

Unaccompanied minors in Bremen

A case study on how empowerment is implemented in the
work with young refugees in Bremen

Abstract

The number of people escaping from wars and conflicts to European welfare states is increasing. Many of them are children; some come as unaccompanied minors (UMs), fleeing without parents or any other responsible family member, entering and living in the country of refuge on their own. The “United Nations” (UN) and its “Convention on the Rights of the Child” from 1989 secures them special protection in any country of refuge. How does Germany and in particular the federal city state of Bremen support UMs? This case study investigates policies and practices for UMs in Bremen and applies empowerment theory. Accordingly, the focus of the thesis will be on the policy-implementation of empowerment-based goals. Withal, empowerment is understood as participation. How do stakeholders in fact participate UMs? The research retrieves qualitative evidence from semi-structured interviews with stakeholders in Bremen. Findings demonstrate a discrepancy between the obligation to participate and its implementation.

Keywords: Unaccompanied minors, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, empowerment theory, participation, Bremen, implementation

Word count: 21 920

Acknowledgements

Initially, I want to thank all people who participated in this research. Without them this thesis would not have been possible.

I take this opportunity to also express gratitude to the “Centre for European Studies” for their financial support of my fieldwork in Bremen.

Furthermore, I wish to express my sincere thanks to my supervisor Moira Nelson, who gave me useful feedback.

I also want to thank Cecilia, Claudia, Jakob and Kai, who gave me helpful advices and helped me editing this thesis.

Most notably, I am grateful to my parents and my family for supporting me my entire life and Kai and my friends for their great assistance throughout the whole process of this research.

Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	Motivation	1
1.2	Research question and design	3
1.3	Structure of the thesis	4
2	Background	5
2.1	The international recognition of UMs	5
2.2	The state of play in Germany	6
2.3	Policies for UMs in Bremen.....	9
2.4	The discourse on UMs in Germany and Bremen	14
2.5	Previous research.....	15
3	Theoretical framework.....	17
3.1	Empowerment theory	17
3.1.1	The concept of participation.....	23
3.2	Implementation theory	24
4	Methodology	26
4.1	Qualitative case study design	26
4.2	Data collection.....	28
4.2.1	Operationalisation	28
4.2.2	Framing and conducting the interviews	29
4.2.3	Recording the interviews.....	31
4.2.4	Method of analysis	31
4.3	Validity, reliability and generalisability.....	31
4.4	Limitations	32
5	Analysis.....	34
5.1	Assignments of stakeholders	34
5.2	Implementing participation	38
5.2.1	Informing.....	38
5.2.2	Consulting	42
5.2.3	Cooperating	43
5.2.4	Participation practices of Refugio Bremen e.V.....	45
5.3	Discussion	46

6	Conclusion	50
7	References.....	53
	Appendix 1.....	60
	Appendix 2.....	62
	Appendix 3.....	65
	Appendix 4.....	69

1 Introduction

1.1 Motivation

For several reasons, people are forced to leave their country of origin. They escape from wars, conflicts, poverty or natural disasters (European Commission, 2010). People fear or have already experienced violence, torture, displacement or persecution due to the current crisis in the Arab world and (civil) wars in Syria or Somalia and seek protection in inter alia European countries. The number of refugees arriving in countries such as Sweden, Italy or Germany and applying for asylum is rising sharply.

European welfare states struggle in managing this rising number of asylum applications, while they dispose social security systems that provide resources for those people. The current debate in these countries goes back to the question of how to handle the great number of refugees and asylum claims, without disregarding the responsibility of being places of refuge. There are no common policies unifying European welfare states, but various policies and standards for refugees and asylum seekers. This study focuses on the German federal state of Bremen.

In 2015 300,000 asylum applications are expected to be lodged in Germany; it would be the highest value for more than 20 years¹ (Zeit Online, 2015a). Thereby, the responsibility for asylum seekers is distributed among the German federal states. Bremen² faces a similar trend. In 2014 approximately 2,200 refugees arrived, but in 2015 more than 3,000 refugees are expected to seek asylum in Bremen. In February 2015 alone, the Bremer social security office has predicted 400 refugees to come, which would be five times more than in February 2014 (Weser-Kurier Digital, 2015d).

Even more than adults, children are highly vulnerable in wars and conflicts in their countries of origin and indeed strongly dependent on the protection of their parents and family. Accordingly, primarily the UN “Convention on the Rights of the Child” (CRC) defines and justifies the special need of protection of children. Nevertheless, many children are forced to escape

¹ In comparison, in 1994 322,000 asylum applications were recorded by the German “Federal Office for Migration and Refugees” (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF)) (Zeit Online, 2015a).

² In Germany the principle of the federation applies and constitutes 16 different federal states. Bremen is a German federal state in Northern Germany with the two cities Bremerhaven and Bremen. The federal state has a total population of 654,744, whereby 546,451 people live in the city of Bremen (Statistisches Landesamt Bremen, 2013: 10) that the thesis focuses on.

without being accompanied by their parents or other responsible family members, experiencing the escape on their own.

Refugee children seeking protection in another country, other than their country of origin, by themselves are called unaccompanied minors (UMs)³ and are also the subject of this research. Children mostly become UMs through the separation of the family during their escape, forced marriages in their country of origin, potential marriages in Europe or the separation of the family during a war conflict (EMN, 2014). Young refugees arriving in a country without any responsible family member generates a special need of protection in the entered country. In 2011 the number of asylum applications of UMs, lodged in 69 countries, added up to 17,700 and are particularly in countries such as Belgium, Sweden, Germany and the United Kingdom, which record the largest numbers of UMs claiming asylum (UNHCR, 2012). Thereby, 70 percent of all UMs seeking asylum in Germany were granted international protection in 2014 (EMN, 2014). There is no common way of aiding UMs in the European Union (EU) or Germany, although they are strongly dependent on public support and the provision of accommodation, sustenance, health care, education et cetera. In Germany, protection for refugees, asylum seekers and UMs and their asylum procedures are centrally regulated while each federal state hosts highly different numbers of UMs and is responsible for matters such as their accommodation and social support (Bundesministerium des Innern, 2015).

According to the Bremish “Senator of the Interior”, Ulrich Mäurer, nearly all UMs arrive in a few larger cities (Radio Bremen, 2014) like Hamburg, Berlin or Frankfurt on the Main (BAMF, 2009: 21), whereby Bremen ranks as the eighth place⁴ of all German cities in 2013 (Die Senatorin für Soziales, Kinder, Jugend und Frauen, 2014: 3). In October 2014 alone, 342 UMs came to Bremen. Also the number of children taken into care depicts a great rise. Thereby, the federal state of Bremen, its “Senator for Social Affairs, Children, Youth and Women”, Anja Stahmann and the “Youth Welfare Office Bremen” (Amt für Soziale Dienste Bremen) has set quality standards for the first contact and accommodation of UMs in Bremen in 2013 (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013). These aim to steer the more general work with UMs and takes up the concept of empowerment as one guiding principle of action. Furthermore, it refers to the participation directive and the right to wish and vote in the “Youth Welfare Services” (Jugendhilfe) (§ 5 “German Social Act Book Eight” (Sozialgesetzbuch Aches Buch – Kinder- und Jugendhilfe (SGB VIII)). Accordingly, young people in residential education would like to and should cooperate in decisions about how they live their life and

³ This thesis interchangeably refers to UMs, young refugees, children, youths, young people et cetera in order to not exclusively use the term UMs which can be considered as highly stigmatising. It is of slight interest whether these are children or youths. However, object of this research are exclusively minor refugees who come to Bremen unaccompanied. I do not use the term unaccompanied asylum-seeking children since in Bremen the majority of UMs does not apply for asylum but a “tolerated stay” which will be defined later. No youths is excluded from this research by reasons of his particular residence status.

⁴ Thereby, Bremen is the tenth biggest city and the smallest federal state in Germany.

reside and according to which rules they make their everyday life in Bremen (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 27). Participation is supposed to have an influence on the development of young people to responsible and socially competent personalities (ibid.: 8). There is also an essential discourse on participation promoted by the main representative of UMs, the “Bundesfachverband Unbegleitete Minderjährige Flüchtlinge e.V.” (BUMF). The latter claims a paradigm shift of recognising UMs as actors capable of acting instead of dependent victims.

Participation is therefore the focus of this thesis and considered as an important part of empowerment, which vice versa is expected to significantly facilitate the integration of UMs into society. However, in the context of a great increase of UMs staying in Bremen, it is questionable to what extent Bremen can still cherish the empowerment and participation aim.

Bremen is considered to lack resources for refugees and asylum seekers that guarantee them an appropriate environment, services and support. Accordingly, the Refugee Council Bremen refers to a great lack of appropriate accommodation in Bremen and refers to the situation of UMs as a “disaster” (Taz, 2015). UMs do not, as intended, spend only a few days in the “Central Reception Centre” (Zentrale Aufnahmestelle (Zast)) but rather weeks or months, whereby the care in the Zast would not be adequate. These forms of mass accommodation are considered to “deny people’s eligibility for participation and would make them sick” (ibid.). The human rights organisation, “Pro Asyl” claims that governing authorities in Bremen would be overloaded and significantly lack personnel resulting in an ad hoc policy. This would however aggravate a fair and constitutional asylum procedure and lead to intolerable months-long latencies of the registration, hearing and decision process (ibid.).

1.2 Research question and design

The objects of analysis are stakeholders working with UMs in Bremen. Referring to the broad empowerment principle and participation aims in the above-mentioned quality standards as well as participation obligations in the SGB VIII, this research aims to assess the implementation of empowerment-based participation by those stakeholders. It leads to the research question (RQ) of this thesis, investigating:

How do stakeholders⁵ in Bremen aid in the empowerment of UMs?

⁵ Various actors directly work with UMs. The research also integrates superior organisations (“Refugio Bremen e.V.” and “Fluchtraum Bremen e.V.”), which also represent UMs in Bremen. I refer to the term “stakeholders” in order to indicate that actors are supposed to have an interest in the success of their work and aid for UMs.

Accordingly, the research design is a qualitative case study with an explorative analysis of the role of stakeholders in the empowerment process of young refugees. The research involves six particular stakeholders in Bremen that all directly address and work with young refugees. Interviews with an official guardian and a case manager for UMs from the Youth Welfare Office Bremen, the “Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen”, a caretaker in a residential home for UMs and the two non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and associations Refugio Bremen e.V. and Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. are conducted.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured as followed. Initially, the background section introduces the reader to the general recognition of UMs in the international and national legal sphere. It further depicts the state of play and the general discourse on UMs in Germany and with a focus on Bremen as well as previous research.

The theoretical part elaborates on empowerment theory and its dimension of participation and further introduces implementation theory.

Subsequently, I introduce the reader to my qualitative case study design and the methodological choice of conducting interviews. The case and sample selection and the operationalisation of participation of UMs will be also outlined.

The analysis presents findings from the interviews and discusses them in detail.

Finally, I state concluding remarks and further implications.

2 Background

2.1 The international recognition of UMs

How does international law regard UMs? This background section initially considers how the UN perceives UMs.

The “UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees” from 1951 has established a definition of a refugee. He⁶ is defined as any person who fears persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion and who is outside the country of his nationality while being unable, fearing or unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country (Article 1 A. (2); UNHCR, 2010: 14). Article 23 determines the obligation of all contracting states to ensure refugees the same treatment concerning public relief and assistance as accorded to their nationals (*ibid.*: 24-25). Indeed, young refugees escape for the same reasons as adult refugees and are covered by the convention.

The “Hague Protection of Minors Convention” from 1961 determines responsibilities for the protection of minors. It has been signed by 13 nation states, mostly EU member states, which appeal to their prevailing national valid legislation as being responsible for the protection of UMs (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 6).

UMs are also targeted by the CRC determining children’s special need for protection. Accordingly, a child is every human being younger than 18 years (Article 1; UN, 1989). Besides, it introduces the concept of the best interests of the child, stating: “In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration” (Article 3; *ibid.*). In Article 22 the CRC directly refers to young refugees. It claims that states “shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee [...] shall, whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance [...]” (Article 22 (1); *ibid.*). “In cases where no parents or other members of the family can be found, the child shall be accorded the same protection as any other child permanently or temporarily deprived of his family environment for any reason [...]” (Article 22 (2); *ibid.*).

⁶ Due to a better readability, this thesis exclusively refers to the male gender. As a matter of course, it generates the female form.

Furthermore, in 1997 also the “UN High Commissioner for Refugees” (UNHCR) has introduced guidelines for dealing with UMs. First of all, it defines UMs as minors who are separated from both parents and are not being cared for by an adult who by law or custom has responsibility to do so (UNHCR, 1997: 1). Thereby, the UNHCR refers to the basic child care principle of the best interest of the child which responsible authorities have to comply with (ibid.: 1). Thus, children who seek asylum are entitled to special care and protection (ibid.: 2).

Young refugees are internationally recognised and certain cornerstones for aid for young refugees in receiving countries are set. This research particularly investigates the situation of UMs in Germany.

2.2 The state of play in Germany

How does German law include UMs? And what are respective policies in place?

Germany has signed the Hague Protection of Minors Convention (section 2.1) and thus guarantees that young refugees are integrated in the prevailing valid German legislation. Accordingly, the SGB VIII obtains for the special protection of UMs. Within, those are object of measures of the Youth Welfare Services (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 6). Accordingly, “Youth Welfare Service Organisations” also called “provider” are either public or voluntary and responsible for general aid for UMs. Additionally, the “German Civil Code” (Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch (BGB)) states that in the absence of their parents children need a guardian.

The SGB VIII basically defines “unaccompanied” as every minor who is not in the company of the primary carer or guardian when entering and further staying in Germany (§ 7 (1) 5. & 6. SGB VIII; Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Landesjugendämter, 2014: 7). Foreseen, the separation is expected to last (ibid.). A “minor” is defined as everyone who is under the age of 18 years and thus a child or youth (§ 7 (1) 1. & 2. SGB VIII; ibid.), which refers to the legal full age in Germany of 18 years.

§ 42 (1) 3. SGB VIII directly integrates young refugees. It states that if a foreign child or youth enters Germany unaccompanied and if there is no guardian inland, the Youth Welfare Office is obliged to take the former into custody⁷. Within, the issue of UMs depicts an independent criterion for the Youth Welfare Office to take a child into care (BAMF, 2009: 30). According to § 6 (2) SGB VIII foreigners can only claim those services when they have, by law or “tolerated stay”⁸, their ordinarily residence inland.

⁷ This thesis interchangeably refers to the account of “taking a child into custody” and “taking a child into care”.

⁸ A “tolerated stay” can be defined as a suspension of deportation. In contrast to asylum, a person’s residence is only tolerated, but not permitted.

How are responsibilities distributed? The Youth Welfare Office for the area, in which the minor stays, is responsible to take the young refugee into care and conduct his clearing phase (section 2.3). Furthermore, it is also in charge for further support within the Youth Welfare Services. Therefore, the primary responsible public authority for UMs is the local Youth Welfare Office (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Landesjugendämter, 2014: 13-14).

In how far does the SGB VIII also direct participation pattern? According to § 1 (1) SGB VIII, every youth has the right to an encouragement of his development and education to an autonomous and socially competent personality. In that sense, § 5 SGB VIII introduces the right of youths to wish and vote. They are entitled to choose between facilities and services of different providers. Besides, youths are supposed to articulate wishes concerning the arrangement of aid and have to be informed about that right. § 8 SGB VIII makes participation a legal assignment. Accordingly, youths have, according to their development status, to participate in all decisions of the public Youth Welfare Services pertaining to them (§ 8 (1) SGB VIII). Moreover, youths have the right to address the Youth Welfare Office in any issue concerning parenting or development (§ 8 (2) SGB VIII). UMs have to be further cautioned in order to know their rights in administrative procedures and entitled to counselling (§ 8 (3) SGB VIII). Indeed, § 8 SGB VIII concerns decisions and processes that affect and organise circumstances of youths' lives (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 8) With the implementation of the German "Child Protection Act" in 2012 the existing participation aim has been even expanded by § 45 (2) 3. SGB VIII, introducing the right to choose the facility, in which youths are cared for full- or part-time, and its location and to lodge an appeal in that facility (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 8).

§ 36 SGB VIII determines the involvement of youths in the "Help Planning" (Hilfeplangespräch), which focuses on the individual need of support and takes place between the end of the clearing phase and further actions. For young refugees it is supposed to involve the clarification of residential perspectives, education, medical and therapeutic needs and the securing of follow-up actions either in the Youth Welfare Services or by relatives, whereby the primary consideration is always the best interests of the child (ibid.: 23). The wishes and choices of youths have to be met as long as these do not cause disproportionate additional costs.

UMs have to pass through the same residential procedures as adult refugees. Inasmuch, UMs in Germany have to apply for either asylum or a tolerated stay. The latter is no legal residence permit (§ 60a "Residence Act") but rather means that the deportation of a person is suspended. In contrast, asylum implies that the residence of a person is granted as states in Article 16a of the "German Constitution" (Deutsches Grundgesetz (GG) and the "Asylum Procedure Act" from 1982. However, while adult refugees apply for both themselves at the "Foreigners' Registration Office", UMs in Germany have to be assisted by their guardian when they are under sixteen years old and do not yet have the full legal authority (§ 12 (1) Asylum Procedure Act; BAMF, 2010: 1 & 3).

From the age of 14 years all irregular entrants are submitted to criminal identification (§ 16 (1) Asylum Procedure Act & § 49 (6) Residence Act), which is generally undertaken by the police in cooperative administrative assistance for the Foreigners' Registration Office and that is supposed to ascertain that a refugee has not yet been registered in any other member state of the EU. It includes the taking of a photograph and the recording of the fingerprint (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 13). Indeed, in 2013 the "European Court of Justice" (ECJ) has judged that the responsibility for the minor lies with the respective country in which he stays after he has lodged an application for asylum. Thereby, the ECJ argues with the best interests of the child that is defined in Article 24 of the EU "Charter of Fundamental Rights", the status of UMs as highly vulnerable people and the special worthiness of protection of UMs (Europäischer Gerichtshof, 2013 & Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 13).

How do legal rights of UMs reveal in practice? As a first step after the entry of an UM in Germany, the respective local Youth Welfare Office and "Foreigners' Registration Office" have to be informed. Three aspects can be clarified. Firstly, the age of the person is essential (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 12 & Landesbetrieb Erziehung und Beratung, 2015: 2) and needs to be assessed in an early stage. When the UM is as expected under 18 years, the Youth Welfare Office has to immediately take him into care. Indeed, UMs are granted a high degree of protection and support in the Youth Welfare Services so that according to the BAMF measures can only be ensured when these are restricted to the circle of people who is legally entitled (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 12). Nonetheless, it is often difficult to determine the age of young refugees as in many cases there is no certificate of birth or other valid identification. Foreseen, the age needs to be self-assessed by an authority or the statement of the respective UM been trusted. However, there are no nationally consistent, reliable and obligatory age assessment procedures (ibid.: 13) so that all German federal states or cities follow different medical and non-medical methods (EMN, 2014). Secondly, a guardian who legally represents the UM and applies for either asylum or tolerated stay comes to pass. Thirdly, those matters of residence need to be examined, whereby the status as an UM sets how residence procedures pass off. In Germany asylum procedures of young refugees are given priority (BAMF, 2010: 1).

Further policies mostly differ among federal states and municipalities. The "Königsteiner Schlüssel" depicts a redistribution key for asylum seekers among German federal states determining how many each federal state is obliged to take (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2015). The percentage is calculated from the fiscal revenue and the population numbers of each federal state. Nonetheless, there is no equal allocation of UMs existing yet (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 21), although the number of young refugees in different federal states significantly varies. While North Rhine-Westphalia has received 1,083 UMs, only one young refugee arrived in Thuringia in 2013 (Die Senatorin für Soziales, Kinder, Jugend und Frauen, 2014: 2). The need for an additional statutory quota regulation for UMs has been noticed (BAGFW, 2015: 1). Accordingly, the "Federal Assembly" has initiated a bill for a redistribution key in

July 2015 that has been essentially nudged by Bremen (Radio Bremen, 2015c). Moreover, the “Federal Working Group for Non-Governmental Welfare Services” (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege (BAGFW)) appreciates the overload of some big cities in Germany, which “partly brings them to the limits of their performance” (BAGFW, 2015: 2), yet opposes the mechanical redistribution and claims to transfer the local responsibility for UMs to a supra-regional provider with a competence for taking a child into care and further support. Nevertheless, in case that the redistribution key for UMs resembles the one for asylum seekers, it would mean that Bremen is going to receive only one percent of all UMs coming to Germany (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2015). The number of UMs staying in Bremen would significantly decrease from around 600 to 200 youths each year (Radio Bremen, 2015c).

2.3 Policies for UMs in Bremen

The SGB VIII constitutes a legal framework that all German federal states have to regard. Nonetheless, policies for UMs are introduced and implemented by each federal state who receives young refugees. This section depicts specific policies for those youths in Bremen, focusing on general policies as well as guardianship, clearing, accommodation, education and health care.

“Rights and personal matters are the starting point for all actions and activities” (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 3),

stated senator Stahlmann in the preamble of the quality standards for the first contact and accommodation of UMs in Bremen, which have been introduced in 2013 and complement the existing quality standards for child and youth services from 2009. It basically claims to protect, empower and promote young refugees (“Schützen & Stärken & Fördern”) and introduces empowerment as the principle of taking action when going into participation (ibid.: 27). Conclusively, Bremen invokes empowerment in its contact with UMs.

However, how does the aid system for UMs in Bremen generally work? Support for young refugees is provided by coexisting public and voluntary Youth Welfare Service Organisations because there is no solely public aid system for UMs. Voluntary organisations have to ensure the aptitude of its professionals (§ 72 (1) SGB VIII; ibid.: 7).

All young refugees who arrive in Bremen are initially received in the Zast, which is an official Youth Welfare Service Organisation since May 2015. When an UM has reached the Zast alone, his arrival needs to be immediately reported the Youth Welfare Office Bremen and its steering authority, the “Sozialzentrum 4 Süd” (SZ 04/Süd). Subsequently, the identity and age of the young person have to be determined. Since the age of youths can rarely be proved by valid identification papers, Bremen relies on youths’ self-assessment of age. However, the latter is supported by a visual inspection of the stature and appearance and an additional

recorded inquiry. Thereby, a functional directive from 1994 states that the age determination of young refugees in Bremen needs to be, dependent on the gender, performed by either an informed male administrative employee or a female skilled employee of the Zast (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 12). Indeed, as long as the state of being under age is sufficiently probable, the Youth Welfare Office Bremen has to take the child into care. In contrast to other federal states like Hamburg, Bremen does not make use of medical examinations, for example a test of the upper and lower jaws or the carpus (ibid.: 13 & Landesbetrieb Erziehung und Beratung, 2015: 3-4). As a result the chosen methods of consultation and visual examination indicate that the age assessment of UMs in Bremen is rather an “age estimation” (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 12) with a possible deviation from real age up to two years than a precise age determination. Besides being interviewed by the Youth Welfare Office Bremen, UMs are submitted to criminal identification by the police and its unit “K 54 Migrations- und Arbeitsmarktdelikte” (Polizei Bremen, 2013), that takes a photograph and record the fingerprint of every youth on behalf of the Foreigners’ Registration Office (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Initial processes for UMs in Bremen

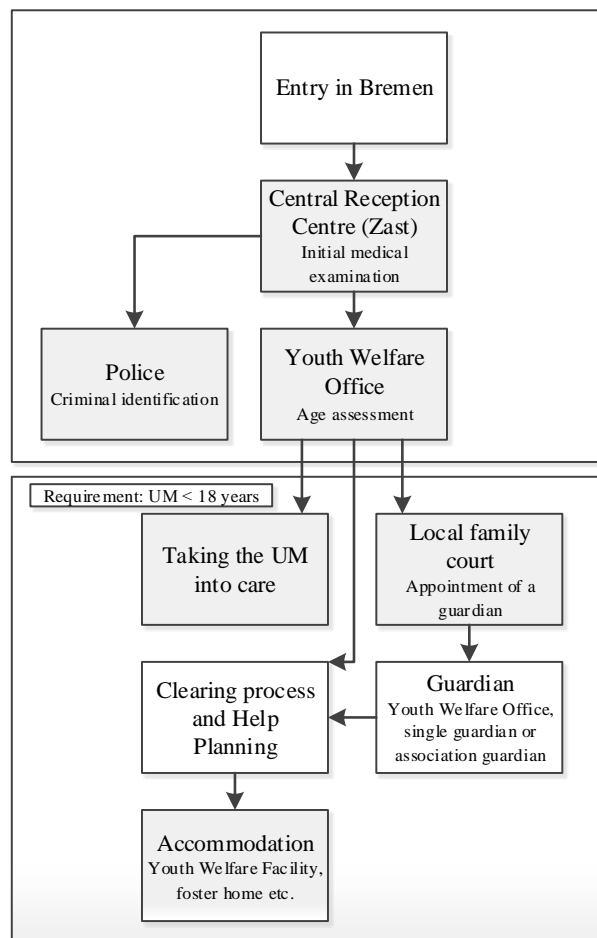


Figure 1: Own illustration of initial processes for UMs after arriving in Bremen; source: Rhein 400-20-7; see Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 10.

The criterion of nonage justifies the appointment of a guardian by the local family court to the respective youth (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 14). Basically, the Youth Welfare Office Bremen has the official guardianship for all UMs arriving in Bremen. Initially, the Youth Welfare Office is obliged to ensure the psychic and physical well-being of the youth. It conducts an initial documented meeting, which focuses on the clarification of personal details and the family and socio-cultural background, possible traumata, the education level, reasons for the escape and the residence permit. Afterwards, also a single person or an association can be mediated to the youth as a guardian. In case that a family member is already living in Bremen, the Youth Welfare Office has to examine whether the respective person is able to assume the guardianship in terms of requirements of § 72a SGB VIII, whereby the suitability is mainly given (ibid.: 20). In Bremen Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. and the “Deutsches Rotes Kreuz” (DRK) with the project “proCuraKids” mediate single guardians (Amt für Soziale Dienste Bremen Fachabteilung Junge Menschen, 2010: 17).

Subsequently, the clearing process, that already launches with taking a child into care, proceeds (§ 42 SGB VIII). The UM might stay in a special clearing facility. Essential elements of the clearing phase are the arrangement of the Help Planning (§ 36 SGB VIII) and the clarification of the need of Youth Welfare Services with the form of assistance and measures. Besides, the clearing phase involves the organisation of a legal representation for UMs embodied in guardians and the form of accommodation, the clarification of the medical condition and the social anamnesis, processes of registration, the education and information transfer to the child (Taz, 2014). The clearing is understood as a cornerstone in the organisation of individual aid for a young refugee and the fundamental development of a perspective for his life (ibid.). Bremen is the last federal state that has established its own clearing centre, the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen opened in midyear 2014, which houses around 35 youths in seven living groups for a period of around three months. Although the possibilities in that special clearing centre are particularly favourable, the clearing phase does not exclusively proceed there, but also in other facilities in Bremen. The Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen is only available for a minority group of all UMs in Bremen so that in the context of the increasing number of UMs arriving in Bremen senator Stahmann considers to look for additional premises and to establish an additional clearing centre in Bremen (ibid.).

What is the accommodation situation for UMs in Bremen like in general? The Youth Welfare Services facilitate to place youths either in foster families, “Youth Welfare Facilities” or private houses. In the Bremish case, “Pflegekinder in Bremen gGmbH” (PIB) and its project “Kinder im Exil” (Children in Exile) cares for the housing of UMs in foster families and supplements the work of the Youth Welfare Office Bremen, whereby referring to § 33 SGB VIII, the promotion of a personal bond and improvement of educational conditions in families by full-time care. Moreover, the concept regards the special need of protection of UMs, their special social and cultural situation and is considered to better promote the integration of UMs in a foreign culture (PIB, 2011: 3). Young refugees are also accommodated in different Bremish Youth Welfare Facilities,

which are run by either public or voluntary providers. These are either houses and groups for exclusively UMs or all youths in the Youth Welfare Services. Their approach and the intensity of care differ. According to the Youth Welfare Services, there needs to be a variety in forms of housing. Moreover, there is also the possibility for UMs to live in their own private flat in Bremen. According to senator Stahlmann and her claim to highly regard personal matters, the diversity of forms of accommodation is considered to respect various needs of individuals as well as the freedom of choice of youth in the Youth Welfare Services (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 24).

After arriving in Bremen, initial examinations and the provision with a guardian and housing (Figure 1), UMs are granted education and health care.

How are UMs educated in Bremen? There are many challenges in the struggle to provide schooling for UMs. Indeed, many UMs have experienced no or a fragmented or interrupted schooling in their countries of origin; others are not able to prove their former education. Additionally, many young refugees are traumatised from the experiences of their escape or the loss of their family. Also the unsecure residential status mentally strains these young people and is able to promote concentration disorders. There are certainly special educational needs that go beyond the obstacle of a foreign language, whereby language problems often cause a barrier to the willingness to learn and integrate. Consequently, the Bremish “Senator for Education and Science” pursues certain goals. These are the early securing of a regular school attendance of UMs, which is connected to language acquisition, a professional orientation and an imminent integration into a normal school class. Further aims are to obtain young refugees school-leaving qualifications and the provision of aid in the transition from school into a training scheme or professional qualification (ibid.: 30). In general, the German federal states are solely responsible for education policies and have to decide on compulsory schooling. In Bremen, § 52 of the “Bremish Education Act” determines compulsory schooling for everyone who resides in the federal state of Bremen and thus also young refugees. After a school examination, UMs older than 14 years are mainly sorted in language-pre-classes, whereas UMs older than 16 years often directly visit a special “Vocational Training Schools” (Allgemeine Berufsschule (ABS)) (Fluchtraum Bremen e.V., 2013: 7). The language-pre-classes take UMs around on years and apply to those who visit a school in Bremen for the first time and who do not have or only have slight German language skills. UMs in vocational education visit the ABS which in Bremen comprises preparing courses for their occupational choice and language training in a tiered system and generally prepares the “Higher Education Entrance Qualification”. Firstly, in one-year bridge courses young people with a slight former education acquire basic skills in the German language and learn about a possible educational orientation. Secondly, one-year preparing courses for the occupational choice with language training take place. Foreseen, UMs achieve the

language skills they need to continue with a “Training Scheme”⁹ (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 30-31).

With regard to difficulties of refugees to find apprenticeships and entering the labour market, the initiative “Bremer und Bremerhavener IntegrationsNetz” (BIN) has been introduced in 2010. It applies to refugees, asylum seekers and tolerated refugees between 15 and 67 years and *inter alia* UMs, supplies remediation and aims at enabling those people to visit a normal Vocational Training School. The BIN facilitates opportunities for those people to enter the labour market in Bremen and has established essential work integration structures (Zentrum für Beruf und Schule, 2011). Moreover, the initiative provides a certain amount of apprenticeships that are solely warrant for those people. For September 2016 50 additional training schemes are expected to be supplied (Radio Bremen, 2015b). Beyond that and in order to create further perspectives, senator Mäurer has introduced the “Bremer-Erlass” (Bremish enactment) that is also called “Mäurer-Erlass” in 2013. It directs that young people who come to Bremen as UMs and who are currently in education or training or who have not yet completed at the age of 21, while the training is imminent, obtain a residence permit (§ 25 (4) Residence Act), whereby the means of subsistence do not need to be ensured (BUMF, 2013). In that sense, education is connected to a secure residence title and offers new possibilities to young refugees.

To what extent are UMs in Bremen provided with health care? According to §§ 40 and 42 (2) SGB VIII, UMs in the Youth Welfare Services have the right to “Health Assistance”¹⁰. However, the costs of health care are absorbed by the health insurance, which makes out a health insurance card and quarterly accounts for the costs with the Youth Welfare Service Organisation. Once the health insurance card is available, it is forwarded to the facility the UMs lives in (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 26). Secondly, which health services are supplied in Bremen? With Refugio Bremen e.V., Bremen has its own advisory and treatment centre for refugees and torture survivors that also treats young refugees. It is free of charge, covers various forms of therapies and annually reaches around 200 traumatised adults, youth and children (ibid.: 27).

⁹ This thesis interchangeably refer to Training Scheme and apprenticeship.

¹⁰ Initially, UMs do not have an own health insurance, but rather only the right to a Health Assistance (§§ 40 and 42 (2) SGB VIII).

2.4 The discourse on UMs in Germany and Bremen

In order to get an understanding of the living reality of UMs in Germany and Bremen and the societal willingness to integrate those young people, it seems highly relevant to investigate the perception of UMs in the media. Indeed, the latter is able to significantly steer the public perception.

With the federal election in Hamburg¹¹ in February 2015, the issue of UMs has increasingly entered the German media. Hamburg hosts a great and increasing number of young refugees. While in 2012 only 881 UMs were registered, the number has increased to 2,011 UMs in 2014 (Zeit Online, 2015c). In view of the federal election, the “Christian Democratic Union of Germany” (CDU) has started campaigning against delinquent young refugees, claiming a better protection of citizens in Hamburg against delinquent, minor refugees. Correspondingly, the spokesman for youth and family of the CDU-fraction in Hamburg, Christoph de Vries stated that

“[a]ll legal opportunities have to be exploited in order to deport unaccompanied minors who attract attention as multiple offender or who become an offender after an unsuccessful asylum procedure” (ibid.).

Consequently, UMs have become strongly politicised in Germany (Zeit Online, 2015b & 2015c). Broad discussions about UMs in other German cities like Bremen, which focus on delinquent young refugees, arise.

In February 2015 the largest daily newspaper in Bremen “Weser-Kurier” has published an extra press pack, called “Delinquent young refugees in Bremen” (Weser-Kurier Digital, 2015a). It intensively focuses on the delinquency of UMs in Bremen.

“There are not many young refugees who attract attention with criminal offence or riot. But these few shape the image of the many” (ibid.).

The story of Khaleed, an UM from Somalia living in Hamburg, is considered to be exemplary for the perception of UMs in the German media.

“I rather feel safe in Germany but we are vulnerable [...]. If some unaccompanied refugees are bad, all are bad” (Zeit Online, 2015b).

The further discourse takes up the consideration to house repeatedly delinquent UMs from Bremen and Hamburg in the premise of a former prison in Bremen (Radio Bremen, 2015a; Weser-Kurier Digital, 2015b; Weser-Kurier

¹¹ Like Bremen, Hamburg is a German federal city state that is located in the Northwest of Germany and thus close to Bremen. There is a cooperation and political exchange between Hamburg and Bremen in terms of UMs.

Digital, 2015c). Advocates do not primarily reason with the Bremer accommodation system, which is working to full capacity, but rather with conflicts with UMs in the neighbourhood (Weser-Kurier Digital, 2015b & Zeit Online, 2015d). While the CDU and the fraction leader of the “Alliance ’90/The Greens” (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) in Bremen, Matthias Güldner defends the closed accommodation since the few criminal minors harm the reputation of all refugees in the city (Weser-Kurier Digital, 2015b), the fraction leader of the “Left” (Die Linke) in Bremen, Kristina Vogt, opposes the proposal. She claims that many young refugees who are accommodated centrally do not make progress. “Just as they go in, they come out again” (ibid.) and thus refers to the aim to empower UMs.

Despite mentioning that a few UMs shape the image of many, the local media in Hamburg and Bremen mainly reports on delinquent young refugees. The media is considered to steer the perception of UMs in one direction in depicting UMs in a highly problematic manner. The media reporting in the German and Bremish media often seems one-sided and lacks balanced information about the background and living realities of young refugees. In that context, the media is expected to facilitate a negative perception of UMs, which can have a spill over-effect on the general public perception of young refugees.

The additional general lack of research on UMs in Germany and Bremen strongly motivates me to provide information on their life in Bremen within applied social science methods.

2.5 Previous research

There is previous research on UMs referring to them as an international concern. Inasmuch, there are various studies of the UN and NGOs with a focus on young refugees’ special needs as children or mentioning current challenges such as the increase of the numbers of young refugees. However, research mainly considers the national sphere. It either elaborates on individual countries of origin or mainly European host countries. Thus, there are several studies on UMs in Sweden first of all in the context of migration and education pattern. For example, Lennartsson has addressed the issue of UMs in Sweden with a focus on the implementation of the best interests of the child (Lennartsson, 2014).

In Germany, there is broad research on migration in general. Indeed, there are also studies about the concern of refugee children coming to Germany unaccompanied (Angenendt, 2000; Woge e.V., 1999; Balluseck, 2003). There are rather studies on legal aspects and conditions than social science studies focusing on challenges of those youths. In that context, the BAMF studies the international and national legal recognition of UMs within general policies and processes in Germany (BAMF, 2009 & 2010). Additionally, the BUMF accumulates generous knowledge and conducts evaluations concerning the performance of the German federal states in UMs policies. Besides, the BUMF aims to close the proclaimed information-gap on UMs in Germany and considers participation pattern of those

young people. However, there is a lack of scientific research on the empowerment and the participation of refugees and in particular UMs in Germany. To my knowledge only the study of Maede focuses on participation of young refugees¹² in Germany (Maede, 2008).

This thesis considers the case of Bremen. In 2013 the federal state of Bremen has published the already mentioned quality standards that first of all refer to the first contact and the accommodation of UMs in Bremen but additionally provides information about the policy background in Bremen within (initial) processes (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013). Additionally, there is a study about the schooling situation of UMs in Bremen published by Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. (Fluchtraum Bremen e.V., 2013). Besides research, the Refugee Council Bremen tries to draw attention to UMs and their situation in Bremen and publishes position papers (Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. & Flüchtlingsrat Bremen, 2013). However, a scientific research gap on young refugees in Bremen can be outlined.

There is also no research on the application of the empowerment and participation approach on young refugees in general and in Bremen in particular yet. Insofar, this thesis essentially contributes the scientific research on policies for UMs in Germany and Bremen, the application of ET on young refugees and the participation discourse.

¹² Maede brings in the term “Young refugee”, which he considers as less deficit-oriented and which leaves space for a more subjective determined age than the term UM (Maede, 2008: 1). I incorporate the term “Young refugee” as one alternative term for UM.

3 Theoretical framework

3.1 Empowerment theory

The thesis applies Empowerment theory (ET). It puts ET in the context of UMs in Bremen and investigates on their empowerment process. This section firstly outlines the core notion of ET and secondly elaborates on its contextual application on UMs in Bremen.

The theoretical approach of ET is variously applied in many scientific disciplines, contexts and with diverse focuses. Inasmuch, the notion of empowerment appears broad and highly fragmented.

“Empowerment is a multi-level construct consisting of practical approaches and applications, social action processes, and individual and collective outcomes” (Jennings, Parra-Medina et al., 2006: 31).

The roots of ET can be considered in the 1960s/1970s and its application in psychology. Thus, Rappaport depicts psychological empowerment as the core concept for community psychology (Christens, 2011: 114) which focuses on changes within the individual. Moreover, Zimmerman conceives this form of empowerment as processes by which people gain greater control over their lives, take part in democratic decision-making and develop critical awareness of their socio-political environment (Zimmerman, 2000). In that sense, psychological research on empowerment has essentially focused on the roots of “empower” (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995).

In the early 1980s’ research stage, Moscovitch and Drover have linked the empowerment framework to the concept of power and powerlessness (Lord & Hutchison, 1993). Power is defined as “the capacity of some persons and organization to produce intended, foreseen and unforeseen [unforeseen] effects on others” (Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989) while having different origins such as personality, property or influential organisations (Lord & Hutchison, 1993). In contrast, Keiffer defines powerlessness as the expectation of a person that his own actions will be ineffective in influencing the outcome of life events (ibid.). Lerner distinguishes between real and surplus powerlessness. While real powerlessness is a result of economic inequalities and oppressive control exercised by systems or other people, surplus powerlessness refers to the belief that change cannot happen. Powerlessness is rather a result of the non-willingness of a person to struggle for more control and influence (ibid.). Accordingly, the need for empowerment occurs with the powerlessness of individuals that are considered to lack power and are not able to gain greater control and resources in their lives (Lord & Hutchison,

1993: 2). Empowerment can be simplified as an increase of power. The reflexive verb “empower” implies that individuals empower themselves. Within, empowerment occurs rather as an active self-initiative than a passive automatism (Purdey, Adhikari, Robinson et al., 1994: 330). Indeed, empowerment can be realised through organisation that hold power through cumulated common goals and purposes (Speer & Hughey, 1995: 732-733).

Bennett Cattaneo et al. argue that empowerment is more than the often proclaimed psychological phenomenon of increasing power. Accordingly, it involves both the self and the social world. Empowerment basically incorporates the interaction between individuals and their social context (Christens, 2012; Neal & Neal, 2011; Bennett Cattaneo & Goodman, 2015). Perkins and Zimmerman apprehend the connection between the individual well-being and the larger social and political environment. In that context, Zimmerman introduces the concept of “embedded individual empowerment”, which aims at understanding that “what goes on inside one’s head interacts with what goes on in one’s environment to enhance or inhibit one’s mastery and control over the factors that affect one’s life” (Zimmerman, 1990: 174). Interventions that are empowerment-oriented on one hand enhance wellness and on the other hand try to ameliorate problems, provide opportunities for participants to develop knowledge and skills (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995: 569-570). Sen’s capabilities approach to human welfare and empowerment approach from 1992 links the well-being of individuals to his functioning and the “beings” and “doings”, the even called social power (Hill, 2003: 118). Within, empowerment processes significantly facilitate power and are able to transform power relations and conditions (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton et al., 2009).

Between the late 1980s and mid-1990s the interest in ET has strongly increased; it becomes a significant concept for understanding the development of individuals, organisations and communities (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). The approach has been increasingly incorporated in various scientific disciplines such as development and gender studies. Empowerment of women becomes a central part of the gender debate. Scholars connect ET to marginalised groups by reasons of caste, disability or ethnicity (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton et al., 2009: 3). It has been also related to youths and their participation (see “Youth Empowered Solutions” (“YES!”)¹³; Jennings, Parra-Medina, Hilfinger Messias et al., 2006), health and rehabilitation and patient education research (Petersen, Tribler & Mølsted, 2008), poverty, political representation and voting in political science (Rocha, 1997). In 1989 the Cornell Empowerment Group has introduced an often quoted and general definition.

“Empowerment is an intentional, ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation through which people lacking an equal share of valued

¹³ YES! has established an own program and empowerment model which aims to empower youths and create community change in partnership with adults.

resources gain greater access to and control over those resources.”
(Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989 & Wolff, 1993: 3)

The examination of ET reveals the width and diversity of the empowerment concept. In order to provide a better understanding of empowerment, different dimensions and domains of empowerment can be distinguished.

There can be a focus on either economic, human and social, political or cultural empowerment (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton et al., 2009: 1). Accordingly, human and social empowerment is the “multidimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives and that fosters power [...] in people, for use in their own lives, their communities and their society, by being able to act on issues that they define as important” (ibid.). Political empowerment involves the capacity to analyse, organise and mobilise which affects collective action and change, whereby the former is often related to a rights-based approach as empowered people are considered to assume their rights and entitlements (ibid.). In accordance to this political dimension, empowerment has been often conceptualised as an emancipation process, in which disadvantaged people are empowered to “exercise their rights, obtain access to resources and participate in the process of shaping society and making decisions” (ibid.: 2), which helps people to struggle against oppressive social relations.

Moreover, the mode of analysis can be different. Either the individual or a group can be empowered. Rocha refers to a ladder from less to more empowerment and thus from individual to community empowerment. He defines “atomistic individual empowerment”, which targets the individual as a solitary unit and which intrinsically increases his efficiency and alters his emotional and physical state and competence, as the traditional understanding of empowerment. Against, “embedded individual empowerment” involves the larger structures and settings which an individual is integrated in and which certainly affect the individual. The individual is part of a social, economic and political system that mediates all action, whereby the context affects the experience of power (Rocha, 1997: 34-36). Furthermore, Rocha also refers to “mediated empowerment”, “socio-political empowerment” and “political empowerment”. According to Zimmerman, at the individual level empowerment includes a capability and participatory behaviour and the motivation to control. Although it is a social phenomenon, empowerment has been often approached from an individualistic perspective (Riger, 1993).

Scholars also distinguish empowerment processes and outcomes. Actions, activities, or structures are considered to empower while the outcome of such processes result in a level of being empowered (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995: 570). Sadan depicts the empowerment process as the process of increasing control and the transition from a state of powerlessness (Sadan, 1997: 137).

There is no universal model of ET, but its notion is incoherent. Rocha claims that it is comparable to variation in citizen participation. “All empowerment is not equal” (Rocha, 1997: 31). This thesis investigates the

empowerment of UMs in Bremen. How can ET be applied on this particular case?

Basically, this research builds on the assumption that UMs are rather marginalised than socially integrated (Figure 2). It justifies the need of young refugees for empowerment and the policy-making of empowerment-based goals which in turn is supposed to facilitate their integration into society (Figure 2). Park defines marginalisation as the experience of living between two cultures that have asymmetric power (Boychuk Duchscher & Cowin, 2004: 289), while Hall et al. define it as the peripheralisation of individuals and groups from a dominant and central majority. Accordingly, marginalisation rests upon experiences, which are not shared by others, severe trauma, stigmatisation, illness, risks of alienation or altered perceptions (Hall, Stevens & Meleis, 1994) or the experiences of segregation (Boychuk Duchscher & Cowin, 2004). UMs are torn between two countries and cultures, (of) their country of origin and their country of refuge. Thereby, young refugees do not possess the same social, economic and political rights¹⁴ as peers with a German citizenship (BUMF, 2015), but rights that depend on the residential status. In that sense, UMs are segregated from the central majority of German citizens and power is asymmetric by reasons of citizenship. Additionally, young refugees often carry experiences of violence and traumata and are dependent on social welfare and the provision of aid. According to Lerner, UMs are in a state of real powerlessness. The assumption that young refugees are marginalised and compared to German citizens lack power motivates the choice of ET in this thesis.

This research mainly considers youth and women's empowerment. With reference to youth empowerment, UMs are struggled by two main factors. On one hand, they are youths who are still on their way to a self-defined identity and facing adulthood. The character of youths is not yet steady, but intensively developing. On the other hand, they are young people that have experienced war, conflicts or poverty and whose childhood is intensively threatened. Besides, key dimensions of youths empowerment are a welcoming, safe environment, secondly meaningful participation and engagement, thirdly equitable power-sharing between youth and adults, fourth engagement in critical reflection on interpersonal and socio-political processes (Jennings, Parra-Medina, Hilfinger Messias et al., 2006: 31-32), which are considered to be even more essential for young refugees, who arrive in another country and are supported by other people than their family. In that context, aid in the development and integration of youths into society is meant to be built through active community participation (ibid. & Kim, 1998). Accordingly, the focus of this thesis will be on human and social empowerment *and* political empowerment. Firstly, in the context of human and social empowerment youths gain "control over decisions and resources that determine the quality of one's life" (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton et al., 2009: 5) and

¹⁴ As foreigners, UMs are not allowed to vote. In general, they cannot claim the rights in the GG that are proclaimed as German fundamental rights and only apply to citizens with a German citizenship.

are enabled to act on issues that they define as important (ibid.). Secondly, political empowerment considers that youths assume rights and entitlements.

Moreover, the research refers to empowerment as a process. Considering the approach of women's empowerment, Longwe has developed a framework which addresses the structural oppression of women and which is applied on young refugees in this research. Longwe introduces five processual degrees of empowerment, which are welfare, access, conscientisation and awareness-rising, participation and mobilisation and control. What do different dimensions mean for UMs? The dimension of welfare provision only demands a passive role of young refugees as recipients. It ensures that basic needs like housing, nutrition, income or guardianship are satisfied. The access dimension persuades equal access to resources such as education. The dimension of conscientisation and awareness-rising recognises and addresses structural and institutional discrimination of young refugees. The focus of this research is on the fourth dimension of participation and mobilisation, which calls for the implementation of action, the equal taking of decisions and power relations between stakeholders and UMs. Lastly, the control dimension implies that young refugees are able to make decisions that are fully recognised (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton et al., 2009: 5.). Longwe approaches empowerment as a rising, but holistic process, which is not supposed to end before an individual is able to make decisions and control his own life (Figure 2).

Figure 2: The empowerment process of UMs

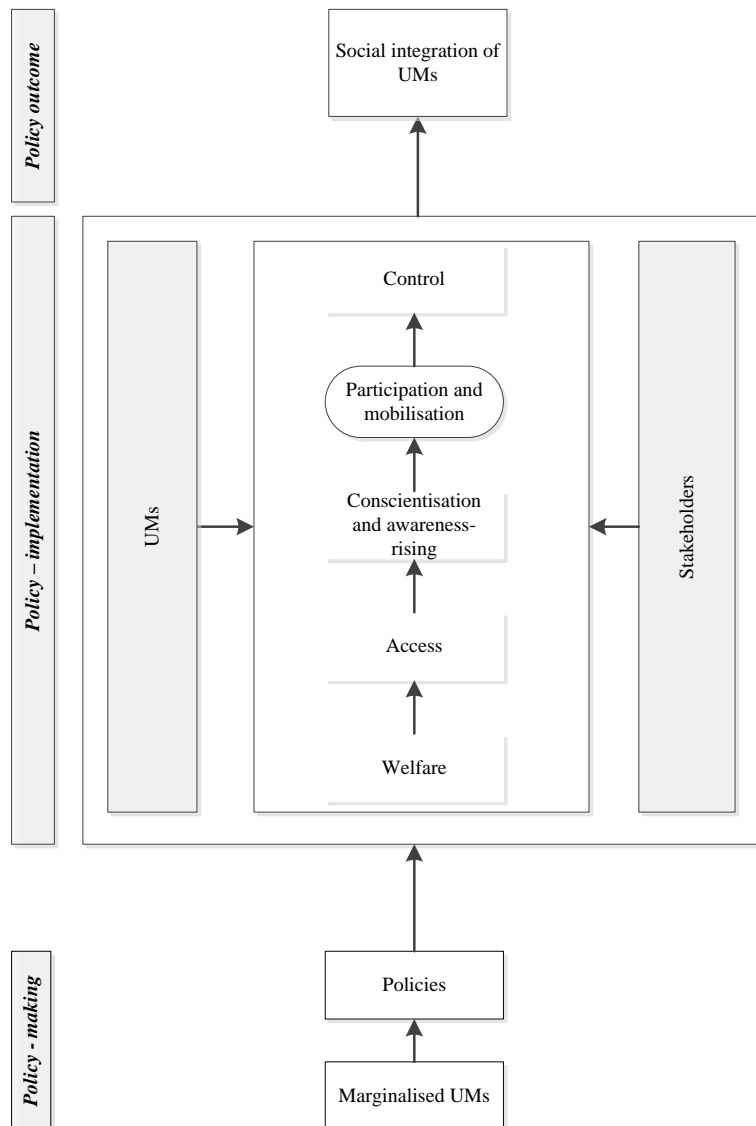


Figure 2: Own illustration of the empowerment process of UMs; source: Longwe’s five degrees of empowerment.

Accordingly, UMs in Bremen are expected to be marginalised and targeted by particular policies and practices in Bremen. Latter are implemented by different stakeholders in Bremen working with UMs. I suppose that Longwe’s highest degree of empowerment, the control to make rational decisions, is an essential condition and catalyst for the social integration of young refugees into society (Figure 2). Whether the social integration of UMs in Bremen is willing or not is an important issue, which cannot be broadly assessed in this research. Indeed, this question is connected to the willingness to empower young refugees. Often the residential status of young refugees remains a state of uncertainty. Since there are empowerment-based political goals in Germany and Bremen in place, this thesis supposes a political willingness to empower UMs. In the context of Longwe’s framework, the implementation of participation is expected to be influential on the empowerment process of UMs.

3.1.1 The concept of participation

Participation is strongly tied to the concept of empowerment (Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989; Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton et al., 2009; Maede, 2008). This thesis primarily focuses on participation. Mobilisation is considered as a precondition for participation and involves the transition from a passive to an active condition of an individual. Vice versa, participation is supposed to be a proxy for empowerment as it alters power relations in terms of decision-making power.

“Decisions on our matters are taken, so we have the right to participate!”
(BUMF, 2015)

As a concept from the 1960s and first of all involved in democratic theory, participation has been established in the UN-Charta. Basically, it means to be involved and establishes opportunities to influence decisions by providing particular structures and processes. Participation respects the quality of interactions between individuals and groups in the decision-making process. It is tied to the concept of power and facilitates the either formal or informal social process of sharing power (Ryan, 1999: 33-34).

According to Whitaker, people occur as producers or participants in the comprehending and acting on their immediate environment. In that sense, participation goes back to the taken role of individuals and their own experience of power. Rocha links participation to demonstrating initiative, the importance of self-respect, self-reliance and self-determination. Important elements are nurturing support and the willingness to direct and control the self. Gruber and Trickett state that the extent to which the individual possesses decision-making power determines empowerment results (Rocha, 1997: 36-37).

One important requirement for participation is the extent and quality of information, which individuals are provided with during the decision-making process. Accordingly, Pettigrew considers information as a significant political resource (Ryan, 1999: 34). This thesis connects participation to the need of UMs to be well informed about rights and duties, measures and perspectives in Bremen, what in turn enables young refugees to appropriately participate in the decision-making. Knowledge is seen as a necessary requirement to make rational decisions.

Beyond its recognition as a right of self-determination in the UN-Charta, participation has been established in the CRC and the German SGB VIII. Thus, the legislation ensures information that is suitable for children, the freedom of expression, a self-determined organisation and a cultural participation (BUMF, 2015).

What does participation mean for UMs? According to the BUMF, participation is connected to a paradigm shift of young refugees from dependent victims to actors capable of acting. It rejects UMs to be conceived as a vulnerable, passive, defenceless group of people, whose interests have to be represented by pedagogues. Against, young refugees are rather capable and actively acting people with various resources (BUMF, 2015). Participation is understood as the

contribution and codetermination of UMs. In that sense, the participation aim significantly builds on youths' existing resources, while also recognising the need to provide young refugees with additional resources such as further education and most importantly information about all processes.

There is always the question of participation - in what? The research basically depicts participation as the individual willingness of an UM to play an active part in all processes and decisions that affect himself and his life and perspectives in Bremen. Furthermore, it asks youths to argue respective actors such as the (official) guardian, case manager, caretaker in a residential home own needs and interests in all corresponding processes and thus use the guaranteed power in decision-making. It investigates fundamental participatory structures and its implementation. Foreseen, the notion of participation does first of all focus on the participation of UMs in Bremen in the decision-making process by existing institutional structures. However, it also includes that UMs need to be participated in a private or public socio-cultural manner, which can extend the scope of action and evens power differences. However, both participation on decisions and socio-cultural participation aim at obtaining control and enabling to shape own living conditions of young refugees (BUMF, 2015). It strongly equals the goal of human and social empowerment of "gaining control over decisions and resources that determine the quality of one's life" (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton et al., 2009: 5).

3.2 Implementation theory

Besides policy-making, policy-implementation is an integral part of policy processes that embody both policy intentions and results. This section elaborates on implementation research according to the focus of the thesis on the policy-implementation of empowerment-based goals.

Policy processes can be figured as a chain or cycle. They involve decisions about what should be done and the state of art of what has been done so far. Smith et al. state that there are many actions and decisions in between, connecting both former aspects. Implementation research "seeks to make sense of this space between government intention and policy impact" (Smith & Larimer, 2009: 155).

Since the early 1970s and the study of Pressman and Wildavsky on implementation in public administration, implementation is object of research. Scholars variously argue that, in the entire policy process, policy-implementation is either a single or a follow-up aspect of policy-making (Barrett & Hill, 1984). Smith et al. state that, from an implementation perspective, policy begins with the formal declaration of what the government will do.

Further research in the 1980s emphasise the variables between the intention and the performance of governments. In that sense, implementation means that the declaration of intent, which has been established *inter alia* through legislation, needs to be translated into reality. Vice versa, the translation has to regard the exact intention and a way to do it. Although implementation often

includes the formulation of rules which bureaucrats are committed to bring into action, rules can be differently interpreted and appreciated by different actors; yet, coordination concerns prevail (Smith & Larimer, 2009: 155-156). In that sense, implementation theory studies the relationship between institutional structures, through which individuals interact, and the outcome of that interaction (Jackson, 2001: 655).

How to apply implementation theory on my case? My case does not only involve public policies, that have been decided by the German and British government, but it also contains participation claims that have not been formally introduced, but have been established by the introduction of the mentioned quality standards for UMs in Bremen. In the case of UMs in Bremen, the application of implementation theory has been extended by less formal quality standards, which are rather a guideline than legally binding.

The thesis refers to the implementation stage of participation. It has been decided and declared that young refugees have to be participated. But, are UMs in fact participated? Do stakeholders who work with young refugees in Bremen perform participation? In that sense, this research investigates whether participation intents have been translated into reality.

4 Methodology

4.1 Qualitative case study design

How do different stakeholders empower and participate young refugees? There is no research on the empowerment processes of UMs and also no data responding to this research interest. This condition justifies the methodological choices of this thesis to design a qualitative case study that retrieves evidence from own fieldwork and semi-structured interviews.

The case of this case study are UMs and stakeholders working with them in Bremen (see Appendix 4).

There is the tendency to associate case studies with qualitative research. In general both a qualitative and quantitative research is feasible within a case study design. Nevertheless, case studies favour qualitative research, whereby its data can be collected in many different ways (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard et al., 2003: 3). Its techniques certainly vary, but are most likely any kind of observations, content analyses, focus groups or interviews (ibid.; Morgan & Leech, 2009: 176; Thomson, 2011: 46). This research provides data from interviews.

Bryman states that interviews are supposed to be helpful when doing an intensive and detailed examination of the case (Bryman, 2012). Interviews can be either highly structured interviews with closed questions, semi-structured interviews or unstructured or in-depth interviews with open questions. Questions can be either self-formulated or external-formulated (Kumar, 2005: 123). In this research semi-structured face to face interviews with self-formulated questions are conducted. In general, semi-structured interviews are assumed to be to a high extent equally structured by the interviewer and the interviewee. By posing questions, the interviewer sets relevance to certain topics. Vice versa, the interviewee is able to steer the direction of the interview through his answers to the questions. If questions are not appropriately answered, the interviewer can bring up a subject again or exemplify, illustrate or reformulate the question. Also the interviewee can ascertain that particular topics are addressed. Questions are rather open than closed and leave narrative potential and only work as aid to orientation (Lamnek, 1989: 77) or an interview guide. Questions are considered to rather demonstrate that you are competent and aware of what you want from the interviews than exercise control over the interviewee (Bernard, 2000: 191). Moreover, semi-structured interviews can be better compared than unstructured interviews.

Participants in interviews make up the sample of this research. Selecting “less than the total population is an advantage for researchers for several reasons” (Gliner, Morgan & Leech, 2009: 116). It takes less time, is less expensive and

guarantees a better quality control. Patton states that “qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases” (Patton, 1990: 169) that are selected purposefully. They succeed in being information-rich cases that gather important information, which in turn are intensively linked to the purpose of the research (Patton, 1990: 169).

There are different ways of identifying samples. Patton brings in that different strategies for purposefully selecting information-rich cases exist (ibid.). In this research, I apply snowball and chain sampling *and* criterion sampling. Firstly, snowball and chain sampling refer to the question of: “Who should I talk to?” (ibid.: 176). Well-situated or well-informed people are expected to know best who else to talk with. Informants recommend others as valuable for the aim of the research. Secondly, according to criterion sampling, all cases meet a predetermined criterion of importance ensuring that everything which is important for the case is included and the case is going to be appropriately handled (ibid.). This thesis considers the case of UMs in Bremen and investigates on the sample of six stakeholders, which are an official guardian and a case manager from the Youth Welfare Office Bremen, the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen, a caretaker in a residential home, Refugio Bremen e.V. and Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. Initially, I have talked to the Youth Welfare Office Bremen, which provides guardians and case managers for UMs and is considered to be the most important public authority for UMs in Bremen. I have further studied the work of Refugio and Fluchtraum and heard about the opening of the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen. When conducting the interviews with youths, I have learned about the importance of caretakers for youths. Further on, I got recommendations from Refugio and Fluchtraum, who are key stakeholders for young refugees in Bremen and do important networking. Besides, all chosen stakeholders correspond to the criterion, which is the provision of any kind of support for UMs in Bremen. They are either actors with a public assignment or actors that represent UMs and their interests. All stakeholders are important for the case and this empowerment research.

Furthermore, May refers to the need of all interviewees to have knowledge about the profession in order to be able to answer interview questions (May, 2011: 141). The interviews only involve professionals who are expected to know about their field of work and thus being able to appropriately respond to the questions.

Scholars argue for a certain amount of interviews needed. Which sample size is appropriate? Qualitative research aims to generate sufficient data so that “the illuminate patterns, concepts [...] of the given phenomena can emerge” (Thomson, 2011: 46). Patton comes up with the concept of theoretical saturation. Accordingly, the researcher broadens the sample size until the interviews do not supply any new data (ibid.: 47). When ignoring theoretical saturation, the development of patterns might be inadequate and findings lack reliability and validity (ibid.). With only six stakeholders, the sample of this research is assumed to be small. Nonetheless, the majority of important stakeholders for UMs in Bremen is considered to be integrated in the sample. They are supposed to be main actors and providers of aid for young refugees. Besides, fieldwork needs to be feasible. It takes time to conduct and appropriately analyse and compare data.

Certainly, the generation of data through the conducted interviews responds to the purpose of this research and the question of the implementation of empowerment-based goals by those stakeholders.

Besides rights or basic guidelines (section 5.1), the main source of information of this case study research are the interviews with stakeholders generating evidence, which does not yet exist and which can be used to answer the RQ on the performance of empowerment by different stakeholders in the work with young refugees in Bremen.

4.2 Data collection

4.2.1 Operationalisation

Besides understanding empowerment, Luttrell et al. claim that there is the need to operationalise empowerment in order to apply and measure it (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton et al., 2009), which seems important when investigating on empowerment practices for UMs in Bremen.

This thesis refers to Longwe's empowerment-dimension of participation and mobilisation and the already mentioned definition of the Cornell Empowerment Group (section 3.1). The operationalisation makes participation better comprehensible and workable for the interviews and its questions. Thus, participation can be appropriately measured and empowerment-based goals classified.

The definition of the Cornell Empowerment Group refers to participation as one aspect of empowerment. It involves people gaining greater access to and control over own resources (section 3.1). Basically, empowerment of UMs within this research means participation of UMs. What does participation mean in the case of stakeholders supporting UMs in Bremen?

This operationalisation refers to three different steps depicting increasing participation (Rau et al., 2011). Participation involves an interaction between stakeholders, who provide participation patterns, and participants, who use these patterns. In that sense, participation is a giving and taking and involves an active role of both partners. This thesis and operationalisation focuses on the ones who legally or voluntarily provide participation pattern. Accordingly, it rather elaborates on the responsibility of stakeholders than of UMs.

Basically, information is considered as an essential requirement for participation. UMs need to know about rights and duties, measures and perspectives in Bremen. Otherwise they lack important resources, which are necessary to take in an active role in processes and decisions. Thus, participation means *informing* UMs. When stakeholders provide UMs with information, UMs' knowledge is expected to increase. Being informed means knowing; knowing about the aid-system and perspectives beyond that system, when attaining full age. Certainly, it assumes that UMs are also open to receive information and acquire knowledge. Then information can also serve to reflect the own as-is

situation to the optional situation. Conclusively, with the increase of knowledge, the willingness to influence, change or improve the own situation is expected to grow.

As a next step, stakeholders need to have an interest in getting to know the opinion of the single UM. They need to be able to take an active stand and to articulate needs and interests. Therefore, UMs need to be questioned. Participation means *consulting* UMs. It assumes that young refugees are able and willing to express their opinion. There need to be a mutual communication between stakeholders and UMs. This communication is expected to be verbal and take place in common meetings of stakeholders with a single young refugee or a group of them. Stakeholders are not only expected to give UMs a voice, but also to appropriately anticipate their opinions. Power in processes and decision-making is considered to further increase, when stakeholders grant young refugees a say.

Participation also means *cooperating* with UMs. It assumes that UMs have an opinion heard and considered by stakeholders. In case, that there are different opinions between the stakeholder and the youth, these need to be weighed. Optimally, both see each other as equal partners. This dimension often goes within round tables.

With each dimension of participation, the UM is expected to move from being passively steered towards more actively steering. All three steps assume that young refugees and stakeholders have a common language. Indeed, a lack of language skills is expected to significantly aggravate every kind of participation.

4.2.2 Framing and conducting the interviews

Taking the former operationalisation into account, this section amplifies the detailed set-up of the interviews and how these have been conducted.

As already stated, the interviews are supposed to be semi-structured face to face interviews. They offer the chance to narratives of the interviewees and important additional information, which facilitate a better understanding of the whole situation of UMs in Bremen with integral processes and empowerment capabilities.

When people are the main source of information, it is important to secure them anonymity. Due to ethical considerations (Appendix 2), personal information about the interviewees such as the name and gender are treated with anonymity. Thereby, it can be avoided that interviewees feel pressure on their person and individual work attitude, which is not supposed to be anyhow valued and publicly revealed in this research. Interviewees have been informed about this anonymity in an early stage of the interview in order to provide a comfortable interview situation and get less biased statements. Revealing names of the interviewees are replaced with numbers in the recorded data and the following analysis.

Interviewee 1: Official guardian¹⁵ for UMs from the Youth Welfare Office Bremen; 14th of April 2015, Bremen

Interviewees 2: Personnel from Refugio Bremen e.V.; two participants (a) & (b); 15th of April 2015, Bremen

Interviewee 3: Personnel from the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen; 17th of April 2015, Bremen

Interviewee 4: Personnel from Fluchtraum Bremen e.V.; 22nd of April 2015, Bremen

Interviewee 5: Case manager for UMs from the Youth Welfare Office Bremen; 28th of May 2015, Bremen

Interviewee 6: Caretaker in a residential home for UMs; 1st of June 2015, Bremen

The interviews have been all conducted in German. Unfortunately, some German expressions within the interviews cannot be one-on-one exactly being translated from German to English. Nonetheless, the meaning of statements is not expected to alter.

How did interviews proceed? Initially, all participants were orally informed about the purpose and aim of the research, whereby they have been already informed about the study, when requesting them for the interviews. Furthermore, Figure 2 about Longwe's five degrees of empowerment and a written informed consent¹⁶ were handed out. Within, interviewees received all important information about the research. Indeed, information is considered to positively influence the willingness of stakeholders to participate in the interviews (May, 2011: 141). The concept of empowerment is expected to be known in social sciences and by interviewed stakeholders, who predominantly have a corresponding education. Conclusively, all participants in the interviews were considered to be confident with the research approach and issue. After this presentation, the first question was stated. Except two closed questions, all questions were formulated as open questions (see Appendix 1). In order to appropriately end the interview situation, I stated my gratitude to them for participating in the research and offered them to receive the final version of this thesis.

There was no particular timeframe for the interviews. A relatively open timeframe facilitates that potential dialogues are formed and relevant information can be appropriately gathered. Nevertheless, the duration of interview sessions is strongly connected to the amount of questions being raised. In that context, each interview session was expected to approximately take between 30 to 45 minutes. Indeed, the duration of the interviews was also dependent on individual responses

¹⁵ As the thesis in general depicts persons in the male gender, also when writing about the interviewees I only refer to the masculine form.

¹⁶ Main source of information is people who participate in the interviews. They have to be protected in any stage of the research. The informed consent states ethical considerations, which are main principles when conducting interviews and which are also considered in this thesis (Appendix 2).

and further upcoming questions, but also the available time of the respective interviewee. In fact, it varied between 20 and 50 minutes.

4.2.3 Recording the interviews

With the authorisation of each interviewee, all interviews were audiotaped. With the hand-in of the written version of this thesis, also a flash drive, which contains the actual wording, will be annexed.

4.2.4 Method of analysis

In order to gain meaningful and useful results, material has to be analysed in a methodological manner (Attride-Stirling, 2001: 386). There are many ways to analyse data from qualitative research such as interviews. This thesis applies thematic analysis.

It identifies and presents sections which are related to data (Alhojailan, 2012: 39). Each section or subsection covers a single aspect of a whole interview. Thereby, each aspect and its potential can be understood more comprehensively (ibid.: 40). It also offers the chance to simplify data, maximise its use and give the analysis a clear structure.

Which themes can be identified in this research? Basically, the research considers assignments of the stakeholders. However, it first of all investigates on the implementation stage of empowerment-based goals. Both aspects are single sections of the analysis. Additionally, subsections refer to different kinds of participation pattern considering the operationalisation of participation in this thesis (section 4.2.1). Accordingly, subsections refer to the participation dimensions of informing, consulting and cooperating. Inasmuch, sections and subsections in the analysis refer to main concepts of this research (Bryman, 2012).

4.3 Validity, reliability and generalisability

This section assesses the scientific validity, reliability and generalisability which are all important criteria for social sciences inquiry.

Firstly, what does validity imply? Scientific findings need to be valid and thus first of all true and certain. Investigations are true when these accurately present the considered phenomenon and certain when these are supported by sufficient evidence (Schwandt, 2001: 267). According to Bernard, validity means that instruments, data and findings in research need to be accurate and trustworthy (Bernard, 2000: 46). This research is assumed to fulfil the criterion of validity. It represents the issue of UMs in Bremen. This called and depicted “phenomenon” is backed up with evidence from interviews and further information. All instruments, data and findings are expected to be accurate and trustworthy. At

least, there is no indication of variation that would possibly deny the research to be valid.

Secondly, there is the criterion of reliability of social sciences research. Accordingly, research is reliable when it can be replicated by another scientist. Social scientists expect that replicable research is not necessarily always valid while all valid research is replicable (Schwandt, 2001: 226). Thus, reliability means that investigations need to be repeatable. One gets the same information when an instrument to measure something is used more than once. For example, when a person is interviewed twice and the interviewer gets the same response the first and the second time, research can be referred to as reliable (Bernard, 2000: 47). All (theoretical and methodological) choices within this research are transparent and considered to be comprehensible. Further important information are attached. Conclusively, the research can be certainly done by another researcher who is considered to generate the same evidence. This research meets the criterion of reliability or also called reproducibility.

Thirdly, is the research generalisable? Generalisation is also called external validity and another criterion of inquiry. It is “an act of reasoning from the observed to the unobserved, from a specific instance to all instances believed to be like the instance in question” (Schwandt, 2001: 105). It describes the process of moving from the specification of patterns, relations, processes et cetera to a more general and abstract understanding of these aspects of human life (ibid.: 106). In this research, findings cannot be generalised. One cannot gather from UMs in Bremen and according policies to the situation of UMs in another country, German federal state or even city. Although all interviewees are tied to a field of work within a public authority, organisation et cetera, the work of one person cannot be indicative for the work of another person with the same working assignment. What one guardian does, is not emblematic for all other guardians. Interviewees are first of all individuals with own opinions, interests and behaviour pattern that shape his work, but which cannot certainly been identified in this thesis. This research is highly specific as it investigates on a unique case of UMs and the provided aid of single stakeholders in Bremen. It is a small cut-out of a considerable bigger issue for welfare states, their (social) policies and integration efforts. The non-generalisability can be seen as one limitation of this research.

4.4 Limitations

This research has some limitations being mentioned in this section.

Initially, it needs to be included that I have planned to also conduct interviews with UMs in Bremen. Indeed, I also conducted these semi-structured interviews with five young refugees living in the city of Bremen in the end of April, focusing on the question of how youths experience practices in Bremen. The timeframe of the interviews was short and only a few questions have been formulated (see Appendix 3) and asked in very simple terms in either German or English and without using an audio recorder, in order to not additionally frighten

youths. Furthermore, I tried to create a comfortable environment and unbent atmosphere. Nonetheless, it unfortunately proved to be difficult to interview them. They seemed precarious and sceptical about the situation and occurred reserved. The willingness to talk was slight, so that it was difficult to initiate a dialogue. Information could be hardly gathered. Only some questions have been answered by youths.

In general, the interviews are not expected to solely bring enough evidence for this research. Only five youths (one girl and four boys) could be interviewed. Furthermore, some questions could be potentially biased by the fact that the official guardian finally selected the sample and organised the interviews. It is questionable, whether UMs felt able to freely respond. In that context, the Youth Welfare Office Bremen had to authorise me to get in contact with youths. Although I could influence the sample selection and was able to state criterions like age, gender and country of origin, lastly the Youth Welfare Office asked youths, who vice versa had to decide to participate or not. I also only talked to youths who spoke either German or English, which can be an implication that the sample privileges well educated youths. However, some results are worthwhile being mentioned (section 6). Furthermore, I can also draw my own conclusions from the fact that it was difficult to conduct those interviews. First of all, I might have underestimated the situation of conducting interviews with traumatised refugee children, who additionally live in a foreign country without any relatives and who have not known me before. The fact that youths did not like to talk might be an indication for suggestions like the importance of building relationship and trust, but which are not further examined herein.

Evidence is basically retrieved from the interviews with the stakeholders. They are asked about their own empowerment- and participation- based goals and implementation practices for UMs. Indeed, there is no distance to the question, but all are rather directly affected from the object of research as their work is going to be assessed. It is likely that they rather praise than depreciate their own work. Furthermore, it is expected that they do not automatically make all relevant information transparent. Consequently, participants and results of the interviews are expected to be biased, which depicts a great limitation of this research. Nevertheless, stakeholders are potentially able to state any kind of criticism or frustration since this research is anonymous and does not state names of the interviewees. Additionally, the research does not include a stakeholder who is responsible for the schooling and education of UMs. Education policies for UMs are a broad, but highly specific issue that can be object of another single research. However, there are insights in the education situation of UMs in Bremen (section 2.3).

A further limitation of this research is the concept of empowerment and participation. Both concepts are broad and everyone has a notion of participation, but the notion significantly differs in the public sphere and in the understanding of different stakeholders. Participation in what? This research brings in a definition, which is also presented in the interviews. Nonetheless, this research lacks previous studies on the empowerment and participation of young refugees that can be referred to in this thesis.

5 Analysis

5.1 Assignments of stakeholders

What are the assignments of chosen stakeholders? This section gives a glimpse of the work of (official) guardians, case managers, caretakers in both, the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen and a regular residential home, Refugio Bremen e.V. and Fluchtraum Bremen e.V.

Guardians and case managers in the Youth Welfare Office are considered to work with youths in general. UMs are one specific assignment. Which assignment do guardians have? Generally, the guardian is the legal representative of the UM and exercises the parental custody for the UM. Vice versa, the UM is the ward of the guardian. The relationship between guardian and ward is characterised by a unilateral dependence of the UM on his guardian, as the UM is a minor and cannot legally represent himself and his interests. It is the guardian, who makes all necessary decisions for the ward. The former is of course supposed to always act in the interests of the ward and only obliged to secure the best interests of the child. In the context of UMs, the guardian is considered to be an important contact person for the UM (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 22). He applies for socio-educational support within the SGB VIII. Together with the ward he has to, as far as possible, develop perspectives for the wards' life, he supports the ward in procedures under the legislation on foreigners like asylum or tolerated stay. In that context, the guardian has the legal care and responsibility for the ward (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015), whereby he is supervised by the local family court (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 19 & 22). One important point of contact of guardians and wards is the Help Planning, which also a case manager from the Youth Welfare Office attends. However, there are different types of guardians. In Bremen there can be an official guardian from the Youth Welfare Office Bremen or a single guardian, who is either a person or an association being appointed by the family court. This assessment refers to official guardians since one official guardian was interviewed. In contrast to single guardians, who might have only one ward, an official guardian has a great and increasing amount of wards. Nevertheless, to exercise the parental custody for an UM demands that there is a personal point of contact and a relationship being built between the guardian and the ward as needs and wishes of a ward cannot be known by his guardian himself. Indeed, the official guardianship for UMs is a work that is newly performed. There is no forerun of the UM or his family in the Youth Welfare Services or other social services. Hence, there is a strong need to recognise the backpack of his health, possible traumata but also resources an UM brings in order to state which way can be gone together. However, the guardian

argues that it is one of the most important goals in the work with UM that he is accommodated according to his age and guided into an appropriate Youth Welfare Facility (Interviewee 1, 14th of April 2015).

What does the work of a case manager involve? Like the guardian, also the case manager states that it is a crucial aim of his work to find an accommodation for the UM, in which he can stay for the long term. Furthermore, a security of existence for the youths has to be achieved. Thereby, he brings up that the Youth Welfare Office, in which the case manager operates, is assigned in child and youth protection and that young refugees need a special protection as they come without their parents. UMs lack orientation and need to early settle and integrate, which is the highest premise in the case management. Besides, the work of the Youth Welfare Office does not only involve taking the child into care, but also the parental stage and inter alia visiting authorities (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015). In general, the case manager is the one who is responsible for the case. Each UM has a case manager. Each youth in the Youth Welfare Services makes up an own case, whereby each case manager is indeed responsible for many cases and youths. Their work basically involves to advice and accompany the UM. Furthermore, the case manager is supposed to introduce the Help Planning. The case manager depicts it as the dialogue about perspectives for youths (ibid.). Basically, he is expected to invite to the Help Planning and make offers for the youth (Interviewee 1, 14th of April).

With the opening in September 2014, Bremen supposes of an own clearing centre, the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen. What is its (caretakers') assignment? The work is essentially determined by the clearing assignment, which generally contains the clarification of the guardianship, when it has not been done before, and the health condition, the registration under the legislation on foreigners, the social anamnesis and the mediation of information (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 16). Besides, the Help Planning is going to be prepared by writing a report for the Youth Welfare Office focusing on what the youth wants and needs. The conceptual service assignment of the centre intends to be concluded in three months. Caretakers are supposed to accompany youths in the clearing phase. They do not know anything about the youth when he arrives in the clearing centre. Thus, caretakers need to work on the reasons why he is in Bremen and what kind of perspectives he has. In that context, the main assignment is to clarify how it can go on for the youth. The assistance of caretakers in the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen involves four stages. Firstly, caretakers need to assess the behaviour, compatibility, and social competences of every youth. Secondly, needs are going to be assessed and reflected together with psychologists of the centre. Thirdly, legal issues, primarily concerning the residential status, can be clarified with the support of one expert in the centre, lawyers or other organisations and taken up in the report for the Help Planning. Does it make sense to apply for asylum or rather a tolerated stay? Fourthly, in order to use the Bremer Erlass (section 2.3) educational perspectives are assessed by looking at existing educational resources and investigating what is possible within the Bremish school system (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015).

Youths can further live in various ways. Inter alia they can be accommodated in the steady Youth Welfare Services. Since 2005 refugee children are integrated in the regular steady Youth Welfare Services. It is provided by various Youth Welfare Organisations. In Bremen there are either residential groups for exclusively UMs or mixed groups of all youths in the Youth Welfare Services. What does the work of a caretaker in a residential group for UMs comprise? Basically, the work of caretakers in the steady Youth Welfare Services comprises writing “Help Plans” (Hilfepläne), being involved in the basic organisation of the day, experiencing daily routine with youths but also picking up their experiences and needs. UMs often bring particular experiences. Many youths have been on escape in their country of origin and have gone through a lot. Accordingly, UMs particularly need to come to rest. One aim is to offer young refugees a safe haven (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015).

Beyond these public assignments, which are determined by law and mainly the SGB VIII, there are other stakeholders being involved in aid for UMs. These are Refugio Bremen e.V. and Fluchtraum Bremen e.V.

What is the assignment of Refugio? Refugio is a non-governmental advisory and treatment centre for refugees and torture survivors, which has been established as a voluntary Youth Welfare Service Organisation.

According to its articles of association, it aims at improving the psychosocial and health situation of foreign refugees in Bremen under reserve to identity and self-determination (Refugio – Psychosoziales Zentrum für ausländische Flüchtlinge e.V., 2005) Basically, it refers to the assignment to provide a protection area for the soul (Refugio Bremen e.V., 2014).

“People who have fled violence, persecution or discrimination seek protection. Refugio is a safe place for refugees. We offer psychosocial counsel[ing] and therapeutic options. Our offers are multilingual, free and will be treated confidentially.” (ibid.)

It attempts to tackle the problem that refugees do not have access to a therapeutic treatment by reasons of their residential status. Refugio aims at improving their health-situation and mental well-being in order to also increase the integration opportunities (Interviewee 2(a), 15th of April 2015). One third of all patients are minors, but not all are unaccompanied. With a special focus, Refugio offers young refugees a psychotherapy aiming at trauma processing or a “Curative Educational Individual Measure”, which focuses on the prevention of diseases (Interviewee 2(a) & (b), 15th of April 2015). Both offers are meant to on one hand stabilise and on the other hand they supply leisure and group activities that are low-threshold therapeutic. Foreseen, offers do not focus on talking but making, experiencing and coming into group processes, whereby next to having fun, arriving together, resources are strengthened and relationships and friendships are built (Interviewee 2(b), 15th of April 2015). Refugio aims at mobilising resources of young refugees, which is strongly connected to the notion of empowerment (Interviewee 2(a), 15th of April 2015). Furthermore, Refugio is doing networking and cooperates with specialists in the areas of law, education, health and social affairs

such as guardians, schools, Youth Welfare Facilities of lawyers (Freie Hansestadt Bremen, 2013: 27).

What is Fluchtraum? According to its articles of association, the purpose of Fluchtraum is to promote aid for refugees. Indeed, Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. is the only association in Bremen that exclusively supports UMs. In particular, they mediate, advise and educate single guardians for UMs in Bremen (Fluchtraum Bremen e.V., 2009), which often starts with taking mentorships for youths. In that context, Fluchtraum organises public information meetings, which everyone can attend, followed by deepening dialogues with possible mentors in order to examine if they are suitable as single guardians. If so, Fluchtraum coordinates a first meeting with the volunteer and the youth. Afterwards, the mentoring phase of approximately ten weeks begins. Fluchtraum accompanies and advises volunteers as well as they together with experts provide further trainings in specific topics like guardianship, residential status, and trauma, in cooperation with Refugio Bremen e.V., Youth Welfare Services and other current issues. Subsequently, some volunteers stay mentors or take over a single guardianship under the consent of the respective UM. Currently, Fluchtraum focuses on mediating single guardians. The association also considers to establish an own mentorship-programme in near future. In comparison to guardians, mentors work on a volunteer basis and have less rights and duties. Mentors are considered to significantly do intense relationship and integration work, which guardians and caretakers do not have the time to (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015). Moreover, Fluchtraum provides information about UMs in Bremen and has organised an expert day “Clearing-procedure for UMs” in 2013, or published a report on the schooling of UMs in 2013 (Fluchtraum Bremen e.V., 2013).

The assignments of guardians, case managers, caretakers in the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen and residential groups for UMs, Refugio and Fluchtraum prove that different actors have various assignments and provide different aid for UMs. Nonetheless, there are many intersections of work, where different actors need to cooperate like in the Help Planning, in which the youth, his guardian, case manager and caretaker participate. Besides, cooperation can be seen as essential to appropriately meet the individual needs of every single UM. Stakeholders can get information from each other, when they are in (good) contact. Furthermore, UMs are able to better exploit the aid system, when different stakeholders work together and are able to mediate the youth. First of all, Refugio and Fluchtraum take up this responsibility and work on building a network of stakeholders.

5.2 Implementing participation

Stakeholders shape policies and aid for UMs in Bremen. This section goes beyond the assignments and elaborates on the implementation stage. It is an explorative analysis of the role and participation practice of stakeholders in the empowerment process.

The following analysis exclusively presents findings from the conducted interviews. As already stated (sections 4.3 & 4.4), evidence is not generalisable and strongly limited as gathered information only depict an extract of reality. In that sense, results only include actions of single stakeholders.

Basically, the analysis refers to the operationalisation of empowerment. It considers the participative elements of informing, consulting and cooperating, which might partly intersect. It assesses the work of official guardians, case managers, caretakers in regular residential homes for UMs and the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen, whereby the work of Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. is considered to potentially have a double-empowering effect as firstly the organisation itself and secondly their mediated single guardians and mentors work with UMs.

Furthermore, the work of Refugio Bremen e.V. is illustrated separately by reasons of its specific therapeutic approach. As key stakeholders for UMs, Fluchtraum and Refugio are supposed to have a superior view on participation practices in Bremen. After elaborating on the three dimensions of participation and the work of Refugio, this section also discusses results from the interviews.

5.2.1 Informing

This section assesses measures of stakeholders particularly attempting to inform UMs.

Information are considered as a requirement for every UM to participate and thus highly important in the entire empowerment process. Basically, UMs partly face participation the first time in their live as many have been escaped from non-democratic countries with rather dictatorial political structures or more ore other hierarchic inner family structures (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015).

“They are involved whereby they previously just had to do what their parents or the military asked them to do. It is a development process that they pass through.” (Interviewee 1, 14th of April 2015).

In that context, youths also need to get to know basic political structures in Germany and Bremen in order to understand their rights herein.

“When youths have understood the system, it shows that they participate totally different.” (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015);

Or rather, when there is knowledge, entire procedures are different (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015).

To start with, all involved stakeholders have been asked to assess the state of knowledge of UMs on rights and duties, actors, measures and perspectives in Bremen. The majority rates it basically as slight or bad. However, some state that the state of knowledge differs among UMs. Some UMs know a lot about different aid-systems in German federal states which is connected to the assumption that information are fast scattered via social networks (Interview 3, 17th of April 2015) or other youths (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015). Often knowledge obtains to different facilities and its supplies, but there is often only superficial knowledge on the Youth Welfare Services and procedures (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015). Youths do often not know what asylum or tolerated stay means or what for example a guardian or case manager is and what he does (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015). Another stakeholder argues that knowledge on the basic legal and societal structure does often not exist, but sometimes there is an imagination or a certain sense of demanding being linked to knowledge about what other youths have. Inasmuch, there is the need to know what a welfare state is and what it contains in order to understand provided aid and decisions that are made (Interviewee 5, 28th of May). With increasing contact and meeting points with actors and organisations knowledge is expected to increase (Interviewee 2(b), 15th of April 2015).

In how far does the Youth Welfare Office Bremen inform UMs? Referring to initial information about where to go when arriving in Bremen, the aim to personally inform each UMs cannot be implemented anymore by the case management as there are too many UMs arriving at one day. Therefore, the Youth Welfare Office has published a welcome letter “Herzlich Willkommen in Bremen” (Welcome to Bremen) stating the first three steps of the initial medical examination in the Zast, visiting the police for the criminal identification and the Youth Welfare Office for the age assessment (Figure 1), the addresses of the contact points and the directions to the Youth Welfare Office Bremen. It is provided in English, French and Arabic and thus expected to be accessible for the majority of UMs. It secures that UMs enter the Youth Welfare Services, but does not inform about legal rights, social security and aid-system that UMs are affected by. However, “we try to advice as much as we can”, whereby the basis of understanding is bad and dependent on translators (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015).

How does the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen contribute the level of knowledge of UMs?

“What is the system and how does it work? That is one part of the analysis that is supposed to take place here in order to go further with planning perspectives”. (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015)

The clearing centre aims at working on UMs’ perspectives. “To clarify that question of how it can go on is our assignment (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015). Therefore, the clearing centre tries to slowly explain the youths what the

Youth Welfare Services is, how it works, what they can expect from it, what the next steps are, but also the support in general and by his guardian within his decision-making power. Thereby, UMs are expected to better understand their position and what they have to expect as well as identify their attitude towards it. Furthermore, myths about the aid-system can be dispelled and exuberant wishes been reconsidered (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015). Beyond this work of caretakers, the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen has one personnel position that is assigned to legal questions of youths (section 5.1). Within, questions relating the residential status or the identity assessment of UMs can be clarified and it can be better reflected whether it is more appropriate to apply for asylum or a tolerated stay (ibid.).

Furthermore, the department of official guardians from the Youth Welfare Office Bremen makes use of the approach of multipliers. Accordingly, official guardians use UMs who are on a good path as multipliers for other UMs. Official guardians go into the facilities in which UMs live and invite them in groups in their offices. In the context of those round tables, official guardians are able to explain youths together with multipliers the role of the guardian as well as the aid-system of the Youth Welfare Services and clarify certain cornerstones of society. Thus, multipliers have some kind of exemplary function. They can explain other UMs from an inner perspective what it means to live in Bremen and what their initial difficulties have been (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015). Often lively discussions arise, whereby “youths are more likely to accept those opinions [of multipliers] than when they have constant conversations with the caretakers in the residential homes” (Interviewee 1, 14th of April 2015). Due to the increasing number and the connected overload of the aid-system for refugees and UMs, demands cannot always be satisfied. “Then multipliers can calm and explain the youth to be more patient” (ibid.). Often more understanding arises. Besides, there is the need to explain the structure of the social security system and the democratic legal system with its rights but also consequences of offences (ibid.). “We try to cover those aspects with the consequence that youths become calmer towards the system” (ibid.). Often comparisons between the country of origin and Germany are drawn (ibid.). Indeed, round tables with multipliers are not only used by official guardians to only inform but also to consult and cooperate with UMs.

The caretaker in the residential home for UMs states that it is part of his work to inform. Among others, caretakers need to explain youths what an asylum procedure is while they are not allowed to give legal advices (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015). As youths are born in totally different countries with a different legal framework and culture, it is also necessary to give them an understanding of the existing legal security which does not prevail in most countries of origin. Thereby, it is even difficult to explain a youth who is born and grown up in Germany for example how one becomes a refugee. To shortly elucidate a youth, who speaks a different language, the German legal framework or a refusing notification from the BAMF in an extreme form of officialese is even harder (ibid.). However, it is possible for caretakers to have an influence on that state of knowledge and further participation “by having a tight contact to youths, which is only possible in such

as small group¹⁷ but not in a house in which 40 youths live” (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015).

“[C]aretaker are information source for many things and unfortunately there are also caretakers who are not well-informed.” (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015)

The issue of forced migration and the context of young refugees in Germany and Bremen need to be known by caretakers and other providers of information. Otherwise information cannot be well communicated to youths. However, not all caretakers in residential groups in which also UMs live have a special education and knowledge (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015).

How does Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. contribute the state of knowledge of UMs? Fluchtraum refers to brochures from the BUMF that aim at inform UMs about rights and duties. Thus, the BUMF has published a guide for unaccompanied minor refugees, called “Welcome to Germany!” that has been translated in eight languages (BUMF, 2010). According to Fluchtraum “every youth should have that in order to know what he can expect herein” (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015). Indeed, it is seen as a good start (ibid.). Nevertheless, only some providers have ordered those brochures. Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. tries to provide some of those brochures from its own budget (ibid.). Furthermore, Fluchtraum created and published an own brochure, which is directly addressed to UMs. It informs youths about the general work of Fluchtraum and the existence of single guardians and provides contact details so that youths can also contact Fluchtraum (ibid.). Moreover, also single guardians and mentors that are mediated by Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. are expected to be able to inform youths. Since both groups are trained from Fluchtraum and experts, they are supposed to know how aid is organised. Otherwise, they are always encouraged to ask Fluchtraum for more specific information. “Once there is trust, they [UMs] believe what the volunteers tell them” (ibid.). These people are considered to have a different cogency than caretakers. Single guardians and mentors have the necessary time and patience to give UMs necessary information, also about current challenges in the provision of aid, and appropriately answer questions and “explain them things [...] in a human language” (ibid.) rather than in a de-emotionalised technical language.

To a great extend UMs are also expected to gain information from other youths (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015 & interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015) whose general influence is supposed to be huge by reasons of the same background, age, possibly language and the overall importance of peer groups. Thereby, the wish and attempt of youths to collect these information is expected to exist (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015).

¹⁷ The interviewed caretaker is responsible for a group of eight UMs.

5.2.2 Consulting

The former dimension of informing mainly requires an active action of the ones who inform. As recipients of information, UMs take in a less active part. Accordingly, the latter need to show interest in gaining information, use offers they get and comprehend those information. The dimension of consulting does not only require stakeholders to ask UMs, but it also needs UMs to articulate needs and interests.

“[S]ome dedicated youths try to get in contact through their caretakers, asking to get to know their guardian. These appointments we make possible. Youths are able to just come around and look for a dialogue with us which is not at all a problem for us.” (Interviewee 1, 14th of April 2015)

According to this statement, the department of official guardianship tries to enable to get in personal contact with dedicated youths who themselves show interest in getting to know their guardians. In such meetings possibly needs and interests can be mediated by the respective youth. This getting to know is not an established institution by the Youth Welfare Office Bremen and the department of official guardianship, but voluntary and requires the UMs to get active. Besides, round tables with multipliers (section 5.2.1) are also supposed to be consultative as they do not only aim at informing UMs but also promote dialogues and discussions about individual experiences, support and perspectives.

“There is nothing herein that is going to bypass youths. We discuss things with the youths until the end.” (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015)

The Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen depicts the principle of transparency. Foreseen, the youth is supposed to know everything happening around him, existing demands on him and discuss them. Besides, there is a complaint box that has been used only once. Caretakers encourage youths to articulate criticism. They also accompany youths to places such as official guardians and case managers in order to help them stating concerns and in order to not let them feel surrendered (ibid.).

“The standards. We have group discussions in the residential community in which youths can articulate their interests and ideas, all sorts of things. We have a complaint box which is not often used [...]. It only works when there are colleagues, whom youths trust, who have knowledge about the different countries youths come from. Otherwise you can indeed save the theoretical fuss.” (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015)

Also the caretaker in the residential home for UMs refers to the possibility of youths to articulate interests, ideas and complains, whereby it is only supposed to be in fact used when there is a relationship of trust between caretakers and the

respective youth. Building trust takes time, respect and efforts of both, the youths and people working with them (Interviewee 2(b), 15h of April 2015). It is not working when there are colleagues who do not speak a common language with the youth, who do not have knowledge or cannot empathise with the situation of the young refugee (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015). However, caretakers are considered to try to implement participation (Interviewee 2(b), 15th of April 2015).

Also the work of single guardians and mediators mediated by Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. is supposed to be consultative. In general, within both forms of companion there is more time to individually dispute with the respective youth than most official guardians, case managers and caretakers have (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015). Thereby, single guardians and mentors often only care for one youth and can better focus on his individual needs and wishes.

“Most [youths] have a positive approach [...] they value that there is a person that just cares for them and not five or ten more, just him. They have a private number they can call. Some just meet once; even there the youth values it.” (ibid.)

5.2.3 Cooperating

This section elaborates on the participative dimension of cooperating which is certainly strongly connected to the consulting-element. Beyond being asked, it involves that the opinion of youths is not only heard, but also considered in decision-making processes.

“Participation is obvious for us, that we participate the youths, to take them into shared responsibility because we do not make decisions over their heads. If the youth participates and contributes, it is more successful.” (Interviewee 1, 14th of April)

However, it makes a difference and is decisive for the social integration of youths if one only administers documents or takes youths into the obligation of cooperation (ibid.). As one measure, the department of official guardianship takes the youth into shared responsibility with its participation-duty. Thereby, youths are called upon providing the certificate of birth in order to simplify the age assessment and further official procedures. This measure claims a contribution of youths, a cooperation between them and the Youth Welfare Office Bremen and transfers responsibility from public authorities to youths. Nonetheless, it is not considerable in terms of decision-making power.

“The youth is the only expert for himself [...]” (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015)

Moreover, every UM is involved in the individual Help Planning that basically takes part in regular intervals together with his guardian, case manager and caretaker from the steady Youth Welfare Services. Decisions in the Help Planning are supposed to be made in the interaction of several professionals. All participants have to set up an individual Help Plan together with the youth concerned (§ 36 (2) SGB VIII). In principle, “we assume that everyone who comes as a minor has a need for Youth Welfare Services” (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015). Thus, “Help Planning is a dialogue about perspectives for youths” (ibid.), asking what the youth wants and needs (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015). “[T]he case manager is the one who does the Help Planning, invites us [guardians] and makes offers” (Interviewee 1, 14th of April 2015) and the caretaker is considered to actually write the Help Plan (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015). However, the Help Plan has to be signed by the individual youth (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015). In the Help Planning, youths are supposed to be the ones who know best what they need as there are no parents in the background who can report on him or reveal something (ibid.). Inasmuch, it is important that youths know what Help Planning is. As they often have shortly arrived in Bremen and do not have pronounced German language skills, there is often also a translator participating though.

“[T]he entire Help Planning [...] can only be done together with the youth. It is one of the most essential participation parts that they [youths] can co-determine processes of what they are going to do”. (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015)

Besides the Help Planning as an essential participation pattern of all youths in the Youth Welfare Services, UMs are able to object administrative processes and use legal opportunities when they do not agree with particular processes such as identification procedures. Thereby, youths are supported by the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen explaining the youth the normal way to consult and get advice and assistance. “It is one thing we would do together with them [youths]” (ibid.). However, this measure is supposed to be a basic political participation pattern that exists independent of stakeholders. There are further direct cooperating-elements focused by the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen. Accordingly, there is the attempt to make the design within the clearing facility together with youths.

“We try to make residential group-plans and an overall plan which is really really difficult to do because of language barriers and [...] patience.” (ibid.)

It has been done in four to five languages, whereby the patience and capacity to keep up is not given by all youths. Moreover, youths are free to conceptually co-create a common kitchen (ibid.).

“Try to think of everything that is possible herein [...] in the context that we are an intermediate stop.” (ibid.)

Whereas the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen strongly focuses on creating a Welcome-atmosphere for youths, more long-term pedagogical work could work more on the development of (new) competences (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015).

5.2.4 Participation practices of Refugio Bremen e.V.

This section considers practices of Refugio Bremen e.V. Its assistance has to be distinguished from the support and participation practice of other involved stakeholders, mentioned in the former sections. Refugio encounters UMs with a holistic therapeutic approach, which builds on individual resources, power sources, competencies and good memories of youths that contribute his stability in the current situation (Interviewee 2(b), 15th of April 2015). Aid is supposed to exclusively focus on the person and his stabilisation whereas other involved stakeholders provide the specific setting around the youth that is expected to have empowering effects. However, what kind of participation does Refugio claim?

“[...] [W]e are the ones that offer the framework, continuity, reliability, relationship and the setting in which youths can arrive. However, [...] when support is wished things such as punctuality, keeping appointments are claimed and important.” (ibid.)

Beyond these general demands of a reliability of youths, primarily the therapeutic work performed by Refugio cannot be conducted without the contribution of youths. Participation is a matter of course since the therapist and the youth are in a relationship with a particular request (ibid.).

“[T]he therapist’s attitude demands a great openness. It is important to see character traits, the socialisation, the level of education [...]. I am not the one that has leased the truth. There is the situation of approaching one another.” (ibid.)

In a first talk therapists ask for competencies, interests et cetera, whereupon the youth also articulates what and which kind of treatment is in his interest. In the following treatment process he is supposed to state again and again what has changed within his symptoms and how he evaluates the therapy process, whereby the therapeutic (goal) setting can be modified when needed (Interviewee 2(b), 15th of April 2015). Therefore, Refugio provides information about the origin of stress symptoms like insomnia, nightmares, flashbacks and concentration disorders, furthermore developing strategies that work against and obtain control over those symptoms (ibid.). Beyond this therapeutic work, Refugio also offsets the lack of information by other stakeholders and generally informs young refugees (section 5.2.1). In the first dialogue with UMs, often questions that usually arise in the clearing process such as perspective questions are asked.

“[These] have to be answered because they have not been asked before. It can find place” (Interviewee 2(a), 15th of April 2015).

Knowledge can provide further orientation for UMs that vice versa might have a positive effect on his mental stability.

Conclusively, the work of Refugio Bremen e.V. is supposed to mobilise various individual resources which might set a good basis for the further participation (willingness) of young refugees. Moreover, Refugio is engaged in networking and mediates youths to respective other providers of aid.

5.3 Discussion

“When we want to participate, we need to offer them [youths] something. Otherwise it is just a flagship.” (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015)

The conducted interviews prove that all stakeholders are familiar with the concepts of empowerment and participation. Basically, several stakeholders also approve a special need to empower UMs due to various reasons such as their position as refugees and minors who are additionally unaccompanied, their public perception, their limited legal rights or their unsecure residential status (Interviewee 2(a), 15th of April 2015 & interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015). However, there is no difference between UMs and other youths in the Youth Welfare Services (Interviewee 1, 14th of April 2015 & interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015). Moreover, some stakeholders argue that there is a welcome culture and that a societal acceptance and responsibility to aid UMs is mostly existing as long as youths' behaviour is society-compliant (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015 & interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015).

All stakeholders are either voluntarily aiming or legally obliged to participate youths in their work. The former analysis depicts practiced participation pattern by six different stakeholders in Bremen. Indeed, stakeholders participate youths by informing, consulting and cooperating (with) them. All stakeholders inform UMs to a certain extent by either written information, in conversation with the youth or by other persons such as multipliers. Youths are also to a relatively small extent consulted and able to articulate interests and wishes by for example using a complaint box. Besides, the Help Planning legally integrates the youths in important perspective decisions and stakeholders cooperate, when organising the life in residential homes. Hence, stakeholders certainly aid in the empowerment of youths. Nonetheless, there are several empowerment-based goals that are not practiced.

All stakeholders argue that the current aid-system for UMs in Bremen is totally overloaded respectively even overwhelmed (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015) which significantly affects their work.

“[The] system is shortly before collapsing.” (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015)

There are different arguments why the system is overloaded. Publicly often the number of refugees arriving in European welfare states is problematised. In a different sense, it can be also argued that the status quo is a result of too little resources measured with the number of refugees (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015). Many stakeholders claim that there is a great lack of resources in terms of personnel but also factual and in terms of the amount of money that single municipalities have to care for UMs.

“Everything is lacking: Case managers, guardians, economic aid for the system, and performance agreements for projects and services. We did not expect a so precarious situation” (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015).

First of all the current accommodation system in Bremen seems not to be able to manage the great increase of the number of refugees and UMs in Bremen anymore, which results in building huge camps of tents or Youth Welfare Organisations hiring hostels (Interviewee 1, 14th of April 2015), in which pedagogical work of caretakers for UMs is hardly possible or cannot even exist. Thus, many stakeholders depict the current accommodation situation in Bremen as one of the greatest challenges in the aid-system for UMs.

“Bremen is doing fine in many things, except housing.” (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015)

UMs remain in the Zast for too long, whereby it is highly overcrowded (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015). Not only the care with a staffing condition of one caretaker for 15 youths but also the accommodation situation is highly problematic. Currently, 165 UMs are expected to wait for a place in a Youth Welfare Facility or other subsequent housing (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015). This situation is expected to certainly works against a welcome culture but also the importance of initial support that sets cornerstones for perspectives and the social integration of UMs in Bremen.

“When you as a young person remain in a waiting position plus being poorly provided plus being poorly informed plus being poorly cared for, it is a really bad beginning.” (Interviewee 2(a), 15th of April 2015)

Besides, in terms of personnel resources, official guardians and case managers need to care for many more youths than intended. Whereas official guardians that specialise on UMs are by federal law supposed to have 50 cases, the actual case number amounts to 70 to 80, whereby in April already 100 more UMs are preannounced to arrive in Bremen (Interviewee 1, 14th of April 2015). Yet, a high turn-over rate and vacant positions in the official guardianship and case management even affect those to have too many cases. Caretakers in residential

homes face similar challenges, whereby the former have the most intensive contact to youths. However, the requiring assistance is expected to be higher for UMs than other youths (Interviewee 2(b), 15th of April 2015) by reasons of health conditions, special needs and no common mother-tongue. Whereas the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen has a very good staffing condition of one caretaker for two UMs, caretaker in regular residential homes have to care for many more youths which does also mean to have less time to care for the individual youth.

Indeed, most stakeholders see the overloaded system and the lack of resources as the most important reasons for not being able to comply with participation aims. When exemplarily assessing informing practices, this cannot or can hardly take place in personal conversations of public actors such as official guardians and case manager but if at all in written form.

“Guardians often talk of a transfer [...], although it just means that they have to move. The capacity to use a normal language has been partly lost because they do not have the contact to the youth, have so many records and partly just administrate. How could you just sit down in order to discuss the housing system or school situation in Bremen? That are impossibilities.” (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April)

Caretakers in regular residential homes and the Bahia Clearing Centre, Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. and Refugio Bremen e.V. seem to be able to partly offset the work of overtasked official guardians and case managers. However, not all UMs have contact to the clearing centre, Fluchtraum and Refugio and rather use other peers as sources of information, whereby information are not always accurate and are able to build shifted imaginations. The possibility to consult and cooperate with UMs is also hardly given.

Due to the lack of appropriate accommodation, the right to wish and vote of youths in the Youth Welfare Services (see § 5 SGB VIII), which is one of the most powerful participation measures, still exists but cannot be implemented anymore. “The freedom to wish and vote is currently abolished.” (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015).

“They are disappointed when they are participated and their wishes are not implemented [...] they are asked and we are arguing against that.” (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015)

Currently, accommodation related there is no choice (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015). Even worse, official guardians and case managers are hardly able to know or even have contact to all the youths they are supposed to care for. Inasmuch, they do not even know what the youth’s wish is. When they know, they are not automatically able to follow this wish as there is not enough accommodation. But every existing free place in Youth Welfare Services is immediately occupied. In fact, the right to wish and vote needs to get back reliability, otherwise one stakeholder argues, it can be just abolished.

However, the Help Planning seems to remain, whereby it remains unclear to what extent needs and interests of youths can be appropriately involved in it when the youth has not even met his guardian or case manager before the actual Help Planning meetings.

Concerning the Bremen quality standards that set cornerstone for aid for UMs and refer to basic empowerment and participation approaches in the first contact and accommodation of UMs in Bremen, colleagues in the official guardianship are expected to not know these (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015). Yet, participation aims cannot be implemented when relevant professionals who work with UMs, do not even know standards of their work.

This evidence depicts that some stakeholders first of all from the official guardianship, case management and caretakers in residential homes for UMs neither have all necessary information about conditions and requirements of their own work nor about the youths they care for. Indeed, stakeholders seem to also struggle in keeping own claims in their work with young refugees. The willingness to participate seems to be given. Indeed, the overload of the system and of each professional working with UMs seems to significantly counteract legal and personal participation intentions. The problem is not about the participation *willingness* of stakeholders and UMs. Most stakeholders seem to aim at providing participation opportunities and want to take youths into shared responsibility. Also UMs want to participate; stakeholders depict their willingness to participate as “existing” (Interviewee 5, 28th of May 2015), “very high” (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015), “very great” (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015) or even “outstanding great” (Interviewee 1, 14th of April 2015). Indeed, caretakers assume that they “can influence that [the willingness] by having tight contact to youths which is only possible in such a small group but not in a house where 40 youths live and where other problems are prioritised” (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015). Consequently, the missing implementation of participation and empowerment seems to be connected to the lack of personnel and factual resources and are thus a result of the missing *capacity* of stakeholders to participate UMs. In the current situation participation just cannot be appropriately implemented. Although stakeholders try to practice participation, as long as Bremen lacks basic resources like accommodation and pedagogical professionals who are responsible for the implementation of participation and empowerment, the legal participation obligation as well as further participation cannot be appropriately implemented.

6 Conclusion

“[F]ulfilling the assignment in a good way is a challenge.” (Interviewee 3, 17th of April 2015)

The purpose of this research has been to assess how stakeholders in Bremen aid in the empowerment of UMs in terms of participation. Accordingly, there has been retrieved evidence of participation practices of six stakeholders in Bremen, an official guardian and case manager from the Youth Welfare Office Bremen, a caretaker in a residential home for UMs, the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen, Refugio Bremen e.V. and Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. oriented on the dimension of informing, consulting and cooperating with UMs.

Results in the analysis prove that youths are participated but not to the extent that has been legally and further determined. Public actors lack essential personnel and factual resources to fulfil (legal) empowerment-based goals. In that context, the right to wish and vote that has been established in the SGB VIII, still formally exist but has been abolished in reality. Stakeholders like the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen with its public assignment of conducting UMs' clearing phase is still able to mostly fulfil its assignment. Certainly, it has to be considered that different stakeholders have different resources. The clearing centre has a very good staffing condition which is essential for the intensity of care of UMs. However, only a few of all young refugees arriving in Bremen get the chance to reside in the clearing centre or have to wait for a place very long so that the scope of influence of the Bahia Clearing Centre is limited. Other organisations such as Refugio and Fluchtraum further aid UMs and try to bridge what cannot be done by public actors first of all in terms of informing youths. However, they also reach their limits.

It seems that young refugees can be partly only provided with the most necessary aid. According to Longwe's five degrees of empowerment barely the first dimension of empowerment, which is called “welfare”, can be afforded. In that sense, UMs rather take in a passive role as recipients of aid ensuring that basic needs such as housing, nutrition, income or guardianship are satisfied (see section 3.1; Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton et al., 2009: 5.). Thus, in this current state participation of UMs occurs as wishfulness than being actually enforceable. Neither stakeholders nor young refugees are considered to be by any means satisfied with this situation.

“[Y]outh are asked for their wishes and needs and it is tried to implement it [participation] [...] but finally it will be addressed pragmatically.” (Interviewee 2(b), 15th of April 2015)

Although the conducted interviews with five young refugees in Bremen have not brought enough evidence for this research and are not representative due to the selection by the Youth Welfare Office and the small sample of only five youths, some indicators are worthwhile being mentioned. All youths have applied for a tolerated stay, which might be connected to the fact that the Bremer Erlass offers them appropriate opportunities to get into a Training Scheme and thus obtain a secure residence title. Furthermore, all have experienced further education in their country of origin. Three out of five youths have stated that they mainly receive information on rights and duties, measures and perspectives in Bremen by their caretakers. However, some of the interviewed youths have seemed to lack essential information as they even asked me if I could send them this thesis in order to read it and get (more) information about the aid-system in Bremen. The interviews revealed that youths are highly motivated to socially integrate in Bremen. All had defined goals and ideas of how their life in Bremen should look like. Many of them wanted to talk to me in German as well as all have talked to me about their own wishes. Many of them articulated the wish to move into an own flat, graduate from school, find an apprenticeship or study and get an employment in Bremen. Some explicitly stated that they want to be more independent. Indeed, I experienced youths as highly motivated and self-responsible.

Actually, the Bremer Erlass can be considered as a good motivation for young refugees to continue their education in Bremen and get in a Training Scheme. Resources UMs bring with and which they can further expand can be taken up as great chances for a secure residence title. Thus, ideas, potentials and resources of young people can be appropriately regarded. In the national comparison Bremen succeeds with the Bremer-Erlass or the BIN-programme and its educational perspectives.

Furthermore, Bremen supposes of a comparable engaged civil society providing a welcome culture for refugees and UMs (Interviewee 6, 1st of June 2015). Initiatives such as “Flüchtlingshilfe Bremen” that organises donations in kind for the camp of tents and which enjoys great popularity among people in Bremen (Ehrich, 2015) or the high number of people who want to assume a single guardianship of mentorship by Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. and whose employees are currently not even able to manage and mediate the great amount of volunteers anymore (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015) indicate a great societal willingness to support refugees.

With mediating single guardians and mentors also Fluchtraum does important work for UMs in Bremen and aids in their empowerment. Thereby, single guardians and mentors are expected to have much more time than official guardians have for single youths. They can also significantly aid in socio-cultural participation of youth in sport clubs et cetera as well as they can promote youth to improve German language skills.

Additionally, Refugio is meant to improve the health situation and mental well-being and thus increase the integration opportunities of UMs.

In fact, in times in which aid by public actors essentially lacks resources, the work of such NGOs like Fluchtraum and Refugio but also the civil society

becomes even more important. Both organisations are only bound to its articles of associations and are indeed able to adapt themselves the situation and its necessities. Accordingly, when the number of UMs in Bremen has been lower, official guardians have not had so many cases and could better care for UMs so that Fluchtraum focused on mediating mentors as the need for single guardians has been low. With the increasing number of young refugees within the last three years, official guardians are increasingly overtasked and do not have the time to appropriately care for UMs anymore so that the focus of Fluchtraum has changed again and is meant to mediate single guardians (Interviewee 4, 22nd of April 2015).

However, Bremen needs to continue this path in terms of appropriate housing and has to provide further resources in order to accomplish its empowerment and participation aims. The unsuitable accommodation conditions and lacking personnel resources should not get the chance to work against the potentials of youths and blur what Bremen is doing well. The holes, that the current aid-system has, have been already recognised by all stakeholders.

Interviews have indicated that there are quarrels of different stakeholders. First of all in challenging times there is the need to cooperate, to work together, to inform about each other's work and mediate young refugees. Thus, youths are enabled to make at least use of all supplied measures and exploit what is possible within the aid system and use all existing empowerment capacities. Although Fluchtraum and Refugio are engaged in networking, Bremen lacks a network manager or organisation that solely focuses on building a network of aid and which could also coordinate further voluntary aid. Existing network structures could be incorporated and further being built. Indeed, both Refugio and Fluchtraum seem to be also fully occupied by their core area of work which is psychosocial support and the mediation of single guardians and mentors.

The current situation of lacking resources, (future) concepts and organisation of aid rather gives rise to the fundamental question whether participation is really politically willing or rather a flagship of German and Bremish policies for young refugees. Indeed, participation certainly requires more factual resources in order to supply youths a choice. To the same extent it also asks for more personnel resources as arbitrary decisions are always easier to make than cooperative decisions.

There is need to reconsider policies as well as there is need for further research on empowerment- and participation-based support of young refugees which can certainly pave the way to a succeeding integration of those young people – if willing.

7 References

- Alhojailan, Mohammed I. (2012). Thematic analysis: a critical review of its process and evaluation. *West East Journal of Social Sciences 1 (1)*: 39-47.
- Amt für Soziale Dienste Bremen Fachabteilung Junge Menschen (2010). *Handlungsleitfaden zur Zusammenarbeit des Ambulanten Sozialdienstes Junge Menschen mit Vormündern*. Handbuch HzE B 3.5.2.
- Angenendt, Steffen (2000). *Kinder auf der Flucht: Minderjährige Flüchtlinge in Deutschland*. Opladen: Leske & Budrich.
- Attride-Stirling, Jennifer (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research 1 (3)*: 385-405.
- BAGFW (2015). *Unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge schützen, fördern und beteiligen! – ein Vorschlag der BAGFW für eine geänderte Zuständigkeitsregelung*. Retrieved from: http://www.bagfw.de/uploads/media/2015-03-10_Unbegleitete_minderjaehrige_Fluechtlinge.pdf on 29th of May 2015.
- Balluseck, Hilde von (ed.) (2003). *Minderjährige Flüchtlinge: Sozialisationsbedingungen, Akkulturationsstrategien und Unterstützungssysteme*. Opladen: Leske & Budrich.
- BAMF (2009). *Unbegleitete minderjährige Migranten in Deutschland – Aufnahme, Rückkehr und Integration*. Working Paper 26 der Forschungsgruppe des Bundesamtes. Retrieved from: http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/EMN/Nationale-Studien-WorkingPaper/emn-wp26-unbegleitete-minderjaehrige-de.pdf?__blob=publicationFile on 11th of May 2015.
- BAMF (2010). *Dienstanweisung Asylverfahren: Unbegleitete Minderjährige*. Retrieved from: http://www.b-umf.de/images/da_unbegleitete-minderjaehrige-2010.pdf on 11th of May 2015.
- Barrett, Susan & Michael Hill (1984). Policy, Bargaining and Structure in Implementation Theory: Towards an Integrated Perspective. *Policy & Politics 12 (3)*: 219-240.
- Baxter, Pamela & Susan Jack (2008). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report Volume 13 (4)*: 544-559.
- Bennett Cattaneo, Lauren & Lisa A. Goodman (2015). What Is Empowerment Anyway? A Model for Domestic Violence Practice, Research, and Evaluation. *Psychology of Violence 5 (1)*: pp. 84-94.
- Bernard, H. Russell (2000). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Boyчук Duchscher, Judy E. & Leanne S. Cowin (2004). The experience of marginalization in new nursing graduates. *Nurs Outlook* 52: 289-296. Retrieved from: http://www.academia.edu/5013537/The_experience_of_marginalization_in_new_nursing_graduates on 17th of June 2015.
- Bryman, Alan (2012). *Social Research Methods*. Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BUMF (2010). *Welcome to Germany! A Guide for Unaccompanied Minor Refugees*. München. Retrieved from: <http://www.b-umf.de/images/willkommen/willkommensbrochureenglisch-web.pdf> on the 29th of July 2015.
- BUMF (2013). *Bremer Erlass erleichtert Aufenthaltssituation*. Retrieved from: <http://www.b-umf.de/de/startseite/bremer-erlass-erleichtert-aufenthaltssituation> on 11th of May 2015.
- BUMF (2015). *Gesellschaftliche Beteiligung von jungen Flüchtlingen*. Retrieved from: <http://www.b-umf.de/de/themen/partizipation> on 23th of June 2015.
- Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Landesjugendämter (2014). *Handlungsempfehlungen zum Umgang mit unbegleiteten minderjährigen Flüchtlingen: Inobhutnahme, Clearingverfahren und Einleitung von Anschlussmaßnahmen*. 116. Arbeitstagung der Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Landesjugendämter vom 14. bis 16. Mai 2014 in Mainz. Retrieved from: http://www.bagljae.de/downloads/118_handlungsempfehlungen-umf_2014.pdf on 29th of May 2015.
- Bundesministerium des Innern (2015). *Asyl- und Flüchtlingspolitik in Deutschland*. Retrieved from: http://www.bmi.bund.de/DE/Themen/Migration-Integration/Asyl-Fluechtlingsschutz/Asyl-Fluechtlingsschutz/asyl-fluechtlingsschutz_node.html on 30th of July 2015.
- Christens, Brian D. (2012). Toward relational empowerment. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 50 (1-2): 114-128.
- Cornell Empowerment Group (1989). Empowerment and family support. *Networking Bulletin* 1 (2).
- Die Senatorin für Soziales, Kinder, Jugend und Frauen (2014). *Vorlage für die Sitzung des Jugendhilfeausschusses der Stadtgemeinde Bremen am 09. Dezember 2014/Vorlage für die Sitzung der städtischen Deputation für Soziales, Kinder und Jugend am 8. Januar 2015: Top: 9: Unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge im Land Bremen*. Bremen. Retrieved from: <http://bremerjugendring.de/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/TOP-9-Unbegleitete-minderj%C3%A4hrige-Fl%C3%BChtlinge-im-Land-Bremen.pdf> on 11th of May 2015.
- Ehrich, Issio (2015). *Wenn Engagment ins Chaos führt: In Bremen beommen Flüchtlinge endlos Hilfe*. N-tv.de. 31th of July 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.n-tv.de/politik/In-Bremen-bekommen-Fluechtlinge-endlos-Hilfe-article15631861.html> on 4th of August 2015.

- EMN (2014). *Meetings and Conferences: National EMN Conference on Unaccompanied Minors: Between Refugee Experience, Youth Welfare, and Residence Law, Nuremberg, 24 October 2014*. Retrieved from: <http://www.emn.sk/en/activities/meetings-and-conferences/185-national-emn-conference-on-unaccompanied-minors-between-refugee-experience-youth-welfare-and-residence-law-nuremberg-24-october-2014.html> on 12th of February 2015.
- Europäischer Gerichtshof (2013). Bestimmung des zuständigen Mitgliedsstaats zur Prüfung des Asylantrags eines unbegleiteten Minderjährigen ohne im Hoheitsgebiet eines Mitgliedsstaats anwesende Familienangehörige bei Antragstellung in mehreren Mitgliedsstaaten. *Urt. v. 06.06.2013, Az.: Rs. C-648/11*. Retrieved from: http://landingpages.wolterskluwer.de/media/landingpages/auslaenderrecht_infobrief_2011/Archiv_07-08_2013/C-648_11.pdf on 25th of May 2015.
- European Commission (2010). *Europäische Kommission ruft zu verstärktem Schutz unbegleiteter Minderjähriger in der EU auf*. IP/10/534. Brüssel. Retrieved from: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-10-534_de.htm on 31th of January 2015.
- Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (2015). *Distribution of asylum applicants*. Retrieved from: <http://www.bamf.de/EN/Migration/AsylFluechtlinge/Asylverfahren/Verteilung/verteilung-node.html> on 2nd of March 2015.
- Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. (2009). *Vereinsatzung*. Bremen. Retrieved from: <http://www.fluchtraum-bremen.de/images/fb/Vereinsatzung.pdf> on 27th of July 2015.
- Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. (2013). *Zwischenbericht zur aktuellen Beschulungssituation unbegleiteter minderjähriger Flüchtlinge in Bremen*. Bremen.
- Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. & Flüchtlingsrat Bremen (2013). *Positionspapier zur Situation minderjähriger Flüchtlinge und UMF*. Bremen. Retrieved from: <http://www.fluechtlingsrat-bremen.de/wp-content/uploads/Positionspapier-UMF.pdf> on 12th of June 2015.
- Flüchtlingsrat Bremen (2005). *Das Bremer Modell – Gesundheitsversorgung für Flüchtlinge*.
- Freie Hansestadt Bremen (2013). *Qualitätsstandards Unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge (umF) in Bremen: Erstkontakt und Unterbringung*. Bremen. Retrieved from: http://www.soziales.bremen.de/sixcms/media.php/13/2013-Handreichung-Gremienfassung-korr_11_2013.pdf on 6th of February 2015.
- Gliner, Jeffrey A.; George A. Morgan & Nancy L. Leech (2009). *Research methods in applied settings: an integrated approach to design and analysis*. New York: Routledge.
- Hall, J. M., P. A. Stevens & A. L. Meleis (1994). Marginalization: A guiding concept for valuing diversity in nursing knowledge development. *ANS 16 (4)*: 23-41.
- Hill, Marianne T. (2003). Development as empowerment. *Feminist Economics 9 (2-3)*: 117-135.

- Jackson, Matthew O. (2001). A crash course in implementation policy. *Social Choice and Welfare* 18: 655-708.
- Jennings, Louise B.; Deborah M. Parra-Medina; DeAnne K. Hilfinger Messias & Kerry McLoughlin (2006). Toward a Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment. *Journal of Community Practice* 14 (1-2): 31-55.
- Kim, S., C. Crutchfield, C. Williams & N. Hepler (1998). Toward a new paradigm in substance abuse and other problem behavior prevention for youth: Youth development and empowerment approach. *Journal of Drug Education* 28 (1): 1-17.
- Kumar, Ranjit (2005). *Research methodology: a step-by-step guide for beginners*. Second edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Lamnek, Siegfried (1989). *Qualitative Sozialforschung: Band 2: Methoden und Techniken*. München/Weinheim.
- Landesbetrieb Erziehung und Beratung (2015). *Minderjährige unbegleitete Flüchtlinge: Inobhutnahme und Erstversorgung im Landesbetrieb Erziehung und Beratung*. Hamburg.
- Lennartsson, Sandra (2014). *Securing the child's best interest for unaccompanied minors living in group homes: A case study on how the child's best interest is understood and implemented by stress-level workers in Bremen*. Lund: Lund University. Retrieved from: <http://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/record/4586792> on 12th of June 2015.
- Lord, John & Peggy Hutchison (1993). The Process of Empowerment: Implications for Theory and Practice. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health* 12 (1): 5-22.
- Luttrell, Cecilia; Sitna Quiroz; Claire Scrutton & Kate Bird (2009). *Understanding and operationalising empowerment*. Working paper 308. London. Retrieved from: <http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/5500.pdf> on 12th of May 2015.
- May, Tim (2011). *Social Research: issues, methods and processes*. Open University Press.
- Meade, Philip (2008). *Wege und Hindernisse der Partizipation junger Flüchtlinge in Deutschland*. Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin.
- Neal, Jennifer W. & Zachary P. Neal (2011). Power as a structural phenomenon. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 48 (3-4): 157-167.
- Ormston, Rachel; Liz Spencer; Matt Barnard & Dawn Snape (2003). *The foundations of qualitative research*. Ritchie, Jane; Jane Lewis; Carol McNaughton Nicholls & Rachel Ormston (2003) (Ed.). *Qualitative research practice: a guide for social science students and researchers*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Patton, Michael Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Perkins, Douglas D. & Marc A. Zimmerman (1995). Empowerment Theory, Research, and Application. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 23 (5): 569-579.
- Petersen, Sanne K.; Jane Tribler & Stig Mølsted (2008). Empowerment-inspired patient education in practice and theory. *EDN Autumn* 5 (3): 99-103.

- PIB (2011). *Konzeption Kinder im Exil: Ein Angebot im Rahmen der Vollzeitpflege für unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge gem. §§ 33 und 42 SGB VIII*. Bremen. Retrieved from: <http://www.pib-bremen.de/images/broschueren/pib%20konzeption%20kinder%20im%20exil.pdf> on 26th of May 2015.
- Polizei Bremen (2013). *Organigramm Direktion Kriminalpolizei/Landeskriminalamt*. Retrieved from: <http://www.polizei.bremen.de/sixcms/media.php/13/kripo.pdf> on 7th of June 2015.
- Purdey, Alice F.; Gyan B. Adhikari, Sheila A. Robinson & Philip W. Cox (1994). Participatory health development in rural Nepal: Clarifying the process of community empowerment. *Health Education Quarterly* 21 (3): 329-343.
- Radio Bremen (2014). *Jugendliche Flüchtlinge: Minderjährige sollen besser verteilt werden*. 12th of December 2014. Retrieved from: <http://www.radiobremen.de/politik/dossiers/fluechtlinge/innenministerkonferenz-fluechtlinge100.html> on 22th of March 2015.
- Radio Bremen (2015a). *Minderjährige Flüchtlinge: Kriminelle Jugendliche sollen ins Ex-Gefängnis*. 5th of February 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.radiobremen.de/politik/nachrichten/kriminellefluechtlinge100.html> on 23th of February 2015.
- Radio Bremen (2015b). *Integrationsprojekt. Ausbildungsplätze für 50 Flüchtlinge in Bremen*. Retrieved from: <http://www.radiobremen.de/politik/dossiers/fluechtlinge/jobs-fuer-fluechtlinge100.html> on 4th of June 2015.
- Radio Bremen (2015c). *Neuer Verteilungsschlüssel: Weniger minderjährige Flüchtlinge nach Bremen*. Retrieved from: <http://www.radiobremen.de/politik/dossiers/fluechtlinge/verteilung-fluechtlinge102.html> on 18th of July 2015.
- Rau, I.; J. Zoellner; K. Nolting; J. Rupp & D. Keppler (2011). *Aktivität und Teilhabe: Akzeptanz Erneuerbarer Energien durch Beteiligung steigern*.
- Refugio – Psychosoziales Zentrum für ausländische Flüchtlinge e.V. (2005). *Vereinssatzung: Geänderte Fassung vom 25.11.2004 und 13.9.2005*. Bremen. Retrieved from: <http://www.refugio-bremen.de/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Satzung-REFUGIO-eV.pdf> on 27th of July 2015.
- Refugio Bremen e.V. (2014). *Herzlich Willkommen!* Retrieved from: <http://www.refugio-bremen.de/> on 26th of July 2015.
- Riger, Stephanie (1993). What's wrong the empowerment. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 15: 121-144.
- Rocha, Elizabeth M. (1997). A Ladder of Empowerment. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 17: 31-44.
- Ryan, Margaret (1999). The role of social process in participative decision making in an international context. *Participation and Empowerment: An International Journal* 7 (2): 33-42.
- Sadan, Elisheva (1997). *Empowerment and Community Practice*.
- Schwandt, Thomas A. (2001). *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry*. Second edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

- Smith, Kevin B. & Christopher W. Larimer (2009). *The Public Policy Theory Primer*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Speer, Paul W. & Joseph Hughey (1995). Community Organizing: An Ecological Route to Empowerment and Power. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 23 (5): 729-748.
- Statistisches Landesamt Bremen (2013). *Bremen in Zahlen 2013*. Bremen. Retrieved from: <http://landesportal.bremen.de/fastmedia/36/biz2013.pdf> on the 11th of July 2015.
- Taz (2014). *Flucht: Betreutes Ankommen*. 22th of September 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.taz.de/!146455/> on 11th of May 2015.
- Taz (2015). *Missstände in der Flüchtlingspolitik: Die zwei Gesichter der Stadt*. 27th of February 2015. Retrieved from: <http://taz.de/Missstaende-in-der-Fluechtlingspolitik/!155541/> on 1st of March 2015.
- Thomson, S. B. (2011). Sample Size and Grounded Theory. *JOAAG* 5 (1): 45-52.
- UN (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. The General Assembly A/RES/44/25. Retrieved from: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/44/a44r025.htm> on 28th of January 2015.
- UNHCR (1997). *Guidelines on Policies and Procedures in dealing with Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum*. Retrieved from: <http://www.unhcr.org/3d4f91cf4.pdf> on 1st of February 2015.
- UNHCR (2008). *UNHCR Guidelines on Determining the Best Interests of the Child*. Retrieved from: <http://www.unhcr.org/4566b16b2.html> on 12th of June 2015.
- UNHCR (2010). *Convention And Protocol Relating To The Status Of Refugees*. Retrieved from: <http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.html> on 31th of January 2015.
- UNHCR (2012). *Unaccompanied children look toward school after ordeal to reach Europe*. Retrieved from: <http://www.unhcr.org/5034c9a69.html> on 11th of February 2015.
- Weser-Kurier Digital (2015a). *Dossier: Straffällige junge Flüchtlinge in Bremen*. Retrieved from: http://www.weser-kurier.de/startseite_dossierid,16.html on 23th of February 2015.
- Weser-Kurier Digital (2015b). *Unterbringung straffälliger junger Flüchtlinge: Isoliert und allein gelassen?* 5th of February 2015. Retrieved from: http://www.weser-kurier.de/bremen/bremen-stadtreport_artikel,-Isoliert-und-allein-gelassen-_arid,1049627.html on 23th of February 2015.
- Weser-Kurier Digital (2015c). *Neuartige geschlossene Einrichtung geplant: Einsperren? Senat entscheidet heute*. 10th of February 2015. Retrieved from: http://www.weser-kurier.de/bremen/bremen-stadtreport_artikel,-Einsperren-Senat-entscheidet-heute-_arid,1053330.html on 23th of February 2015.
- Weser-Kurier Digital (2015d). *Zuwanderung in Bremen: Die Not mit den Unterkünften*. 24th of February 2015. Retrieved from: http://www.weser-kurier.de/bremen/bremen-stadtreport_artikel,-Die-Not-mit-den-Unterkuenften-_arid,1063910.html on 24th of February 2015.

- Weser-Kurier Digital (2015e). *Behandlungszentrum Refugio ausgelastet: Zu wenige Therapieplätze für Flüchtlinge*. 9th of March 2015. Retrieved from: http://www.weser-kurier.de/bremen/bremen-stadtreport_artikel,-Zu-wenige-Therapieplaetze-fuer-Fluechtlinge-_arid,1074644.html on 12th of March 2015.
- Woge e.V. (1999). *Handbuch der sozialen Arbeit mit Kinderflüchtlingen*. Münster: Votum.
- Wolff, Thomas J. (1993). *Coalition Building: Is this Really Empowerment?*
- Zeit Online (2015a). *Asyl: Bundesamt für Migration erwartet 300.000 Asylanträge*. 19th of February 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/zeitgeschehen/2015-02/asyl-antraege-migration-deutschland> on 19th of February 2015.
- Zeit Online (2015b). *Minderjährige Flüchtlinge: Was macht man mit denen?* 22th February 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.zeit.de/2015/06/fluechtlinge-minderjaehrig-hamburg> on 22th of February 2015.
- Zeit Online (2015c). *Flüchtlingspolitik: Wahlkampf mit den MUFs*. 27th of January 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.zeit.de/hamburg/politik-wirtschaft/2015-01/hamburg-minderjaehrige-fluechtlinge-wahlkampf-cdu> on 23th of February 2015.
- Zeit Online (2015d). *Unbegleitete minderjährige Flüchtlinge: Letzte Hoffnung Recyclinghof*. 2nd of February 2015. Retrieved from: http://blog.zeit.de/hamburg/mufs-industriegebiet-hamm/?_ga=1.137294192.1354650415.1404481637 on 23th of February 2015.
- Zentrum für Beruf und Schule (2011). *BIN – Bremer und Bremerhavener Integrationsnetz*. Retrieved from: http://www.zsb-bremen.de/zsb2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=99&Itemid=74 on 4th of June 2015.
- Zimmerman, Marc A. (1990). Taking aim on empowerment research: On the distinction between individual and psychological conceptions. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 18 (1): 169-177.
- Zimmerman, Marc A. (2000). *Empowerment Theory*. Rappaport, Julian & Edward Seidman (Ed.) (2000). *Handbook of Community Psychology*: 43-63.

Appendix 1

Questionnaire for stakeholders¹⁸

Introduction of the interviewer and with basic information about the research:

- Jana Blauth, grown up in Delmenhorst in the immediate hinterland of Bremen
- Presently student of the international Master programme “Welfare Policies and Management” with the major Political Science at Lund University in Sweden
- Currently writing my Master thesis on the subject “Unaccompanied minors in Bremen – A case study on how empowerment is implemented in the work with young refugees in Bremen”
- RQ: How do stakeholders in Bremen aid in the empowerment of UMs?
- Referring to Longwe’s five dimensions of empowerment, I focus on the fourth dimension of participation and mobilisation
- *Handing out figure 2*
- Participation is understood as contribution and codetermination
- I ask myself to what extent policies and practices in Bremen facilitate and implement participation, which is object of this semi-structured interview
- Further interviews are conducted with a guardian and case manager from the Youth Welfare Office Bremen, Refugio Bremen e.V., the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen, Fluchtraum Bremen e.V. and a caretaker in a residential home for UMs
- *Handing out informed consent*
- Initially, I would like to ask you introducing and general questions about your work and continue with empowerment-specific questions and a perspective question
- Is it okay to record the interview?

Introducing questions:

1. What is your profession and professional role herein?
2. Please report briefly about your work. (Possible follow-up questions: Do you directly work with UMs¹⁹? *If so*, how long? What does your work with UMs embrace?)
3. How do you perceive the position of UMs in the German and Bremish society? (Possible concretisation: Do you perceive UMs rather as socially integrated or marginalised?)

¹⁸ The questionnaire is attached in English. However, all interviews have been conducted in German. The following information are only provided as notes.

¹⁹ In order to be precise about the object of research, this questionnaire exclusively refers to the term UM.

General questions about your work:

4. Which specific aims do you pursue in your work with UMs?
5. Which guiding principles of action are important in your day-to-day work? (Possible concretisation: legal foundations (SGB VIII), service regulations, guidelines or the like)
6. (Stating: The best interests of the child are in the first place. When addressing participation, the quality standards for the first contact and accommodation of UMs in Bremen refer to the cause of action of empowerment and claim to protect, empower and promote. Moreover, the SGB VIII and the Youth Welfare Services allege a constant participation of youth.) Do you know this approach? *If so*, to what extent does empowerment play a role in your work?

Empowerment-specific questions:

7. How do you estimate the knowledge of UMs on rights and duties, measures and perspectives in Bremen? (Specify with: good, medium, slight)
8. In how far do you promote the state of knowledge of UMs? (Possible follow-up question: How do you provide UMs with information? Do you do it actively under discussion or passively through third parties or in written form?)
9. (Stating: Information are considered as essential for the participation of UMs.) How do you perceive the willingness of UMs to participate in processes and decisions that immediately affect them? (Specify with: great, medium, slight)
10. Do you pursue specific active participation standards in your work? *If so*, which kind of participation do you promote? How do UMs adopt those means of participation?
11. To what extent do you consider a participation of UMs as essential for their social integration?
12. What other options are promoting the social integration of UMs?

Perspective question:

13. (Stating: The number of refugees coming to European countries such as Germany are expected to further significantly increase.) Which main challenges do you anticipate for your work with UMs?

Concluding remark:

14. Would you like to note or add something?

Appendix 2

Informed consent for stakeholders²⁰

TITLE OF STUDY

“Unaccompanied minors in Bremen – A case study on how empowerment is implemented in the work with young refugees in Bremen”

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Jana Blauth

Political Science Department, Lund University, Sweden

Syker Straße 369, 27751 Delmenhorst, Germany

Phone: +4915789282615/+46767867153

Mail: jana_blauth@gmx.de

PURPOSE OF STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to investigate particular policies and practices for unaccompanied minors (UMs) in Bremen. The study elaborates on the implementation of empowerment-based goals and investigates how UMs are participated by different stakeholders.

STUDY PROCEDURES

The research is based on own fieldwork in Bremen. It retrieves data from different semi-structured interviews. Inasmuch, different stakeholders in Bremen who are working with UMs are interviewed in approximately half an hour interview sessions. Audio taping will be used.

²⁰ The informed consent was handed out every interviewee. There were always two exemplars, which were both signed by the respective participant and the investigator, who both kept one exemplar. The handed out informed consent originally contains a header stating the title of the thesis and a footer stating the page number and participant’s initials on each page. Due to formative reasons, these have been left out in this version.

RISKS

The study tries to avoid risks. However, questions involve your actual practices and as such possibly details about personal attitudes. You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

BENEFITS

The researcher will benefit from the retrieved information by using the evidence for her Master thesis. There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, you can certainly obtain the final version of this Master thesis.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your responses to this interview will be anonymous. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

- Assigning code names/numbers for participants that will be used on all research notes and documents
- Keeping notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifying participant information in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher.

Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases in which the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the Primary Investigator, please contact the Regional Ethical Review Board of Lund University.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you

withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

CONSENT

I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

If yes: How long? _____

Stakeholder-specific questions:

9. Do you know your case manager?

Yes

No

If yes: How often do you meet your case manager? _____

And: Are you satisfied with the support of your case manager?

Yes

No

If no: Why are you not satisfied with his/her support? _____

10. Have you been to the Bahia Clearing Centre Bremen?

Yes

No

11. Do you know Refugio Bremen e.V.?

Yes

No

If yes: Do you stay in contact with Refugio Bremen e.V.?

Yes

No

12. Do you know Fluchtraum Bremen e.V.?

Yes

No

If yes: Do you stay in contact with Fluchtraum Bremen e.V.?

Yes

No

Action-oriented questions:

13. Who gives you information about procedures on your residence permission (asylum/toleration?):

14. Who gives you information about actions/measures in Bremen?

15. What could you freely choose?

Guardian:	Yes	No
Accommodation:	Yes	No
School:	Yes	No

16. In which decisions are you involved?

Procedures on residence permission (choice between asylum and toleration):

Yes No

Actions/measures (help planning of Youth Welfare Office):

Yes No

In your (current) accommodation:

Rules of community life:	Yes	No
Permission to go out:	Yes	No
Meal/food planning:	Yes	No
Composition of the rooms:	Yes	No
Spending of pocket money:	Yes	No
Activities:	Yes	No

17. Would you like to be more involved in decisions that affect you?

Yes No

If yes: Where would you like to be more involved? _____

Perspective questions:

18. Do you have wishes and ideas for your livelihood in Bremen?

Yes

No

If yes: How do they look like? _____

And: Whom do you tell the wishes and ideas? _____

19. Would you like to change something concerning your living situation?

Yes

No

If yes: What would you like to change? _____

20. *Retrospective to your time in Bremen:* Which support (by which actor) did you help most/best to organise your life in Bremen according to your own preferences? And why?

Appendix 4

Case selection

According to Stake, “case study research is concerned with the complexity and particular nature of the case in question” (Bryman, 2012: 48). Traditionally, the term “case” is associated with a location such as a community or organisation. However, more general a case is any (complex) social phenomena (Kumar, 2005: 113) or an apparent object of interest. Researcher aim at providing an in-depth elucidation of the unique features of that case (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, they include the context and conditions that are assumed to be relevant for the studied phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008). In every research, the unit of analysis needs to be determined (ibid.: p. 545). Thus, in a case study the question of the unit of analysis and what I want to analyse is connected to the question of what is the case. Every case study focuses on either the analysis of an individual case which can be a person, group, process or any other unit of social life (Kumar, 2005: 113). Inasmuch, the case selection within a case study is essential.

Case of this research is UMs in Bremen. Bremen takes many UMs into care. Besides, Bremen introduced exemplary policies for refugees like the “Bremer Modell Wohnen”²² and “Bremer Modell Gesundheit”²³, the Bremer Erlass and the quality standards for the first contact and accommodation of UMs. Through these policies, aid for refugees and UMs in Bremen seems to stand out (section 2.3). Thus, the case selection appeals to interesting conditions for UMs in Bremen and the reference to empowerment as a guiding principle of action. This case study has to take the context and certain conditions for UMs in Bremen into account. Hence, it analyses the aid system that is provided by different stakeholders in Bremen working with these young people. This research intensively examines the settings of UMs in Bremen with a focus on policies and practices that are considered to empower. The ones who are responsible for aid for UMs and who are supposed to be interested in an empowerment of young refugees are the stakeholders. How do stakeholders implement empowerment in terms of participation? This case study integrates an explorative analysis of the role of stakeholders in the empowerment process of UMs. Conclusively, the case which is UMs in Bremen is bounded to the aid of different stakeholders that operate in Bremen.

²² The Bremish Housing Model guarantees refugees to look for a decentralised private flat three months after arriving in Bremen.

²³ With the introduction of the Bremish Health Model in 2005, all refugees receive a health insurance card, which grants them access to the German health care system (Flüchtlingsrat Bremen, 2005). In Germany, only Hamburg supposes of a comparable health care system.