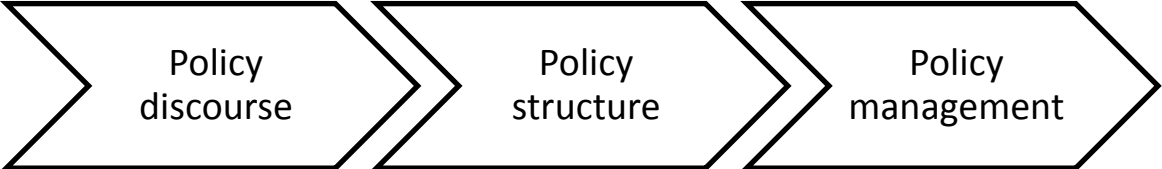
To reiterate, the model constructed by Hasenfeld and Brock (1991) consists of the following components:

Policy-making → Policy → Policy instruments → Critical actors → Driving forces → Service delivery system → Output

My analysis does not deal with the actual output, or results, of the policy reform. Neither am I looking at the interaction of case workers and clients from a street-level perspective. The outputs are therefore not relevant for my analysis, whereas only parts of the service delivery system are important. What I will discuss are the ideological and political assumptions of policy, i.e. ‘policy-making’ and ‘policy’ according to Hasenfeld and Brock’s model; policy structure and policy gaps (‘policy’ and ‘policy instruments’); and finally organisational constraints and values (‘critical actors’ and ‘driving forces’ and partly ‘service delivery system’). For the purpose of my analysis, I have adapted the model as dealing with policy discourse, policy structure and policy management.

To me, policy discourse is related not only to the specific policy goal, but also to the different values and assumptions behind the policy. Furthermore, the ways civil servants view these ideals are relevant for seeing whether the legitimacy of the policy is accepted at an organisational level. Following Hasenfeld and Brock (1991), I see the policy process as iterative, and therefore believe that policy discourse should be understood also from the perspective of civil servants’ ideals as a feedback loop in the policy process. The policy structure can be seen as the legal and organisational framework which structures the policy, identified by Hasenfeld and Brock as authority, resources and program design. Here, we will thus consider the specifications and consistency of policy as well as

legal power and practical resources. Finally, I see the policy management theme as relevant from an organisational perspective, where organisational culture and values, as well as interaction within and between organisations are relevant. Here, we are able to use both Hasenfeld and Brock’s perspective and organization theory. The model below can illustrate this thinking.



Policy discourse	Policy structure	Policy management
Government investigation	Legal framework	Institutional framework
Civil servants’ understandings	Formal organisational responsibility	Cooperation and interaction

The themes which I have chosen are all related to the issue of responsibility. My starting point is the following three questions:

- 1) In what ways should the authorities take responsibility for the group of newly arrived refugees?
- 2) How are responsibilities divided through the reform?
- 3) How are these responsibilities conceived and dealt with in practice?

The first question is related to which discourse and values are used to deal with this question politically in order to understand the underlying premises of the reform. Furthermore, I will consider how civil servants view this responsibility.

The second question deals with the practical specifications given to authorities through the reform, in terms of different tasks. Mainly, I focus on policy gaps which cannot be completely solved on a local level due to legislation regarding the reform and how these gaps are related to the political purpose.

In the third question, I consider how these practical gaps are dealt with on a local level, focusing mainly on views on responsibility and coordination between the local municipality and the Public Employment Service.

Thus, in my analysis I move from ideology to the structural specifications of the policy to the organisational context of policy implementation.

The structure of my model can be illustrated in the chart below.

Question	Preparation	Themes	Policy process
In what ways should authorities take responsibility for the group of newly arrived refugees?	Values articulated in the written program for the quick establishment of refugees as expressed in the assignment of duties and responsibilities.	Activation and care/assistance discourse	Values forming the basis of the investigation.
How are the responsibilities divided through the reform?	How structurally complete is the formed program	Policy gaps	Legal framework and formal organisational responsibility.
How are these responsibilities conceived and dealt with in practice?	Are there conflicts built in to the program that might impede implementation?	Cooperation/Interaction	Views on organisational responsibility and cooperation.

4.2 Policy discourse

4.2.1 Political discourse level: Work v care

In this section, I will examine the pre-legislative government report which forms the basis of the new legislation. I will discuss two different perspectives on integration which are discussed in the text. Understanding these two perspectives and their different assumptions is important in order to see how the policy process and preparations follow these intentions in later parts of the analysis. Here, I try to examine the values and ideology which shape the problem formulation and possible solutions, which we can expect will set the scene for the subsequent policy structure and policy resources. Mapping out the ideological and political values in the policy is therefore an important starting point for the analysis.

In the preliminary government investigation, the distinction between “the work line” and “care/assistance” is set out by the investigator from the start to discuss integration policies. When discussing the work the local municipalities have carried out for this group, some local municipalities are considered to have done a good job with this group, whereas others have failed in their commitment. Some local municipalities have created a department for the introduction activities, whereas in other municipalities, refugees are referred to the social services department. Since refugees as a group do not necessarily suffer from social problems, this link to the social services

department is seen as problematic by the investigator. Furthermore, the work of some municipalities is also seen as too focused on caring for the individual, rather than on promoting the individual's own capacities:

Many municipalities have organised their introduction work under Social Services, which has most likely affected the work in a caring direction.
(SOU, 2008: 59)

Refugees have become a problem for authorities to handle. If we had demanded self sufficiency immediately things would most likely have been very different today. The caring attitude we have had has become a problem for both the newly arrived refugees and for society.
(SOU, 2008: 62)

Moreover, this "caring⁷" attitude is seen to have had negative effects on the refugees' behaviour:

A culture of care/assistance and financial support without linked demands of performance have created passivity and a habit to go to the social worker when extra costs occur.
(SOU, 2008: 102)

The investigator thus links the previous integration programs to the social services and to a dependency culture. As a contrast, the new reform becomes linked to a culture of the work line:

In those countries which succeed best with integration, the work line applies. You are required to get a job to support yourself. It is in the work place and through your colleagues that you get your introduction to life in society, the national culture and so on... Now it's the work line which applies in Sweden as well.
(SOU: 2008, 62)

Through these quotes, we can notice two things. Firstly, the discourse of care is put in direct opposition to the 'work line' and firmly places the reform in an activation perspective. Here, we can notice the moral assumptions of the reform, as the social service is seen as enabling a negative benefits and dependency culture, a notion often related to activation discourses (see Dwyer, 2004). As a contrast, personal responsibility and self-sufficiency are promoted as ideal moral values which are the basis for introducing changes in terms of the policy:

My ambition is to put the main responsibility for the newly arrived refugee's future with the newly arrived refugee themselves. It must be made clear that it is the newly arrived refugees themselves who have to deal with the consequences of not being active.
(SOU, 2008: 102)

⁷ Swedish: "omhändertagande".

Through these quotes, we can thus see the moral assumptions of the policy, which are important for considering the policy framework (cf Considine, 2005).

The second assumption is the emphasis on the importance of work for achieving integration. By focusing on the “work line” also in terms of integration, employment is seen as the main key to being integrated into society. Aspects such as language learning and cultural understanding are seen as secondary to finding employment and also as logically following employment – integration will happen in the workplace. In one sense this perspective thus defines integration into society as being employed and further strengthens the activation discourse.

In line with this, different incentives to enable refugees to work are discussed. The investigation therefore recommends that a new type of benefit is introduced where the individual can keep extra income from work up to a certain limit, as an incentive to find work as soon as possible. Here, another aspect of activation policies can be noted in line with welfare-to-work and work-first programs, namely the idea that it is always better for the individual to take up any type of work, rather than holding out for a job that is more suited to the individual’s education and skills (see Daguerre, 2008). The investigator does however also discuss the importance of education and validation of previous education, which can be seen as a more complex perspective on activation. Nevertheless, the incentives built in to the program which encourage a quick establishment on the labour market imply that the main focus is on finding a job as soon as possible.

From the investigation, we can thus notice two separate integration discourses. The perspective promoted by the investigator takes its starting point from the “work line” and can be seen as a more narrow approach to the integration process. The contrasted “caring” approach is not discussed fully by the author, but can be assumed to cover a wider perspective of integration. In practice, however, the proposals set out by the author also include other non-work related issues, such as language learning and cultural learning, through SFI (Swedish for immigrants) and cultural integration programs (sambhällsorientering), although it is emphasised that these activities should be possible to combine with employment. Despite the main focus being employment, other activities are thus still seen as important and the differences between the two perspectives are not fully resolved.

Setting out the assumptions of integration in the investigation forms the basis of the analysis upon which the rest of this section will be built. First of all, these assumptions provide both an ideological and practical perspective of the law. As we have seen, organisational and individual case workers’ values are often considered important for successful implementation. Local support for the ideological values promoted in the policy is important for building legitimacy for the policy within the different agencies (Brodkin, 2006; Hasenfeld and Brock, 1991). Secondly, the assumptions in the “policy-making” stage are important for understanding the intentions of the law and how these intentions are understood in relation to the policy structure that will be examined in part 4.3 of the analysis.

Before turning to the policy structure, we will consider whether the policy intentions and values as set out in the preliminary investigation are shared by civil servants at the local organisational level.

4.2.2 Civil servants' discourses

In the following section, I discuss in what ways civil servants discuss the political context and values of the reform. I examine this in terms of what I label the work line discourse and the care/assistance discourse, based on the perspectives in the preliminary government investigations.

During the interviews, respondents were asked about the political purpose of the reform. Some referred directly to the term “the work line” (*arbetslinjen*) whereas others mentioned different aspects of the workline policies which were mentioned above, e.g. individual responsibility and incentives. When asked about the political purpose, one informant from the local municipality stated that:

[Respondent J]: Well it's that people should get work faster... You shouldn't have to learn Swedish for many many years... and what I said from the start you know... that it took far too long... That is the purpose... and to make the workline even clearer.

This respondent thus agrees with the idea that previously, it has taken too long for individuals to get employed, and the main idea with the new reform is that refugees should get employment sooner. Furthermore, the term “work line” is accepted and used in order to put this political reform into context. It is thus possible to see that the ideological value behind the policy is used as an accepted term which is not reflected upon or questioned by the informant.

The informant from Arbetsförmedlingen focuses on another aspect of activation policies, namely that work should pay:

[R.B]: Well the political purpose is that work should pay. It should pay to get a job, it's... it's important that the person who comes to us goes out and gets a job, partly to be a good example for others who come here, but partly to contribute to the welfare of the country... Above all it's a personal gain for those who will get out on the job market... to become integrated... to a certain extent... which you can be through a job and through taking responsibility for your own life and your future here in Sweden.

Here, work is seen as a way to “become integrated” and as a personal gain for the individual. To work and to be responsible for your own life are seen as interlinked issues, and the theme of personal responsibility is also acknowledged by this informant. Both of these respondents thus accept the ideology behind the policy, in terms of activation and personal responsibility. This can be seen as key for implementing policy as staff accepts the legitimacy of policy by accepting the moral assumptions that underpin the policy itself.

The theme of individual responsibility and incentives was also discussed by the informant who saw the main purpose of the reform to get individuals into work more rapidly:

[R.A]: Besides it's a ...eh... great opportunity for refugees who really want to... It's a lot about the individual's responsibility ... [...] But the reform itself gives us new opportunities... that is above all for the newly arrived refugee... and if you want, if you take your own responsibility then... then I think that you have a better chance.

[R.A]: Eh... financially you can be much much better off...Eh... these amounts are individually based which means that you can have completely different

financial circumstances... especially if you have your own apartment contract... and that was the idea as well... But eh... what I fear and what I see, is that... there's many who don't care about... that this contact with acquaintances, friends, relatives is more tempting than money...

Here, the importance of money is contrasted with a broader integration perspective which emphasises personal relations. This is an interesting issue, which questions the assumption that economic incentives are prominent for individual decision-making, and gives a broader perspective of what the integration process entails. Furthermore, the informant uses professional knowledge and expertise to challenge the legitimacy of the policy as being unable to achieve the policy goal. Even if the political and ideological reasons are accepted, the practical conditions to reach the policy goal are questioned.

The activation perspective can thus be contrasted with a perspective of concern for the individual, or a different view of the integration process. Another informant expresses a concern that the reform does not give enough time for the individuals to adapt during a two year period, and that more resources should have been directed to Swedish language learning, so that individuals started out with a good knowledge of the language. Health is also discussed by some of the informants:

[R.D]: What... what we do know of course is that... that many have very traumatic experiences which need... that you need help to treat... and perhaps tailor eh... education and treatment and so on...

These examples provide an alternative view on integration, which considers other aspects than employment, such as language learning, health and the ability of individuals to manage their life in a new country. These two views on integration are not necessarily contradictory, but informants that express their concern for individuals are often positive in regards to an increased focus on work. These perspectives are not so easily taken account of in a narrow use of the work-first discourses, where a more simplistic goal process is structured in terms of work → integration. In one way, the current reform can be seen as narrowing the scope of policy-making, where a complex problem as failed integration is reduced to a more easily managed problem of newly arrived refugees not entering the labour market. As discussed in the theoretical part, this is often the case in terms of complex policy proposals, where ideological arguments are put forward at the policy-making level but practical policy complexities are left unresolved (Hasenfeld, 2010).

In these situations, conflicting ideas are often re-introduced at the local level. In this case, the different perspectives which are set out in the investigation can be seen as tensions in the different interviews and meetings as well. First of all, many of the respondents use the political work line discourse, either explicitly or implicitly when discussing the purpose of the reform. The values which are promoted through the investigation thus seem to be widely used in these local organisations as well as on a central level. Of course, it could be the case that civil servants use these notions as they are required "in order to have their views taken seriously" (Boston, cited in Considine, 2005: 68). On the other hand, this could also mean that the moral assumptions of this policy already exist as ideological and normative values within the institutions. These interpretations are of course only hypotheses, and what we can see is that the moral values of the activation ideology are in fact being used by the civil servants, for whatever reasons.

However, while acknowledging these values, respondents also use a more complex integration discourse, either to challenge the work line discourse or as a complement to the employment focus of the reform. In this sense, the use of both discourses can be seen as consistent with the government investigation, where the tension between work and other integration aspects such as language and culture is evident. Thus, conflicting policy goals and assumptions are left to the implementation stage, but the legitimacy of the policy goals related to an employment focus is largely accepted by staff.

4.3 Policy structure

After discussing the political values of the reform and how these are considered on a local level, I want to examine the structural conditions of the policy. To refer back to the introduction of the analysis, my question concerning this part was:

How are the responsibilities divided through the reform?

By looking at these responsibilities, I will try to analyse the structural framework of the policy. Through the analysis on ideological assumptions of the policy, we saw that while local civil servants accepted the activation perspective of the policy, broader claims regarding integration as a complex policy problem were also argued for in the government investigation and by civil servants. As conflicting policy ideals often remain unresolved at the policy-making level, we can expect some conflicts in the structural build-up of the policy as well. Returning to Hasenfeld and Brock's (1991) model, this part of the analysis relates to the components authority, resources and program design.

In this section, I will consider how different issues regarding individual cases occur related to divisions of responsibilities between authorities. This will serve as an example of how organizational responsibilities are divided between authorities through the legal framework. These specific practical issues of how to work with different individuals can enable us to discuss the different policy instruments and their importance for implementation. Furthermore, I will analyse this in relation to the policy intentions discussed in the government investigation.

In section 4.2.1 of the analysis, I discussed two different perspectives set out in the government investigation of the workline and care/assistance. These perspectives assume different values as well as ways to consider integration. When considering the legal framework, it is therefore relevant to take account of the division of responsibilities in relation to these two themes. Secondly, we will examine how these divisions work in practice.

Assigning formal responsibility to the Public Employment Service as main implementing agency of the reform can be seen as highly symbolic and as a way to underline the importance of work. This is also noted by the investigator as an advantage of giving responsibility to the Public Employment Service⁸:

According to me, responsibility by the Public Employment Service would entail a further strengthening of the workline. The knowledge of the Public Employment Service regarding the actors in the labour market and the possibility for influence already during the asylum period would also be strengthened. With the Public Employment Service as responsible for the introduction, it would be

⁸ In the investigation, two possibilities are discussed: giving responsibility to the Migration Board or to the Public Employment Service.

clear to asylum seekers in Sweden that everyone has to support themselves financially.

(SOU 2008: 191)

The division of responsibility to the Public Employment Service as main actor is thus both consistent with the values promoted regarding activation policies and considered in line with the agency's professional expertise. This can thus be seen as a way to highlight the clarity and consistency of the policy intentions, albeit only symbolically.

In order to break the "caring" tradition which the investigator considered problematic in many local municipalities, the local municipalities do not have full responsibility for the group of newly arrived refugees:

The proposal means that the municipality is freed from comprehensive work regarding introduction benefit payments to individuals and it also means that part of the work which is being conducted by the refugee coordinators and others in the municipalities is transferred to the coach instead.

(SOU 2008: 74).

On the other hand, the local municipalities remain responsible for providing Swedish for immigrants and also get a new responsibility in providing cultural integration programs and municipalities thus become an important stakeholder in the policy process. This change in division of responsibilities can thus be seen as in line with the values and perspectives set out in the investigation. These intentions are also noted by both staff in the local municipality who comments that:

[R.J.]... Well a bit simplified it's been said that newly arrived refugees shouldn't be received by the social service when you arrive in Sweden...eh... you shouldn't have to be received by the social services unless you have social problems and are in need of more than financial assistance.

Similar views are expressed in some of the meetings, where staff from the social services note that they should not have any contact with these groups. Thus, the intentions of the government investigation are that individuals will have less contact with the local municipalities in terms of payments and benefits, as the main responsibility has shifted to the Public Employment Service. From a practical perspective, however, this division of responsibility has been more complex and it is questionable if the policy intentions in this case can be met. As Hasenfeld and Brock (1991) note, in terms of implementation we need to consider the legal power conferred to the implementing agency to enforce compliance with the policy, as well as the different stakeholders. We will therefore consider how these formal responsibilities are translated into practice.

4.3.1 Financial payments

Instead of the simple division of responsibility that I sketched out above, in practice, several authorities will still be involved in the integration process and the Public Employment Service will not have full responsibility.

For example, the Social Security agency (*Försäkringskassan*) will be responsible for paying out the establishment benefit, while the Tax office (*Skatteverket*) will provide the individuals with a social security number. Due to the coordination process, different administration routines and processing times of the authorities, this resulted in a financial gap, where refugees would have to wait for several weeks before the first payment of the establishment benefit could be completed. In this

sense, the legal power conferred to the Public Employment Service is limited, as the implementing agency does not have the power to ensure payments are issued correctly.

To resolve this issue, meetings were held in Malmö municipality to establish a routine for this and other policy “gaps”, where the local municipality were required to pay out “gap assistance” for a limited period of time. Part of this money can later be reimbursed from the state to the local municipality and the local municipality is concerned with keeping track of the different gap periods resulting from the reform.

[R.A]: And it’s also that the lump-sums won’t be enough. So then it’s even more important to keep track and be able to document so that this can be raised, so the lump-sums for the gaps can be raised.

[R.L]: The way it is now, it’s an 8000-10.000 SEK loss straight away for a simple case.

From this example, we can see that it is not always possible to successfully separate responsibility between state and local authorities. An important issue here is the responsibility local authorities have for their residents through the law for Social Services⁹. The local municipality thus has to assist the Public Employment Service in order for the reform to start successfully and so that the refugees are not left without any money for a substantial period of time. Furthermore, we can see that limited legal power has been directed to the Public Employment Service. This agency can therefore not singlehandedly enforce compliance with the policy, but is required to coordinate the work with other agencies. Moreover, financial resources becomes an important issue, as the local municipality may not be reimbursed for the extra expenses related to implementing the reform in terms of extra payments to refugees.

4.3.2 Categorisation

A related example which shows the difficulties in providing a complete structure for the program and to fulfil the intentions of the work line perspective is the categorisation of clients into the program and cooperation between authorities in relation to this.

In order to strengthen the work line, the government investigation points out the importance of participating in the program if the individual does not have any serious medical problems which affects participation (SOU, 2008: 107). In the government law, individual refugees can participate and receive economic benefits of 25%, 50%, 75% or 100% depending on their capacity to work. This decision is taken after a recommendation from a doctor, who the refugee sees at a local health care centre.

There are two main issues related to this relevant for the division of responsibilities. Firstly, the cooperation with the responsible regional health authority *Region Skåne* is essential for the program to work. In interviews and meetings, concern about this was expressed by civil servants from both the Public Employment Service and the local municipality. One respondent from the PES comments:

⁹ See SFS, 'Socialtjänstlag', (Socialdepartementet, 2001: 453).

[R.B]: Region Skåne has probably not really understood this... I should only mention Malmö because things are a bit different in smaller towns...

[I]: Mm

[R.B]...it.s easier there... but in Malmö they have... the Region might not have understood what an important role they play for investigating people's ill health.

The PES does not have any legal power in relation to this either and no extra resources such as doctors working specifically for the Public Employment Service to examine these clients. In the meetings with civil servants in the municipality, the difficulty to get a doctor's appointment was also brought up as a problem.

[R.H.]: But then you also have to be clear that it's difficult for our target group to even get a doctor's appointment. I mean, will the PES have their own doctor's surgery [laughing] or how will they do it?

From the perspective of the Public Employment Service, their work with the clients cannot begin properly until they know on what percentage an establishment plan should be set up and they are thus dependent on the health care system to start be able to start working with the clients. From some local municipality civil servants' perspective, this is seen as another problem where the Public Employment Service does not have knowledge about the complexity of this type of case work. A well-known problem in the local municipality regarding the health care system has thus been transferred to the new policy structure. This could thus be seen as another example of where conflicts are not solved at the policy-making level (Brodkin, 2006).

However, also the local municipality has a stake in this categorisation of clients. This is another "gap" where the local municipality will be required to pay complementary social assistance in those cases where the individuals do not reach the financial norm set out by the social services, if for example establishment benefit is only paid out 25%. In many cases, there will thus be extensive cooperation between the local social services departments and the Public Employment Service. Furthermore, despite the original intentions of the law, many individuals may be dependent on complementary social assistance, depending on whether clients are categorised as having full work capacity or not. This can be seen as an example where the clarity and consistency of the policy is not fulfilled. Ideologically, moving clients away from the social services can be seen as an accepted moral argument, but in practice, the legal structure of the policy does not achieve such a decisive change, as the Public Employment Service does not have the authority to pay out money to clients.

Another important issue which is illustrated here is the change in financial circumstances this reform brings to local municipalities. During the preparation meetings I attended, it was not yet clear how much money the local municipalities would be reimbursed for providing gap assistance and for supporting social assistance. Following the changing financial situation compared to when local municipalities achieved money for the introduction benefits from the state would thus be an interesting area for further research. It is however possible to note, that while the local social services have final responsibility for individuals who do not qualify for benefits financed by the state, it becomes very difficult to separate the workline from the "care/assistance" associated with the social services in practice. Instead, while the local municipality provides the final social security net,

individuals such as refugees who do not have “social problems” in the traditional role of the social services will nevertheless be dependent on their assistance, against the intentions of the law.

By looking at a few details of how the structural framework regarding the reform is built up, it is possible to see that the intentions as set out in the investigation are not always easy to fulfil. Rather, cooperation between the authorities becomes necessary. Furthermore, the significance of these policy gaps can also be questioned. For example, are all these gaps unintentional, due to a poor understanding of the different processes involved in practical issues? Or, are some gaps intentional as a way to shift responsibility? Either way, the examples above can all be seen as examples where unresolved issues at the policy-making level are reproduced at the implementing stage, due to limited legal authority, limited resources and the inconsistencies of policy through the program design.

4.4 Policy management

In the previous part, we looked at the policy structure through using the concepts of legal authority, resources and program design. The issues discussed gives us a perspective not only of the gaps in the policy structure, but also of how these gaps can be expected from the ideological discussions. In this part, I want to move from the structural to the organisational level of policy, by discussing the following question:

How are the responsibilities of the reform conceived and dealt with in practice?

As we saw previously, the policy structure demands coordination and cooperation from many authorities. Furthermore, different agencies are required to change their previous work with clients. From organization theory, we can see that organisational change and implementation depend on perceived legitimacy of the policy and the institutional framework of the organisation (Ingram and Clay 2000). Moreover, coordination and cooperation between departments is often seen as problematic (Lundin 2007), while social relations are important for solving conflicts (Granovetter 2001). To be able to understand these parts of the policy process, I want to look closer at the views on technical driving forces, the interorganizational network and power relations.

I have divided this part into two sections. First, I want to look at the ways civil servants consider the responsibilities of the reform. In one way, this is related to the values as discussed in the first part of the analysis, but also concern practical issues of resources. Secondly, I want to examine how the cooperation between authorities is perceived. By examining how the actors view their own and others’ organisational tasks, I hope to gain an understanding as to whether organisational problems may impede implementation, and how these issues relate to previous parts of the analysis.

4.4.1 Views on responsibility

In this section I will to discuss employees’ views on responsibility for this group of newly arrived refugees. This can be related to the discussion in part 4.2.2 of the analysis, where different views of integration were considered, with one more strict work line perspective and one perspective of care/assistance. Views on which organisation is best suited to work with this group can be related to different views on integration, but can also be seen as a way for staff to legitimise their own organisations.

For some civil servants in the local authority, it is considered positive that the Public Employment Service takes over responsibility for newly arrived refugees.

For example, one respondent states:

[R.J]: ... Well but one strength is of course that you are trying to eh... give the main responsibility... eeh... for the establishment measures to... to the Public Employment Service... that it becomes concentrated... that it is clear that it is ... labour market measures... which will be ... eh... offered and that...that it should be an efficient process for the newly arrived...

Similarly, the respondent from the Public Employment Service points to the change in focus which will be apparent when the PES is responsible:

[R.B]: [...] We will assume that... all individuals can and want to support themselves financially and that they can participate in different activities which will lead to self-sufficiency 100 per cent, that is forty hours a week...

[R.B]... it will mean a rather substantial difference... it's not that... that the municipalities have been compliant in any way...but we will have another focus which is much more... that is more clear especially regarding work... ehm... work comes before language courses for me... there are people who can work without knowing any Swedish...and there are above all people who can work and study Swedish and I have seen that many times before...it will work now during this...during the establishment reform as well.

In both quotes, the focus on work is seen by the respondents as one of the main benefits of the PES being responsible for the implementation of the reform. This perspective is also in line with the policy intentions of the reform. In this way, the policy can be seen as in line with the organisational legitimacy of the PES. By having a strong employment focus, the agency's legitimacy for working with this group is justified. Thus, the institutional framework of the PES and the "beliefs and shared understandings" (Ingram and Clay, 2004: 540) within this organisation can be seen as providing a good "fit" with the policy. The assumption made by the informant from the PES, that all clients are "job ready", can also be interpreted in line with this; by making this assumption the institutional legitimacy of working with this group is supported.

As a contrast to this perspective, some respondents use the care/assistance perspective to point to issues with giving responsibility to the PES. Here, the PES is seen as lacking a crucial resource – knowledge about this group. In the meetings between civil servants of the municipality, this was more obvious than in the interviews. It is often pointed out that PES does not realise the complexity of the situation for newly arrived refugees. Additionally, the PES is seen as not understanding many of the practical difficulties involved such as arranging childcare, waiting for a doctor's appointment and so on. There is often a concern that this practical knowledge and experience which the local municipality has achieved will be lost in the process, as the PES often looks for other solutions than those used by the local municipality.

For example, one respondent discusses the issue of health, and the ways the local municipality has been working with this group in health related issues:

[R.D]: What... what we do know of course is that... that many have very traumatic experiences which need... that you need help to treat... and perhaps tailor eh... education and treatment and so on...

[I]: Mm

[R.D]: And we have had that in Malmö for many years... Eh... So I hope that they don't lose that at the Public Employment Service...

[Mm]

[R.D]: For that is... I mean... then you can never get a person into work or fulltime if you lose that part... if there is a need to treat... then you don't stand a chance... Then you have them on social assistance.

The traumatic situation for the newly arrived refugees is discussed by other informants as well and in several meetings. In a meeting between the Public Employment Service and the local municipality, one civil servant from the local municipality points out that the group of women from Somalia is difficult to work with, because so many in this group are in very poor health and carry traumatic experiences. The civil servant poses the question to the PES as to what extent they will be able to look out for these individuals and create an establishment plan that will help them in a flexible way, enabling them to cope with other issues of settling in Sweden, such as visiting authorities and arranging childcare. Here, the civil servants in the local municipality can be seen as defending their own organisational legitimacy, through promoting their ideals of helping the individual from a more complex perspective and using a different 'institutional framework' (Ingram and Clay, 2000). The area of employment is the PES' area of expertise, but when other areas are considered, employees in the municipality see their own organisation as more knowledgeable, and thus more legitimate.

However, the civil servant from the PES also uses this wider integration perspective when discussing health issues as important for helping individuals in the program:

[R.B]: ...we have... suspicions that if you come from a war-torn country without any infrastructure there will be quite a lot of ill-health... sooner or later it will appear... Then we want to try to find it as soon as possible, so that you don't start a longer programme only for it to collapse six months later, right...

In this sense, a wider perspective on integration is also important for the PES in order to be able to fulfil their tasks. The tension between the focus on workline and care/assistance for the individual is thus apparent also in these views on responsibilities of the organisations and how to work with the refugees practically. This informant also underlines that in these cases, other groups of expertise will need to attend to these issues, thus emphasising the limits of legitimacy for the Public Employment Service in terms of working with this group. In this way, for the PES a balance must be made between the assumption that the clients are work-ready and the acknowledgement that this group is likely to need extra support through other channels.

For civil servants in the local municipality, the transfer of responsibility to the Public Employment Service can be seen in two perspectives. On the one hand, civil servants in the local municipality assert their own knowledge and expertise through their previous work with newly arrived refugees and they express doubts that the PES understand the complexity of the situation. In one way, this

could be seen as a competition for having clients in the organisation and thus securing work for the organization as well as maintaining the status quo. The local municipality as an organisation has a larger set of responsibilities for individuals which can be used to emphasise their organizational legitimacy. Through using this institutional framework of the municipality, the municipality is considered more capable of dealing with the group of newly arrived refugees if a complex view on integration is discussed. On the other hand, many respondents in the local municipality also express a positive view of the PES taking over responsibility. This is primarily mentioned in terms of employment, as the Public Employment Service is considered to have a greater expertise, as well as financial resources in this area. Thus, a possible interpretation could be that the local municipality employees resist this change in relation to the areas where the municipality has a stronger legitimacy in terms of working with this group.

Another point to note is that I have interviewed civil servants in different departments; hence, their 'stakes' in the take-over vary. The position of civil servants in the local organisation may therefore also affect their attitude to this reform, where those working closer to the clients may have a higher stake in "losing" clients to the PES¹⁰.

While it is impossible to draw any final conclusions of the motivations of civil servants for using different discourses, we can see that the different values as set out in the investigation are apparent. Furthermore, it is important to consider that the institutional framework and context, both internally and between organisations may impact attitudes to policy and organisational change.

4.4.2 Cooperation strategies

As we saw in the second part of the analysis, the structural framework of the reform requires extensive cooperation within and between organisations. What Hasenfeld and Brock (1991) label interorganizational networks is therefore a relevant concept for this part of the policy analysis. I cannot predict how this will work when the policy is in place, but I see this as an important part of the policy process in terms of understanding the organisational policy setting.

As the structural framework has many inbuilt coordination tasks between organisations, examining views on cooperation becomes relevant for understanding the policy context. How coordination and cooperation are managed between organizations can be seen as an expression of power relations between organisations as well as the stakes different agencies have in solving problems and participating in the policy implementation (Hasenfeld and Brock 1991; Lundin 2007). Moreover, organisations cannot always be expected to behave rationally in these situations, but often depend on social relations for problem-solving (Granovetter 2001). Considering views of cooperation and coordination is therefore an important part in understanding the institutional framework and management of policy.

For some respondents, cooperation is seen as unproblematic and does not pose as a greater impediment to succeeding with the reform. The respondent from the PES comments:

[R.B]: We are very used to cooperating at the Public Employment Service; otherwise we wouldn't have been able to handle a single thing of what we do...

¹⁰ For example, prior to the reform, five Work and Integration centres (AIC) in Malmö municipality have been working with newly arrived refugees during their introduction period. Partly as a result of the reform, an organisational restructuring has taken place, where the five centres have been reduced to two.

[1] Mmm

[R.B]: ... and you can tell as well that... both within the municipality and the state, people are capable of and good at, and used to cooperating.

Cooperation is here seen as unproblematic and as a natural part of the daily work required from staff at the Public Employment Service. A respondent from the local municipality also sees cooperation with the Public Employment Service as well-functioning.

[R.A]: ...and cooperation... yes, I think it's been good... we've been able to solve all those problems which we've seen and which we've been able to take measures against already now during the project stage...

However, the same respondent also notes that cooperation between the PES and the local municipality has previously been problematic in relation to working with newly arrived refugees:

[R.A]: Eh... I think that... what's important is that the PES gets the formal responsibility... We had been able to work like this really even without the reform... but it was all the time you know "come back when you speak Swedish"... so as it was then, the way I understood it... this cooperation between AIC, the Work and Integration Centre, and the PES could have been better... And I think that the municipality has struggled to improve it... many routines have been developed but.. it felt like eh... many refugees were a long way from the labour market... and many times... the municipality has struggled on its own...

Another respondent from the local municipality has a similar argument. The respondent is happy with the cooperation with the department of the Public Employment Service which deals with integration:

[R.D]: And there it's about building up something that is... where you are... you've [the PES] been in a position of dependency... you've been dependent on the municipality [...] But if it's not like that then the cooperation isn't that good.

Here, a clear power relation can be noted, where the interest of the PES to build cooperation in this instance is related to a perceived need of help from the local municipality to implement the policy. Meanwhile, the municipality has not previously been able to cooperate with the PES to receive help with the group of newly arrived refugees when the municipality has had the main responsibility.

In the meetings, problems of cooperation between the local municipality and the Public Employment Service are often discussed. However, some respondents also often defend the work of the PES and refer to certain individuals within the PES who are aware of the complexities of the integration process and who are working with the municipality to implement the changes. Creating channels for solving these issues is also noted as an important part of the preparation work for the implementing agency:

[R.B]: [...] what's been important is to develop the channels that we need to use once the reform has come into force, to develop these contacts, to win approval from our municipal and other state organisations for the mission so

that they gain an understanding for, who we are, why do we do the things we do and why do we need their help...?...

Establishing contacts between the different stakeholders and departments is thus seen as an important prerequisite for implementing the policy. This can be seen in relation to Granovetter's (2001) work, where social relations and contacts are often the preferred ways to solve problems between different institutions.

Cooperation can thus be seen as a key issue in the policy institutions. The issues of social relations as well as power or the stakes organisations have in the policy are important for understanding the interorganizational relations.

The respondents from the local municipality have experienced a limited interest from the PES when the municipality had the main responsibility for the newly arrived refugees. However, in the tasks where the PES is responsible, cooperation is promoted and achieved as they are dependent on the local municipality to perform the tasks. A similar pattern can be seen in the example with the health authorities. Here, the PES will be dependent on the willingness of the doctors to cooperate in order to perform their own task. In this sense cooperation between authorities can also be seen as a power relationship between the different agencies. In the case of the local municipality, they are always the last resort for financial aid and thus have very limited power to refuse to take on clients which are referred from the PES. For the PES however, acceptance of clients to different programs can vary, and the local municipality have not always been able to convince them of accepting clients. For the current reform, however, channels of cooperation are important for the implementing agency and they are instead dependent on stakeholders such as the local health care centres, who may not have a particular interest or economic stake in the reform.

Again, a difference between the state authority and the local council may be noted. For the local municipality, a failure in cooperation with the PES regarding these refugees will only result in these refugees remaining in the municipality programs. A failure for the PES on the other hand, will mean that the individuals who do not gain employment or other means of support will be re-actualised to the local municipality after the two-year period. Thus, as well as different organisational values and culture, the particular stakes involved in the program's success should be taken in consideration.

From discussing these issues, we cannot make a prediction of the actors' behaviour in the implementation process. However, by following different policy models and examining this topic from an organisational perspective, we can hypothesise that organisational values and strategies will influence the behaviour of staff when carrying out the policy and working with clients. The policy structure and organisational context can be seen as setting the scene for the policy delivery system as well as the output. The ways actors perceive their own organisational responsibility and the necessity to cooperate are likely to influence their behaviour further along in the implementation process.

4.5 Discussion

In the discussion, I want to start by summarising the findings of the analysis. Thereafter, I want to link these issues to the starting point of this thesis, namely the question of state responsibility and legitimacy.

In the analysis we have moved from the ideological policy goals to practical implementation concerns through looking at policy documents, the structural policy framework and the institutional framework of two implementing organisations. So, what conclusions can we draw from these findings? From the first part of the analysis, we could see that the political goal of integration has been narrowed to a discussion of access to the labour market. However, other integration goals such as language learning and cultural understanding are also included in the broader policy ideals. The moral assumptions of a “work-first” rhetoric is thus complemented by broader understandings of the integration process.

This ambivalence regarding what entails a successful integration process is also reflected in the ways civil servants regard the reform, supporting the moral assumptions of activation on the one hand while also pointing out other aspects of the integration process. Moreover, the policy structure also reflects this through the many gaps of the reform where the Public Employment Service has limited implementing power and municipalities’ remain responsible for various aspects of the reform, especially to be able to cover important gaps which have not been resolved through the institutional policy framework.

In the third part, we also discovered that the institutional framework of organisations is important for understanding how change is accepted or rejected. Here, support for policy change can be related to whether the organisational culture and values are consistent with the moral assumptions of the policy and hence whether the policy is seen as legitimate. Moreover, power relations between the organisations as well as interpersonal relations between staff can be seen as important.

Many of the problems pointed out by staff prior to the reform took place are also noted in a report which evaluates the first 100 days of the reform (Rosenqvist 2011). For example, successful municipality integration programs are being closed due to a lack of funding, although the municipalities remain responsible for other immigrant groups than the newly arrived refugees. This can support the view that problems at the implementation stage are issues which were left unresolved at the policy-making level. For example, the lack of clarity in terms of different authorities’ responsibilities which have been noted in this thesis, was pointed out as a problem at an earlier stage by various municipalities (Integrations- och jämställdhetsdepartementet 2009).

At the organisational level we can see that organisational issues related to different institutional frameworks and the perceived legitimacy of policy can be solved to a certain extent through the interpersonal relationships of staff between the organisations. Whether or not these relations are enough for solving the inbuilt policy problems as well as overcoming different organisational perspectives remains to be seen. However, this finding is important as it could mean that there may be other issues at stake than that of the institutional framework. Or, rather, embedded in the institutional framework may be a certain flexibility and communication strategy between staff in different public agencies in order to manage the work related to welfare administration. In one sense, this may be a necessary strategy to be able to deal with these client groups in an area of welfare administration which have seen various changes in terms of changing organisational responsibilities. To see how these relationships are played out in practice is therefore an important topic for future research in the area.

In this thesis, we have seen that the two areas of ideology and practical policy implementation are closely related. Civil servants accept the moral arguments of ideology, while practical problems can

impede the changes and contradict policy goals. In terms of state responsibility, this can be seen as one of the key issues in the reform. The division of responsibility is both of ideological and symbolic importance to strengthen the activation perspective of the reform by giving responsibility to the Public Employment Service and limiting the influence of the municipalities' social service departments. On the other hand, the issue of responsibility between these different authorities is not actually resolved, but a potential for future conflicts. This can be seen as a result of the narrowing of policy problem and goal, where the main emphasis of the policy is to get people into the employment market. By constructing a narrow policy goal such as access to employment, and avoiding more thorny issues related to immigration such as access to housing, health care and child care facilities, large responsibilities are left with the local authorities. Moreover, as social assistance has become the main benefit for those who are not covered by the state unemployment system, local municipalities have the final responsibility for ensuring that their residents have a basic means of support. In this sense, some of the issues of this policy reform merely reflect the unresolved issue of the 'dual welfare model', where parallel support systems exist. On the other hand, the recentralisation for this specific group in terms of the reform relieves the municipality from this particular burden of support in those cases where individual refugees do not require additional social assistance.

These issues are also important in terms of achieving state legitimacy. In a policy reform which focuses on a narrow goal such as achieving increased employment for newly arrived refugees, results can more easily be measured and perhaps also successfully achieved. However, if "integration" is set out as a policy problem which the reform aims to solve, this narrow focus can become problematic. If citizens expect governments to be able to deliver on these broader policy goals, legitimacy may be questioned if larger integration problems persist. Furthermore, as important parts of the implementation are left to various private actors, the link between state policy and implementation may be even harder to achieve than when the responsibility were left to local municipalities. Here, limited accountability and control of private actors means that political legitimacy and responsibility are further removed from the policy results.

5. Conclusion

In this thesis I have considered the establishment reform for newly arrived refugees from a political ideological perspective as well as from a practical perspective of policy implementation. Moving between these two perspectives has been fruitful in various ways. Firstly, it has been clear that problems that were present in the pre-government investigation have been transferred to the implementation stage in the form of various conflicting ideals regarding the concept of integration. Secondly, ideology can be considered important as the ideological assumptions in the policy are adopted by civil servants. Thirdly, by looking closer at the implementation stage, we find that this ideology to some extent can be seen as conflicting with the institutional framework of the local municipality. From a perspective of organization theory, we would have expected this to be a serious threat to the policy implementation as institutions attempt to maintain their own institutional legitimacy. However, while this partly seems to be the case, we see that interpersonal relationships of individuals between the different organizations can overcome these policy problems. This could be seen as a complementary level of ideology, where civil servants in these organisations develop strategies of flexibility and mutual understandings to manage their own responsibilities in a changing environment.

6. Executive summary

A reform regarding the integration of newly arrived refugees into Swedish society (the establishment reform) has been introduced by the Swedish government in 2010. The background to this reform is the perceived failure of achieving successful integration of immigrants, particularly in the labour market, when local municipalities had main responsibility for this group. Through the reform, the responsibility is centralised to the state authority the Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*). Moreover, a certain element of privatisation is introduced, as private coaches (*etableringslots*) are being paid to help the refugees in terms of job-seeking and other activities.

Through changes in policy, issues of state legitimacy and responsibility are often actualised. The question of how states manage the responsibilities expected by their citizens is important both from a normative ideological perspective and from the practical administrative realities of policy. In this thesis the reform is examined both in terms of its ideological assumptions and the implementation of the reform in a local municipality. Thus, the main purpose of the thesis is to *analyse the reform from a perspective of welfare policy and to analyse the implementation process of the reform.*

The reform can be situated in a changing environment regarding immigration and integration. After mainly receiving labour market immigrants in the 1950-1960s, Swedish immigration patterns have shifted to include mostly refugee and family reunification immigrants. In the 1980s, municipalities took over responsibility for immigrants, as they were considered to be better able to provide assistance to these groups. Municipalities were also required to offer introduction programmes including Swedish language learning and labour market measures, although local efforts varied greatly. From a European Union perspective, integration programmes are encouraged by EU soft policy and several countries have increased focus on language and civic information courses, as well as requiring citizens to participate in citizenship tests.

The reform can also be seen from a theoretical perspective of activation. The labour market perspective of activation is related to other neoliberal reforms in advanced welfare state and signifies a changed relationship between states and their citizens. Unemployed individuals are increasingly required to participate in activation or “work first” programmes as a condition to receiving benefits. Meanwhile, governments have abandoned macroeconomic attempts to achieve full employment, and activation measures can thus be seen as a way to focus on the supply side of labour. As a result, unemployment is largely “individualised” as part of a trend where individuals are required to take greater responsibility for their own life situation. From a Swedish perspective, a “dual welfare model” can be seen as citizens who are not covered by state unemployment insurance are moved to social assistance provided by the local municipalities and often required to participate in local activation programmes.

From a practical policy perspective, the theoretical perspectives of implementation and organization theory were used. Implementation theory can shed lights on the practical issues of achieving policy change in practice, as policy intentions are not always realised and translated into successful policy outcomes. I use the political economy model developed by Hasenfeld and Brock (1991) where policy implementation is seen as “iterative”, focusing on both the policy-making activities and organisational aspects, thus combining top-down and bottom-up approaches to implementation. Crucial aspects in this model are apart from the policy-making stage different policy instruments, critical actors, driving forces and the service delivery system.

From an organization theory perspective, focus is on the difficulty to achieve change within organisations, something which may impede policy implementation. The “embeddedness” of social relations, such as social networks and personal relations, is seen as an important feature of organisations (Granovetter, 2001). Moreover, the institutional framework of organisations in terms of ideological values and shared understandings within organisations may be barriers to change as institutions attempt to maintain the status quo (Ingram and Clay, 2000). Cooperation between organisations can therefore be seen as difficult to achieve if institutions have different institutional frameworks.

To answer the research question, the methods of documentary analysis, observations and semi-structured interviews are used. For the documentary analysis the pre-legislative government report *Egenansvar – med professionellt stöd* (SOU, 2008) is used. I participated in meetings and conducted interviews with civil servants in Malmö municipality and the Public Employment Service in Malmö.

For the analysis, the policy model of Hasenfeld and Brock (1991) was adapted to include the three areas of policy discourse, policy structure and policy management. In the policy discourse part, the government investigation as well as civil servants’ understandings of the policy discourse were examined. Under the heading policy structure, the legal framework and the formal organisational responsibility were considered, specifically in relation to structural gaps in the policy structure. In the policy management part, the institutional framework of the organisation was considered in relation to civil servants’ views on organisational responsibility and cooperation strategies.

The findings of the analysis are summarised below:

- The government investigation set out two different perspectives on integration, one in line with the activation perspective which emphasised work as key to integration. The other perspective underlined the “caring” attitude of the social services as a reason for the previous failure of the integration process. While the first perspective was promoted, a broader understanding of integration was also evident in the government report for example through discussions of language learning and cultural integration programs. This can be seen as conflicting policy ideals which are left unresolved at the policy-making stage. Moreover, this can be considered as a “narrowing” of the policy goal where access to the labour market replaces the larger goal of integration.
- Civil servants accept the normative ideology of the activation perspective through supporting the “work-line” elements of the reform. However, they also express ambivalence in relation to this as they also emphasise the importance of broader integration goals such as health and language learning.
- From the policy structure discussion we discovered that the formal division of responsibility between authorities could be seen to be of symbolic importance but failed to give the implementing agency, the Public Employment Service clear legal authority for implementing changes. Instead, the division of responsibilities resulted in many policy gaps in terms of for example payments which require extensive cooperation between authorities. In this sense, conflicts at the policy-making stage have been transferred to the local policy level.

- In terms of categorising clients, financial interests also play an important part, as local municipalities are required to pay out financial assistance during the “gap period” while not being guaranteed full reimbursement for these costs.
- In terms of responsibility, local civil servants are positive to the Public Employment Service taking over responsibility, but also fear that the PES does not have a broad competence in regards to practical integration issues. The Public Employment Service’s work with newly arrived refugees can be seen as legitimate when respondents discuss employment issues whereas the local municipality or other authorities are seen as more capable of dealing with other issues related to integration.
- Cooperation between authorities is seen as unproblematic by some respondents. Others point out that the Public Employment Service is mostly willing to cooperate when they are dependent on the local municipality for help. An interpretation is that this is an expression of the power relationship between the PES and the municipality, where the municipality as the agency of last resort through the social services legislation has less power to refuse clients than the PES.
- Establishing channels of cooperation on an interpersonal level between staff in the two organisations can be seen as a strategy to bridge the conflicts which are set out through the structural policy framework. This could point to a different level of the institutional framework of the organisations, where flexibility and communication are important tools for managing work responsibilities in a changing area of welfare management.

From this thesis we can see the importance of studying both the ideological and practical aspects of policy. By considering the ideological and political assumptions of the policy-making stage through analysing the pre-legislative documents, we found conflicting policy ideals. These ideals can be seen through the civil servants’ discourses as well, and can also explain why certain problems remain in the policy structure. Moreover, by considering the implementation stage in terms of the preparation process, we could see how issues of legitimacy and institutional ideals were important for understanding civil servants’ claims regarding their own organisational responsibility. Here, we can both see why there may be grounds for conflicts, but also how cooperation strategies can bridge these inbuilt conflicts. Furthermore, by returning to the original issue of state responsibility, we can ascertain that while responsibility is recentralised, the reform takes place within the existing “dual welfare model” system, which means that conflicts between state and local authorities are likely to persist in relation to those cases which are not fully managed by the Public Employment Service. Moreover, determining responsibility for the integration process may be increasingly problematic with the introduction of private companies into the process.

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8. Appendix: Interview material

List of informants

Respondent	Meeting(s)	Interview
A	X	X
B		X
C	X	
D		X
E	X	
F		X
G	X	
H	X	X
I	X	
J	X	X
K	X	
L	X	
M	X	X
N	X	
O	X	
P	X	
Q	X	

Statement

The interview will be used in my thesis where I am writing about how the reform is being implemented in the municipality of Malmö. What I am interested in this interview is how the staff who works with the reform perceive the purpose of the reform, as well as possibilities and obstacles regarding the implementation work. Everything you say will be anonymous and confidential and you are of course not required to answer all the questions. If you have any question regarding the material and/or your participation, you can contact me at any time. Can I have your consent to record the interview?

Interview questions

What work responsibilities do you have today?

Can you describe how you have worked with the reform?

In the meetings there has been talk regarding certain policy gaps. Why do you think the gaps have come about? → How have the gaps been handled?

Do you experience that there are any obstacles for the reform to be implemented successfully?

What do you consider the main strengths and/or weaknesses of the reform?

What do you think the consequences will be after the 1st of December (2010) (regarding clients, the departments, the organisation)?

How would you describe the political purpose of the reform? → What is your opinion about the political purpose?

Do you think the political purpose of the reform will be achieved?

How do you think the introduction programmes and integration work today?

Which responsibility do you think the municipality and the state respectively should have in this question?

What do you think will change for your organisation as a result of the reform?

What possibilities/problems do you see in terms of your work?

Have you experienced any resistance against the reform?

How do you experience to cooperation between you and [the PES/ the municipality] today?

Regarding which issues do you cooperate?

Statement in Swedish

Intervjun kommer att användas i min uppsats där jag är intresserad av hur reformen implementeras i Malmö stad. Det jag är intresserad av i den här intervjun är hur personalen som jobbar med reformen upplever syftet med reformen och dessutom hinder och möjligheter för att implementera reformen. Allting du säger kommer att vara anonymt och konfidentiellt och du behöver självklart inte besvara alla frågor. Om du har några frågor om materialet och din medverkan kan du kontakta mig närsomhelst. Kan jag få ditt samtycke till att spela in intervjun?

Interview questions in Swedish

Vad innebär ditt arbete/enhetens arbete idag?

Kan du beskriva lite kort hur du har arbetat med reformen?

På mötena har det pratats om de här glappen när det gäller ekonomisk ersättning. Varför tror du att glappen har uppstått?

Hur har ni hanterat detta?

Upplever du att det finns några hinder för att reformen ska implementeras framgångsrikt i Malmö stad?

Vad tycker du är styrkorna/svagheter med reformen?

Vad tror du att konsekvenserna kommer att bli efter den 1e december? (klienter, statskontoret, organisationen, socialtjänsten)

Hur skulle du beskriva det politiska målet med reformen? (Vad tycker du om själva syftet/målet?)

Tror du att det politiska syftet med reformen kommer att uppnås? Varför/varför inte?

Hur upplever du att flyktingmottagandet och integrationen fungerar idag?

Vilka fördelar/nackdelar ser du med att kommunen/Arbetsförmedlingen har huvudansvaret?

Vad tror du kommer att förändras för dig/er i och med reformen?

Vilka problem/möjligheter ser du för ert arbete?

Vilket ansvar tycker du att kommunen respektive staten bör ha?

Upplever du att det finns något motstånd mot reformen från något håll?

Hur upplever du att samarbetet mellan er och Arbetsförmedlingen funkar idag?

I vilka frågor samarbetar ni?

Research Questions

Interview Questions

