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Employment –

Chance+. Network Refugees and Employment

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#### The Research Project

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Models of Co-operation between Local Governments and Social Organizations in Germany and China– Migration: Challenges and Solutions (LoGoSO Germany China) is a comparative research project of the Freie Universität Berlin, the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster and the Chinese Academy of Governance, funded by Stiftung Mercator.

This comparative research project looks at the co-operation between state and social organizations (SOs) in China and Germany. It focusses on social service delivery in the area of integration of migrating populations with special attention to the fields of education, employment, vulnerable groups and social assistance (incl. legal aid) as a crosscutting issue to all of the fields. Within this subject area, the project wants to identify different models of state-SO co-operation and analyze which models are successful and why and where this co-operation is problematic. It aims to capture the different models of co-operation in Germany and China, to analyze and compare the underlying structures and to show potentialities for development.

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## 1 Introduction

Chance+ is a network of several organizations that support the labor market integration of refugees<sup>1</sup> in Cologne and two neighboring cities. The given report presents the network's member organizations, their internal collaboration and their co-operation with the local administration. The case study employs data in the form of media reports, the websites of the network partners and in-depth expert interview with representatives of some of the participating organizations.

The report will be structured as follows: The subsequent chapter will introduce the network organizations, highlight their internal governance structures, activities and relationships with other organizations (chapters 1.1-1.4). Due to the focus of the research project, the report will concentrate on those partner organizations that promote labor market integration in Cologne and omit those active in the other cities. The second chapter turns to the actual network in which these organizations collaborate. It starts by describing the federal program that funds it, as well as the goals and activities of the network (2.1). Subsequently, the chapter illuminates the responsibilities of partner organizations and their co-operation within the network (2.2). Lastly, it turns to the co-operation of the total network with the local government.

The network Chance+ presents a particular case of co-operation between the local government and social organizations because the coordinator of the network is employed at the job center Cologne. For this reason, she has a double function as being part of the administration and the network. In the given report, the job center Cologne (*Jobcenter Köln*) will be depicted as one of the partner organizations of the network as well as a co-operation partner of it. This makes sense because the coordinator of Chance+ sees herself, first and foremost, as a member of the network and not as an employee of the job center. Further, Chance+ is organized as a separate unit within the job center. The job center will be analyzed as a co-operation partner of the local public administration because Chance+ interacts in diverse ways with the various departments of the job center.

## 2 Information on the participating organizations

### 2.1 Jobcenter Köln / Job center Cologne

#### 2.1.1 General information

The Federal Ministry for Labor and Social Affairs (*Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales/BMAS*) is in charge of labor market policy and fulfills this task by preparing legislation and concepts, while it has delegated the administration of unemployment benefits and labor market policies to the Federal Employment Agency (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*) (Gluns 2018: 5). It is a federally structured body consisting 156 local employment agencies (ibid.). These employment agencies establish job centers in co-operation with the local administration (ibid.). Thus, the job center Cologne is a joint facility of the Federal Employment Agency and the city of Cologne.

#### 2.1.2 Internal governance structures

The job center Cologne is divided into a management division and seven branch offices distributed across the city (Jobcenter Köln n.y.). The management division consists of several administrative units,

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<sup>1</sup> The term "refugee" is used in a broad sense here to denote all persons who live in Germany with the legal status of a recognized refugee, asylum seeker, or exceptional leave to remain ("toleration") (cf. Gluns 2018a: 7f).

which are responsible for the operational tasks (ibid.). These are 1) finance and controlling, 2) data protection, 3) human resource management and facility management and 4) quality management (ibid.). The job center is led by an executive committee including one managing director and one member of committee (ibid.). They are responsible for the daily operations of the job center, while its strategic decisions are made by a board of owners. It is formed by each three representatives from the employment agency and the city of Cologne (ibid.). Every two years the board of owners develops a labor market and integration guideline (Arbeitsmarkt- und Integrationsprogramm) which sets the focus areas of labor market policies in Cologne (Jobcenter Köln 2015: 3). It serves as an information document to policy makers, businesses and other actors involved in the local labor market (ibid.). An advisory board comprising representatives from the local and regional government, trade unions, employers' associations and the employment agency assists the development of the labor market and integration program and the operational tasks of the executive committee (Jobcenter Köln n.y.).

Volunteers are not directly involved in the activities of the job center. In recent years, however, it has established contacts to recently founded welcome initiatives and invites them to take part in monthly gatherings informing about the labor market access of refugees (CH\_JCK2). These events allow volunteers to voice their ideas and concerns to the job center (ibid.).

### 2.1.3 Activities

The job center is in charge of the case management and disbursement of transfer payments to long-term unemployed workers (UBII) (Gluns 2018: 5). Additionally, it carries out active labor market policies. These encompass education and training to qualify unemployed persons to enhance their employability, counselling and placement and support of self-employed work (ibid.). Furthermore, the job center provides counselling modulated to specific target groups, namely unemployed persons under 25, persons with health impairments, single parents, homeless people, academics and refugees.<sup>2</sup> In recent years, it has particularly amplified its services for the latter (CH\_JCK2). One milestone was the establishment of the business unit Integration Point. It was set up in 2015 upon the initiative of the employment agency of North Rhine-Westphalia (Grabbe 2018: 7). It serves as the first point of contact for refugees and bundles the activities that had been formerly conducted by the local employment agencies and job centers (ibid.). These are the provision of general information on the German labor market, counseling on the recognition of qualifications, and training and work placement (Jobcenter Köln 2017: 14). They are partly organized via projects that are financed by the Federal Ministry for Labor and Social affairs and are carried out with the help of non-profit organizations (ibid.: 14f.; CH\_JCK2).

The job center and its services are financed by the federal government as well as the municipality (GIB 2015: 8). While the federal government covers the general financial transfers to unemployed persons and administrative charges, the municipality carries the costs of accommodation under financial participation of the federal level (Gluns 2018: 5). Additional labor market policies for recipients of UBII are financed by the municipalities (ibid.).

### 2.1.4 Networks

The job center follows a network approach and considers the co-operation with public and private partners a core element of its work (Jobcenter Köln 2015: 15). In terms of the integration of refugees,

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.jobcenterkoeln.de/site/arbeitsuchende>, last accessed 5/11/2018.

this co-operation was intensified in 2016 by the establishment of a Co-Ordinator of Refugees (*Flüchtlingskoordinator*) within the department of the Lord Mayor. This coordinator and his employees run the project “Shaping Integration”<sup>3</sup> (*Einwanderung gestalten*), which strives to enhance the strategic orientation and connection of administrative departments concerned with the integration of refugees in the city of Cologne (CH\_JCK2). The project informed the job center about the activities of public and private actors and introduced those persons in charge to each other (ibid.). As a result, representatives of the immigration authority (*Ausländerbehörde*), the social welfare office (*Amt für Soziales und Senioren*) and housing office (*Amt für Wohnungswesen*) take part in the recently established information events for volunteers (ibid.).

## 2.2 IN VIA Katholischer Verband für Mädchen- und Frauensozialarbeit e.V. / IN VIA Catholic Association for Girls and Women’s Social Work

### 2.2.1 General information

A further network partner is IN VIA Catholic Association for Girls and Women’s Social Work. Wealthy women from the catholic nobility and bourgeoisie founded the organization in 1898 in order to support the independent livelihood of women and girls in need.<sup>4</sup> They established a railway mission to take care of those women and girls that came from rural areas to find work in Cologne (IN VIA 2016: 5). Since the end of the second world war, IN VIA has run several women’s shelters in Cologne (ibid.). In the 1960s, they particularly accommodated female Spanish “guest workers” (ibid.: 8). A decade later, IN VIA amplified its target groups and activities by offering child and youth welfare in the form of counselling for migrant families and social work in schools (ibid.). Today, the organization offers services for children and adolescents regardless of their origin, gender and belief<sup>5</sup>. It assists their integration into schooling and training through more than 60 projects and initiatives all over Cologne.

### 2.2.2 Internal governance structures

IN VIA is a recognized provider of youth welfare services. Its governance structure consists of four bodies (IN VIA 2018). The executive board manages the organization. It is assisted by a secretariat and several central units which are responsible for public relations or fundraising. The decisions-making process of the executive board is supported and controlled by an advisory board consisting of eight voluntary members. They are elected by the members’ assembly. Furthermore, in order to run economic activities, the association functions as the majority shareholder of the IN VIA GmbH. It is managed by a board of supervisors. The operational activities of IN VIA are conducted via five operational departments. These are 1) education, school co-operation and railway mission, 2) job preparation, youth exchanges and youth residences, 3) vocational training, work placement and business co-operation, 4) social employment companies and 5) general administration (IN VIA 2018).

The income of IN VIA is made up of the following sources: Contributions from the EU, the federal government, the state North Rhine-Westphalia and the city administration make up the lion’s share (59 percent) (IN VIA 2017: 7). Additional funding is secured via membership fees (18.1 percent),

<sup>3</sup> From 2017 till 2019 the Land North Rhine-Westphalia sponsors the project “Einwanderung gestalten” and implements it in 12 cities. The objective of the project is to assist cities in developing a strategic and coordinated approach to the integration of migrants. For further information on the implementation of the project in Cologne see <https://www.stadt-koeln.de/politik-und-verwaltung/presse/einwanderung-gestalten-nrw-stadt-praesentiert-zwischenergebnisse>, last accessed 5/11/2018.

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.invia-koeln.de/de/unser-verband/historie.php>, last accessed 5/11/2018.

<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.invia-koeln.de/de/unser-verband/wofuer.wir-stehen.php>, last accessed 05/11/2018.

contributions by the catholic church (3.6 percent), donations (0,9) and other assets (18.4 percent) (ibid.).

About 160 volunteers are involved in a broad range of activities of the organization.<sup>6</sup> They provide language training and tutoring in full-time schools and the organization's youth accommodations. Moreover, IN VIA organizes mentoring programs and runs a bike repair shop in a refugee accommodation with their help (IN VIA 2016: 7; IN VIA 2017: 34). Volunteers are coordinated by a staff position attached to the executive board (IN VIA 2017: 8). Although IN VIA does not disburse any financial compensation to volunteers, the organization offers trainings for them (ibid.). While volunteers do not take part in the implementation of Chance+, participants are referred mentoring programs, language training and tutoring programs organized by volunteers. In the framework of these programs, volunteers accompany participants to authorities and act as counselors on job application matters (ibid.: 10).

### 2.2.3 Activities

IN VIA provides social work and supervision in full-time schools, measures of occupational preparation and work integration, international exchange programs and accommodation for youth (IN VIA 2017: 6). Refugees are supported via a broad range of measures. At the organization's railway missions they receive travel support and a first orientation after their arrival in Cologne (ibid.: 7). Unaccompanied minor refugees live in the organization's accommodations for youth (ibid.). Furthermore, IN VIA participates in the project "Participation" (*Mitsprache*) initiated and financed by the Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. It informs parents with a migratory background about the German education system (ibid.). Next to Chance+, IN VIA is a co-operation partner in several other federal programs assisting the integration of refugees into the labor market. It implements the program "Quality is no coincidence – New Standards for Refugee Work" (*Qualität ist kein Zufall – Neue Standards für die Flüchtlingsarbeit*). In the framework of this project, IN VIA offers language tutoring and general education for refugees between 16 and 25 years (ibid: 22). Furthermore, the organization co-operates with the job center in the project "KompAS" which helps refugees find official recognition for previously acquired qualifications (ibid.: 21).

### 2.2.4 Networks

From the beginning, the organization belonged to the welfare association Caritas, which is closely linked to the catholic church. The Caritas Cologne has five member associations that serve specific target groups.<sup>7</sup> Among these, IN VIA is the organization that is in charge of women and youth. Additionally, IN VIA is a member of the worldwide network of IN VIA associations (IN VIA 2017: 33). It closely collaborates with partners from politics, businesses, civil society and science (IN VIA 2017: 6). For instance, it receives grants from public entities and private foundations to implement its programs (ibid.). To ensure the standards of its services, it is a member of the Quality Community Professional Education Cologne (*Qualitätsgemeinschaft Berufliche Bildung Köln*), which brings together 130 organizations that provide vocational and further education in Cologne.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.invia-koeln.de/de/helfen-spenden/ehrenamt-bei-in-via-koeln.php>, last accessed 05/11/2018.

<sup>7</sup> See [https://caritas.erzbistum-koeln.de/dicv-koeln/ueber\\_uns/organisation/gremien/verbandskonferenz/](https://caritas.erzbistum-koeln.de/dicv-koeln/ueber_uns/organisation/gremien/verbandskonferenz/), last accessed 11/11/2018.

<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.weiterbildung-koeln.de/mitglieder/bildungsanbieter-mitglieder-a-z/>, last accessed 11/11/2018.

## 2.3 Caritasverband für die Stadt Köln e.V. / Caritas Association of the City of Cologne

### 2.3.1 General information

The Caritas Association of the City of Cologne was founded in 1915 in order to unite and assist catholic social service organizations and parishes. In this way, its founders strived to alleviate severe hardships during the first world war (Caritasverband für die Stadt Köln e.V. 2016: 1). While the organization concentrated on the support and counselling of other organizations in the first decades of its existence, it began to open up own retirement homes, childcare facilities and centers of assisted living for people with disabilities after the second world war (ibid.: 2). The arrival of migrants from Spain, Italy, Portugal and Turkey in the 1960s caused the Caritas to introduce welfare and counselling services for this target group (ibid.: 5). During the decades, these services and facilities for the elderly, children, the disabled and migrants were continuously broadened. Today, it includes over 80 facilities and services all over Cologne.<sup>9</sup>

Refugees have been on the agenda of the Caritas Cologne since the late 1970s when it established a home for the so called “boat people” from Laos (ibid.: 5). Since 1985, it has operated a therapy center for victims of torture (*Therapiezentrum für Folteropfer*) as a specialized counselling service for traumatized refugees (ibid.: 6). Reacting to the arrival of a large number of refugees in 2014, the organization has expanded its services for this target group (ibid.: 7). Further elaborations on this will be given in chapter 3.3.3.

### 2.3.2 Internal governance structures

The Caritas consists of six business units. Each comprises one activity field of the association (Caritasverband für die Stadt Köln e.V. 2018a: 36-37). Relevant for the integration of refugees is the business unit integration and family assistance (*Integrations- und Familienhilfen*) (ibid.). It provides several services for refugees and employs 200 persons (CH\_CVK). The business units are governed by an executive board consisting of two people. They are instated by a members’ assembly (Caritasverband für die Stadt Köln e.V. 2018a: 36). The members’ assembly consists of representatives from the 36 local parishes, specialized associations and the regular member associations (ibid.). Additionally, the Caritas holds several social enterprises (ibid.).

Funding for the Caritas Cologne comes from several sources. The major share comes from service charges, particularly health insurance funds (76 percent), followed by public subsidies (11 percent) and church taxes (5 percent) (ibid.: 28). The remainder consists of donations and interest income (ibid.). In recent years, the share of public subsidies has grown as the organization has expanded its counselling and care services for refugees (ibid.).

The organization employs 1,765 salaried and 1,630 voluntary members of staff (ibid.: 22). Volunteers are traditionally involved in a broad range of activities (CH\_CVK). Their tasks range from supervising and coaching children to palliative care. An agency of the Caritas matches volunteers with their desired activity and suitable organizations (Caritasverband für die Stadt Köln e.V. 2018b). Although volunteers are not directly involved in the activities of Chance+, coaches of the network offer trainings informing volunteers about the labor market and vocational training opportunities for refugees (CH\_CVK).

<sup>9</sup> See [https://caritas.erzbistum-koeln.de/koeln-cv/ueber\\_uns/organisation/](https://caritas.erzbistum-koeln.de/koeln-cv/ueber_uns/organisation/), last accessed 9/11/2018.



### 2.3.3 Activities

On the one hand, the Caritas Association of the City of Cologne represents the interests of its member organizations on the city level. On the other hand, the Caritas comprises several facilities and services that range from kindergartens to retirement homes (Caritasverband für die Stadt Köln e.V. 2018b). Within its business unit, integration and family assistance, the organization conducts several activities for refugees. In the field of social assistance, it operates group accommodations and helps refugees find private homes (CH\_CVK). Further, it offers legal counselling on the asylum process and cares for those that have experienced torture (ibid.). In the field of education, a new co-operation with the catholic church of Cologne has been set up. This is the so-called “Initiative New Neighbors (*Aktion Neue Nachbarn*)” which offers language courses in the facilities of the Caritas and parishes (ibid.). The courses are conducted by volunteers and funded by the catholic church (ibid.). In the field of labor market integration, the organization has offered counselling, internship placement and preparatory courses for years. The activities are usually not customized to the needs of refugees but serve unemployed persons in general. For example, it operates vocational training centers for people in need of special support. These regularly include refugees.

In order to dovetail the organization’s general activities in the field of labor market integration with its services dedicated to refugees, a new service unit called profession and labor (*Beruf und Arbeit*) was introduced in 2017. It offers counselling and work placement exclusively for refugees via three projects (CH\_CVK). First, the “Initiative New Neighbors” (*Aktion Neue Nachbarn*) matches refugees with voluntary mentors that assist them in their search for employment (CH\_CVK). Second, the Caritas co-operates with the job center in the project “Perspectives for young refugees” (“*Perspektiven für junge Flüchtlinge*”) (ibid.). This project entails six weeks of theoretical introduction to the German labor market, followed by an internship of the same duration. It targets asylum seekers and tolerated persons up to the age of 35. Thirdly, the service unit, profession and labor, manages Chance+. All projects are supported by one recently recruited employee who is exclusively responsible for assisting refugees in finding a suitable language course (CH\_CVK).

### 2.3.4 Networks

The Caritas Association is strongly interlinked with the catholic church of Cologne (Caritas 2018a: 32). Further, in the course of its projects for refugees, it co-operates with various public authorities and private organizations, in particular the local job center, the immigration authority, the chamber of commerce, educational providers and businesses (CH\_CVK). Moreover, as a member of the Round Table for Refugee Issues Cologne, which acts as an advisor to the council and administration of Cologne, it is involved into policymaking (ibid.). In 2004, the Caritas Cologne supported a local campaign to provide refugees in Cologne, who had the legal status of an exceptional leave to remain, with a permanent residence permit (Prölß 2011: 180). The result of this campaign was the establishment of a commission to advise the local immigration office on its decisions in special cases of hardship (ibid.: 181). The Caritas has been a member of this commission ever since (Caritasverband für die Stadt Köln e.V. 2016: 8; CH\_CVK).

## 2.4 Internationaler Bund e.V / International Union

### 2.4.1 General Information

In 1945, the Internationaler Bund e.V. was founded in Tübingen, a city in southwestern Germany (Internationaler Bund 2018b). Its original objective was to assist homeless and unemployed youth (ibid.)

who, due to the Second World War, lacked an education (ibid.). Since its founding, the target groups and geographic reach of the organization have continuously expanded. Today, it acts as a service provider for children, youth, adults and seniors living under difficult conditions. Its main underlying rationale is to enable these target groups to manage their lives independently with the help of education, training and further projects (Internationaler Bund 2015: 1). The organization strives to enhance intercultural understanding and tolerance in all its activities (ibid.). It is active in 300 locations all over Germany and reaches 350,000 people every year (Internationaler Bund 2017: 2). In Cologne, it is active in several schools and training centers.<sup>10</sup> The network Chance+ is attached to the Labor Project Cologne Rolshover Straße (*Arbeitsprojekt Köln Rolshover Straße*) (Internationaler Bund 2018a). Since 1986, this project has facilitated labor market integration of the unemployed (ibid.).

#### 2.4.2 Internal Governance Structures

The Internationaler Bund e.V. consists of a members' assembly, a committee of three directors and an executive board (Internationaler Bund 2017: 32). The association is divided into three regional divisions and six subsidiaries (ibid.). These are either profit or non-profit companies (ibid.). The Labor Project Cologne Rolshover Straße belongs to the Internationaler Bund West for Education and Social Services gGmbH (*Internationaler Bund für Bildung und Soziale Dienste gGmbH*). Its head office is located in Cologne.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, the Internationaler Bund operates several foundations (ibid.).

Germany-wide, the organization employs 14,000 staff (ibid: 2). Volunteers are chiefly involved via federally funded voluntary work programs (ibid.: 17). Apart from that, no evidence was found that the organization resorts to voluntary engagement in any way. IN 2016, the Internationaler Bund had 625.4 million euros of revenue (ibid. 2). 80.2 million of this revenue was generated by the International Bund West gGmbH (ibid: 30). The total revenue of the International Bund is made up of several sources, namely grants and compensations by local, regional, federal and European public bodies (80.8 percent), participation fees of service recipients (7.6 percent), contributions by insurance providers (3.3 percent), donations and penalties (0.2 percent) and other earnings (8 percent) (ibid: 30).

#### 2.4.3 Activities

The Internationaler Bund operates general education schools, vocational training centers, childcare facilities and homes for the disabled and homeless (ibid: 33). Further, it provides mobile social work and facilities for the labor market integration of different target groups (ibid.). The Labor Project Rolshover Straße is an example of such a facility. After the qualifications and skills of the unemployed persons have been registered, they can take part in counselling, training and job placement measures that are organized via projects funded by the federal or regional government (Internationaler Bund 2018a). Vocational training is offered on-site as the Labor Project Rolshover Straße operates its own training centers for gardening and landscaping, painting and cooking (ibid). Furthermore, the organization runs a bike repair shop as a job creation scheme for drug addicts and administers job boards in two districts of the city (ibid.). To cater to the needs of refugees the labor project implements Chance+ and the program "Perspectives for female Refugees" (*Perspektiven für weibliche Flüchtlinge/PERF w*). This second program imparting knowledge on the German labor market and language competences to female asylum seekers and recognized refugees (ibid.).

<sup>10</sup> See <https://www.internationaler-bund.de/ib-in-ihreer-naehe/liste/>, last accessed 12/11/2018.

<sup>11</sup> See <https://ib-personalentwicklung.de/ib-gruppe/organisation/>, last accessed 12/11/2018.

#### 2.4.4 Networks

The Internationaler Bund, as a whole, is active in numerous federal, European and international networks for vocational training, international development co-operation, inclusion, social work and political education (Internationaler Bund 2017: 18). Those partnerships that create opportunities for youth are particularly paramount to the organization (ibid.). The most well-known partners are the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, the Federal Agency of Migration and Refugees, the Federal Labor Office, the German Red Cross and the German Association for Public and Private Welfare (*Deutscher Verein für öffentliche und private Fürsorge e.V.*). In addition, the association participates in local networks. As well as IN VIA, it is a member of the Quality Community Professional Education Cologne.<sup>12</sup>

### 3 Information on the program and the co-operation with the local government

#### 3.1 General information on the selected program and its development

Chance+ Network for Refugees and Employment is chiefly financed via a joint program of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Federal Ministry for Labor and Social Affairs called ESF Integration Guideline (*ESF-Integrationsrichtlinie Bund*) (BMAS 2017: 4). During the project period from 2014 until 2020, it strives to provide persons with difficulties in obtaining employment with training and employment (Die Bundesregierung 2018). The program is a combination of former programs that were started during the EQUAL community Initiative (2002-2007) and XENOS (2007-2013) (ibid.).

It comprises three projects. The first one is “Integration instead of Exclusion” (*Integration statt Ausgrenzung*). It targets the labor market integration of persons from the age of 18 till 35. The second one is “Integration through exchange” (*Integration durch Austausch*). It provides measures to increase the mobility of youth, i.e. through internships in other European countries. Thirdly, the program “Integration of Asylum Seekers and Refugees” (*Integration von Asylsuchenden und Flüchtlingen/lvAF*) supports asylum seekers, recognized refugees and those with an exceptional leave to remain (“toleration”) (BMAS 2017: 4). Persons from the so-called “safe countries of origin” are, however, excluded from participation in the program because they do not have access to the labor market (Gluns 2018: 8f). Furthermore, the participants must reside in the respective city (CH\_APV).

All of these programs demand the creation of local networks that include the local public administration and job centers (BMAS 2014: 1-2). Further, it is considered useful to include additional partners, namely non-profit organizations or businesses (ibid.). The partner organizations establish co-operation contracts that specify the extent to which each partner contributes to the network, i.e. by providing qualification and training (ibid.: 6). The networks apply to the Federal Ministry for funding in a competitive procedure. The Ministry decides on the applications and disburses the funds. 50 percent of funding is provided by the ESF and 40 percent by the Federal Ministry (ibid.). The remaining share of 10 percent must be paid by the organizations themselves (BMAS 2015: 6; CH\_JCK1; CH\_CVK).

Chance+, and 40 other networks, are funded via the program line lvAF. In order to integrate refugees into the labor market, the federal program consists of three components: individual counselling and placement for participants, building networks and transfer of expert knowledge (BMAS 2017: 5-10). The Chance+ network is very much in line with the federal program: It strives to integrate refugees

<sup>12</sup> See <https://www.weiterbildung-koeln.de/mitglieder/bildungsanbieter-mitglieder-a-z/>, last accessed 12/11/2018.

into the labor market and enable them to lead a self-determined life (CH\_JCK1). For this purpose, it provides the aforementioned three core components. In detail, individual counselling and placement encompasses:

- Counselling regarding residence status and labor market;
- Individual profiling and coaching;
- Providing support in access to general or vocational education;
- Providing assistance in access to services of the regular and special support systems; and
- Placing participants in internships (Chance+ n.y.).

The networking component is fulfilled because Chance+ strives to include all relevant actors on a regional and supra-regional level (ibid.). Furthermore, expert knowledge is spread to reduce barriers for refugees' labor market access (Chance+ n.y.; BMAS 2017: 9-11). In this regard, Chance+ provides training for public and private actors such as employees of the local job centers, politicians and administration officials, as well as those from businesses and civil society (Chance+ n.y.; BMAS 2017: 9; CH\_CJK1). Next to this orientation, and in alignment with the goals of the federal program, a particular focus of Chance+ are persons who are living in Cologne with an exceptional leave to remain, as they cannot resort to the regular offers of the job centers and employment agencies (CH\_JCK1). This can be explained by the orientation of the previous networks. The forerunners of Chance+ were established in 2008 and called KNFA (*Kölner Netzwerk Flüchtlinge und Arbeit / Cologne Network for Refugees and Labor*) and Colorful into the Future (*Bunt in die Zukunft*) (ARGE Köln 2010). They focused on persons without a permanent residence permit, i.e. "tolerated" persons" or asylum seekers (CH\_JCK1; ARGE Köln 2010: 1). By providing them with employment, they intended to guarantee them a right to stay (ibid.). Nonetheless, in the current funding phase, the focus of Chance+ was broadened and the program is generally in line with the federal program's target groups and objectives.

### 3.2 Collaboration between the network partners

Many of the network partners have collaborated in the precursory networks (CH\_JCK1). The network KNFA involved the Caritas Association Cologne and an organization in which the Internationaler Bund functions as a shareholder<sup>13</sup> (ARGE 2010: 6). Furthermore, this network was coordinated by a forerunner model of the job center. Partner organizations of Bunt in die Zukunft were IN VIA and the Caritas Cologne (ibid.). Despite these previous experiences, Chance+ was rather uncoordinated at the beginning, but over time the network has grown, and partners have established close contacts (ibid.). Now, it has become a regional network that operates in four cities and involves seven network organizations that employ a total of 24 staff (CH\_JCK1).

The following paragraphs outline the respective tasks of those organizations that operate in Cologne. The coordinator of the network is employed at the job center Cologne. She is the contact person for the network partners, the BMAS and external stakeholders (CH\_JCK1). She is responsible for the administrative tasks of the network and supervises compliance with the requirements determined in

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<sup>13</sup> This organization was the 'Konsortium Kölner Beschäftigungsträger' (Consortium of Cologne employment companies). It consists of five nonprofit-organization active in the field of labor market integration. The employment of youth and long-term unemployed people is paramount to the organization. For further information see <https://www.konsortium-koeln.de/cms/website.php?id=index.html>, last accessed 15/11/2018.

the funding contract (ibid.). Further, she is in charge of the public relations of the network and represents it on city-wide and regional conferences and events (ibid.).

The Caritas employs two persons in the project Chance+, one full-time and one half-time worker (CH\_CVK). Their core activity is to provide individual counselling and to place participants in trainings or employment (ibid.). In doing so, they often rely on the longstanding activities of the Caritas in the field of refugee integration and on other organizations of the Catholic Church. For instance, the Caritas offers social counselling via the therapy center for victims of torture or it refers refugees to the voluntary job mentoring program of the “Initiative New Neighbors” (ibid.). Furthermore, to motivate refugees to take part in Chance+, the Caritas regularly conducts information events in refugee accommodations (ibid.). In order to reduce structural barriers that impede the work integration of refugees, it provides counselling and trainings to employers and others dealing with the labor market integration of refugees (Chance+ n.y.).

Similar to the Caritas, the core activity of IN VIA is to offer individual counselling and work placement.<sup>14</sup> In particular, it provides application trainings and refers refugees to the organization’s language courses. Furthermore, it cooperates with businesses in order to provide job orientation and work experience to refugees (Chance+ n.y.). To increase the chances that refugees are employed, it provides assistance to businesses on legal matters and guides the refugees during the first weeks of their new employment (ibid.). IN VIA employs two persons for Chance+.

Finally, the Internationaler Bund offers individual counselling and job placement; however, this is not its major strength (Chance+ n.y.). Instead, it assists participants with job orientation and invites them to take part in trainings in the organization’s own training companies.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, the organization provides seminars on the immigration regulations for third country citizens.

The networks partners exchange information via telephone or email and regularly gather for operational meetings (CH\_JCK1). Additionally, the coordinator and project managers of the partner organizations meet every two months in order to discuss the focus of activities and further develop the network. Every partner organization must provide the coordinator with an annual plan specifying the services it wants to offer (CH\_JCK1). As long as they follow the contracts and guidelines of the project, the network partners are quite free in the implementation of Chance+ (ibid.). This is necessary, as every partner organization has its own strategic goals (CH\_JCK1). An interviewee from a partner organization characterizes the network coordinator as “very open to new ideas and thematic priorities of the partners” (CH\_CVK)<sup>16</sup>. Nonetheless, the coordinator gives recommendations to the partner organizations and takes a steering role when it comes to the interaction of the network with external partners and institutions (CH\_JCK1). Furthermore, the partner organizations autonomously select the personnel dealing with Chance+ in their organizations. The coordinator is solely responsible for the correct administrative procedures (CH\_JCK1).

In conclusion, the yearlong co-operation between the networks partners has fostered a close relationship between them. Their tasks in the network overlap to a large extent, with the exception of the coordinator, every organization provides counselling and placement for refugees, as well as

<sup>14</sup> See <https://www.invia-koeln.de/de/unsere-arbeit/migranten-gefluechtete/chance-plus.php>, last accessed 15/11/2018.

<sup>15</sup> See <https://www.internationaler-bund.de/angebot/9780/>, last accessed 15/11/2018.

<sup>16</sup> „[...] sehr offen gegenüber neun Ideen und thematischen Vorstellungen der Partner“.

trainings for third parties. This can be explained by the fact that one core element of the federal program is to provide comprehensive counselling for every participant. Nevertheless, the orientations and activities of the organizations differ to a certain extent due to their overall orientation and previous activities in the field of refugee integration. For instance, the Caritas and IN VIA focus on comprehensive counselling and refer to third parties for trainings, while at the Internationaler Bund, the inclusion of refugees in their own training workshops is paramount. This observation fits to a former evaluation of the first funding round of ESF-networks (among them KNFA) highlighting that church-based organizations are focused more on social counselling and their activities, in terms of labor market integration, are less differentiated than those of typical education and training providers (Lawaetz Stiftung 2010: 26). Nevertheless, the changes in the internal governance structures of the Caritas have demonstrated that the organization has greatly amplified its activities in this field. Furthermore, the structures of the network can be characterized as participatory because the partner organizations are involved in the strategic decisions of the network and are quite free in how they implement Chance+ in their own organizations.

### 3.3 Co-operation with the local government

As the job center Cologne is a joint facility of the Federal Employment Agency and the city of Cologne, it can be seen as one co-operation partner of Chance+ at the local level. The job center Cologne employs the coordinator of the network and other members of staff of Chance+. Their offices are located in the job center, in close proximity to those of the Integration Point (CH\_JCK2). This facilitates a close co-operation between Chance+ and the job center and supports the work of Chance+. First of all, it generously provides the network with access to the infrastructure of the job center, i.e. the premises, database of clients and technical support (CH\_JCK1). This is beneficial for Chance+ as it professionalizes the network (ibid.). Second, the coordinator, and other members of staff of Chance+, already worked for the job center before they switched their position to the network (ibid.). Thus, they possess good personal contacts to the employees of the different division of the job center (ibid.). For this reason, it is well-established that the employer service of the job center forwards job offers to Chance+ (ibid.). Further, the Integration Point sends its clients to Chance+. This is particularly the case when clients need more comprehensive counselling. It is seen as a particular strength of Chance+ that it can offer counselling and services for those refugees that are still in the asylum process, as well as qualification and training measures for specific target groups (CH\_JCK2). Additionally, while tasks in the job center are functionally divided between different departments, Chance+ operates as one-stop-agency for refugees. It is mostly seen as an advantage of the network that it can inform a refugee about his or her job opportunities and subsequently contact a potential training company, while this task is carried out by different departments within the job center (CH\_JCK1). However, some employees of the job center are also critical of this capacity (ibid.). They prefer to contact employers solely via the respective department of the job center in order to avoid double structures and bind the network closer to the structures and hierarchies of the job center.

A further aspect of the co-operation is that Chance+ is invited to take part in monthly internal meetings of the job center, Integration Point and employment agency (ibid.). These meetings are chiefly informative, they do not involve Chance+ in any decisions of the job center or Integration Point. However, they give Chance+ the possibility to inform the other participants about its projects, which in turn passes this information on to their departments and thus increases the popularity and usage of Chance+ further (ibid.).

Apart from actors within the job center, the network partners collaborate with other public institutions. To ensure a comprehensive case management they work with the immigration authority, housing authority and the local integration center (*Kommunales Integrationszentrum*) (CH\_JCK1; CH\_CVK). Furthermore, Chance+ organizes trainings for employees of different public institutions such as the employment agency and those working in other federally funded projects such as the IQ networks<sup>17</sup> (CH\_JCK1, CH\_CVK). The network's close connection to the job center is seen as an advantage in this co-operation because it facilitates good access to the aforementioned public bodies and enables Chance+ to communicate confidently with them (CH\_CVK). This can be explained by the fact that the role of Chance+ has changed during the years. During the first funding phase of the project, the network was the only service dealing with the labor market integration of refugees, in particular those living on toleration in Cologne (CH\_JCK1). Additionally, its unique selling point was its expert knowledge on asylum and labor law (*ibid.*). For this reason, the network was known all over town. However, as the job center ameliorated its services for refugees by establishing the Integration Point and implementing other federally funded projects, the job center has become the main point of reference concerning the labor market integration of refugees in the city. Furthermore, several working groups have been established in recent years. For this reason, Chance+ has become one actor among many others that are concerned with the labor market integration of refugees. Respectively, employees of the job center are happy to utilize Chance+ and perceive it to be an "additional support offer"<sup>18</sup> that supplements the services of the job center.

Nonetheless, the coordinator of Chance+ does not see the job center or other projects as competition (CH\_JCK1). Instead, it is highlighted that the labor market integration is an encompassing task that needs the joint effort of several actors. However, a disadvantage of the increased plurality of actors and projects is that the structures have become opaque and complicated in Cologne (*ibid.*). This is aggravated by the by the fact that projects are usually organized on a time-limited basis (CH\_CVK).

Additionally, an obstacle in the cooperation with the local public administration is that recent demographic change has drastically increased the workload of employee (CV\_CVK). Similarly, the nature of Chance+, as a time-limited project, makes it hard to offer long-term security and employ personnel continuously (*ibid.*). For this reason, the co-operation relationships must be renewed steadily (*ibid.*). This is particularly important because maintaining personal connection to the co-operation partners, during all project phases, has been crucial to the success of the network the (CH\_JCK1).

Furthermore, important co-operation partners for Chance+ are employers, which provide trainings and jobs to the network's clients. One of these employers is the administration of Cologne. New employees are greatly needed within the administration as a large share of the administrative staff is close to retirement and the city's population is constantly growing (Stadt Köln 2017: 10). For this reason, the city of Cologne welcomes applicants with a migratory background. Since 2007, the office of personnel and administrative management has organized six month internships for youth with a migratory

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<sup>17</sup> IQ networks are financed by a federal program and consist of non-profit organizations. Their main task is to provide counselling on the recognition of previously acquired qualifications and to sensitize the actors of the labor market for the potentials of migrants. For further information see <https://www.netzwerk-iq.de/foerderprogramm-iq/programmuebersicht.html>, last accessed 20/11/2018.

<sup>18</sup> „Zusätzliches Unterstützungsangebot“

background and then if they performed well the participants were accepted in a training relationship.<sup>19</sup> These internships are partially funded by the job center (CH\_APV). Against this background, in 2016, Chance+ signed a three-year contract with the city of Cologne (CH\_APV). Participants receive a training contract specifying their rights and duties. As the city administration does not want to pay any allowances for the internships, they usually take the form of voluntary orientation internships that last no longer than three months (CH\_APV).<sup>20</sup> Frequently, the internships are accompanied by a language course provided by the chamber of crafts (ibid.). The success of the co-operation is ensured by regular meetings between representatives from the office of personnel and administrative management and Chance+ (ibid.). Furthermore, the office for personnel and administrative management is well connected with those actors that provide formal recognition of qualifications, language courses and information such as the chamber of crafts or the immigration office (ibid.). Both, representatives of the city administration, as well as Chance+, are pleased with the co-operation and stress its voluntary basis. Chance+ sees the co-operation positively because the city administration “has practically opened up its total portfolio for [...] participants” (CH\_JCK1)<sup>21</sup>. In return, the city administration views the co-operation as an opportunity to find motivated refugees for its regular internship program for youth with a migratory background and subsequent vocational training (CH\_APV). It values that Chance+ offers comprehensive counselling to the participants in order to make sure that only those refugees, who fit well to the tasks of the city administration, are considered for an internship (ibid.). Additionally, it emphasizes the good personal contact to the representatives of Chance+ (ibid.). Nevertheless, insufficient language skills, long waiting periods for work permits and unclear residency statuses can make the arrangement of internships complicated (ibid.). For this reason, the city administration has considered hiring an additional member of staff to find suitable internship placements for refugees within the city administration (ibid.). Furthermore, as neither the city nor Chance+ provide any funding for the internships, it is difficult to place participants in certain departments of the administration (ibid.). For instance, a participant was only able to gain insights into the work of a civil engineer, after a non-profit organization agreed to sponsor protective clothing (ibid.).

Like the precursory networks, the current network advocates for those refugees with the legal status of an exceptional leave to remain (“toleration”). It strives to improve their access to German language training. Furthermore, the immigration authorities can issue “tolerations for vocational training” which have been introduced by the federal government to allow persons without a permanent stay to remain in Germany during the duration of vocational training and subsequent employment. Chance+ is committed to ensure that these tolerations do not remain lip service in Cologne (CH\_JCK1). While the individual partner organizations are able to actively advocate this position in political forums and round tables, the overall network has to maintain a more moderate role. This is due to the fact that the coordinator of the network is employed at the job center. She stresses that for this reason, Chance+ has to keep in line with its political orientation:

<sup>19</sup> See <https://www.stadt-koeln.de/politik-und-verwaltung/arbeiten-bei-der-stadt/ausbildung/projekt-integration-von-jugendlichen-mit-migrationshintergru>, last accessed 20/11/2018.

<sup>20</sup> Federal law stipulates that interns receive the minimum wage. Employees are exempt from this regulation if the internship is mandatory in the course of studies and training or if the internship is voluntary, shorter than three months and serves as an orientation for the trainee. For further information see [https://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Publikationen/a765-mindestlohn-fuer-studierende.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile&v=3](https://www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF-Publikationen/a765-mindestlohn-fuer-studierende.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3), last accessed 20/11/2018.

<sup>21</sup> „Die Stadt Köln hat praktisch ihr gesamtes Portfolio geöffnet für unsere Teilnehmenden.“



Our boss [the executive chairman of the job center] shapes the policies, but not we as Chance+. [...] I would not publish any statement which has not been approved previously. I can speak in the name of Chance+, but the public relations work is usually aligned with the job center (CH\_JCK1).<sup>22</sup>

Under these conditions, the coordinator and network partners synchronize any political position that they represent as Chance+ (ibid.). The network considers itself as a “silent player” (CH\_JCK1)<sup>23</sup> in terms of policy making and concentrates its efforts on exchanging expertise and providing recommendations on the local level and in the framework of IvAF networks (ibid.). In this way, it strives to influence politics indirectly (ibid.). Furthermore, the increased plurality of actors on the local level has influenced opportunities for Chance+ to shape policies. While the network was invited to join working groups and round tables in former years, it has to request permission to join proactively these days (ibid.).

### 3.4 Assessment of the effect of the program

The effects of the program should be measures according to its objectives. The federal program aims to offer participants access to the labor market in a timely manner and with a long-term perspective. Contrary to this objective, most evaluations focus on numbers or quotas of participants placed in training or employment. An evaluation of the overall IvAF-program demonstrates that 26% of all participants were provided with education, vocational training or work in 2015 and 2016 (BMAS 2017: 4). In comparison to this, Chance+ in Cologne appears to be highly successful because more than 50% of the participants were integrated into the labor market since 2015. The coordinator of Chance+ sees that this high success is the result of the longstanding experience of network partners in the field of labor market integration and the trust that has grown among them and external partners over the years (CH\_JCK1). However, contrary to the results in Cologne, the other cities in which Chance+ operates have significantly lower quota as the network and its structures have only recently been established (ibid.).

Apart from these evaluations based on sheer numbers, further evaluations offer more insights into the effectiveness of the program. The evaluation of the Lawaetz Foundation relating to the first and second funding phases of the network, demonstrates that the network is particularly successful because it provides a tailored approach for those refugees that are eligible to reside in Germany and have access to the job market (Lawaetz Stiftung 2010: 39). Their long-term integration into the labor market is supported because apart from legal and job counseling, the network’s activities involve social and psychological advice and inform the refugees about the German labor market (ibid.). Moreover, the evaluation shows a greater effectiveness than other programs in the XENOS framework (Lawaetz Stiftung 2011: 59).

Based on these evaluations, and its comparatively high integration quota, Chance+ can be considered very successful. Nevertheless, interview partners have voiced some opportunities for improvement. The organizational form of a network demands a high administrative effort (CH\_JCK1). Furthermore, the federal program itself is highly bureaucratic in terms of financial administration and the registration of participants (ibid.). In contrast to this, most organizations only receive funding to hire one full-time and one part-time employee, which is not considered enough to dedicate sufficient time to the counselling of participants. For this reason, it is suggested that an increase in staff expenses is

<sup>22</sup> Hier macht unser Chef Politik, aber nicht wir als Chance+. [...] ich würde hier kein Statement raushauen, was ich nicht auch abstimme. Und ich kann im Namen von Chance+ sprechen, aber die Öffentlichkeitsarbeit wird eigentlich mit dem Jobcenter abgestimmt.

<sup>23</sup> „stillter Player“.

needed so that more employees that dedicate their working hours to the actual counselling are hired (ibid.).

The second objective of the federal program is to spread expert knowledge among policy makers on the regional and federal levels, employers and non-profit organizations (BMAS 2017: 9-11). This is implemented by the coordinator and network partners via trainings and presentations for employees of the local public administration, private companies and non-profit organizations (Chance+ n.y.). Furthermore, the network partners strive to establish good relationships with the local employers' associations. While the impact of this training and presentations is difficult to measure, the establishment of many co-operation contacts can be considered a maker of success because it demonstrates that many businesses have been sensitized to the idea of refugees as potential employees (Lawaetz Stiftung 2010: 42; CH\_JCK1). Moreover, the representatives of Chance+ pass on their expertise and recommendations to policy makers on the federal level via periodic meetings with representatives of IvAF-networks (CH\_JCK1). The coordinator of the network sees it as an achievement of the networks that the needs of female refugees have been put on the agenda of policy makers a little more (ibid.).

#### 4 Conclusion

The network Chance+ can be considered a successful co-operation between the local public administration and non-profit organizations. The co-operation of organizations from different backgrounds within the network allows it to draw on different fields of expertise, resources and competences. Although their collaboration is based on a formal agreement, the yearlong co-operation of partners in previous networks has fostered a close and trustful relationship among them. The partner organizations generally follow heterogeneous goals and are involved in political activities; however, they have united into a common goal. Despite this common goal and formal agreement, the participatory structure of the network allows them to shape its strategic decisions and gives them generous freedom to implement the program within their own organizations.

Furthermore, the network partners are well established in Cologne. The majority of them have previous experience in the field of labor market integration in general and with services for refugees in particular. They are currently involved into several federal projects and social services aiming at the integration of refugees. This expertise and associated prominence help them set up close contacts to public bodies and refugee communities. While this expertise of network partners may be a success factor that can be found among many of the IvAF networks, it is a particular advantage of Chance+ that the coordinator of the network is employed by the job center. It provides Chance+ with a professional technical infrastructure and makes it natural that the other employees of the job center send suitable clients to Chance+ as they see the network as an appropriate supplement to their own services. Further, the network can participate in internal meetings of the job center and federal labor agency which increases its popularity. Finally, the connection to the job center emphasizes the network's claims in front of other local public actors.

Nonetheless, there are obstacles to the success of the network. Chance+ has to deal with bureaucracy and the established procedures of the administration. This can be seen in the high administrative effort required to gain work permits and the criticism that the network acts as one-stop agency that circumvents the routines when contacting potential employers. Further, the organizational form of a network, and the administration of the federal program, demand a high administrative effort from the

coordinator and partner organizations. In comparison to this, the project finances only very few persons per organization and often on a part-time basis. Thus, the employees must complete a lot of time-consuming administrative work that takes away from time invested into the actual counselling work. Furthermore, the time-limited nature of the IvAF networks, and demographic change in the administration of Cologne, impede the continuous employment of staff. Thus, co-operation relationships must be renewed and cultivated continuously. For this reason, it is recommended that the funding be increased – especially for the counselling activities – in future project rounds. Moreover, in recent years many new projects have been introduced that deal with the labor market integration of refugees. Established players such as the job center or Caritas have extended their services for refugees. While representatives of Chance+ do not perceive these new projects and activities as competition, they stress that the local structures and responsibilities have become complex and that it is harder for Chance+ to gain access to relevant working groups and discussion forums. Lastly, the co-operation between Chance+ and the city administration is impeded by the fact that neither the network nor the city provides any funding for the internships, which makes it complicated to place participants in certain departments of the administration.

In terms of policy making, Chance+ considers itself as a silent player. Although the network strives to improve the living conditions of those refugees with the legal status of an exceptional leave to remain, it cannot directly advocate for their rights. This is due to the fact that the coordinator of the network is employed by the job center and thus the network has to maintain its political orientations.

In conclusion, the well-functioning collaboration between the network Chance+ and the public administration can be considered an important pillar of its success. The model of collaboration can be characterized as a mix of hierarchical-bureaucratic and new governance model of networks. Hierarchies are visible in the internal organization of the administration. They become relevant for Chance+ because it must follow the political positions of the job center. Moreover, bureaucratic structuration and processes are important to consider because some think it is critical that Chance+ act as a one-stop agency in order to be effective and this does not follow the rule-bound procedures and functional structuration of the administration. The network approach characterizes the interaction of different partners within the network. Although they are formally bound by a funding contract, they make strategic decisions jointly and the individual partners can implement the offers of Chance+ autonomously within their organizations. Elements of the New Public Management model can be observed in the form of competitive tendering for funding and the evaluation of the program which is highly focused on the share of participants placed in employment or training.

**Interviews:**

- CH\_JCK1 Coordinator of the Chance+ network, employed at the job center Cologne; June 2018
- CH\_JCK2 Employee of the job center Cologne, expert on the labor market integration of refugees; July 2018
- CH\_CVK Employee of Caritasverband für die Stadt Köln e.V.; July 2018
- CH\_APV Employee of the City of Cologne, Amt für Personal und Verwaltungsmanagement; July 2018

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