

London School of Economics and Political Science

**From No Work to Work? The Role of Job Placement and Skills
Training Services in Assisting Unemployment Benefit II
Recipients Find Work under Germany's Hartz IV Welfare
Reforms**

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Abstract

This thesis presents the results of a qualitative investigation of Unemployment Benefit II (UBII) recipients' experiences of skill training and job placement services under Germany's Hartz IV welfare reforms—arguably a (neo-) liberal intervention in the context of what has traditionally been described as a conservative-corporatist welfare regime. This thesis explores the experience of skills training and job placement services in terms of the degree to which these support mechanisms engage with UBII recipients' needs and perceptions and how these necessarily reflect the purposes of the support and activation mechanisms (to provide support to and assist the long-term unemployed find work) and the underlying policy assumptions (that the long-term unemployed need to be made to demonstrate responsibility in finding work). The evidence presented suggests such services have not necessarily provided a route into regular employment. Instead the 'support' mechanisms tend to 'busy' the recipients; to be irrelevant to the recipients' employment history and/or future interests; and not to match what recipients wish to, or are interested in, doing. Secondly, the policy rhetoric and design of the Hartz IV reforms implied, ostensibly, a shift with some cultural significance—from social solidarity to individual responsibility; from old (conservative) to new (neo-liberal) paternalism. The thesis examines UBII recipients' perception of their 'right' to and 'responsibility' in finding work. The evidence suggests that popular discourse and understandings of the right to and responsibility in finding work in Germany are not so distinct or dissimilar from the Anglophone world. Finally, this thesis identifies a potential contradiction within the German government's political objective of providing support (Fördern) to recipients in return for UBII recipients demonstrating responsibility (Fordern) in finding work. The findings suggest there is little need to make unemployed Germans feel 'responsible' for finding work. The demands placed on recipients to demonstrate to case managers that they are taking responsibility for finding work may undermine the recipient's ability responsibly to look for work. And UBII recipients may 'trick' the system to meet these demands, ostensibly wasting the time and resources of Jobcenter staff and UBII recipients.

This thesis concludes by arguing that Fördern and Fordern are ultimately not compatible within a policy framework. Where Fordern (demand/require) exists in conjunction with the threat of sanctions for non-compliance, there is too much of a chance that Fördern (support), in the form of job placement and skill training services, will be used to regulate the conduct

of and discipline UBII recipients rather than provide legitimate support. Thus, any support provided starts to break down as soon as Fordern is inserted into the policy framework.

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List of Acronyms

ALMP	Active Labour Market Policy
BA	Bundesagentur für Arbeit (Federal Employment Agency)
BMAS	Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales (Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs)
BMI	Bundesministerium des Innern (Federal Ministry of the Interior)
CDU	Christian Democratic Union
EU	European Union
GSEOP	German Socio-Economic Panel
GVA	Gross value added
IAB	Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung (Institute for Employment Research)
IABS	IAB Employment Sample
IEB	Integrated Employment Biographies
JSA	Jobseekers Allowance
NPM	New Public Management
MSSD	Most Similar Systems Design
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PASS	Arbeitsmarkt und soziale Sicherung Panel (Labour market and social security panel)
PES	Public Employment Service
SA	Social Assistance
SGBII	SozialgesetzbuchII (German Social Code Book II)
SGBIII	SozialgesetzbuchIII (German Social Code Book III)
SI	Social Insurance
SPD	Social Democratic Party
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
UA	Unemployment Assistance
UBI	Unemployment Benefit I
UBII	Unemployment Benefit II
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The last two decades have witnessed fundamental changes to welfare state policies that have been the subject of intense scholarly research in recent years. Supported by the EU and the OECD¹, policy makers in many Western European countries, in the United States, and in Australia have sought to reduce welfare dependency via policies promoting personal responsibility through labour market participation. Here Germany has followed this trend, instituting comprehensive labour market and welfare state reforms between 2003 and 2005 known as the Hartz I-IV reforms. Specifically, under the policy maxim of *Fördern und Fordern*, the fourth Hartz law incorporated active labour market policy (ALMP) interventions based on a ‘rights and responsibilities’ policy logic into the administration of unemployment benefit for the long-term unemployed.² Therefore, using the significant case of post-Hartz IV reformed Germany, the purpose of my research project is to explore Unemployment Benefit II (UBII) recipients’ experience of skills training and job placement services in terms of the degree to which these support mechanisms engage with their needs and perceptions. The second objective of this thesis is to explore how meaningful the discourse of *Fördern* (support) and *Fordern* (demand/require) is to those UBII recipients who experienced the support and activation mechanisms first hand. In this context *Fördern und Fordern*³ means the state purports to provide sufficient support to assist Unemployment Benefit II recipients integrate into the labour market in return for the jobseeker demonstrating personal initiative and engagement in finding work. Given that ‘*Fördern und Fordern*’—arguably a (neo-) liberal intervention in the context of what has traditionally been described as a conservative-corporatist welfare regime—was central to the design of the structure and administration of active labour market policies, this thesis will therefore examine the meaning UBII recipients’ attach to their right to and responsibility in finding work. Exploring recipient perceptions of their right to and responsibility in finding work can help gauge the degree to which the policy

¹ Expansion and enhancement of the effectiveness of active labour market policies was one of the ten policy guidelines of the OECD Jobs Strategy and was the same principle included in the EU Employment Guidelines (Martin and Grubb, 2001).

² Prior to the induction of the fourth Hartz law in January 2005 German social security for the unemployed was administered through three schemes: unemployment insurance, unemployment assistance and social assistance. As of January 2005, the social insurance scheme was converted to Unemployment Benefit I. Unemployment assistance and social assistance was collapsed into one flat rate, means-tested benefit called Unemployment Benefit II. The changes to the structure and administration of benefit will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Two (section 2.2).

³ The then SPD-Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and his Minister for Economic Affairs, Wolfgang Clement, introduced the principle of *Fördern und Fordern* into their Agenda 2010. This is not a direct translation, but rather *Fördern und Fordern* draws on the premise of rights and responsibilities. The Federal Employment Service translates ‘*Fördern und Fordern*’ as ‘challenge and promotion’.

discourse fits with and/or is internalized by UBII recipients and how this then (if at all) manifests itself in UBII recipient interactions with the Hartz IV policy interventions. To that end, my research questions are as follows:

- Are the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients?
- How meaningful is the Fördern and Fordern policy discourse for Unemployment Benefit II recipients, in terms of their perception of a ‘right’ to and ‘responsibility’ in finding work?

This study is not an evaluation of the efficacy of skills training and job placement interventions. Rather the aim of this study is to explore their deeper meaning and effect: the degree to which UBII recipients’ experience with the skills training and job placement services necessarily reflect the purposes of the support and activation mechanisms (to provide support to and assist the long-term unemployed find work) and the underlying policy assumptions (that the long-term unemployed need to be made to demonstrate responsibility in finding work). Since the Hartz reforms are guided by the theory that a job is the best form of welfare and the use of sanctions have been expanded on and now made applicable to all Unemployment Benefit II recipients (those who prior to the reforms were recipients of unemployment assistance and social assistance), understanding how UBII recipients experience these support and activation mechanisms can lend insight into who benefits from the support mechanisms and why (or why not). How indeed do UBII recipients utilize the services offered and how, if at all, does participation in, for example, a skills training, impact recipient job search and the job they ultimately take? This is relevant because as some qualitative studies that draw on user experience of job placement and skills training services in the UK, Australia and the US suggests, such support mechanisms have tended to busy recipients or recipients take a job they do not or cannot retain (Murphy et al., 2011; Blalock, et al., 2004; Finn and Schulte, 2008). If this is the case for a proportion of recipients in countries that have adopted similar active labour policy mechanisms, then it becomes a larger policy question of whether, as McKnight (2001) suggests, simply taking a job for a job’s sake in order to meet the objective of a policy, does not necessarily result in long-term benefit

either to the state, that has to be prepared for recidivism, or the individuals who may find themselves unemployed and back on benefit, with no increase in earnings to speak of.

In the event, this thesis presents a serious critique of the German approach. The evidence offered by this study suggests (see Chapters Six, Seven and Eight), that the policy objectives informing the support mechanisms used to assist in integrating the long-term unemployed into the labour market by and large contradict the real-life experiences of the respondents interviewed for this study. In fact, it appears that skills training and job placement services may be leaving some recipients in a more precarious position. Indeed it seems that the German government's political objective of providing support (Fördern) to UBII recipients may be undermined by them having to demonstrate –rather than effectively to exercise— responsibility (Fordern) in finding work. Moreover, an analysis of the evidence for this study suggests there is little need to make unemployed respondents feel 'responsible' for finding work. The demands placed on respondents to demonstrate to case managers that they are taking responsibility for finding work in some cases appear to undermine the recipient's ability responsibly to look for work. And UBII recipients may 'trick' the system to meet these demands, ostensibly wasting the time and resources of Jobcenter staff and UBII recipients. In the end, this is a story concerning the popular and political discourses that shape what is being done with the lives of people who are unemployed and on benefit.

1.2 The Research Process

This is a qualitative study of user experience with Jobcenter support and activation mechanisms. Fifty semi-structured interviews were conducted at two Jobcenters (25 interviews at a Jobcenter in Hamburg and 25 interviews at a Jobcenter in Bremen) with Unemployment Benefit II recipients in order to answer my two research questions. An additional five interviews were conducted with Jobcenter case managers, two who worked at a Jobcenter in Bremen and three who worked at a Jobcenter in Berlin. The initial objective with interviewing a small sub-sample of case managers was to check whether any general issues and themes that arose from my interviews with the fifty respondents was a result of internal policy or something else. My second objective was to better understand the day-to-day practicalities of the case managers' job and the reasons and motivations for the decisions

they made that impacted UBII recipients generally (see Chapter Five, section 5.3.1 for more detail).

In designing the study, I did not set out with a pre-existing theoretical framework, nor did I create a new one. I did not aim to test a hypothesis or a theory. Nevertheless I was mindful as to whether recipient experiences with the active labour market policy interventions adopted in the Hartz IV reforms—specifically the skills training and job placement services—would echo the findings of qualitative studies exploring similar themes and similar active labour market policies in the welfare-reform context stemming from the UK, the US and Australia. And in this context, I was especially mindful as to what, if anything, can be said about the adoption of neo-liberal interventions in a traditionally defined conservative corporatist welfare regime. Accordingly, I had some clear ideas about what themes I might explore. However, my initial analytical framework was essentially centred on my research questions and the interview questions that I subsequently pragmatically developed with a view to answering the said research questions. The questions from the interview schedule provided the springboard from which I then formulated the initial thematic categories or 'codes' for analysis. A myriad of additional codes, which will be discussed further in Chapter Five (section 5.6.1), emerged from an analysis of the fifty interview transcripts—codes that I had not anticipated but nonetheless became major themes for analysis. But I did not allow a preconceived set of assumptions to affect how I formulated and ultimately asked the questions in my interviews with respondents. My objective was to let respondents relate their experience as best as possible without me influencing what I thought their responses should or might be. My principal aim was to let respondents' voices (i.e., their responses to questions) guide my analysis.

While I had not set out explicitly to use a grounded theory approach, I am able in retrospect to say that it was the principles of grounded theory that were ultimately employed in the development of this research project (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin and Strauss, 2008). Here my objective was to let the data speak for themselves. It was only after the analysis was complete and the themes to emerge from my findings became clear, that I was able to bring theoretical perspectives to bear. I had not wanted to embrace assumptions that might influence the tone of my fieldwork and ultimately the type of responses respondents gave.

Writing up my research findings proved to be very much an iterative process. The thesis had evolved from the initial flickering of an idea of what to explore, to the development of the research questions, to the fieldwork, the analysis of the data and finally the reporting of the findings. Each stage in the research process, particularly while I was drafting my empirical chapters, brought me closer to understanding what my findings were ultimately saying—what conclusions I could draw. But it was only after I had completed first drafts for my empirical write-up that the pattern of findings was discernible. It was at this point that I explored how best to make sense of these findings.

At this stage I adopted a Foucauldian analytic because it offered what I found to be the most effective interpretation of my findings. This required me to reframe elements of my thesis and the empirical chapters to incorporate the analytic and explain the larger meaning and significance of my findings. Key here is that the Foucauldian analytic adopted had not informed the development of my research questions, my coding framework or my initial analysis of the evidence. That said, while I draw on Foucault's use of immanent function and the 'conduct of conduct' to assist in interpreting the findings of this study, this thesis is not a classical Foucault study of power, authority and exploitation. Instead, I will be drawing on Foucault where applicable, while utilizing other normative frameworks, such as Hartley Dean's heuristic modelling device for understanding competing constructions of rights and responsibilities, within which to interpret the findings of this study.

1.3 Brief summary of findings

This thesis makes two contributions to the academic literature. The First contribution is the finding on the degree to which the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms reflect the manner and substance of the lived experiences of UBII recipients. While this is a small study and the findings are not generalizable to the larger UBII recipient population, nevertheless, this study does provide some insight into the experience of respondents who participated in skills training and job placement services. The findings contribute to the existing body of literature that explores the impact support and activation measures have on recipients' ability to find work generally, while providing greater insight into the German case specifically. Indeed, the findings suggest that there is a contradiction between the policy objective of the support mechanisms and the real-life experiences of those respondents who

participated in them. This contradiction manifests itself in that skills training and job placement services do not necessarily provide the support respondents for this study needed in order to integrate into regular employment. Instead the ‘support’ mechanisms tended to ‘busy’ many respondents; were irrelevant to their employment history and future interests; and did not match what they wished to, or were interested in, doing. Moreover, my research suggests that the German government’s policy objective of providing support (Fördern) to recipients has the potential to be undermined by UBII recipients having to demonstrate responsibility by meeting Jobcenter activation requirements (Fordern). Instead of providing the support needed as perceived by the respondents for this study, it appears such mechanisms were used to regulate their conduct in order to ensure they meet the activation requirements (and demonstrate responsibility). It is here that Foucault helps us to understand the wider significance of the meaning behind the findings for this study. Drawing on Foucault’s use of immanent function, the support measures (Fördern) that are an integral part of the reforms appear to serve an immanent, or symbolic, rather than an actual function (see Chapter Three for a larger discussion of Foucault’s conceptualisation of immanent function). While policy makers did not consciously set out to design active labour market policies that would fail to meet users’ needs, for the majority of respondents, the support mechanisms did little to ultimately meet their needs and provide the type of support *they* required. It is at this juncture that the support provided takes on a symbolic function in that the image being conveyed by the government is that it is investing a great deal into helping those categorized as the long-term unemployed find work. Whether UBII recipients are, as a result of the support, better positioned to integrate into the labour market, is not the point because irrespective of the outcome, the government has done its duty and provided ‘support’.

Secondly, researchers have not heretofore explored the degree to which (if at all) the policy discourse of Fördern and Fordern is meaningful to UBII recipients in terms of their perception of their right to and responsibility in finding work. In relation to this research question there are two key implications of the findings to stem from an analysis of the research. First, Germany has been described as a conservative-corporatist welfare regime (Esping-Anderson, 1990). Thus, when drawing on H. Dean’s (see Chapter Four, figure 4.1) competing constructions of rights and responsibilities, one might suppose then that UBII respondents for this study—many raised in the German tradition of welfare provision—would perceive their right to and responsibility in finding work in line with the conservative-corporatist—with some overlap in the social democratic—tradition. But given that

respondent responses to the question of whether they have a right to and responsibility in finding work fall in all four of Dean's quadrants—(neo-) liberal, social democratic, utilitarian and conservative—suggests that the respondents' understanding of the popular discourse of their right to and responsibility in finding work is not so distinct or dissimilar from those in Anglophone (or Nordic) countries. This finding also implies that policy initiatives in place to prompt UBII recipients to demonstrate responsibility in finding work—something they are presumed to lack—is not completely necessary because for a majority of respondents, a responsibility to find work and to work was already instilled in them. Secondly, and more broadly, given that respondent responses fall in all four of Dean's quadrants suggests that how respondents internalize their understanding of a right to and responsibility in finding work in many ways reflects what Hemerijck et al (2000) have argued. Namely, while the social Catholic principles of solidarity, subsidiarity and equivalence were embedded in the design of the post-war German welfare state, so too were Calvinist principles, stemming from Bismarck's inception of social insurance for manual workers, where work was perceived as salvation and the responsibility to work ultimately rests with the individual. The relevance of this finding to my research question suggests that when considering the degree of change that the Hartz policy interventions represent, the principles—Fördern and Fordern—of the Hartz reforms represent more continuity with the past than change. Indeed the German social state has always been a hybrid of principles that are reflected in respondent responses.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into nine chapters. In this introductory chapter, I outline the main themes relevant to this study and introduce the research questions to be answered in the following chapters. Chapter Two sets the historical, ideological and moral context for how the Hartz reforms came into existence, focusing specifically on the policy changes introduced in the fourth Hartz law. Given that Germany did not have a blueprint for reforms, policy makers looked to neighbouring countries of the Netherlands and the UK for models of reform. It is argued that reforms introduced in the UK under New Labour proved particularly insightful and instructive to German policy makers. More detail is provided on the actual structural changes made to unemployment benefit and who was affected by these changes. This chapter then proceeds to question whether Fördern and Fordern signify a fundamental shift from social solidarity to individual responsibility. In order to answer this question, this

chapter examines the historical roots of the Christian Democratic social state and the relevance Catholic and Protestant social doctrine has had on the design of unemployment insurance in Germany. In line with Kaufmann (1988), Manow (2004) and Kahl (2005), this chapter argues that the idea of individual responsibility as a condition of welfare provision is not completely and fundamentally new to the German social state. By exploring the variants of Protestant social doctrine and its influence on the design of the German social state, this chapter shows that threads of individualistic and (coercive) paternalistic elements have always been present. Indeed, this chapter, building on Manow and Van Kersbergen's analysis, will argue that, the German social state as we know it today is a hybrid of Catholic and Protestant principles forged through compromise.

Chapter Three explores four key themes as they relate to the respondents' experiences with their (in)ability to integrate into the labour market. First, this chapter reviews the literature and the evidence on the degree to which active labour market policies generally, and in Germany specifically, assists participants in labour market integration. Second, the issues of atypical, temporary and low-wage work are integral to the experience of respondents for this study who were in receipt of Unemployment Benefit II. Thus, this chapter reviews the literature and evidence on how these issues impact jobseekers ability to find work, stay in work and move from low-paid positions to higher paid positions. Finally, this chapter reviews the evidence on the impact and the effectiveness of the Hartz reforms, looking specifically at evaluations of the One-Euro-Job. Through a review of the evidence, a gap in the literature presented itself.

A two-fold analytic was adopted to assist in understanding the findings of this study. Thus Chapter Four has two objectives. First, this chapter starts out by presenting the reasons why a Foucauldian analytic was eventually adopted for interpreting and understanding the findings of this study. Specifically, this chapter explores how the concepts of immanent function and the conduct of conduct in Foucault's work relate to my own work. Second, I explain my adoption of a critical understanding of citizenship theory in order to interpret the findings as they pertain to my second research question that examines respondents' perceptions of a right to and responsibility in finding work. Within this context, Hartley Dean's heuristic device for understanding competing constructions of rights and responsibilities as they pertain to capitalist social policies is used to interpret this study's findings.

Chapter Five discusses the research methods. It addresses the reasons for adopting a qualitative approach in relation to the research questions and refers to the ethical issues of concern to the research. The first section describes the sampling approach adopted, including how the two cities were selected as locations for the research. The next section discusses how the two Jobcenters were selected as locations to conduct the interviews. The chapter then proceeds to present the research sample of UBII recipients and Jobcenter case managers and discuss the limitations of the sample. The interview process is then outlined, whereby semi-structured interviews were carried out with UBII recipients and Jobcenter case managers. Finally, this chapter explores the data analysis and issues concerning validity and reliability of the data.

Chapters Six to Eight present the findings of the study in relation to the research questions. Chapter Six explores the experiences and perceptions of respondents for this study who participated in skills trainings. It considers whether their ability to enter the regular labour market was either helped or hindered by the type of training they participated in. While there are a range of skills trainings that are considered ‘Maßnahmen’ by the Jobcenter, respondents for this study primarily participated in short-term, One-Euro-Jobs and/or vocational (re-) training placements which in turn form the three categories of analysis for this chapter. Key themes discussed in this chapter include the degree of autonomy and choice respondents had in selecting which skills training they wished to participate in. Here, the role of the case manager in providing support is explored in more detail. It is, after all, the case manager who ultimately does or does not approve participation in a given skills training. Indeed, this chapter will argue that the decisions made as to which training a respondent participated in was not necessarily aligned with their professional history or future job prospects.

Chapter Seven focuses on the experiences and perceptions of respondents who received job placement services. Like Chapter Six, Chapter Seven also considers whether respondents’ ability to integrate into the regular labour market was either helped or hindered by the job placement assistance provided them. Here support provided was understood as job placement, consultation and/or mediation. This chapter discusses the Jobcenter’s use of profiling recipients in order to determine the degree of ‘support’ (Fördern) and/or ‘activation’ (Fordern) required. Respondents did not know that they had been placed in a profile category type that may have impacted the degree of support received or the level of activation required

of them. In light of Jobcenters' use of profiling, the issue of case manager discretion used to determine the amount of activation and/or support required is explored in more detail.

Chapter Eight explores respondents' perception of a right to and responsibility in finding work. It considers the larger significance of respondents' perceptions in terms of what popular discourse can tell us about the nature of welfare regimes. In order to account for diversity in respondents' perceptions of a right to and responsibility in finding work, four categories of a right to work and four categories of a responsibility in finding work emerged from an analysis of the evidence. Since it is argued that the *Fördern* and *Fordern* policy logic is grounded in the distinctly neo-liberal rights and responsibilities framework, this chapter explores respondents' understanding and perception of *Fördern* and *Fordern*. Indeed, respondents felt that it was fair and realistic for the government to expect something in return for their receipt of benefit from the state. But it was the fact that the support promised (*Fördern*) was not that which respondents needed or required in order to assist them integrate into the regular labour market that they found problematic.

Chapter Nine discusses the conclusions of the research with regard to the literature and refers to the implications of the findings for social policy. First this chapter explores whether the policy objectives expressed by the fourth Hartz law are reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of respondents for this study. Second, this chapter considers how meaningful the *Fördern* and *Fordern* policy discourse is for respondents in terms of their perception of a right to and responsibility in finding work. This Chapter discusses the immanent function of the skills training and job placement mechanisms and questions whether support can ever be meaningful in the context of the neo-liberal activation paradigm. With this in mind, given the centrality of *Fördern* and *Fordern* to the design of the Hartz reforms, the tension between providing *Fördern* (support) while meeting requirements *Fordern* (demand/require) at the same time is explored more closely. Indeed, it is argued that so long as the *Fördern* (support) provided is predicated on meeting *Fordern* (requirements), the two can then never really successfully work in tandem because requirements coupled with the threat of sanctions undermine the 'support' mechanisms provided. Moreover, this chapter explores the three key issues of 'work', 'skills' and 'support' as they relate to welfare reforms and active labour market policies more generally. Both the popular and political discourse calls for tougher work requirements for the unemployed, skills trainings to fill skill gaps and support during their endeavour to find work. This chapter argues that what is instead needed

is a more nuanced discussion of what is meant by ‘work’, ‘skills’ and ‘support’, especially in an ever changing labour market landscape.

Chapter Two: German Welfare State Change in Context

2.1 Introduction

The foundation of German social security has its roots in legislation passed in 1883, 1884 and 1889.⁴ Chancellor Otto van Bismarck created the first-of-its-kind social insurance for regularly employed manual workers. The influence of his policies has been long and vast. Indeed Germany has been referred to as the “social insurance state” (Riedmüller and Olk 1994; Hinrichs, 2010). In accordance with the social insurance approach, the German welfare state primarily provided wage-earner-centred social policies within which the precondition for receiving benefits had been a prior standard employment relationship (Vobruba, 1990). On account of this institutional arrangement, benefits were therefore to be financed through equal contributions by workers and employers and not through general taxation (Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2007). Indeed Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein (2007) argue that securing the ‘achieved living standard’ (*Lebensstandardsicherung*) through different social insurance schemes became the overarching objective of post war social policy.

And yet, is social insurance—specifically unemployment insurance—still at the heart of social security in post-Hartz reformed Germany?⁵ The changes made to labour market and unemployment benefit policy on account of the Hartz reforms have prompted Weishaupt (2010) to question whether ‘Modell Deutschland’ is in flux. The fourth Hartz law, instituted in January 2005, changed the structure of unemployment benefit—reducing receipt of unemployment insurance from 32 months to one year, dissolving unemployment assistance while arguably substantially increasing the role of a tax-financed, non-earnings related and means-tested basic income benefit (see section 2.2 for more detail). This ‘change’ has prompted some academics to question whether the Hartz reforms represent an altogether new set of social security principles and objectives (Seeleib-Kaiser, 2004; Betzelt and Bothfeld, 2011a). And therein lies the key issue: it is not only a question of what has changed but the degree of change and what this then means for how Germany has traditionally been defined as a conservative corporatist welfare regime (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Indeed, my second

⁴ Health Insurance Bill of 1883; Accident Insurance Bill of 1884; Old Age and Disability Insurance Bill of 1889. Compulsory unemployment insurance was introduced in 1927.

⁵ Social security in the German welfare state context consists of a number of social policy areas including health, pensions and unemployment benefit. For the purpose of this chapter (and this thesis) I will only be discussing social security in the context of unemployment benefit.

research question asks how meaningful the *Fördern* and *Fordern* policy discourse is for Unemployment Benefit II recipients, in terms of their perception of a ‘right’ to and ‘responsibility’ in finding work. Taking this analysis one step further, do the institutional and structural changes to unemployment benefit coupled with the introduction of *Förden* and *Forden* into both the policy rhetoric and design imply a significant shift with some cultural significance—from social solidarity to individual responsibility; from old (conservative) to new (neo-liberal) paternalism?

This chapter will therefore explore changes made to unemployment benefit over time and especially with the advent of the fourth Hartz law. It will then proceed to explore the principles that underpin the design of German social security more broadly but with an emphasis on unemployment benefit specifically. Instrumental in Germany’s ‘uniqueness’ were the Christian democratic [social Catholic] principles of solidarity, equivalence and subsidiarity (van Kersbergen, 1995). In order to answer the question of whether the introduction of *Förden* and *Forden* signifies a fundamental shift from social solidarity to individual responsibility it is important to first, as van Kersebergen and Manow (2009) argue, consider the difference between Catholicism and the major variants of Protestantism and the respective influences religious beliefs had on the design of social security generally and unemployment benefit specifically. This is relevant to this thesis’ research objectives for two reasons. First, embedded in the notion of rights and responsibilities is the question of who is responsible for one’s state of unemployment—the state or the individual? The introduction of *Fördern* and *Fordern* into the policy rhetoric and design of the Hartz reforms places the responsibility squarely on the individual who, if necessary, needs to be made to demonstrate that he or she is actively and responsibility seeking work. And yet, in a country where social security was ostensibly predicated on the principle of solidarity, is the notion of individual responsibility all that new? By stepping back in time and exploring the different tenants of social Catholic and variants of Protestantism and their influence on German social policy, we find that individual responsibility was always a leitmotiv in German unemployment benefit. Secondly, that individual responsibility was always a leitmotiv in German unemployment benefit policy goes a little way towards explaining—for some respondents (others of whom did not have German heritage)—why responses to questions about respondents right to or responsibility in finding work shared characteristics with those to be found in Anglophone countries (see Chapter Eight for further discussion).

First however, section 2.2 will start by explaining the Hartz reforms and why they might be regarded as a step-change. Section 2.3 to 2.5 will suggest a more nuanced story: Section 2.3 will trace the roots of Christian Democracy in relation to different understandings of moral responsibility. Section 2.4 will consider the incremental development of the post-WWII unemployment benefit system. Section 2.5 will conclude with a summary of the issues discussed in this chapter.

2.2 The structure of unemployment benefit pre-and post-Hartz reforms

Prior to the reforms, there were three types of benefit schemes for the unemployed/non-employed: unemployment insurance (UI), unemployment assistance (UA) and social assistance (SA). The Federal Labour Office (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit later renamed in 2004 Bundesagentur für Arbeit-Federal Agency for Work) administered both unemployment insurance and unemployment assistance. Funded by compulsory contributions,⁶ those eligible for unemployment insurance, i.e., those who had worked in insured-type employment for a minimum of 12 months, received 63 per cent of their last earned net salary (68 per cent if they had dependent children) for up to 32 months—only if sufficient contributions had been made and depending on the recipient's age.⁷ Once the period of unemployment insurance expired (i.e. 32 months had passed) or he or she did not qualify for unemployment insurance from the start because they had not been in insured employment long enough, the jobseeker received unemployment assistance. Unemployment assistance was paid out of general (federal) taxation (rather than contributions) and was means-tested (taking into account a spouse's income) though provided benefits which were proportional to previous earnings with up to 53 per cent of last earned net income (or 58 per cent with dependent children).⁸

In addition to unemployment insurance and unemployment assistance, there was the means-tested and non-earnings related social assistance benefit administered and funded by the local authorities that were also charged with reintegrating those on benefit into the labour market

⁶ Subject to a ceiling, are proportional to gross earnings, which Clasen (2005) points out, were 3 per cent in 1980 and 6.5 per cent in 2004.

⁷ Recipients of unemployment insurance age 55 and older could be in receipt of UI for longer than three years. Unemployment insurance at a replacement rate of 68 percent of the previous wage was to insure a relatively stable income for workers during spells of unemployment and until they found a job that paid a comparable wage to their last position. As Clasen (1994) has pointed out, this was to ensure that an unemployed worker would not have to take a job offer, which compared to their previous job, either paid less or was in an inferior occupational field or position.

⁸ It is this last point under which unemployment assistance shared both social insurance and needs-based benefit characteristics (Clasen, 2005: 55). While unemployment insurance was limited in its duration, unemployment assistance in principle was paid for an unlimited period of time so long as the need was there and individual or family circumstances had not changed (Kemmerling and Bruttel, 2006)

(Konle-Seidl et al., 2007).⁹ This was the social security benefit of last resort that a person could receive in Germany. Social assistance allocated basic income support for those who could not rely on sufficient resources from other sources of income or to those jobseekers who did not qualify for unemployment insurance and unemployment assistance, both of which required a certain contribution period through employment (Rauch and Dornette, 2009). It secured a minimum standard of living above the poverty line and was paid for an unlimited period of time.

The Hartz reforms resulted in changes to the structure and administration of benefits for the unemployed by combining unemployment assistance with social assistance (see table 2.1). Since 2005, an employed person who has paid sufficient unemployment insurance contributions and becomes unemployed receives Unemployment Benefit I (UBI) for up to but now not exceeding 12 months of unemployment.¹⁰ The current benefit rate is 67 percent of prior earnings for an individual with children and 60 percent prior earnings for an individual.¹¹ Thereafter—and here the fundamental change—the recipient is transferred to Unemployment Benefit II (UBII) which is a non-earnings related benefit of €364¹² per month (plus the ‘adequate’ cost for housing and heat) and is means-tested.¹³ In addition to former UBI recipients,¹⁴ those who have never paid (or did not pay enough) social security contributions, though deemed capable of working, receive UBII from the start.¹⁵

⁹ A considerable share of the social assistant recipients also received UA. In 1998, for example, c. 40 per cent of all unemployed social assistance recipients received UA as well (Clasen and Goerne, 2011).

¹⁰ Originally UBI was available to workers 55 years and older for up to 18 months. In 2008 the government extended maximum entitlement period for UBI to 15 months for those aged 50 and older and 24 months for those aged 58 plus (Weishaupt, 2010).

¹¹ Clasen and Goerne point out that remarkably little has changed from unemployment insurance to Unemployment Benefit I. The change from benefit being 68 per cent of previous net earnings to 67 per cent for individuals with families and 63 to 60 per cent for an individual was already introduced in 1994. The Hartz reforms as such did not alter these rates; but the reforms did change the maximum entitlement period (2011: 7).

¹² The monthly stipend increased in 2013 to €374 and in 2014 to €384 based on inflation. At the time of this study, respondents were receiving a monthly stipend of €364. This is the amount that will be referred to throughout this thesis.

¹³ UBII is means-tested, which means receipt of benefit is predicated on combined household income. Single parents, as well as adults with a minor are entitled to the full amount of UBII. As of 2013 UBII recipients with adult partners receive €345. Children younger than 6 years receive €224. Children between 6 and 13 years of age receive €255. Children and young persons between 14 and 17 years receive €289. Young adults between 15 and 25 years of age who live with their parents receive €306. Young adults who are 25 years and older must file their own application for unemployment benefit II regardless of whether they live in their own flat or with their parents.

¹⁴ If a long-term unemployed person has received a sufficiently high UBI benefit, the transition towards the lower UBII income is smoothed out over a two-year period. Thus only the unemployed with no prior or insufficient UBI entitlements are dependent on the flat-rate benefit from the very start (Hinrichs, 2010).

¹⁵ Recipients who receive UBI but, owing to their limited contributions while working, are not receiving enough are then eligible for UBII top-up.

Table 2.1 Major characteristics of the old and new unemployment protection system

	before/after 2005 UI/UBI	before 2005 UA	SA	since 2005 UBII
Eligibility	contribution based	means-test	means-test*	means test
Benefit	earnings-related	earnings-related	flat-rate**	flat-rate
Funding	contributory	taxation (federal budget)	taxation (municipal budgets)	taxation***

*Notes:**stricter means test for SA than for UA applied; **plus additions depending on family situation and needs; ***largely federal budget plus municipal funding for accommodation (from Clasen and Goerne, 2011).

Moreover, while the Labour Promotion Reform Law of 1998 introduced further conditionality such as ‘actively seeking work’ measures and a ‘reintegration contract’, with the advent of the Hartz reforms, receipt of UBII became conditional on *every* Unemployment Benefit II recipient demonstrating that they are actively seeking work. This conditionality was manifested through the Integration into Work Agreement. Every UBII recipient must enter into an agreement with the state that outlines what the recipient must do to demonstrate he or she is actively seeking employment or they face sanctions.¹⁶

2.2.1 Outlining the Hartz reforms

It was not until two major events collided in February of 2002 that the possibility of change could be realized. In February 2002 the Alliance for Jobs Training and Competitiveness (Bündnis für Arbeit)—a corporatist arrangement modelled on tripartite bodies that had successfully negotiated reforms in the Netherlands—was terminated by Chancellor Schröder because no agreement on substantial reforms could be reached. Schröder’s termination of the Alliance proved to be a critical juncture—signalling a move away from Germany’s classically corporatist model upon which labour and social policies were negotiated. At the same time the German National Audit Office discovered that the German Public Employment Service (PES) had falsified the figures of its job placement performance.¹⁷ Together, the so-

¹⁶ § 2(1) Social Security Code II: *Grundsatz des Forderns*.

¹⁷ Prior to the Hartz reforms, the Public Employment Service (PES) was tasked with placing the unemployed into work. The PES and its private partner companies were given wide latitude and resources by the federal government to create projects to improve placement. In 2002 Germany’s Federal Auditing office discovered that the PES and its partner companies had systematically reported over three times as many placements as it had produced. The PES management and employees provided training and financial support activities. The PES counted all jobseekers having benefited from one of the services provided as a “placement”, though they had led to a job in only 30 per cent of the cases.

called ‘placement scandal’ coupled with the impossibility of achieving negotiated reforms presented an opportunity for the Red-Green government to unilaterally redesign labour market policies not backed by a compromise with the social partners (Hinrichs, 2007; Fleckenstein, 2008).¹⁸ As a result, Chancellor Schröder established the Hartz Commission, named after its Chairman Peter Hartz, which was tasked with creating a proposal that would recommend measures for organizational reform of the Public Employment Service, address the problems associated with the institutional separation of the unemployment benefit schemes and address the reintegration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market through activation measures (Fleckenstein, 2008). In the summer of 2002, the Hartz Commission published its long-awaited concept outlining the changes needed to create modern services for the labour market (*Moderne Dienstleistung am Arbeitsmarkt*) and a reorganization of the Public Employment Service. The Red-Green coalition under Gerhard Schröder took up the Commission’s proposals after re-election in September 2002. The reforms were subsequently legislated into four packages called the Acts for Modern Services for the Labour Market (*Gesetze für moderne Dienstleistung am Arbeitsmarkt*) otherwise known as the Hartz I-IV laws.

On the face of it, the laws instituted between January 2003 and 2005 (see table 2.2) constituted a change to both labour market and associated unemployment benefit policy in Germany. Getting people back to work quickly, efficiently and effectively was the main goal and the central logic of all new or reformed labour market policies (Hinrichs, 2007). Thus the goal was to create a three-way reform strategy that sought to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of labour market services, ‘activate’ the unemployed within a ‘rights and responsibilities’ (Fördern und Fordern) policy framework, and stimulate employment demand by deregulating the labour market. Broadly speaking, the combined reforms modified already existing active labour market policy measures while introducing new measures that fundamentally changed how institutions operated and cooperated with one another. Policies that deregulated the labour market concentrated on the temporary work sector, while the largest and—fundamental to my project—most important changes took place in the realm of job placement and skills training services and the benefit system (Joacobi and Kluve, 2007; Oschmiansky, 2007). Yet ultimately Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein (2007) argue that the

¹⁸ The placement scandal resulted in the dismissal of the head of the Public Employment Service and was subsequently replaced by the appointment of the Commission for Modern Services in the Labour Market which became known as the Hartz Commission. The Commission consisted of selected trade unionist, personnel directors of large corporate enterprises, representatives of the States, management, consultants and academics.

activation measures implemented in the Hartz reforms were similar to those implemented by many local authorities in their social assistance schemes since the mid-1980s. They argue that to some extent the use of activation measures built on the shift towards increased means-testing that had already occurred by stealth during the 1990s.

2.2.2 The impetus for reform

Owing to the ongoing and consistently rising numbers of recipients on unemployment assistance in the former East Germany (i.e. the German Democratic Republic) and recipients on social assistance in the West coupled with well-known inefficiencies in both systems, there was increased pressure in the mid-1990s to reform social security for the long-term unemployed (see section 2.4.2 for more detail). Yet, the ability to actually move legislative change through parliament entailed a complicated set of checks and balances that Boeri et al (2001) argue resulted in gradual solutions rather than “cold turkey policies” (see also Palier, 2010). Given that general, popular support for the welfare state was high, any reforms supporting vast change prior to 2000 were met and blocked by political opposition. Hence reforms to German social policies generally, and the labour market specifically, have tended to be slow (Zohlenhöfer, 2001) and were largely path-dependent in nature (Hinrichs, 2010). Yet, based on their analysis of political debates in the 1990s, Fleckenstein and Seeleib-Kaiser point out that the macro-level political discourse about the need for welfare state and labour market reform had slowly been shifting well before the Social Democrats and the Greens entered government in 1998. Indeed, since the mid-1990s there had been intensified efforts to reform unemployment benefit. But for Hinrichs it was ultimately the financial cost of reunification, coupled with high unemployment that promoted a change in political discourse and created a space for the possibility of large-scale reforms.

At the same, time non-wage labour costs, the rise of ‘globalization’ and concerns about generational equity became dominant ‘catch-words’ in the public and political discourse that, Hinrichs (2010) argues, combined with the cost of reunification and high unemployment, helped change the perception that social insurance was an effective problem-solving tool to the perception of social insurance as the actual problem. Thus, after years of opposing the main arguments of the CDU-FDP (Christian Democrats/Liberal Democrats) coalition, the SPD (Social Democrats) embraced the pro-active labour market policy pattern that the CDU

had long championed. The problem was that neither the SPD nor the CDU and their partners had a blueprint for policy reform. Policymakers therefore looked to countries, such as Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK for a blueprint because they were perceived as countries that had successfully reformed their unemployment benefit system and labour markets (Fleckenstein, 2008; Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2007). Policy strategies in those countries were therefore closely followed by German political actors. And since these countries were governed by centre-left parties at the time, their policy strategies were increasingly seen as politically feasible by the SPD.

Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein (2007) argue that policy change in Germany cannot be explained by predominant theories such as the path dependence theory or the ‘varieties’ of capitalism approach. They are not suggesting that these explanatory approaches do not matter at all, but that the policy concepts that eventually turned into the Hartz reforms were developed through a process of social learning and it is this that is the key factor to understanding the recent developments in German labour market policy. Hall defines social learning as “a deliberate attempt to adjust goals or techniques of policy in response to past experience and new information” (1993: 293). For them it was the UK Jobcentre/New Deal model that was particularly instructive in the types of programmatic changes made to the German system of unemployment benefit. Indeed the reduction in the amount and duration of benefit coupled with the strong workfare component all appealed to German reformers. Thus in the end, while some initially viewed the UK model with scepticism, those within the SPD who wished to modernize unemployment benefit looked to the UK approach for guidance which, Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein (2007) argue, ultimately led to the eventual adoption of policy activation instruments similar to those in the UK. Yet despite convergence, they argue that differences between the UK and Germany remain. For example, the overall expenditure for active labour market policy is still considerably higher in Germany than the minimalistic UK approach (Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2007).

Table 2.2 Elements and timing of the Hartz reforms

Immediate Measures

Reform of the top-level administrative structures of the Public Employment Service (PES)
Deregulation of job placement (in particular, placement vouchers)

Hartz I Law (German Social Code III or SGB III—Operative January 2003)

Introduction of personnel service agencies
Deregulation of temporary agency work
Tightening the criteria of reasonable work and the sanction regime
Introduction of vouchers for further training
Introduction of remuneration security
Reduction of unemployment insurance contributions when hiring an older job-seeker

Hartz II Law (German Social Code III or SGB III—Operative January 2003)

Introduction of the Mini-/Midi-Job scheme
Introduction of the Me/Family, Inc.

Hartz III Law (German Social Code III or SGB III—Operative January 2004)

Renaming PES as ‘Federal Employment Agency’
Reduction of the regulatory density of the Social Code III
Reform of the executive boards in local agencies
Tightening the sanction regime

Law for Reforms in the Labour Market

Reduction of the maximum duration of unemployment benefits

Hartz IV Law (German Social Code II or SGB II—Operative January 2005)

Introduction of ‘Basic Security for Jobseekers’
Tightening criteria of reasonable work and sanction regime
Establishment of Jobcenters
Introduction of work opportunities
Introduction of start-up grants

Source: Fleckenstein (2011)

2.2.3 The advent of the Jobcenter and the reliance on New Public Management tools

The European Employment Strategy policy approach to active labour market policies has underlined the importance of adopting a ‘personalized’ tactic that is responsive to the individual needs of those unemployed (Freud, 1997; Lindsay and McQuaid, 2008). This ‘personalized’ approach became associated with casework methods (Peck, 2001), i.e., unemployment benefit recipients being assigned a ‘case manager’ to assist them at a ‘Jobcenter’. Indeed, the German government’s point of crafting modern services in the labour market was to secure work for the unemployed by creating an integrated consulting and support service that was to be provided by case managers at a ‘Jobcenter’ while supplying material safeguards through provision of a cash benefit (BMAS, 2006). This involved a mixture, albeit contradictory, of on the one hand placing emphasis on the tailoring of provision to the individual needs of those unemployed, while on the other, moving recipients into a job, irrespective of whether it meets the individual’s needs and interests (Considine,

2001; Peck, 2001; Finn, 2005). The German government adopted New Public Management tools in the managing of the Federal Employment Agency and the municipalities to ensure that services were personalized and responsive to individual needs while tackling high unemployment and economic inactivity.¹⁹

New Public Management tools were first introduced into the then Public Employment Service (later renamed the Federal Employment Agency) after the 2002 ‘placement scandal’. In response to the scandal, the top-level administrative structure of the PES was transformed from a public bureaucracy to a management structure comparable to private companies. Here the tripartite management board and the presidency were replaced with a corporate-like board of three managers, nominated by the government. New elements of competition were introduced into the job placement regime. This included allowing private job placement agencies to demand (limited) fees for their services from jobseekers. Moreover, unemployed persons who had been seeking a job for three months or longer were entitled to a job placement voucher enabling them to use the private service. The policy shift towards NPM was further strengthened through the Hartz III law which stipulated “administrative steering by output-oriented contract management instead of control by decree and budgetary allocations (input-oriented management)” (Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2007:433). The Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs and the Federal Employment Agency, for example, signed performance agreements outlining specific quantitative goals that must be met by the local offices. To underscore the importance placed on successful placement, the FEA must pay approximately €10,000 to the federal government for each UBI recipient that is transferred to UBII on account of the agency not successfully placing the UBI recipient in a job within 12 months (van Berkel, 2010).

2.3 Stepping back: the influence of Christian [Democratic] principles on the design of German social insurance

In constructing his typologies, Esping-Andersen (1990) drew on the power resources theory (Korpi, 1989) to help explain why Germany was as generous in terms of its social spending as the traditionally social democratic countries. But in 1995 van Kersbergen argued that

¹⁹ For Clark and Newman (1997) New Public Management was a tool used in the ‘marketization’ of public services. If public services could not be relocated to the private sector, then private sector tools would be integrated into the management of public services. Key to this was to change public service delivery by positioning the recipient of benefit as the ‘customer’ or ‘client’.

Esping-Andersen's regime typologies failed to take into consideration the influence Christian Democracy (i.e., Catholic social doctrine) had on explaining why Germany was as generous as the Scandinavian countries but was not designed to counter market pressures (i.e., to decommodify labour) to the same extent as the social democratic welfare states. Christian Democracy, van Kersbergen (1995) argued, with its social Catholic underpinnings, produced a traditional, conservative patriarchal, status-oriented model of society. There were a multitude of factors that influence the development of a nation-state's welfare state. And here van Kersbergen together with Manow (2009) has argued for a more nuanced understanding of how welfare regimes are categorized, given the complexity of their histories and the competing interests involved. The welfare state literature now finds itself at an interesting crossroads on account of the *type* of unemployment benefit reforms that have been instituted throughout Western Europe since the late 1990s. And once again Germany makes for an interesting case study. Specific to Germany is the question of the degree to which the role and use of 'responsibility' in the provision of Unemployment Benefit II indicates something new—or whether threads of individual responsibility have always been embedded in unemployment benefit policy design.

Moreover, academics differ about the degree to which the Hartz reforms represent a break from the Federal Republic's social insurance tradition of benefit provision (Palier and Martin, 2007; Hinrichs, 2010; Clasen and Goerne, 2011). Indeed if a break with tradition has taken place, is there then a shift in principles as well? At the heart of this discussion is, on the one hand, an empirical question of whether the structural changes to social security prompted by the Hartz reforms resulted in a decreased role for a social insurance contribution-based benefit, while on the other, a normative question of whether the introduction of 'rights and responsibilities' into the policy logic of basic income support signalled a shift in principles—from less emphasis on the [social Catholic] principles of subsidiarity and solidarity to more emphasis on the [Lutheran and Calvinist] principle of individual responsibility? In order to answer this question, one must step back and explore the development and influence of Catholic *and* Lutheran and Calvinistic principles on German unemployment benefit as we know it today. It is through an analysis of how given principles have been employed in policy making over time that it becomes clear that while the introduction of individual responsibility into the policy rhetoric and design of the Hartz reforms represents aspects of 'newness', there is actually more continuity with the past than one might initially suppose.

2.3.1 The concept of responsibility

While the Hartz reforms arguably brought individual responsibility to the fore in German unemployment benefit in ways it had not necessarily been before, as noted in Chapter One, Kaufmann (1988), Manow (2004) and Kahl (2005) all argue that this individual responsibility is not completely and fundamentally new to German social security. Both aspects of Reformed Protestant (Calvinist) and Lutheran principles²⁰ informed the design of German social security generally but unemployment benefit specifically (the distinction between the two will be discussed further below). But what makes Germany unique is the degree to which Catholic social and political factions, though a minority, had substantial influence over policy making.²¹ This helps to explain Germany's [Catholic] social conservatism on the one hand and its [Protestant] industrial, enterprising work ethic on the other (Kahl, 2005). This confluence of religious doctrines is particularly important and relevant to understanding the role of work and individual responsibility in the provision of unemployment benefit. Here Lutheranism is chiefly influential in explaining how threads of individualistic and paternalistic elements made their way into unemployment benefit—principally social assistance. As Kahl (2005) explains, the notion of the poor taking individual responsibility for their unemployed circumstance first came to the fore in post-Reformation poverty 'policy' of the Protestants that differed fundamentally from the previous Catholic approach to alleviating begging.

Indeed one of the first signs of changes in poverty policy was the change in the municipal edicts on begging that were a result of the Reformation. One of the cornerstones of Catholicism was that an individual's existence was justified by their faith in Christ and by a life of good works (Kahl, 2005). This manifested itself in the relationship between begging and almsgiving. Giving alms to the poor was essential for Catholic salvation. It was very much a quid pro quo relationship: it was the duty of the rich to give alms to the poor for which in return their soul would be saved.²² Kahl (2005) argues that this is why the Catholic church of the early modern period opposed secularizing poor relief because it was believed

²⁰ Here reformed Protestantism refers to Calvinism which is a major branch of Protestantism but differed with Lutherans on the real presence of Christ in the Lord's supper, theories of worship and the use of God's law for believers. The movement was first referred to as 'Calvinism' by Lutherans who opposed it, but many who practice within the Calvinist tradition would prefer to use the word 'Reformed'.

²¹ Kahl (2005) who draws on Dinges' work (1988) goes as far back as the late middle ages and early modern period as important starting points in order to understand the development of modern German social security. It is important to point out that, as Dinges (1988) does, there was also ambivalence by the patrician classes about meeting the needs of the poor and sick in the late middle ages and early modern period by Catholics. Dinges' analysis of poverty in Bordeaux is a good illustration of this.

²² As medieval edicts on begging show, municipalities had started to regulate begging both as a reaction to the social problem, but also because of the Catholic duty to care for the poor (Kahl, 2005).

that a secular system would erase the divine benevolence of the giver. It was the Reformation that largely changed attitudes to how the poor should be cared for—attitudes that resonate with the provision of social assistance today. “With the Reformation and Luther’s translation of the Bible, two things happened to the concept of work: first Luther raised the profile of work immensely and work became an intrinsically positive activity that was pleasing to God; second, work no longer equalled poverty but was seen instead as a way to overcome poverty” (Kahl, 2005: 102). Not working became associated with laziness. Luther rejected individual almsgiving and denounced the able-bodied beggars—the cheaters, idlers and vagrants—as “undeserving poor” who should be excluded from alms.²³

Over time Lutheran social reformers developed their version of poverty policy: in the 1859 edition of the Protestant *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften* (Handbook of State Policies) it was written that the state both had to protect the community from the undeserving poor but also ensure that the “truly needy” were cared for. “Poor relief [thus] rigorously enforced the distinction between the ‘deserving’ and the ‘undeserving’ and relief tended to be restricted to the residential, authentic and morally upright poor” and—here the key point—the able bodied should work and be made to work if necessary (Kahl, 2005: 104). Indeed, Kaufmann (1988) points out that the political guarantee to participate, established in the Weimar Constitution from 1919, not only brought rights, but duties with it as well. For example, Kaufmann (1988) cites Article 163 in the Weimar Constitution that stipulated that every able-bodied man had a duty to earn his living by working, and while the right to necessary support was provided for those who lacked the appropriate opportunity to work, within the confines of poor assistance, he should be required to work if necessary.

Calvin took Luther’s interpretation of work further. He made work an absolute duty; a spiritual end in itself and the best way to please the Lord. Calvin developed the ethos of work and individual responsibility and fundamentally changed the requirements on how people should work.²⁴ Work became a certain mark of elation. Being saved by God meant demonstrating one’s success in an occupation. Wealth, as a result, became an absolute sign that one was saved by God while poverty became the certain sign of damnation (Kahl, 2005).

²³ Kahl cites the forward to Luther’s 1523 German edition of the *Liber Vagatorum*, a collection of fraudulent begging techniques, where Luther demanded that the “undeserving poor”—the cheaters, idlers and vagrants—be excluded from the alms (2005: 103).

²⁴ Applying for relief became a bureaucratic process that required a formal examination of need and eligibility. Whoever fulfilled the criteria was to get relief according to their need, number of children, individual conduct and budget keeping (Kahl cites Rüger, 1932). Lutheran cities took over the workhouse idea from Calvinist cities. German workhouses were to deter the able-bodied poor from claiming relief. It was to remind them of their duty to support themselves. The workhouse was fundamentally a punishment and a correctional institution for the socially deviant.

“The Calvinist creation of the Protestant work ethos and the strict and systematic requirements about what constitutes a life that increases the glory of God (i.e., personal responsibility, individualism, discipline and asceticism) made poverty appear to be the punishment for laziness and sinful behaviour” (Kahl, 2005: 107).²⁵ This meant that the poor needed to be punished and forced to work if necessary. Catholics vehemently criticized this approach. The Reformed Protestant approach was too individualistic and ultimately lacked responsibility for and towards the poor. And yet, for Catholics, it was not the responsibility of the state to address the needs of the poor. It was a religious rather than a political matter. It was the role of charity, of the individual, to set a good example through assisting the poor.

2.3.2 The roots of Christian Democratic principles

Although there are a multitude of factors that have contributed to welfare state development over time, Christian principles are historically embedded even in ostensibly secularized countries such as Germany. The rise of Christian Democracy in Germany, Van Kersbergen (1995) has argued, was a result of (social) Catholic parties mobilizing between 1870 and 1914 in response to Bismarck’s anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf* (culture war).²⁶ While the Catholic social movement did not dominate politics like Protestantism at this time, it nonetheless held a certain amount of political sway. Fundamental differences existed between how variants of Protestant and Catholic social doctrine in the late nineteenth century addressed social problems. For example, as noted above, Catholics advocated that the church and other community-grounded bodies and *not* the state provide the support necessary to address social ills. Moreover, the difference in variants of Protestant and Catholic social doctrine is perhaps best embodied in the fact that Bismarck, a staunch Protestant, blocked any initiatives that would strengthen the protection and rights of the worker citing the cost incurred to the manufacturer and thus the economy. One of the main goals of Catholic social policy in 1870 was to improve the relationship between employer and employee in order to prevent an escalation of class struggles. As Kaufmann (1988) argues, the difference between Catholic and Protestant influence on unemployment benefit policy is best manifested in Bismarkian

²⁵ The workhouse was the invention of Reformed Protestant social reformers. The first German workhouse was established in Bremen in 1609. In the 18th century there were 63 workhouses in the German Lutheran territories and only five in the German Catholic territories (Kahl, 2005).

²⁶ Between 1910 and 1925 the German population was 61.2%-64.1% Protestant and 37.2%-32.4% Catholic. After World War II, the ratio changed drastically to 50.5% Protestant and 45.8% Catholic. The division of Germany after WWII cut off the Soviet zone with its traditionally social democratic and communist (and Protestant) strongholds. This left the predominant Catholic states of Bavaria, Rheinland-Pfalz and Nord-Rhein-Westpfalia who gained prominence as a result.

social insurance while the regulation of factory work for the purpose of equality between work and capital was (and remains) a continuous theme of the Catholic social movement.

The Catholic principles of subsidiarity and solidarity are important to understanding Christian Democracy. Catholic social doctrine called for a correction of the most objectionable societal effects of capitalism. The Catholic principle of subsidiarity maintains that in the last instance the (nation-) state has a duty to intervene to correct for morally unacceptable market outcomes. Catholic social doctrine does not address the type of workers' social *rights* and *emancipation* argument that one finds in Social Democratic ideology, but rather, as noted earlier, the obligation Christians have to help the poor in the tradition of Jesus Christ (Manow and van Kersbergen, 2009: 2). Social policies therefore are mechanisms that can help protect and maintain a stable and fair social order. Moreover, Christian Democratic ideology grounded in Catholic social doctrine typically stresses *Gemeinschaft* (community) over *Gesellschaft* (society)—doctrines rooted in the concept of solidarity. The idea of solidarity in this context is used in social policy to temper inequalities that are considered unjust and result in an undesirable distribution of power (van Kersbergen, 1995). Indeed van Kersbergen argued that “the notion of solidarity as harmony is an intrinsic component of the Christian democratic tradition and is alternately paraphrased as ‘integration’, compromise, accommodation and ‘pluralism’” (1995: 184). The relevance for Christian Democratic support for social insurance is that it entails an essentially conservative conception of risk sharing rather than a socialist conception of solidarity.

Given the strong emphasis on subsidiarity and solidarity in Catholic social teaching, it is argued that such beliefs will be reflected in social policies where Catholics are potentially strong and that in turn, a distinct type of policy design will follow (Hornsby-Smith, 1999). But Manow (2004) argues that in contrast to previous thinking on the *lack* of influence of Protestantism on welfare state development in the literature (van Kersbergen, 1995 and Esping-Andersen, 1990), Protestantism has indeed contributed in a distinct way to welfare state development in Europe—even in Germany.²⁷ Indeed Hemerijck, van Kersbergen and Manow (2000) argue that the origins of the German welfare state were grounded in Protestantism. This project was then “usurped and expropriated by Social Democracy and

²⁷ In 1995 van Kersbergen's work rejected the idea that Protestantism had any positive contribution to either Christian Democracy or the welfare state. But in his 2009 essay with Manow, he amends his earlier argument and notes that the exclusive focus on Catholic social teaching and Christian Democracy neglects the influence of specific types of Protestantism on Christian Democracy.

social Catholicism, as a result of which the bourgeois Protestant middle class, the initial reform fraction, was alienated from the welfare state venture” (Hemerijck, van Kersbergen and Manow, 2000:108). Thus the Protestant middle class adopted the social reform doctrine of ‘Ordoliberalism’.²⁸ Ordoliberalism, in addition to embracing liberal economic policy, also contained elements of interventionism with a social reform purpose (van Kersbergen and Manow, 2009). Ordoliberalism was concerned with social equality, social harmony and the pursuit of a decent life. It was against state redistribution programmes, but not against a ‘caring state’, i.e., a state that ensured peace and justice, even if this meant intervening in and correcting the free market economy to ensure peace and justice.

Moreover, for Manow (2004), the difference in welfare regimes is not whether they are social Democratic or Christian Democratic in nature, rather whether reformed Protestantism or Lutheranism bore its mark on welfare state development. “The existing studies in the field have focused exclusively on Catholicism—thereby implicitly assuming that the main analytical dividing line runs between Catholicism and Protestantism instead of within Protestantism” (Manow, 2004: 3). As opposed to Lutheranism, reformed Protestantism’s influence on welfare state development is often seen as ‘negative’ owing to its strict anti-state platform, the emphasis on self-help, autonomy, strict separation of church and state and individual asceticism. All of which, it is perceived, delayed and restricted the growth of modern social security (Manow and van Kersbergen, 2009). Instead it was, Manow argues, the Lutheran State Church, that did not have any major reservations against the State playing a dominant role in social protection or at least mounted no substantial resistance against the nation-state taking a role in social security provision. “The Protestant free churches and other reformed currents (Dissenters, Calvinists, Baptists, etc.) held a strongly *antiétatist* position, whereas the Lutheran state churches never questioned the prerogative of the central state in social policy and education” (Manow and van Kersbergen 2009: 4). For Manow, the Lutheran State Church positively contributed to the early introduction of social protection programmes and welfare state development (2004: 4; Manow and van Kersbergen 2009). Indeed, the Federal Republic has always been unique in its ability to moderate religious conflict and other social cleavages via the welfare state. The status of the German social state today is the result of years of merging and consolidation of different religious principles and camps forged through ‘amicable agreement and parity representation’. As Manow notes,

²⁸ Ordoliberalism is the German variant between social liberalism and neoliberalism that emphasizes the need for the state to ensure that the free market produces results close to its theoretical potential.

“The different pillars all formed their own welfare organizations which gained privileged status in the field of welfare provision and which became stabilized and subsidized through the ‘corporatist’ welfare state programmes” (2004: 9).

2.3.3 The interwar years

The last years of the German Empire and the democratic Weimar Republic (1918-1933) witnessed the continued development of social insurance schemes. Despite the radically different political regimes in power in Germany since 1871, the organizational arrangements and financing of German social security had shown a remarkable degree of continuity over time (Solsten, 1995).

Between the periods of 1890 to the year of Bismarck's resignation in 1918 improvements were made to the initial three social insurance programs legislated. The National Insurance Code of 1911 integrated the three separate insurance programs into a unified social security system and compulsory coverage and benefits were extended to white-collar workers. Survivors' pensions for widows were introduced in 1911²⁹ while in 1916 survivors' benefits were increased. The retirement age for workers was reduced from 70 to 65.

The Weimar Republic (1918-33) saw the further expansion of social security programs.³⁰ Unemployment relief was consolidated in 1923 into a regular assistance program, financed by employees and employers. Also in 1923, a national law on miners created a single agency for the administration of social insurance programs for miners; before the law went into effect 110 separate associations had administered the program. In 1924 a modern public assistance program replaced the poor relief legislation of 1870 and in 1925 the accident insurance program was reformed, allowing occupational diseases to become insurable risks. In 1927 the national unemployment insurance program entitled the Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance Act (*Gesetz über Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung*) was established and created the fourth branch of the social insurance system. Interestingly,

²⁹ Solsten (1995) points out that the many amendments to the National Insurance Code of 1911 were later integrated into the Social Insurance Code of 1988.

³⁰ In 1920 war victims' benefits were added to the social welfare system. In 1922 the Youth Welfare Act was passed. In 1923 the 1913 agreement between doctors and sickness funds about who could treat sickness-funds patients was integrated into the National Insurance Code.

regulations contained considerable elements of conditionality, such as the recipient's willingness to take up work at another place or from another profession after being unemployed for a period of time. Yet any gains in social insurance and assistance programs were threatened by the Great Depression of the early 1930s. Reduced wages meant smaller contributions to social insurance and assistance programs, all of which were soon on the brink of bankruptcy (Solsten, 1995).

The Hitler regime introduced changes in individual programs and program administration. In 1934 the regime dismantled the self-governance structure of all social insurance programs and appointed directors who reported to the central authorities. Broadly speaking, social policy in Germany between 1933 and 1942 focused heavily on labour market and economic policy—but with varying objectives. On the one hand, any employment creation policies to address mass unemployment implemented between 1933 and 1936 were linked to rearmament planning which were in turn responsible for the rapid growth in jobs in the capital goods sector.³¹ But on the other, this focus only on rearmament came at the expense of other branches of industry that resulted in a very slow solution to mass unemployment (Mason, 1993). Indeed, employment creation policies of the early- to mid-1930s were not aimed at increasing real wages as a means to help revive the general economy and as such reduce poverty. For example, as Mason (1993) points out, any employment creation policies were designed to meet the demands of big industry for government contracts (armaments, railways), tax reductions and tax waivers. In fact, on account of the abolition of trade unions and the working classes political parties, workers conditions, earnings and social insurance contributions were dictated by the government and as result not in line with improving the quality of life for the worker.³² Indeed workers' living standards from 1933 to 1937 did not improve. Average hourly earnings did not keep pace with the rising cost of living.

While the initial policy to align labour market policy to a policy of rearmament resulted in poor wage and poor working conditions (on account of the government simply not having the workers' interest at heart), ultimately Mason (1993) argues, the government was forced to

³¹ By dissolving the trade unions, wage demands could largely be ignored thereby maximizing the profit that could then be reinvested in the economy and thus keeping stable one of the largest cost factors in manufacturing. "In the same way, the expansion of the consumer goods industries could be held in check, so that capital, hard currency and raw materials could be channelled primarily into heavy industry" (Mason, 1993: 130).

³² Mason points out that an additional drain on worker earnings were the salary and wage deductions that consisted of increased contributions for social insurance mandated by the Emergency Decrees of the Brüning government (1930-1932) and the added deductions of the Labour Front, Winter Relief Aid and other Nazi organizations. Deductions thus constituted between 13 and 20 per cent of gross income after 1933 (Mason, 1993).

yield to workers' wage and working condition demands. The ability for workers to actually press for improved living and working conditions was, as Mason argues, the result of full employment, which in turn was the inevitable result of rearmament.³³ As the state of the 'worker' as a problem got worse, it became important for powerful organizations within the power structure, primarily the DAF (Deutsche Arbeitsfront: German Labour Front) and the NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers' Party) to represent the desire of the workers to better their lot—"even if they did this unsystematically, with minimal determination, and for selfish political reasons that had little to do with the welfare of the workers" (1993: 255). For Mason, the decisive factor was the government's anxiety about the solidarity of its political authority—it was the only way for the government to indoctrinate the workers into their philosophy of National Socialism by taking into account the working class's desire for improved living conditions (1993: 255-256). Thus by 1942 all wage-earners regardless of occupation were covered by accident insurance, health care became unlimited, and maternity leave was extended to twelve fully paid weeks with job protection (Solsten, 1995). But it must be stressed that any changes or improvements made to social insurance programs and benefits were according to national-socialist political ideology with respect to who is worthy of relief and were in place to serve the interest of the regime rather than the population. While the three older branches of social insurance kept some of their central features with some reforms even improving benefits and expanding coverage as mentioned, unemployment insurance broke from its insurance principle in 1939 (Frerich and Frey 1996). According to Schmidt (2005) the insurance principle was virtually abolished and replaced with a means-tested benefit. The point here is that there were past precedents for distinctly non-corporatist models of provision.

2.4 The post-war Christian democratic model

The Christian Democratic model as we know it today was shaped in post-World War II Germany by the CDU's 1947 Ahlener Programme and the Düsseldorf Leitsätze (principles) of July 1949.³⁴ Following the collapse of the Nazi dictatorship, post-war Germany needed to

³³ As the war economy slowly shifted mass unemployment to full employment, by the end of 1936 the time had passed when the unemployed would fight over any job that became available; when poorly-paid work was welcomed under any condition or in any field. Indeed, by the end of 1936, the war economy resulted in workers able to choose their own job, and even change jobs for better wages and conditions.

³⁴ On February 3, 1947 the CDU Zone Committee of the British Zone completed the Ahlener Programme. The Ahlener Programme was the CDU's post-Nazi vision for a fundamental reorganization of Germany's social and economic institutions. The Düsseldorf Leitsätze (Düsseldorf principles of the CDU and CSU working group) followed the CDU Ahlener Programme and became the economic and social

build its social, political and economic structures and institutions from the ground-up, including its welfare state. Multiple meetings took place with the intention of planning a new Christian Democratic party. Out of these meetings sprang the Christian Democratic Union (CDU)—the predominantly Catholic party—that was established in Berlin on June 26, 1945 as the main political challenger to the Social Democratic Party (SPD). Given the Social Democrat’s inability to mount an opposition to the Christian Democrats in federal elections in the years immediately following the war, the CDU headed the coalition government consisting of the liberal Free Democrats (FDP) and the Christian Social Union (CSU) between 1949 and 1969 and was influential in rebuilding institutions, steering the economy and designing the post-war social state.³⁵ The influence of Catholic social doctrine on the design of the CDU’s political platform following the war is not to be underestimated at this period of time.³⁶ Many discussions took place between political and religious (Catholic) groups that sought to address and ultimately resolve how the party’s political platform was going to reconcile the anti-capitalist aspects of Catholic ideology, i.e., the belief in a just wage and the Catholic church’s general concern for the welfare of the poor, with the more economic liberal³⁷ interest in a free market economy.³⁸ For example, the Ahlener Programme of the CDU in 1947 started with the critique: “Das kapitalistische Wirtschaftssystem ist den staatlichen und sozialen Lebensinteressen des deutschen Volkes nicht gerecht worden...” (The capitalist economic system belies the state and social interest of the German people...) (Krämer, 2000: 138). Yet, not all camps of the Christian Democratic Union were social Catholic embedded in their perception of the role of capitalism as the CDU of North Rhine-Westphalia, for example. Indeed there was substantial disagreement among the party factions

programme of the CDU for the first post-war federal elections. The Düsseldorf Leitsätze on July 15, 1949 was a product of the discussions that followed the Ahlener programme. While the Leitsätze drew on the principles of the Ahlener programme they also mark the reorientation of the CDU towards a free market economy and a departure from the Christian socialism of the Ahlener Programme of the CDU of North Rhine-Westphalia.

³⁵ Van Kersbergen (1995) argued that the post-war Social Democratic party platform was outdated given the party’s structural bias towards free market capitalism. The SPD was slow to adjust to the “emanating new configuration of the social structure in West Germany. The Social Democrats found it particularly difficult to find a feasible answer to the challenge of Christian Democracy, especially since this new political movement attracted the working class as well. It took the Social Democrats until 1954 to adjust to the evolving and partly already institutionalized new relations of power and to accept the competitive market as a regulating principle of the economy” (80).

³⁶ The Bochumer Katholikentag of 1949 main objective was to create a platform for how Gesellschaft (society) and Wirtschaft (the economy) could be formed in the spirit of Christianity (and as an alternative to the economic liberal economy) (Krämer, 2000). Indeed, the political economic working group of the Bochumer Katholikentag (Bochum Catholic Day) questioned the fundamental value of a capitalistic economic system, the conditions under which the economy developed, the power structure between economy and society and the development of workers’ rights.

³⁷ It is important to clarify what is meant by ‘liberalism’ here. It is easiest to distinguish between economic and social liberalism. Economic liberalism is grounded in ‘classical’ liberal-individualist egalitarian perception, while social liberalism can share the political centre with social democratic thinking. The term neo-liberalism is often used in conjunction with the New Right (the Reagan/Thatcher thinking that blended classical liberalism with authoritarian neo-conservatism) and the particular brand of economic liberalism that adapted to global capitalism.

³⁸ It was not just an issue of morality that determined the pro-welfare stance of religious political parties. Stephens (1979) also suggested that there was a political reason why Christian democratic parties were supporters of the welfare state. Namely, he argues that the parties operating at the political centre were seeking the working class vote and hoped to cooperate with the Catholic unions. Social policies promised to secure the support of the Catholic working class for the Christian Democratic Union, a party that traditionally attracted the middle-class vote.

about the role of the state and social and economic institutions in smoothing over the ill-effects of a free market economy.

Since the Christian Democrats of post-war Germany aspired to a new social order based on social justice, socially responsible freedom and human dignity, a comprehensive social policy for all economically and socially dependent groups was needed. In the end this resulted in the Christian Democrats adopting Ludwig Erhard's creation of an essentially economic liberal social market economy—*soziale Marktwirtschaft*—into their party platform. While the liberal wing of the Christian Democrats ensured that social policy was grounded in a sound and 'healthy' economic policy, one would be wrong to underestimate the importance of the 'social' in the social market economy (van Kersbergen, 1995). Given that Catholic social doctrine called for a correction of socially unacceptable—market produced—outcomes, the social market economy enabled the two sides (the pro-market stance and the desire to moderate social and economic policy) to reconcile by finding a compromise between the liberal *laissez-faire* doctrine and the doctrine of the controlled or planned economy.³⁹ But Hemerijck, van Kersbergen and Manow (2000) argue that *soziale Marktwirtschaft* cannot—as it has usually been—be understood as a compromise between Catholic social doctrine, as embodied in the conservative corporatist welfare state, and economic liberalism. Rather *soziale Marktwirtschaft* should be understood as a compromise between Catholic and Lutheran social doctrine (Manow, 2004).

Indeed, according to the Düsseldorf Leitsätze that embraced the social market economy, the new social and economic order of the Federal Republic meant that competition had to be guaranteed, the monetary system was to be placed under central control and prices were to be freely determined. Moreover, wage moderation was called for and considered essential for economic recovery. Economic management was to consist mainly of credit and monetary policy, although public investment was not excluded. Compensation rather than prevention came to define German social security. For the employed this meant that there was a right to work (for men and women in principle, though in practice mainly for men based on the male breadwinner model), there was the freedom of choice for occupation, fair, equal and a 'just' wage sufficient for a family,⁴⁰ a six-day work week, and labour protection. The typically

³⁹ The economic policy proposed by the Christian democrats was barely distinct from the manifestos of the republican middle class of the Weimar Republic except for the stress on monopoly control (van Kersbergen, 1995).

⁴⁰ Related to this is the assumption about the 'proper' role of women and their special task in child rearing. There is a strong emphasis on parental rights in the education of their children and concerns about undue involvement of the state.

centrist position of Christian Democratic parties is a result of a political platform aimed at social integration, class compromise, political mediation, accommodation and pluralism. “Class reconciliation and cooperation lie at the heart of what defines Christian democracy as distinctive” (van Kersbergen, 1994:36).

2.4.1 Incremental changes made to unemployment benefit policy

Prior to Reunification, the German welfare state was widely viewed in Europe as a success because of a social arrangement that contributed to economic growth, productivity and high employment, as well as low poverty and inequality (Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2007: 429). And yet, starting in the mid- to late-1970s incremental changes were being made to labour market and unemployment benefit policy that, some would later argue (Seeleib-Kaiser, 2004; Heinelt and Weck, 1998; Betzelt and Bothfeld, 2011a), ultimately affected Germany’s ‘social arrangement’.⁴¹ In terms of unemployment benefit this was reflected in the unemployed receiving income transfers to replace lost earnings coupled with selected use of active labour market programmes. In the post-war years ALMPs were available to unemployment insurance and to some extent unemployment assistance recipients in order provide extensive vocational training and job creation programmes. Vocational trainings were given particular emphasis in the context of the German labour market where qualifications were officially classified and protected and a prerequisite for many jobs (Schluter, 1995). But it was the advent of the oil crisis in the mid-1970s that marked a point when gradual changes were made—notably in the 1980s and 1990s—to unemployment benefit in terms of tightened eligibility criteria⁴², contribution caps, and the move away from using active labour market measures for human capital building purposes toward a means to test, among other things, one’s willingness to enter paid employment.

Therein lies an important point about whether (and if so, to what degree) the Hartz reforms represent a sharp change in the nature of unemployment provision in Germany. Clasen (2005) argues that when stepping back and reviewing the changes made to unemployment benefit policy in the last thirty years, the Hartz reforms were, in effect, drawing on policies that had

⁴¹Seeleib-Kaiser (2004), for example, argues it was the onset of cutbacks made in the mid-1970s and legislated by the Social Democratic-Liberal (SDP/FDP) coalition government that started, what would become, incremental withdrawal from the principle of securing the achieved living standard coupled with an increased reliance on the market.

⁴²For those at the margins of the labour market, for example, with shorter contribution periods and those with repeated spells of unemployment, incremental legislative change in 1982, 1994 and 1998 tightened eligibility conditions of unemployment protection (Clasen and Clegg, 2007).

been implemented incrementally since the early 1980s. Yet there are two key points that need to be made here. First, who participated in active labour market schemes or experienced tighter conditionality in the 1980s and 1990s was very much dependent on whether one was in receipt of social insurance, unemployment assistance or social assistance. This coupled with how strictly the regional offices interpreted the law very much depended on how and to what degree (if at all) sanctions were used. Some municipalities were simply stricter than others. Second, how high a regions unemployment numbers were combined with money available to fund ALMPs greatly determined the degree to which ALMPs were used as mechanisms to contain costs (i.e., move social assistance recipients into short-term work schemes). Thus depending on funding arrangements, there was a constant ebb and flow in terms of the use of ALMPs during this time period coupled with different objectives for different unemployment benefit schemes.

I would argue, what makes the introduction of the fourth Hartz law unique and distinguishes it from previous legislation is that the law made—what was arguably a fragmented system—more uniform. Indeed, as Clasen points out “suitability criteria, defining jobs deemed acceptable for unemployed people, had already become tighter in the 1970s and 1980s (Clasen, 1994) and some local offices would require recipients of SA deemed able to work to engage in employment-related schemes. However, general and encompassing activation policies...remained less prescriptive in comparison [to the UK]” (2005: 56-7). On the one hand, the third and fourth Hartz law standardized the rules and regulations concerning eligibility, benefit provision, the use of sanctions and active labour market policies for all recipients of Unemployment Benefit II and on the other hand, justified any changes under the rights and responsibilities policy maxim. And while there is always variance inserted into any system at the very local level where policies play out, the fact that, in this study, there was no variation in respondent responses in terms of their experience of UBII rules and regulations between the Jobcenter in Hamburg and the Jobcenter in Bremen, suggest, on a small scale, that what goes on at the local level is more uniform than not.

2.4.2 The provision of unemployment insurance and unemployment assistance from the 1980s onwards

Unemployment insurance and unemployment assistance were administered by the Federal Labour Office (FLO) (later renamed the Federal Employment Agency).⁴³ The Federal Labour Office and its regional and local labour offices were responsible for transferring payments of unemployment compensation and funded active labour market policies.⁴⁴ These were financed out of the same fund as unemployment insurance, with the federal government having to balance the annual budget of the Federal Labour Office should deficits occur. This was the case, for example, in the early 1980s and for each year in the 1990s.⁴⁵ As Clasen (2005) has noted, this particular funding structure had several implications. First, for individual unemployed persons, access to labour market programmes was, pre-Hartz reforms, largely determined by which benefit a recipient was in receipt of, with those receiving unemployment insurance and unemployment assistance the privileged clients of the Federal Labour Office (Clasen, 2005). This meant that trainings for further qualifications often went to those in receipt of unemployment insurance and to some extent unemployment assistance but were generally not made available to the long-term unemployed on social assistance or those older than 55 (Bosch, 1994). Second, the funding and budget matrix of the Federal Labour Office coupled with the national and regional unemployment status at any given time had a direct effect on the degree of active labour market policies offered recipients. This meant that during times of high unemployment the joint funding structure of the Federal Labour Office resulted in limited funds available for active labour market policy programmes; when unemployment fell, there was then more room for expanding activation programmes because of the reduced pressure on the Federal Labour Office's budget (Clasen, 2005: 55-56). Indeed, the requirement to balance annual deficits in the Federal Labour Office's budget proved to be a strong cost-saving incentive for the federal government. "The state of the annual BA [Federal Labour Office] budget was a major determinant in labour-market policy making" (Clasen, 2005: 56). Thus there is both ambiguity and tension between new and old paternalistic impulses: on the one hand between a desire to reduce social

⁴³ The Federal Labour Office was, on the one hand, an independent public authority subject to federal legislation and on the other, a tripartite organization consisting of representatives from employers, trade unions and the state (Clasen, 2005).

⁴⁴ The FLO also distributed other benefits such as the short-term working allowance.

⁴⁵ Reissert (1994) explains that the financial model of the Federal Labour Office came under particular pressure with the 1974/75 recession where it fell into deficit, one that the Federal Labour Office was unable to dig itself out of until much later. It was because of this that the discussion about how to fund labour market policies remained topical throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

expenditure through 'work-first' labour market activation policies and on the other, a desire to provide support through 'human capital' oriented labour market activation policies.

The impact of growing unemployment numbers in the 1980s as a result of the second major post-war recession impacted access to active labour market policies schemes and slowly prompted increased conditionality. Indeed, the first two years of the Christian Democratic-Liberal coalition government of 1982 were characterized by cutbacks to unemployment insurance, active labour market policies and social assistance. In many ways the unemployment benefit policies of the 1980s can be characterized by selective cuts and targeted improvements (Clasen, 2005). In the early 1980s unemployment had reached, at that time, an unprecedented level with more than two million people out of work (Clasen, 2005: 66). In addition, the combination of the growth of long-term unemployment and tighter eligibility criteria reduced the share of unemployment insurance recipients by the mid-1980s. As Clasen (2005) points out, while this eased fiscal pressure on the Federal Labour Office, pressure on tax-funded unemployment assistance and local social assistance budgets grew. Indeed, Reissert (1998 from Clasen 2005) refers to a 'vicious circle' which stems from the compartmentalized treatment of unemployed recipients in Germany. "High regional unemployment tends to push up local social assistance spending, which tends to deplete resources for regional public investment which, in turn, fosters further employment losses and unemployment" (Clasen, 2005: 56).

Redefining job suitability criteria and placing more responsibility on unemployment benefit recipients to find work was already apparent in the late 1970s and 1980s. As for ALMPs, the option of applying works tests and using labour market and work experience programmes as a way to transfer those on benefit into the labour market had existed in Germany since the 1970s (Clasen, 2005). Conditionality and ALMPs were increasingly used by some local authorities who were responsible for social assistance (SA) recipients as unemployment numbers swelled at regional levels. Following the principle of subsidiarity, the Federal Social Assistance Law from 1961⁴⁶ stipulated that every potential benefit recipient is obliged to make full use of their earnings capacity to provide for the individual and their family. Thus

⁴⁶ The Federal Social Assistance law (Bundessozialhilfegesetz) adopted in 1961 instituted an effective minimum subsistence guarantee by entitling every citizen passing a means-test to a poor relief benefit which would enable the recipients to lead a life in keeping with human dignity including a certain degree of participation in civic and cultural life. The law required all potential beneficiaries to make full use of their own earning capacity. If this requirement was not met, the benefit could be reduced or denied entirely. Alber and Heissig (2011) argue that two of the elements which are usually regarded as key characteristics of the new "work first" approach were already a key aspect of the old German social assistance scheme, i.e. the obligation to make use of one's earning power and the right to retain some of the earned income from work without reducing the benefit entitlement.

they must actively look for job offers if unemployed. Indeed the law stipulated that the ‘sozialamt’ should provide work opportunities for those who cannot find work, but also stipulated that the right to benefits were forfeited if a suitable work offer was refused (Alber and Heisig, 2011).

By 1991 it was the question of how the federal government and the federal parliament were going to finance the increased need for active labour market services in the new German states. It was predicted in 1991 that the extra provision of active labour market services in East Germany would mean an increase in the Federal Labour Office’s budget from 30 to 70 billion DM (Reissert, 1994). The Federal Labour Office’s income from contributions as a result of unification would only increase by c. 6 billion DM. A result of the speed at which reunification took place, the budget of the Federal Labour Office was suddenly facing a financial deficit of more than 20 billion DM—a deficit larger than any earlier deficit of the Federal Labour Office. Reissert (1994) points out that in order to close this financial hole, two options were discussed. The first, the federal government and the federal parliament could close the deficit through a grant to the budget that came out of the federal budget (which meant it was financed through taxes or increased credit) or the government could change the Labour Promotion Law (*Arbeitsförderungsgesetz*)⁴⁷ and increase the shared financial contribution of employees and employer. The second option was chosen. On April 1, 1991 the contributions for employer and employee were increased from 4.3 to 6.8 per cent of gross wage. This was the largest increase to social insurance in the Federal Republic since the Pension Reform (*Rentenreform*) of 1957 (Heinelt, 1994). Indeed Reissert (1994) argues that the financing of active labour market policies in the former East and West were in principle completely financed through social insurance contributions for the years that followed 1991.⁴⁸

But other changes were underway that would ultimately impact the unemployed. The major aim of the Labour Promotion Law of 1969 was to abolish ‘substandard’ employment through various instruments of active labour market policy (Kühl, 1982). It was the induction of the

⁴⁷ The German Labour Promotion Law of 1969 (*Gesetz über die Leistung und Aufgaben zur Beschäftigungssicherung und zur Förderung des Wirtschaftswachstums*) replaced the prior law entitled *The Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance Law (Gesetz über Arbeitsvermittlung und Arbeitslosenversicherung)*. The Labour Promotion Law remained the basis for labour law until December 1997. Through the Labour Promotion Reform Law the Labour Promotion Law became the Third Social Code Book in January 1998. The German Social Code Book III replaced the Labour Promotion Law.

⁴⁸ Even with the social insurance contribution increase from April 1, 1991, the federal government still had to cut active labour market services and in 1993 the federal government had to provide a subsidy from the federal budget to the Federal Labour Office of 25 billion and in 1994 c. 18 billion to close the Federal Labour Office budget deficit (Heinelt, 1994).

Labour Promotion Reform Law in 1997 where substantial changes were made to ALMPs and conditionality in terms of a shift to activation being used as workfare rather than vocational training mechanisms (Bieback, 1997). A gradual decrease in benefit rates for the long-term unemployment assistance recipient was introduced as well as stricter rules regarding active job search and work requirements. “Previously the normative orientation had been to aim for job offers which corresponded with individual skills and acquire status. By contrast, the new legislation indicated a shift towards a system of income protection, but no longer wage replacement or status-adequate employment integration” (Clasen, 2005: 69). Whereas prior to the law an unemployed worker could reject job offers that were considered inferior to his or her former occupational status. Under the new law if, within the first three months of unemployment, a recipient received a job offer that paid up to 20 per cent less than the previous job, that job would be deemed suitable. From the fourth to the sixth month of unemployment any job offer paying up to 30 per cent less than previous earnings was considered suitable and from the seventh month of receiving benefits any job with a net wage equal to the unemployment compensation payment became defined as suitable (Bieback, 1997).

Furthermore the new legislation not only shifted the responsibility for employment towards employers but this time particularly towards the workers themselves which fundamentally redefined the aim of the original law. In contrast to the ‘old’ goals of the Labour Promotion Law of 1969—which stated that it was the primary responsibility of the state to prevent and avoid unemployment—the new law did not state a clear normative aim (Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein, 2007). Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein (2007) argue that these reforms must be considered as quite significant at the level of statutes because they gave local administrators substantial leverage to sanction unemployed workers to take up job offers outside their previous occupation. However, due to the fairly moderate sanction regime at the level of implementation, they argue that the administrators did not make full use of the possibilities given to them by the statutory framework. Moreover Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein (2007) argue that in the period immediately following reunification the conservative Kohl government relied heavily on ALMP instruments in order to minimize unemployment. However, funding was discontinued two years later (1993) when ALMPs were once again at the mercy of budgetary constraints. In the end, Heinelt and Weck (1998) argue that the policy approach of recommodification—initiated in the 1980s—was continued and accelerated. For them legislation that resulted in unemployment benefit entitlements being retrenched,

especially for recipients of unemployment assistance, and the shift to ALMPs increasingly being used to test the willingness of recipients to work (instead of being used to promote standard employment relationships through training and employment measures) coupled with the provision of temporary and ‘substandard’ work (instead of promoting reintegration into the regular labour market) signalled the development towards an ALMP approach characterized increasingly by the desire to exert ‘control’ and ‘discipline’ over recipients of unemployment benefit (Heinelt, 1994: 201).⁴⁹

2.4.3 Social Assistance

The perception of social policy experts in the 1960s and early 1970s was that an improved social insurance system would eventually cover the standard social risks, so that social assistance, in terms of providing a minimum subsistence, would ultimately become diminished (Giese, 1986). But over time, this proved not to be the case. Indeed, while the number on social assistance decreased between 1960 and 1970, between 1970 and 1992 the number actually quadrupled, from 750,000 recipients in 1970 to 2.8 million in 1991 (reunification of course being a major factor for the increase in numbers in the early 1990s) (Statistisches Bundesamt, 1993: 22 from Buhr, 1994). As Buhr points out, it was not just those on the margins of society who went to the ‘Sozialamt’ rather those seeking social assistance stemmed from common social risk categories, such as unemployment, age or divorce. This change resulted in social assistance no longer being something for a mere few in society who, for one reason or another, could not turn to unemployment insurance or unemployment assistance. Therefore since 1985 local authorities increasingly became “a reluctant third source of social security support, particularly for long-term unemployed people” (Clasen, 2000: 95) and by the early 1990s social assistance had become a function of the ever growing system of social provision in Germany.

Federally regulated, social assistance was funded and administered by the local authorities and municipalities. During periods of high unemployment in the 1980s and 1990s significant pressure was placed on local authorities’ budgets because of the increased percentage of long-term unemployed who required social assistance (and could not draw from

⁴⁹ Heinelt and Weck (1998) argue that the policy objective of status preservation embedded in social insurance was increasingly relegated to the short-term unemployed, while the process of recommodification and workfare increasingly dominated the unemployment and social assistance schemes. Indeed, Clasen and Clegg argue that “prior to 2005 claimants of unemployment insurance have not been subjected to a routine form of mandatory activation” (2007: 179).

unemployment insurance or unemployment assistance). As a result, local authorities in high unemployment areas began to develop and implement their own job creation programmes.⁵⁰ This meant transferring employable social assistance recipients to activation (workfare) programmes, such as limited work contracts that would enable recipients to re-qualify for insurance benefits as well as other subsidized employment (Clasen et al., 1998 from Clasen 2005; Finn et al., 2005). These workfare measures provided ‘socially useful’ employment. More important, those jobs that paid wages had the advantage of helping the participant to qualify for unemployment insurance thereby shifting responsibility for future benefit entitlement to the social insurance fund or the Federal Government. By the late 1990s, many local authorities had also begun to implement ‘work for benefit’ programmes as a way of testing willingness to work. Indeed Seeleib-Kaiser (2004) argues that policy reforms at the local level since the mid-1980s and reforms at the federal level in 1993 and 1996 put an increased emphasis on workfare requirements within the social assistance program.

But there was a financial reason for localities increasing their use of workfare measures to activate social assistance recipients. Workfare programmes entitled participants to receive unemployment compensation after the publicly funded or subsidized activation measure expired and he or she still had not found work in the regular labour market. Thereby the costs of unemployment were redirected from the local back to the federal level, which became a form of ‘cost-containment strategy’ for the local authorities (Clasen, 2000). Thus the main reason behind the increased emphasis on activation for SA recipients at the local level was to reduce social assistance expenditure (Seeleib-Kaiser, 2004; Clasen, 2000). “In other words, localities have a financial incentive to activate unemployed social assistance recipients, due to the existing financing structures of the German welfare state” (Seeleib-Kaiser, 2004: 135).

2.5 Chapter summary and conclusion

The history of the principles that underlie the German welfare state is more complex than Esping-Andersen’s ideal model suggest. Broadly speaking, the German welfare state is an

⁵⁰ Different numbers are cited by different academics to illustrate the increase in social assistant recipients participating in active labour market polices—or what Seeleib-Kaiser (2004) refers to as ‘welfare-to-work’ initiatives. In 1998 c. 300,000 (former) social assistance recipients participated in ALMPS whereas the numbers for 1982 and 1993 were 20,000 and 110,000 respectively (Alber, 2001). Clasen (2005) points out that the number of social assistance recipients participating in different types of local employment programmes went from below 120,000 in 1993 to c. 200,000 in 1996 (Heinelt and Weck, 1998: 52). According to a survey by the German Association of Cities (Duetscher Städtetag) about 400,000 (former) social assistance recipients participated in ALMPs during the year 2000, an increase of about 100,000 since 1998. About 50 per cent of the participants were employed in ‘regular’ employment relationships (Deutscher Städtetag, 2001).

ideological and moral hybrid. Ideal, typical modelling of welfare states, like Esping-Andersen's, simplifies the complex, even messy part of welfare state history. While Betzelt and Bothfeld (2011a) argue that the introduction of active labour market policies has replaced the former logic of social security—a combination of equity and solidarity—as the typical organizing principles of German social security, I would argue that unemployment benefit pre-Hartz reforms was not necessarily designed with the intent to extend equity and solidarity to everyone in the first place: those eligible for unemployment insurance *and* social assistance. German unemployment insurance was always both solidaristic in that it was about sharing risk, but it was premised on individual contributions which identified, separated and rewarded the 'worker' from the non-worker. Unemployment Benefit was thus from the start a mixture of 'Bismarck and Beveridge'—rewarding those who 'worked' i.e., the core worker, the protected worker with status-preserving social insurance while preventing the 'outsider', i.e., the social assistant recipient, the low-wage, periodically workless worker from falling into abject poverty with a flat-rate means-tested benefit. And indeed, so long as the robust German economy of the post-war years fostered near-full employment, this separate system of unemployment benefit—and principles—functioned well in that the majority of jobseekers received social insurance. But this system started to falter with rising unemployment in the late 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Indeed it was no longer those on the margins of the labour market who prescribed to social assistance, rather those from typical risk categories, such as age, divorce and unemployment, who were turning to social assistance for help. How municipalities responded to the increased numbers that put pressure on their budgets varied. Some turned to active labour market policies as a cost containment strategy and increased use of sanctions. Others did not. Thus perhaps it is not whether the core, Christian Democratic principles that came to define German unemployment benefit have disappeared, rather whether political actors view them as applicable in the globalized, post-industrial context of an ever evolving labour market.

Without question, the Hartz reforms ushered in new institutional, administrative and regulatory changes that happened also to coincide with the ascendancy of Anglophone—'Third Way'—managerialist orthodoxy. Yet are these changes as radical and as 'new' as they appear? Social Catholic principles of solidarity, subsidiarity and equivalency coupled with the call for a fair and just wage underpinned the design of the post-war German social state. As a result of the reforms, some are questioning whether these very principles have been undermined by the type of policies adopted in 2005. Yet, this assumes that the social Catholic

principles of solidarity and subsidiarity were the only founding principles of the German social state. As van Kersbergen and Manow (2009) argue, both variants of Protestant and Catholic principles were always embedded in the design and message of the welfare state since Bismarck. This is perhaps best manifested in the idea of individual responsibility (Kahl, 2005; Kaufmann, 1988). Arguably a Protestant principle, individual responsibility was embedded in both Lutheran and Calvin edicts on begging and poverty post-Reformation. This culminated in the contemporary perception that work is salvation and while unemployment benefit should manage risk, it was not meant as a replacement for work. The individual should be forced to find work if necessary. Thus threads of individual responsibility were already embedded in the German consciousness—a thread that appears in an analysis of the evidence that follows (see Chapter Eight). As such, the advent of *Fördern* and *Fordern* arguably represents less of a shift to something new and instead signifies more substantive and ethical continuity of German social security over time.

Chapter Three: The Role of Active Labour Market Policies in an Ever Changing Labour Market Landscape

3.1 Introduction

The topics selected for review in this chapter are directly associated with and relevant to the themes explored in the empirical chapters (see Chapters Six and Seven specifically). Indeed, the topics initially selected for review were done so in order to set the context for the research I wished to conduct. Moreover, one purpose of the literature review conducted in Chapter Two was to explore gaps in the literature and research that required further investigation. This chapter therefore extends that review by discussing the literature pertaining to themes as they relate to my own work: active labour market policies generally and in Germany specifically; the rise of atypical, temporary and low-wage work; and the impact and effectiveness of the Hartz reforms (and One-Euro-Jobs). The review attempts to be as systematic and comprehensive as circumstances allow. But given time and space limitations coupled with taking into consideration the breadth and depth of evidence on any one of these topics, I have selected those studies that best illustrate the complexity of the issue at hand.

To that end, this chapter will start with a review of active labour market policies generally and in Germany specifically (section 3.2). Central to any discussion of active labour market policies is the type of ‘activation’ introduced into social insurance provision in an ever changing labour market landscape—should ALMPs focus on human capital development or on workfirst mechanisms? This chapter will thus unpack the evidence about whether and how effective skills trainings are that contribute to human capital development. This discussion is relevant to this thesis because I am exploring UBII recipient experience of skills trainings that may or may not improve their human capital. Next, this chapter will draw on the literature and the evidence to describe and illustrate changes in the German labour market (section 3.3). Specifically three issues will be explored in this context: the rise in atypical and temporary work; the rise in low-wage work and to that end whether low-wage work can act as a stepping stone to better paid work. These three issues directly affect a high proportion of the sample for this study, as will be demonstrated in Chapters Six and Seven. Given that one of the Federal Republic’s objectives for implementing the Hartz reforms was to reduce benefit dependency and thus unemployment numbers, this chapter will explore the quantitative

evidence on the effectiveness of the Hartz reforms generally and the One-Euro-Job specifically at integrating UBII recipients into the regular labour market (section 3.4). Finally, section 3.5 will conclude with a summary of the topics discussed in this chapter.

The objective of this chapter is to provide a context for this study. That said, this study does not evaluate the *effectiveness* of active labour market policies as they pertain to the Hartz reforms, rather explores how they *affect* a sample of those who have participated in activation mechanisms. It is therefore important to understand the issues to arise out of any evaluation as they can and indeed have helped inform the type of questions asked in this thesis. Moreover, it is important to emphasise that the interviews conducted for this study consisted of a sample for whom the reforms had not been especially ‘effective’. Or put another way, we do not know the counterfactual; whether those former UBII recipients who have entered the [regular] labour market (and thus were not at the Jobcenters for me to speak with) did so on account of the activation mechanisms in place to support them in their endeavour to find work thus rendering the support mechanisms ‘effective’. The findings of the evaluations reviewed in the following sections of this chapter suggest how some of the skills trainings were effective for some participants but not for others. Thus this chapter is, in part, critiquing the limitations of existing evaluations. The crucial missing component here is that we do not know a lot, if anything, about *why*. On the one hand, it is not clear to what extent ‘positive’ outcomes are attributable to deadweight effects. On the other, a challenge with non-experimental techniques (such as propensity score matching technique) employed in place of randomized control trials to evaluate the effectiveness of a program depend critically on maintained assumptions about the nature of the process by which participants select into a program (Bryson et al., 2002). As a result, capturing the ‘hard to reach’ recipient is simply difficult which has the potential of skewing the perception of what, then, is effective and for whom.

The challenge with any such review is reconciling the divergent findings that are based on very different levels of abstraction and to some degree epistemologies. For the purpose of this chapter it is not about whether these differences in abstraction and epistemologies can be reconciled (positivist versus interpretivist analytical approaches for example) rather more about presenting how academics heretofore have gone about analysing, evaluating and studying topics as they pertain to the issues discussed in this thesis. Different research questions and objectives require different types of methods that may result in diverse findings

on a similar topic. This review informed the decisions I made as to the type of research questions I asked and which method I would then use to answer the said questions. Indeed, the quantitative evidence on the effects of temporary and low-paid work as a stepping stone to long-term and/or higher paid work, combined with the evidence on the effectiveness of ALMPs assisting in UBII recipients integrate into the regular labour market, became a crucial baseline for the qualitative work which is to follow in the three empirical chapters (see Chapters Six, Seven and Eight).

3.2 Active labour market policies in context

From workfare to welfare-to-work to work-first⁵¹, different terms have been used to refer to a move towards the implementation of ‘activation’ policies that has been central to the process of welfare reform in OECD countries in the last two decades. A rich literature exists on the increased emphasis placed on ‘activating’ the unemployed into employment through specific active labour market policies.⁵² Many have sought to describe the different types of ALMPs that exists in different countries (Considine, 2001; Lødemel and Trickery, 2001; Peck, 2001; Lindsay and McQuaid, 2008; Hoefler and Midgley, 2006; Grey, 2004; Bonoli, 2010). Yet, in the end, they all share common roots: the lack of employment (worklessness) experienced by a growing percentage of the population put pressure on social assistance expenditure. This pressure on expenditure is cited as one of the key motivating factors for the introduction or increased use of active labour market policies, including workfare (Heikkilä, 1999). Broadly speaking, part of the ‘activation-turn’ in labour market policy making (Bonoli, 2010) is the increased use of conditions and sanctions, if necessary, to force unemployment benefit recipients to look for, accept or undertake employment. The stick here is the threat of punishment through the loss of benefit should the recipient not demonstrate that he or she is actively seeking work. Thus, being ‘active’ and ‘available for employment’ takes on an altogether new meaning and relevance in the ALMP context. Yet here Bonoli (2010) argues that ALMP is too broad a category to be used without further specification. He puts forward a typology of ALMPs based on two dimensions: policies oriented towards pro-market

⁵¹ Workfare as used, for example by Jessop (1993), implies a hard line taken toward those on unemployment benefit. Here any job is preferred to no job at all and the state rather than the jobseeker dictates which job should be taken after a certain period of unemployment. Welfare-to-work conveys the softer image of helping the unemployed escape from ‘dependence’ on state benefits while work-first’s aim is to move recipients off benefits and into work quickly (Standing, 2002).

⁵² Active labour market programmes for unemployed workers and those on unemployment benefit can consist of job search assistance, labour market training, wage subsidies and direct job creation in the public sector.

employment and policies that place emphasis on human capital investment (Bonoli, 2010: 436). What distinguishes different activation regimes is the degree of and emphasis placed on human capital investment through the use of active labour market policies such as skills trainings. Should activation policies focus solely on job placement or should the focus be more on filling a gap in the skills set of an individual in order to assist a benefit recipient in finding a regular labour market placement?

For European Union member states, since the launch of the Lisbon Strategy by the European Union in 1998, ‘activation’ has been at the fore of Commission social policy initiatives. Indeed, active labour market policies are central to the *European Employment Strategy*, which defines employment as one of the main objectives of a joint economic policy in the EU (Kluve, 2010). EU member states have integrated different types of ALMPs into their reforms which is part of an effect of Europeanization. Indeed, in addition to the regulation by the EU, ALMPs have been enthusiastically promoted and defined by international bodies such as the OECD (Clasen et al., 2001). By the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was a noticeable shift within the OECD to distinguish between active labour market policies and passive benefits. Most influential was “The OECD Jobs Study” from 1994. The language in the report stressed that social insurance benefits were ‘passive’ because, it was believed, they did not encourage activity from people out of work; while training, retraining and employment services were seen as keeping people ‘active’ in their search for work (Sinfield, 2001). Since the OECD Jobs Study, concern with disincentives and the ‘active’ vs. ‘passive’ policy emphasis spread more widely to individual countries (Holzmann and Jørgensen, 2000).⁵³

Although the Commission’s employment reports picked up the ‘active’ theme by the end of the 1980s, it was not until the early 1990s that social insurance benefits were being described as ‘passive’. With the publication of the Commission’s *Employment in Europe 1995* report, the passive-to-active shift was made evident: “The effectiveness of employment policy must be increased by avoiding practices which are detrimental to the readiness to work, and by moving from a passive to an active labour market policy” (EC, 1995: 105, from Sinfield, 2001). The European Employment Strategy (EES), established with the Amsterdam Treaty of

⁵³As discussed in Chapter Two (section 2.3.1 and 2.3.2), it is important to note that the transition from ‘passive’ to ‘active’ social insurance policies is a matter of degree. Social insurance schemes were never completely provided without certain conditions attached to hasten the return to work, such as paid work, work tests and job search requirements (Clasen, 2004). Indeed in Britain, for example, under the original 1911 unemployment benefit scheme, entitlement to benefit was predicated on meeting an ‘availability for work test’ that in many ways paved the way for tests applied to the current Jobseekers Allowance (JSA).

1998, encouraged member states to implement employment policies that improved employability, developed entrepreneurship, encouraged adaptability and promoted equal opportunities (Fleckenstein, 2011). The policy solutions recommended, such as ‘activation policies’, the reduction of non-wage labour costs, facilitating self-employment with the reduction of tax and social insurance burdens, are generally associated with the Third Way agenda of modernized social democracy (Fleckenstein, 2011: 129).

Within Germany, initial enthusiasm for the EES echoed across the Red-Green government (1998-2005) down to civil servants at the Ministry of Labour who were ‘excited’ about the prospect of a new tool for improving labour market policy making. That said, Fleckenstein (2011) argues that the influence of the European Employment Strategy did not play a significant part in the making of the Hartz reforms.⁵⁴ He cites two reasons for this. First, a lack of peer pressure which second, led to the European Employment Strategy not being picked up in parliamentary debates in the Bundestag or the Bundesrat. Because of the non-binding character of the Employment Guidelines,⁵⁵ in order to create a platform for domestic change, the EES relies on its capacity to generate peer pressure (Fleckenstein, 2011). One avenue for putting pressure on policy makers is through Media coverage which can result in public awareness on a given issue. Here, Fleckenstein cites the sporadic media coverage of the EES which meant that peer pressure as a result of public awareness could not be assured. Coincidentally, the EES in Germany was barely picked up in parliamentary debates in the Bundestag and Bundesrat (Fleckenstein, 2011). Thus, the government did not have to worry about its reputation suffering by the general public when it ignored the Luxembourg Process in policy formation at the national level.⁵⁶

3.2.1 Work-first or human capital development?

In terms of the type of activation embedded in the policy design of welfare reform initiatives, the ALMPs offered unemployment benefit recipients hinge, to a degree, on the government’s objective for reform. As discussed on Chapter Two (section 2.4.1 and 2.4.2) the use of active

⁵⁴ There are, naturally, divergent opinions on this issue. See for example Heidenreich and Bischoff (2008) who argue that the European Employment Strategy helped trigger active labour market reforms in Germany.

⁵⁵ In the absence of sanctions to ensure compliance, the Luxembourg Process is thus not a device for ‘obligated policy transfers’ (see Dolowitz, 2000).

⁵⁶ Regarding possible peer pressure by policy experts at the European level or pressure for compliance with the guidelines from the Commission, Fleckenstein’s findings did not give any indication that national policy-makers perceived any significant pressure from either that could have made them conform to the objectives set by the EES (Fleckenstein, 2011: 130). Though that said, he notes that the reforms proposed by Schröder’s government in 2002 were ultimately very similar in nature to those suggested in the ESS.

labour market policies prior to the Hartz reforms (specifically the fourth Hartz law) were principally used as human capital development mechanisms for those on unemployment insurance and to a lesser extent, those on unemployment assistance. As unemployment increased post Reunification, municipalities started to employ active labour market policies more as a work-first tool for the long-term unemployed (Buhr, 1994). Although the work-first and the human capital development model characterize most of mainstream active labour market schemes, they are nonetheless at odds with each other's objectives. The human capital approach prioritizes the development of social attitudes and marketable skills that will enable individuals to find and retain suitable jobs (Peck and Theodore, 2001; Lødemel and Trickey, 2001; Dean, 2003), whereas the work-first approach focuses less, if at all, on skills training and development and more on moving recipients into, often any type of, work quickly. According to job search theory, the aim of participation in further vocational training, provided as part of active labour market policies, is to expand the individual's employment prospects by improving his or her skills, which in turn signals to potential employers their willingness to work. Indeed, participation in further vocational training is an investment in human capital (Calmfors, 1994; Mortensen, 1986). On the one hand, this investment could result in higher wages for the participant. The overall probability of dropping out of the labour market may decrease, job search efficiency may be enhanced, and in the end, training may also prevent social isolation (Raaum and Torp, 2002). There is a direct return on the investment made by the government for the individual and the economy (Becker, 1962). But on the other hand, there is the issue of lock-in effects. The costs of human capital development may lower the present earnings potential of the participant because if the participant had not been spending time in the training, he or she could have been using that time to search and find a job (Becker 1962). Thus the time spent in further vocational training, it is argued, results in overall lower employment prospects than non-participants—they are locked-in the measure. While this lock-in effect is interpreted as negative in general, this is not the case if the programme leads to a vocational certificate. Obtaining such a certificate reduces the risk of repeat unemployment and results in a more stable employment career (Bernhard and Krupp, 2012).

Based on an analysis of Germany's (and the Netherlands') budget and composition of active labour market policies, the definition of suitable work and the use of sanctions, Bruttel and Sol (2006) conclude that while Germany's current policies are a mixture of both models, ultimately they are a shift away from human capital development towards the work-first

model. Should this matter though? Is one model necessarily more successful at assisting recipients in finding work, short-or long-term? Or do UBII recipients at Jobcenters find themselves stuck between the demands of obtaining human capital, i.e., participating in a skills training and the demands of work-first, i.e., taking the first job made available to them? Dean (2004) argues that while the human capital approach does place emphasis on investing and developing a person's skills through training, this is done both to provide a benefit for the wellbeing of the individual *and* the economy. But as he points out, the human capital approach fails to take into account the wider social context of the individual and how that affects a person's ability to enter the labour market and maintain a job. "The metaphor 'human capital'—while affording a welcome emphasis on things that disabled people, for example, can do—is narrowly construed in terms of the productive potential of workers as economic actors, rather than the broader human capacities of citizens as social actors" (Dean, 2003: 443).

Moreover, as Noon (2002) points out, it was human capital theorists, such as Becker (1964) who argued that a person's human capital will determine their value as an employee in a market economy. This places the burden of 'choice' squarely on the individual—the choice of an individual to increase their human capital through taking advantage of educational opportunities and skills trainings or not participating with the consequence of lowering his or her value in the labour market. The policy focus is too often on supply side policies at the expense of thinking about the value and need for demand side policies. As a result the responsibility for success in work lies with the individual rather than exploring the broader labour market context and trends in both the demand for and supply of the types of skills needed in the labour market (Noon, 2002; Sinfield, 2001). Moreover, Bruettel and Sol (2006) note that the work-first model contradicts the objective of quality in work, particularly in East Germany where one of the preconditions of a successful work-first strategy is a strong labour market, which is absent. In such an environment, increased job activity will yield few benefits. While the authors support elements of a work-first model, they argue that it is not enough simply to provide a stepping stone into work. Provisions must also be made to ensure that job placements are followed by on-the-job training. For Mick Carpenter et al. "the...problem with a human capital or a 'work-first plus' approach is that equalities measures are only seen as justifiable so long as they have an economic rationale consistent with current government policies. They therefore do not prioritize social or human rights considerations over economic considerations" (2007: 160-61).

The probability of finding a job depends on previous unemployment duration for several reasons not least among them the concern that long periods of unemployment result in a loss of human capital (Layard et al., 2005; Shimer, 2008; Bourdet and Persson, 1990). This results in a frustrating cycle where the duration of unemployment decreases the probability of finding a job. Blanchard and Diamond (1994) found that firms rank applications based on those who have been unemployed for the least amount of time. Indeed, firms use the duration of unemployment as a signal for the loss of human capital and productivity. Conversely, a jobseeker unemployed for only a short period of time has a much better chance for placement than a long-term unemployed jobseeker, even if the latter has higher formal qualifications. For Wolff and Jozwiak (2007) the fundamental question is whether short-term training programmes in classrooms or within companies effectively integrate the participants into the labour market in Germany. Their study estimated the effects within company and classroom training separately. They found that training programme participation that established contact with an employer had a considerable impact on the regular employment rate of the participants, more so than classroom training.

Not only may human capital decline with longer unemployment duration, but also self-esteem (Jahoda and Zeisel, 1933; Wulfgramm, 2011). The longer people are unemployed the less is their search intensity because they have faced frustrating experiences and they see their chances of being invited to an interview as rather low (Layard et al., 2005; Falk et al., 2006). Thus the unemployed search less for a job as they see the effort as futile. As a result of searching less, the job-finding probability of unemployed workers declines as the unemployment duration rises. Moreover, family and health restrictions prevent the long-term unemployed from finding a job because they are not necessarily able to work a full day (Thomsen, 2009).

Moreover, after more than a decade of experience with work-first and workfare approaches, there is evidence that a work-first policy runs the risk of low job retention. Indeed, the high rate of 'repeaters' in the UK points to rather low sustainability of workfare strategies (Finn and Schulte, 2008). McKnight (2001) points out that the unemployed are more likely to find work in low-paid jobs than well-paid jobs and low-paid workers are more likely to experience unemployment than are higher-paid workers (see section 3.3.3 for a more detailed discussion on stepping stone effects). Thus, while work provides a means for individuals to improve

their income, due to the complex relationship between low-pay and poverty, a job may not be enough to lift a family previously on benefit out of poverty. While work-first programmes move the unemployed or non-employed into work, for those with few skills or work experience their job-options have the potential to result in a low-pay, low-skill trap (McKnight, 2001).

Kluve (2010) conducted a meta-analysis on a comprehensive data set of 137 ALMP programme evaluations from 19 European countries. His intent was to explore how the different programme types designed for different target groups, taking into consideration the varied economic and institutional settings, succeeded at placing participants in employment. This analysis allowed for the identification of systematic patterns from the available cross-country evidence on ALMP effectiveness. Kluve identified four main categories of ALMP that exist across European countries: 1. training measures;⁵⁷ 2. private sector incentive schemes, such as wage subsidies to private firms and start-up grants;⁵⁸ 3. direct employment programmes that take place in the public sector;⁵⁹ and 4. services and sanctions, a category that consist of all measures aimed at increasing job search efficiency, such as counselling and monitoring, job search assistance and corresponding sanctions for noncompliance.⁶⁰ The objective of this meta-analysis was to investigate ALMPs in Europe by correlating the effectiveness of the program on employment (the outcome variable). The variable was categorized as a trinomial outcome of whether the reported treatment effect on employment probability in a particular study was ‘significantly positive’, ‘significantly negative’ or ‘insignificant’. A number of variables were used to try and explain variation in the treatment impact that included the program type; the research design; the institutional context; and the economic background in a country at the time the particular program was run (Kluve, 2010: 905).

⁵⁷ This category encompasses classroom training, on-the-job training and work experience. These courses can provided either a more general education (i.e., language courses, basic computer courses or other basis courses) or specific vocational skills (i.e., advanced computer courses or courses providing technical or manufacturing skills). “The main objective with this category of training is to enhance the productivity of the participants and to enhance human capital by increasing skills” (Kluve, 2010: 905).

⁵⁸ The objective of private sector incentive programmes is to change the employer and/or worker behaviour through creating incentives, the most prominent is wage subsidies. Here the objective is to subsidise (and thus encourage) employers to hire new workers or to maintain jobs that would otherwise be broken up. These subsidies can either be direct wage subsidies to employers or financial incentives to workers for a limited period of time. They frequently target the long-term and more disadvantaged unemployed.

⁵⁹ This programme type focuses on the direct creation and provision of public works or other activities that produce public goods and services. These measures are typically targeted at the most disadvantaged with the aim of keeping them in contact with the labour market and to prevent further loss of human capital during a period of unemployment. That said, these types of jobs are jobs that are created in addition to and generally not close to the actual labour market.

⁶⁰ These are programmes that aim to increase the efficiency of the job matching process.

Once the type of programme was taken into account, there seemed to be little systematic relationship between programme effectiveness, the macroeconomic environment and a variety of indicators for institutional features of the labour market. The main patterns to arise in the meta regression concerned programme type. Kluge found that traditional training programmes have a modest likelihood of generating a significant positive impact on post-programme employment rates. Relative to training, both private sector incentive programmes and services and sanctions show significantly better performance—30 to 50 percentage points higher probability of estimating a significant positive impact than training programmes. On the other hand, evaluations of direct employment programmes were c. 25 percentage points less likely to estimate a significant positive impact on post-programme employment outcomes. Moreover, the researchers consistently found that programmes targeting youth were significantly less likely to be effective in terms of employment outcomes. Finally, it seemed to be the case that ALMP programmes were more likely to be effective when the unemployment rate was higher. Here the results are particularly robust for training programmes.

3.3 The rise of atypical work in Germany

Without question the labour market landscape has drastically changed since the induction of the ‘globalisation era’ (1975-2008) when neo-liberal economists and politicians worked together to create a global market economy based on competitiveness and individualism (Standing, 2011). In order to keep labour costs down and prevent the transfer of production elsewhere, many countries introduced ‘labour market flexibility’. Standing (2011) points out that ‘flexibility’ took many shapes from wage to employment to job and to skill flexibility. Moreover, in order to reduce unemployment rates while meeting the needs of an ever-changing labour market landscape, flexicurity has been introduced as a way to make workplaces adaptable by offering more flexible contract arrangements. Here too flexicurity’s policy focus is to link cash benefits more firmly to labour market participation and/or training in an “effort to make social policy a ‘productive factor’” (Lewis and Plomien, 2009: 434). Indeed, it is a result of this restructuring of global capital and labour markets that Standing argues a new class of worker has emerged, known as the precariat (2011). Arguably a proportion of UBII recipients, including a high proportion of my sample, belong to the precariat—those who move from one short-term contract to the next, absent an employment

contract or the ability to contribute to social insurance, with little control over their skills development thus potentially making it difficult to use temporary work as a step into a better position.

Among its European neighbours, Germany has become a country with a relatively high percentage of flexible ‘atypical’ employment forms that account for a quarter of its working age population (Schmid and Protsch, 2009).⁶¹ Analysing Microcensus data, the German Federal Statistics Office (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2010) found that between 1997 and 2007 standard (regular) employment declined by 1.53 million jobs (8.5 percentage points) and atypical employment increased by 2.58 million.⁶² Overall, the total volume of hours worked remained stable, which meant that employment was being redistributed between a growing number of individuals (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2010). Ultimately Betzelt and Bothfeld (2011c) argue that the increase in ‘atypical’ employment after 2003 can be attributed in part to the different inquiry and extrapolation methods of the German Microcensus data and partly due to the Hartz reforms relying on ‘atypical’ employment to place recipients in work.

In my opinion, within a relatively short period of time the degree of change in Germany’s employment patterns has been astonishing. The self-employed—those who are considered the least socially protected because they are not generally included in mandatory social insurance systems—increased by 13.3 percent between 1998 and 2008 (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2009). In terms of what type of work makes up the highest share of ‘atypical’ employment Betzelt and Bothfeld (2011c) note that part-time employment (up to 20 hours per week) is followed by marginal employment (mini-jobs with a monthly wage of €400 that are exempt from mandatory social insurance) and then fixed-term work. Indeed, the 2009 report by the Federal Statistics Office *Niedrigeinkommen und Erwerbstätigkeit (Low Income and Employment)* notes that by 2008 marginal employment more than doubled and temporary work even tripled, (though still remains at a modest level) while fixed-term contracts increased by 46 percent. Important here is that there is considerable overlap between single atypical employment forms, especially between part-time, fixed-term and marginal employment. Using German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) data from 1991 to 2006 Vogel (2009) found

⁶¹ Based on European Labour Force (Eurostat) data, atypical employment is defined as part-time work (<36), fixed-term contracts and solo self-employment (i.e., without employees) (Betzelt and Bothfeld, 2011c).

⁶² Using Microcensus data from the period between 1985 and 2005 Oschmiansky (2007) found similar results. Using German Socio-Economic-Panel (GSOEP) data, Brehmer and Seifert (2008) found that between 1997 and 2007, taking into account all part-time employees as ‘atypical’ (but not including the self-employed) the share of ‘atypical’ employment of total employment was 37 percent in 1997 and has since raised 12 percentage points.

that while the proportion of part-time employment has increased amongst male employees—almost one in ten male employees is a part-time worker—women are the predominant part-time employees where four out of five females work part-time. Indeed women aged 36 and older share an above average proportion of part-time employment. Furthermore employees age 55+ as well as labour market entrants have experienced a significant increase in the prevalence of part-time work. Yet, in the period of economic growth in 2007-2008, the number of regular employees grew even more than the still slightly increasing atypical employment. But in 2009 when the economic crisis hit the German labour market it was, not surprisingly, the atypical workers, especially the fixed-term and temporary-agency workers, who were the first to be dismissed (Betzelt and Bothfeld, 2011c).

In Germany it is one's age, skill-level and nationality that are indicators of the risk of being atypically employed. The deregulation of the employment contract—though at first glance appearing to affect a small portion of the young male core worker, but by high growth rates, actually, with the insight of a longitudinal perspective, affects certain social groups (also men) with long or frequent unemployment spells who are disproportionately more often affected by 'atypical' employment and low pay (Alda and Bartelheimer, 2008). Within the last decade, the share of atypical employment among people aged 15-25 years has nearly doubled, on account that entering into a job is typically preceded by periods of fixed-term employment (Betzelt and Bothfeld, 2011c).⁶³ Those with low skills are the group most exposed to the risk of atypical employment (40 percent). Within this group, a high proportion of foreign workers from outside the EU are most often employed in non-standard forms of work because of their precarious legal status, their lack of work permits or due to language barriers. In the end, Betzelt and Bothfeld argue that taken together, this increase can be read as a "remarkable new trend towards destandardized employment" (2011c:110).⁶⁴

⁶³ The interrelationship between sex and age is interesting. For men, the youngest (15-25) are affected three times more frequently than men in mid to older age groups. Whereas for women, the incident of atypical employment hardly differs across age groups (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2008: 17).

⁶⁴ Oschmiansky argues that the Hartz-Reforms target an expansion of low wage work and atypical employment forms and thus he explores how labour market policy promotion of atypical employment affects social security insurance and whether it contributes to the displacement or substitution of regular employment liable to social security benefits. Referencing the literature, he concludes that there are quite a few indications for a partial displacement of regular employment liable to social security benefits as a result of the promotion of atypical employment (Oschmiansky, 2007).

Table 3.1 Socio-demographic distribution of atypical employment, 1997-2007*

	Year					
	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007
	in %					
<i>Age</i>						
15 to under 25 years	19.5	23.8	23.7	26.3	35.9	39.2
25 to under 35 years	16.7	18.8	19.2	20.7	23.9	26.6
35 to under 45 years	18.3	20.5	20.7	21.5	23.1	25.3
45 to under 55 years	15.9	17.6	18.1	18.8	20.6	22.4
55 to under 65 years	19.4	21.8	22.7	23,6	23.1	23.9
<i>Skills-level</i>						
Low skills-level	26.7	29.8	31.3	33.1	35.0	39.9
Medium skills-level	16.5	19.1	19.5	20.6	23.1	25.0
Higher skills-level	14.5	15.5	15.6	16.2	17.3	18.3
<i>Nationality</i>						
German	17.3	19.4	19.8	20.6	22.8	24.7
Foreigners from EU states	17.0	20.0	20.0	22.2	25.2	28.7
Foreigners from other states	21.7	24.7	25.8	29.3	33.5	36.8
<i>Gender</i>						
Women	29.7	X	X	X	X	38.4
Men	7.8	X	X	X	X	14.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>17.5</i>	<i>19.7</i>	<i>20.1</i>	<i>21.2</i>	<i>23.4</i>	<i>25.5</i>

*No comparable figures available for 2008 and 2009; X: no data available; Source: Betzelt and Bothfeld, 2011c

3.3.1 Temporary work in Germany

The use of temporary agency work has increased dramatically in most OECD countries over the past decade—a process that has been driven largely by incremental legislative changes starting in the 1970s that “eased regulations governing temporary agency employment while leaving almost unaltered legislation applying to the stock of workers employed under permanent contracts” (Antoni and Jahn, 2009: 227). Once one of the most heavily regulated in the OECD, the Federal Republic’s ongoing effort to liberalize its traditionally ‘rigid’ labour market regulations has resulted in a markedly changed labour market landscape. The gradual reform of the Labour Placement Act between 1972 and 2003 to allow for the use of temporary agency work contracts was one step of many in this direction. While the Labour Placement Act reforms have gone through a series of fits and starts between 1972 and 2003,

the end result is a German labour market that welcomes temporary agency work and, to a degree, relies on it to keep labour costs down while integrating the unemployed into the labour market in order to keep unemployment numbers low.⁶⁵

The theoretical impact of temporary agency employment on the employment outcomes of the unemployed is not clear. On the one hand, it can be argued that temporary work may improve a worker's human capital while providing the worker with labour market contacts that can later lead to regular employment (Houseman et al., 2003; Jahn and Ochel, 2007). In this case, temporary agencies may reduce the time job-seekers spend looking for a new job and may facilitate rapid (re-)entry into regular employment—especially if client firms use temporary staffing arrangements to screen workers to fill open positions. On the other hand, it can be argued that any human capital effects arising from temporary work are not significant enough because of the primarily short-term, low-skilled nature of temporary jobs (Segal and Sullivan, 1997). Temporary jobs often limit a worker's regular employment prospects because they are dead-end jobs owing to the fact that firms usually have no plans to fill the position permanently and the job itself can tend to be beneath a worker's qualifications (Heinrich et al., 2005). The very nature of temporary jobs designed to fill an employer's short-term work needs means that the work completed is not intended to provide significant opportunities to develop productive job search networks and as a result it may even crowd out direct job searches, inhibiting longer-term labour market advancement (Jahn and Rosholm, 2010).⁶⁶

A study from Denmark, the US and Germany highlight different attempts made by researchers to capture the effect temporary work has had on labour market outcomes. While the empirical evidence is often contradictory (owing to the analysis of different data,

⁶⁵ Antoni and Jahn analysed the gradual changes made to the Labour Placement Act between 1972 and 2003. They divided the nature of change into five 'regimes'. Between 1972 to 1985 Germany first started to permit temporary agency employment but only on the basis of a permanent employment contract. The maximum period of temporary assignment was three months. The first regime was from May 1985 to 1993 and here the maximum period a temporary contract could be assigned was extended from three to six months. The second regime took place between 1994 and 1997 where the government again extended the maximum assignment period for a temporary contract from six to nine months. For the first time temporary contracts actually became attractive to firms to hire temporary agency workers as a means of circumventing employment protection legislation and avoiding firing costs. However hiring a temporary worker was still expensive for the firm. The third regime took place between April 1997 and 2001 where the temporary contract assignment period was extended to 12 months. Temporary agencies were allowed to conclude fixed-term contracts which could be extended up to three times with total employment being up to 24 months. Perhaps the most important change during this period was that temporary agencies were allowed to dismiss the worker as soon as the assignment ended. The fourth regime was 2003 when the maximum assignment time was extended from 12 to 24 months. The amended Act made clear that temporary agency workers were entitled to the same remuneration and working conditions as comparable workers employed at the same firm. Finally, the fifth regime happened in 2004 where the reform of the Labour Placement Act permits a temporary agency to deviate from the principle of equal treatment if the conditions stipulated in a sectoral collective agreement apply to all temporary agency workers. As a consequence of this loophole, wage gaps between temporary and permanent staff of a user firm are permissible if the wages established in the user firm's collective agreement are higher than those in the temporary industry's collective agreement. This is permissible because the temporary agency is the legal employer of the temporary worker (Antoni and Jahn, 2009: 233-234).

⁶⁶In addition, there is evidence that temporary agency workers more often receive arbitrary supervision, face higher labour turnover and are more likely to become unemployed (Houseman et al., 2003; Segal and Sullivan, 1997).

modelling techniques used, time periods explored and country-specific policies under review) the three studies cited below provide some insight into the type of questions asked and the complexity of the findings. First, researchers in Denmark conducted a comprehensive analysis of stepping-stone effects of temporary agency employment on unemployed workers in Denmark for the period 1997-2006. Using duration models and timing-of-events approach⁶⁷ (time from becoming unemployed to finding a non-temporary job) they estimated the causal effects of temporary employment on finding regular work and whether temporary work affects post-unemployment job quality.⁶⁸ They found no evidence of lock-in effects (i.e., while participating in a temporary job). On the contrary, estimating for heterogeneous effects revealed that for some groups, temporary employment even sped up the transition out of unemployment benefits. In addition, the researchers found that when examining these effects across individuals, first- and second-generation non-western immigrants and unemployed jobseekers with low educational backgrounds were those who benefited most from temporary work. The temporary work enabled this category of worker to improve their labour market career prospects by building up their human capital and enlarging their professional networks. In total, temporary jobs tended to improve subsequent job quality by increasing post-unemployment wages and longer post-unemployment job durations (Jahn and Rosholm, 2010).

Heinrich et al. (2005) drew on administrative data from Missouri and North Carolina's records to administer the states' federal welfare programme (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)) coupled with data on all employment covered by unemployment insurance to analyse who among TANF recipients takes up temporary agency work and what the consequences were for their labour market outcomes compared to those TANF recipients hired directly by the firms they work for.⁶⁹ Their results confirm earlier findings by Segal and Sullivan (1997) that TANF recipients in temporary jobs receive lower earnings and have

⁶⁷ The timing-of-events approach takes selection based on observed and unobserved heterogeneity into account. They use this approach to model the in-treatment effect and post-treatment effect of taking a temporary agency job during a phase of unemployment (Jahn and Rosholm, 2010).

⁶⁸ Being employed by a temporary agency during a spell of unemployment is the treatment. Jahn and Rosholm then estimate the effect of this treatment on the exit rate from unemployment to employment, both during and after the treatment. The empirical analysis is based on two sets of Danish register data. The primary data set is an extract from a matched employer-employee data set. The data set is compiled from a variety of sources maintained by Statistics Denmark. To this, Jahn and Rosholm match additional socio-economic information available from the Integrated Database for Labour Market Research (2010: 16).

⁶⁹ The analysis examines cash recipients in the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)—the program prior to the reform in which AFDC became Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) in 1996. The sample consists of all AFDC/TANF recipients in Missouri during 1993 and 1997; the sample of North Carolina is for 1997. Heinrich et al. use a multinomial logit model to examine how differences in individual characteristics and past welfare and employment experience affect the probability of working in a temporary job relative to either not working at all or working for a firm in an alternative industry. They compare the earnings, earnings growth and patterns of AFDC/TANF receipt of recipients who work for temporary service firms with those of recipients who either do not have jobs or have jobs with end-user firms, controlling for individual characteristics (2005: 154).

poorer prospects for moving off of TANF into regular work than those who have non-temporary jobs. However, once the researchers controlled for individual characteristics, they found that although recipients who worked for temporary help agencies have lower initial wages than those with jobs in other sectors, they experience fast subsequent wage growth. Indeed two years later, earnings for temporary agency workers increased faster than those in other industries. Thus, they concluded that temporary agency workers have better future prospects than those who are unemployed on TANF. Indeed their analysis suggests that temporary agency work provides a route to work with ultimately higher pay and greater stability (Heinrich et al., 2005).

Using an extended version of the IAB Employment Sample (IABS),⁷⁰ Antoni and Jahn estimated a mixed proportional hazard rate model in order to examine how the reforms to liberalize temporary agency work in Germany effected employment duration in temporary agency jobs.⁷¹ The objective of the research is to provide empirical evidence on the job tenure of temporary work and the factors that influence their employment duration. Antoni and Jahn (2009) found that job turnover in the temporary work sector was indeed remarkably high in addition to employment in temporary help agencies usually being a brief episode in workers' employment histories. Temporary work offers employment options, particularly for male workers and disadvantaged groups (poorly qualified workers, unemployed persons, migrants, and young workers). Moreover, and as predicted by the researchers, the legislative changes made to allow for firms increased use of temporary help workers coincided with the rise in firms using temporary workers over time. Finally, a workers previous employment status had a significant effect on their temporary employment duration. Those workers who were previously workless left their temporary jobs much more quickly than workers who came from employment or unemployment. In addition, the exit rates out of temporary agency employment were very high for workers with relatively weak labour market position, such as non-German workers, low-skilled workers with little education and those aged 25 and below.

⁷⁰ The IABS is a 2% random sample of all employees registered by the social security system at least once during the sample period. Spells during which workers received unemployment benefits, unemployment assistance or a maintenance allowance were added to the sample. Due to the administrative nature of the IABS, the longitudinal information on the employment and unemployment history of individuals is exact to the day. The records are used to compute the social security contributions paid by the employer and the unemployment benefits paid by the Public Employment Service. Thus, these data sets are likely to contain fewer measurement errors than survey data. The inflow sample is restricted to 1980 to 2003 with censoring on December 2004, allowing the researchers to investigate and compare the effects of the five reforms between 1985 and 2003. Focus is limited to employees aged 15 to 64 in West Germany owing to the effects of 1985-1990 only being available for West German workers.

⁷¹ The researchers compare and explore the effects of five reforms between 1985 and 2003. Due to the division of Germany, information on East Germany was only available from 1992 onwards. Analysis is limited to workers between 15 and 65 and the data only distinguishes between part- and full-time work. Information on the number of hours and thus hourly wages is not available. They thus drop part-time employees, interns, home workers and mini-jobs. They argue that since temp jobs are rarely part-time or second jobs, that this should thus not affect their results.

Overall Anoni and Jahn (2009) found that only a small fraction of temporary workers were able to gain work experience and improve their labour market networks through temporary agency work.

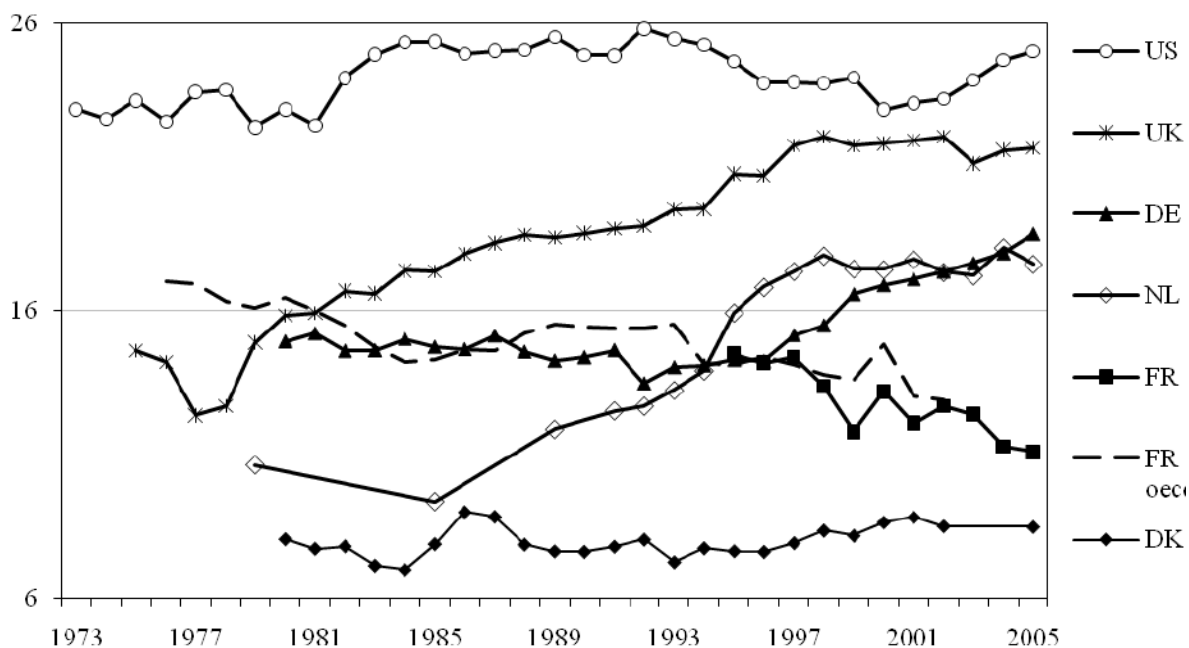
3.3.2 The rise of low-wage work in Germany

In addition to the rising labour market insecurity that has resulted from an increase in atypical, temporary work, the Federal Republic's deregulation strategy has resulted in the creation of an ever steadily but persistently growing low-wage sector. Using GSOEP data, Kalina and Weinkopf (2010) found that in 2008, 6.55 million people or 20.7 percent of total employment fell into the low-wage sector (an increase of 2.3 million since 1998) with an average nominal hourly wage of €7.09 in West and €5.18 in East Germany (2010: 8).⁷² The average nominal low-wage stagnated within the last years such that the real wages of 2008 in the low-wage sector were even below the level of 1995 (Kalina and Weinkopf, 2010). For Betzelt and Bothfeld "this strikingly illustrates the trend of 'fraying' wages at the lower end in a country without a minimum wage" (2011: 112).⁷³ Indeed 71.9 per cent of low-waged employment in Germany is at a medium skills-level, located mostly in the services sector with 69.2 per cent of the work done by women (Kalina and Weinkopf, 2010). Employment instability is twice as high for atypical workers compared to regular employees where 33.8 per cent of atypical workers earned less than two-thirds of median income which was only true for 9.5 per cent of regular employees (Brehmer and Seifert, 2008). Drawing on Microcensus data, 99 per cent of regular workers earn their living mainly from their job, while this is only true for 70 per cent of atypical workers (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2008: 21). A crucial point here is that low-waged employment is one of the major reasons for a steep increase in recent years of UBII recipients who work, often fulltime, but still need to receive wage top-up—the so-called 'supplementers' or *Aufstocker*—making up 27.4 per cent or 1.31 million of all UBII recipients, about half of which work in a 'mini-job' (Statistik der Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2010: 4).

⁷²According to Grimshaw (2011) the most commonly used definition of low pay is a level equivalent to two-thirds of the median wage for all employees in the economy. This has become a standard benchmark following its use in OECD reports. Kalina and Weinkopf's (2010) analysis uses the same definition for low pay.

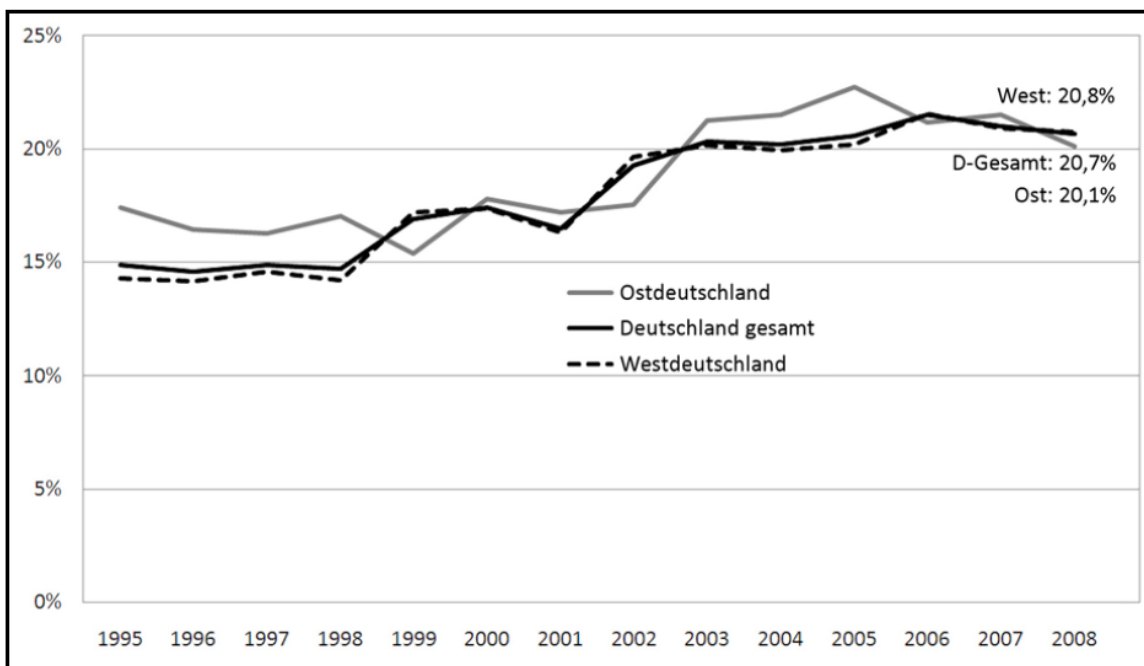
⁷³The extremely low wages in East Germany are partly due to a lack of collective wage agreements or because of very low, but collectively agreed on, wage levels (for example, for many female-dominated occupations) (Kalina and Weinkopf, 2010).

Figure 3.1 Trends and patterns in the incidence of low-wage work in the United States and five European countries^a, 1973-2005 (low pay is defined as two-thirds of median earnings for all employees^b)



Notes: a. National data sources for all six countries, with additional OECD data for France (dotted line). b. All employees are covered, except for Germany and the OECD data for France, which only cover full-time employees (Mason and Salverda, 2010).

Figure 3.2 Percent of low-wage employees—distinguishing between East- and West Germany (including part-time and mini-jobs in %)



Source: SOEP 2008 (Kalina and Weinkopf, 2010)

3.3.3 Evidence on whether low-paid jobs act as a stepping stone to better [paid] jobs

Ljungqvist and Sargent (1998) argue that European, as opposed to US labour markets, are more vulnerable to recessions because generous unemployment benefits reduce incentives for laid-off workers to quickly accept jobs with lower wages than those of their previous jobs. In time of economic crises, the argument goes, the number of ‘good jobs’ with high wages is limited and increased reservation wages of laid-off workers leads to long-term unemployment, a factor producing a significant loss of human capital. By taking up a low-paid job instead of waiting for a well-paid job, unemployed individuals could shorten unemployment duration and thereby avert scarring effects associated with unemployment (Ljungqvist and Sargent, 1998). On the other hand, Marimon and Zilibotti (1999) point out that searching for the ‘right’ job match during unemployment may have positive returns such as reducing job mismatch. “Unemployment benefits provide a ‘search subsidy’ for giving the unemployed time to find, not just a *job*, but the *right job*. Thus, in a labour market with search frictions, unemployment benefits tend to reduce job mismatch” (Burdett, 1979 from Marimon and Zilibotti, 1999: 267).⁷⁴

The fundamental question then is whether a low-wage job, or a job beneath one’s skill level, ultimately provides a stepping stone to something better, i.e., better pay and/or a better position, or whether it is at best an improvement over unemployment. Here the thinking is that unemployment generally leads to a loss of human capital and/or to negative signalling effects which increases the probability of facing unemployment or low-wage employment in the future (Lockwood, 1991). Transitions costs (i.e., the cost of the job search) may reduce the likelihood that workers will take up a new job and the incidences of non-employment may also alter preferences (Hyslop, 1999). Individuals who experience an episode of non-employment may place a higher value on leisure and a lower value on wages and consumption than in the past. As a consequence individuals could reduce labour supply and raise reservation wages (Hotz et al., 1998). Thus, the thinking is that taking up a low-wage job is better than not working at all. Indeed there is evidence that seems to support this assertion. Drawing on GSOEP data, Uhlenborff (2006) analysed low pay and non-employment dynamics of men age 20 to 55 in West Germany between 1998 and 2003.

⁷⁴ Marimon and Zilibotti (1999) go on to point out that unemployed workers without a ‘safety net’ might accept unsuitable jobs and become a part of the ‘working poor’. When this safety net is too high, however, workers become too selective, and reject matches which would have been socially efficient and expedient to accept.

Uhlendorff estimated a dynamic multinomial logit model with random effects and his results suggest that there exists a strong link between low pay and no pay. Compared to high paid workers not employed, individuals have a higher probability to be low paid in the future and vice versa. Uhlendorff argues that there is some evidence that low-wage jobs *are* stepping stones to better jobs and no evidence that being low paid does have any adverse effects on future employment prospects if it is compared with non-employment. Even though a low-wage job reduces the chance to move into a high-wage job for German men *and* increases the risk of non-employment in the future, the employment prospects of low-wage earners are still better than the prospects of individuals who are unemployed. “Despite this clear evidence for a ‘low pay-no pay cycle’, compared to non-employment low-wage jobs increase the probability of being employed in the future and low pay seems to lead to higher paid jobs” (Uhlendorff, 2006: 4).

Using GSOEP data Mosthaf et al. (2009) investigated labour market dynamics of West German women between the ages of 20 and 55 from 2000 through 2006.⁷⁵ They estimate dynamic multinomial logit models with random effects in order to analyse the effect of the experience of low-wage employment on future employment prospects for women in West Germany. They found that being in a low-wage job reduces future employment prospects of German women by increasing the probability of being low-paid and decreasing the chances of being high-paid in the future. This effect was most profound for low-paid women working part-time. However, future wage prospects were better for low-paid women than for unemployed and inactive women, especially when they have full-time jobs. Indeed, the evidence suggests that being unemployed or inactive leads to a stronger decline in the probability of getting a high-paid job than being low-paid and to a higher probability of becoming unemployed or inactive again. Thus taking the evidence into consideration, the authors argue that “for women, low-wage jobs can serve as stepping stones out of unemployment and are to be preferred to staying unemployed and waiting for a better job” (Mosthaf et al., 2009: 15).

Andreas Knabe and Alexander Plum (2010) examined whether low-paid jobs have an effect on the occupational advancement probability of unemployed individuals in West Germany to

⁷⁵ For the analysis the authors constructed four mutually exclusive labour market states: high-wage employment, low-wage employment (distinguishing further between full- and part-time work), unemployment and inactivity. In order to take into account the business cycle, they added data from the Federal Employment Agency about monthly unemployment rates at the month of the GSOEP interview. Low pay is defined as earning less than two-thirds of the median hourly gross wage.

obtain better paid jobs in the future (i.e., the stepping stone effect). Drawing on GSOEP data for the years 1998 to 2007, Knabe and Plum apply a dynamic random effects probit model that takes potential endogeneity of the initial period and time-invariant individual effects into account when analysing whether a low-wage job improved the chances of unemployed persons being able to obtain better-paid jobs in the future.⁷⁶ The results suggest that individuals in low-paid jobs generally have a significantly higher chance of moving into a higher paid position compared to an unemployed person. With the assistance of interaction terms, Knabe and Plum tested the heterogeneity of this stepping stone effect to determine which groups benefit most from low-paid jobs in terms of increasing their chances of moving into a higher paid position. Here they found that the ‘stepping-stone effect’ was particularly strong for people with low or intermediate levels of education, for those who have been unemployed for longer periods of time and if the low-wage job was associated with a relatively high social status. They thus concluded that low-paid jobs *do not* result in a ‘poverty trap’. Indeed, such jobs provided a ‘stepping stone’ to better jobs compared to being unemployed. Following on the findings from Knabe and Plum’s analysis, Mosthaf (2011) took the effect heterogeneity into account and hypothesized that the negative signals of low-paid jobs are stronger for individuals with high qualifications than those with low or no qualifications compared to those without a job.⁷⁷ For low-qualified workers he found that low-wage jobs clearly incur weaker scaring effects compared to non-employment. However for high-qualified workers, low-wage employment is associated with negative signals and thus reduces the chances to move into a high-paid job in the future as much as non-employment (Mosthaf, 2011). Thus his results concur what other studies have found, namely that low-wage jobs serve as stepping stones to better-paid jobs for individuals without vocational training and/or without an Abitur (secondary school degree).

Grün et al. (2011) researched persons entering low-paid jobs out of unemployment in Germany and Austria.⁷⁸ They explored if, and for whom, low-paid jobs served as a stepping

⁷⁶Knabe and Plum (2010) defined low-paid jobs as individuals earning less than two-thirds of the median gross hourly wage. To obtain a more differentiated picture of the stepping-stone effect, they conducted separate analyses for men and women and for two different time periods (1998-2002 and 2002-2007).

⁷⁷ Mosthaf’s study uses data from the German Integrated Employment Biographies Sample (IEBS). The analysis is restricted to West Germany because at the time the study was conducted, labour market conditions still varied considerably between East and West. He applied dynamic multinomial logit models with random effects which control for the problem of initial conditions and include interaction terms of the lagged labour market state allowing him to measure heterogeneity in state dependence (i.e., how labour market history affects current labour market success) in low-wage employment and non-employment with respect to qualifications. A panel dataset was constructed with yearly observations between 2000 and 2006 in order to analyse yearly transitions between high-wage and low-wage employment and non-employment.

⁷⁸This study analysed both Germany and Austria. For Germany they used the 1975-2004 version of the IAB Employment Sample containing information on the employment history (including wages) of employees liable to social security on a daily basis. For Austria, they use a similar dataset based on social insurance data, offering detailed longitudinal and cross-sectional information for dependent employment

stone to better-paid jobs and whether they provided a step towards stable integration into the regular labour market or resulted in a quick return to unemployment.⁷⁹ At the aggregate level, Grün et al.'s research showed that low-wage earners face a higher risk of getting trapped in a low-pay, no-pay cycle since the chance of becoming unemployed at a later point in time is much higher for people in low-wage jobs. However, low-wage jobs still seem to offer better labour market prospects compared to being unemployed. The baseline hazard of becoming unemployed is again higher for low-than for higher-wage spells in both countries. But they found that even more high-wage spells end in unemployment in the medium term which would seem that the findings contradict themselves. Yet, this contradiction can be explained by longer durations of higher-wage spells and therefore Grün et al. (2011) argue that there is no convincing evidence for a distinct low-pay, no-pay cycle since movement between higher-pay and no-pay also seem to be of great relevance.

Research out of the UK by Stewart (2007) examined the extent of state dependence (i.e., the lack of new human capital acquired during a spell of unemployment and the effect of adverse signalling) in individual unemployment and the role low-wage employment plays. Stewart modelled the probabilities of unemployment and low pay using dynamic random effects probit regressions for each process controlling for endogenous initial conditions. Using data from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) waves 1-6 (1991-1996),⁸⁰ he found that the chances of becoming low paid were significantly more likely for unemployed individuals than for high-paid employees.⁸¹ Among employed individuals, the chances of entering unemployment were larger for individuals who had low-paid rather than high-paid jobs. Crucially here, there was also evidence that low pay acted as a conduit to repeat unemployment: unemployed individuals who found a low-paid job were more likely to fall back into unemployment than those who found a high-paid job (Stewart, 2007). For Stewart,

spells and unemployment spells. The German data do not include those self-employed or who are civil servants and only employees who are liable to social security contributions. In addition, when people are unemployed, they can only be 'observed' if they are registered unemployed and receiving unemployment benefit. Finally, IABS data only distinguishes between full- and part-time workers, but do not contain information on working hours. Thus this analysis uses information on West German full-time workers between 18 and 60 years of age. Low wage is calculated as two-thirds of the median wage for each year between 1998 and 2004. The researchers then construct a sample of low-wage spells starting out of unemployment during this period. For Austria, they do this for the period 1998-2003. In order to reduce heterogeneity of the sample, the sample for Austria only includes men between the age of 25 and 54 at the time of inflow.

⁷⁹ Results are compared against a third possibility: persistence of low-wage employment. Persisting in a low-wage job at least provides for employment integration and may be appropriate for persons with low-skills and productivity potential. However this is less the case for high skilled workers. Moreover the income levels remain low, in many cases not much above preceding unemployment related benefits. Nonetheless, both upwards mobility and persistence in low-wage employment can be considered as employment integration (Grün et al., 2011).

⁸⁰ The sample used is restricted to those aged between 18 and 65 for men and 60 for women (age of state retirement) and excludes full-time students.

⁸¹ Hales' et al., (2003) research on the UK Employment Zones found that there were few opportunities for those in work to progress toward better jobs within the organization where they obtained their first job. Those who lost their jobs tended to revert to unemployment rather than their previous 'employability' enabling them to make a more rapid return to work.

the results suggest “that not all jobs are ‘good’ jobs” (2007: 529). In terms of improving future prospects, low-wage jobs do not typically lead on to a better position or pay.

Following Stewart’s (2007) work, Cappellari and Jenkins (2008) provide evidence about labour market transitions for British men. Using BHPS data from 1991-2000 (waves 1 to 10), they modelled annual transitions between unemployment and low- and high-paid employment using a first order Markov model that allows for interrelationships between the dynamics of low pay and unemployment to be analysed. In addition, they took into account three potentially endogenous selection processes: initial conditions in low-paid employment, selection into employment and panel attrition.⁸² They found that controlling for observed and unobserved individual heterogeneity, there is some evidence of labour market scarring effects, but they operate across labour market states as well as within them. “For example, the probability of a man having a low-paid job in one year depends not only on whether he had a job a year before but also whether that job was low paid. The probability of his being employed at all depends on whether he had a job the previous year” (Cappellari and Jenkins, 2007: 59). Generally there appears to be a real state dependence effect that helps to determine men’s chances of being low-paid or unemployed. Thus from a policy perspective Cappellari and Jenkins point out that “policies targeted on unemployed men may reduce the chances of being low-paid once they get a job, and measures designed to raise the earnings potential of the low-paid may also reduce their chances of becoming unemployed in the future” (2007: 78).

Taking into account the variation in findings that, to a large extent, arise out of different levels of abstraction, the relevance of the albeit very limited review of the evidence on stepping stone effects rest in the concern with the experiences of those individuals for whom low paid jobs have not ended up being a stepping stone to a better position and/or higher pay. If indeed, as some of the evidence is suggesting, low-wage jobs do not necessarily act as a stepping stone to a better paid job compared to being unemployed, then policies that encourage exit from unemployment benefit will have little impact so long as being in receipt of benefit is a consequence of the recipients’ individual and not structural characteristics. In

⁸² Cappellari and Jenkins work differs from Stewart’s (2007) in two ways: Stewart also has modelled low-pay dynamics using random effects dynamic panel models. But in these models, “estimation is based on a wave-by-wave sequence of observations starting at the first panel wave, with each followed until panel drop-outs, so that individuals joining the panel subsequently are not included, and nor are individuals who return to the panel after one or more non-response waves—thus excludes a relatively large number of cases. By contrast our [Cappellari and Jenkins] approach includes panel joiners and those with incomplete panel participation patters” (Cappellari and Jenkins, 2008: 59). Secondly, their approach allows regressors to have different impacts on the outcome variable depending on outcomes in the previous period.

other words, activation policies such as job creation schemes and wage subsidies will have little impact on benefit recipients' long-term unemployment status. But if a low-wage job can act as a stepping stone to a higher paid and/or a more permanent position—in other words, being on unemployment benefit increases the probability of future benefit receipt—then activation policies that either prevent entry or expedite exit from unemployment benefit can potentially have a lasting effect on reducing benefit dependency. Here the prevention of an initial unemployment experience becomes an important policy objective, in which case a possible policy response would be to focus on education and training mechanisms. This is the argument from a theoretical perspective. Given that a high proportion of the sample for this study have indeed experienced periods of unemployment followed by periods of low-wage jobs, the debate both contextualises and has salience for their experience.

3.4 Research on the impact and effectiveness of the Hartz IV reforms

Heretofore government, academics, and analysts have evaluated many aspects of Hartz IV reforms. The Institute for Employment Research (IAB), the Research Institute of the Federal Employment Agency, is one of the leading research institutes to conduct Hartz IV programme evaluations in addition to a wide range of other types of labour market analysis. Their findings are integral and directly inform the government, policy makers and the public about what works, what does not work and at what cost. Yet, as a review of the IAB's research shows, they rely heavily on the analysis of administrative and survey data, using propensity score matching techniques as a non-experimental impact estimator to evaluate the Hartz programmes. In the absence of being able to conduct random assignment experiments, generally viewed as the most robust means of estimating programme effects, propensity score matching techniques allow an evaluation of policy to determine whether the introduction of new programmes influence the outcomes of employment and earnings for those subject to the policy change (Bryson et al., 2002). Yet, when stepping back from the IAB's findings on the effectiveness of the Hartz reforms, other studies (including this one) that ask different types of questions and employ a wider range of research methods provide a more nuanced picture of the impact the reforms have had on UBII recipients ability to find work and move off of benefit. Indeed, the development of new research—mainly qualitative—has brought to light the unintended consequences of the Hartz reforms, such as for the working poor, poverty and social exclusion. Göckler (2010), for example, uncovered the discrimination and exclusion of

people with special needs. While the results of the quantitative evaluations demonstrate positive treatment effects for at least some sub-groups, the heterogeneity of the findings (as will be discussed below) indicate that variation in results is dependent on a multitude of factors, including the method of analysis used, the investigation period and the underlying dataset, not to mention the timing and scale of focus (national versus local). The challenge for policy makers is not to jump to conclusions based on the limited evidence that active labour market policy interventions such as skills training and job placement ‘work’. Thus, alongside the findings highlighted below, it is equally important to explore a wider set of research questions using qualitative and quantitative methods in order to understand what policy ‘success’ means and for whom.

Although the goal of improving employability as part of active labour market policies is broadly discussed and deeply embedded on a programmatic level of active labour market policy, changes in employment status as a result of ALMP intervention has been less frequently analysed empirically. That said there are key studies that evaluate the effect active labour market policies have on integrating UBII recipients into the labour market. The Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales) commissioned the IAB to conduct a progress report on the effectiveness of the active labour policy mechanisms—specifically the Maßnahme (skills training)—available to UBI and UBII recipients. The report synthesized all the evidence prior to 2011 that explored whether participation in a skills training resulted in entering unsubsidized regular employment (the outcome variable) (BMAS, 2011).⁸³ The studies reviewed drew on administrative data collected by the Federal Employment Agency that used propensity score matching techniques to compared recipients not placed in a skills training (the non-treated population) to those recipients who were (the treated population). The skills trainings designed to improve the chances of integration into the labour market (die Maßnahmen zur Verbesserung der Eingliederungchancen) are divided into three groups: Job placement voucher for a third party provider;⁸⁴ short-term trainings (maximum of 12 weeks long) that are meant to be small

⁸³ The report was published both by the Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales entitled “Sachstandsbericht der Evaluation der Instrumente” (2011) who commissioned the report from the IAB. The IAB subsequently published the same findings under Gerd Heyer et al. (2011) “Evaluation der aktiven Arbeitsmarktpolitik. Ein Sachstandsbericht für die Instrumentenreform.” IAB Discussion Paper 17/2011.

⁸⁴ First researchers reviewed studies using propensity score matching techniques that evaluated the net effect of job placement vouchers to third party placement organizations and the probability of entering unsubsidized employment twelve months after the issue of the voucher between 2003 and 2005 (Dann et al., 2005; Hujer and Zeiss, 2005; Kruppe 2006; Pfeiffer and Winterhager, 2006). Taken together, for this set of studies they found a tendency for a positive effect of the voucher (Heyer et al., 2011). For every 100 vouchers issued, five to six successful placements were on account of the voucher. However, some employment found on account of the voucher was on average shorter than other employment placements, which could possibly because of deadweight loss. Second, Heyer et al. (2011) reviewed a Hartz evaluation conducted by the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin (2006). Here they differentiated between subsidized and unsubsidized employment and thus measured the effect vouchers had four months from it being issued on entering regular unsubsidized employment. The

additional qualifications to assist in labour market entry; and skills training for advanced education or vocational training.⁸⁵

For a review of the evidence on short-term trainings (maximum of 12 weeks long) the IAB progress report explored a series of studies. Using administrative data from municipalities, a study by Boockmann et al. (2008) explored access to trainings in November and December of 2006. The study evaluated short-term trainings but did not take the different types of trainings into account and showed overall an insignificant effect on labour market entry for the treated compared to the untreated population. Yet studies by Wolff and Jozwiak (2007), Hartig et al. (2008), Kopf (2009) and Kopf and Wolff (2009) that differentiated between different types of short-term trainings and their content found positive effects for the treated population. Using propensity score matching technique these studies measured the effect the training had on UBII recipients entering unsubsidized employment in the first quarter of 2005. Taken together the findings for short-term skills trainings provided to UBII recipients show positive integration into unsubsidized work effects. When difference in training types was taken into account—differentiating between CV training, aptitude tests, training within firms, knowledge brokering trainings and training combinations—the IAB studies (Wolff and Jozwiak, 2007; Hartig et al., 2008; Kopf, 2009; Kopf and Wolff, 2009) measured UBII recipients who entered one of the trainings at the beginning of 2005. The studies explored the effect of the trainings up to 28 months after the start of the training. The findings suggest that the effect of participating in a training within a company is differentiated by age, migration status and the length of prior unemployment as well as the status of the local labour market. For those under 25, the integration into the labour market effect was several percentage points lower than if a participant was over 25. Short-term trainings that focused on CV and knowledge brokering had the most positive effect on labour market integration—the probability that one would enter the unsubsidized labour market was 3 to 4.5 percentage points higher up to 28 months compared to the untreated population. This was followed by

findings suggest that individuals who were on average unemployed for nine months and received a voucher valued at €2,500.00 profited less from the voucher compared to the short-term unemployed (less than three months) who received a voucher of lesser value. Men profited on average somewhat more than women. Finally, researchers reviewed the study by Bernhard and Kruppe (2010). They explored who among the unemployed received the voucher and the subsequent whereabouts of UBI and UBII recipients six months after they were issued the voucher between 2004 and 2007. Here it was not about the net effect rather they analysed the character traits of individuals who did and not receive vouchers and compared that to their success rate of finding regular unsubsidized work. Bernhard and Kruppe (2010) found that vouchers were issued to UBI and UBII recipients who had better chances of entering the regular labour market. Unemployed East Germans have a higher probability of receiving a voucher than West Germans as well as to find a job with the assistance of the voucher. UBII recipients compared to UBI recipients have a lower probability of remaining at their job for a minimum of six months after they have used their voucher (Heyer et al., 2011).

⁸⁵ Those in receipt of Unemployment Benefit I have a legal claim to a third party job placement voucher after two months of being unemployed whereas those in receipt of Unemployment Benefit II do not have that same claim. Instead the instrument is optional and used at the discretion of the Jobcenter.

aptitude tests and combination trainings. However, after the 28 month observation period ended, researchers could not conclude that there were statistically significance effects from CV training on integrating participants in the unsubsidized regular labour market (Heyer et al, 2011).

Drawing on administrative data⁸⁶ between February and April 2005⁸⁷ from the IAB using propensity score matching technique to construct a comparison group, with finding an unsubsidized job as the outcome variable, Bernhard and Kruppe (2012) found positive effects for UBII recipients who participated in educational or vocational training. The empirical findings are consistent with hypotheses derived from human capital theory (Becker, 1962). Owing to the lock-in effect, as long as the vocational training lasts, participants have lower chances of finding employment—but this effect can nonetheless be interpreted as a phase of investment in the recipient’s human capital. After the vocational training is finished, participants gained up to 13 percentage points higher employment prospects and up to 10 percentage points lower receipt of benefit than non-participants (Bernhard and Kruppe, 2012). Their findings on the effect vocational training programmes have on recipients finding work in Germany are in line with results from earlier evaluations (Stephan, 2008; Biewen et al., 2007; Rinne et al., 2011). Taking into account the effects of vocational training for groups differentiated by age, sex, migration status, skills, length of training, duration since the end of the last job and differences between East and West Germany, Bernhard and Kruppe (2012) found that more disadvantaged groups benefit from participation in further vocational training to pretty much the same degree as less disadvantaged groups. This applies to migrants, the elderly and individuals without qualifications and/or those unemployed for a long period of time. Thus Bernhard and Kruppe (2012) argue that if more disadvantaged groups were comprehensively encouraged to participate in further vocational training, the effect would not decrease. It would instead generate opportunities for more disadvantaged groups to gain from further vocational training. From an equal opportunities perspective, they argue that more disadvantaged groups should take part in and be offered expanded opportunities to participate in vocational skills training in order to increase their labour market opportunities.

⁸⁶ The Integrated Employment Biographies dataset from the IAB.

⁸⁷ The treatment group consists of all registered UBII recipients on January 31, 2005 and who started further vocational training between February and April 2005. The control group consist of a 20 percent random sample of the stock of unemployed receiving UBII on January 31, 2005. The control group did not start future vocational training between February and April 2005, but they could have participated later on.

Through an operationalization of employability, Brussig et al. (2010) analysed whether UBII recipients become more employable over time as a result of ALMP interventions.⁸⁸ Overall the findings suggest that individual employability and more so, the individual dimensions of employability, can be influenced through ALMPs. Indeed those ALMP instruments that place a value on in-business internships result in a significant improvement for individual employability. Qualification related skills trainings improve employability in two dimensions: individual resources and the willingness to make job concessions. But they do not significantly increase the total index of employability. Moreover, segmentation of recipients into specialized training placements improved their qualifications and competence and thus their employability. In this context, it could mean that tailoring skills training to an individual's needs and wants are more effective than general programmes designed for everyone. Similar to Heyer et al.'s (2011) findings, the use of third-party providers of services increased the employability of respondents which suggests, when combined, the specialization of third-party providers of services and the training instruments work well together (Brussig et al., 2010).

3.4.1 Research on the effectiveness of One-Euro-Jobs

With the induction of the law, the Second Book of the German Social Code (SGBII), in January 2005 two types of workfare or work opportunity programmes were introduced: the One-Euro-Job⁸⁹ and the salaried work opportunity job (Entgeltvariante). These were two types of training 'support' (Fördern) provided by the Jobcenters.⁹⁰ Participants in the One-Euro-Job still receive their UBGII benefit plus an additional payment of €1.00 to €2.00 an

⁸⁸ The main data stems from a two-wave panel survey of persons who, from October 2006 on, received UBII. The first wave was from January-April 2007 and the second wave was from November to March 2008. The substance of the survey consisted of social-demographic data on recipients' age, sex, and the construction of the household. Those surveyed were asked how they were 'activated' i.e., which instruments were used, which skills training they participated in and how they would evaluate the instrument. Respondents were asked about their employment history including qualifications, competence, personality, individual resources, willingness to make concessions, personal circumstances and social environment. Using propensity score matching techniques Brussig et al. create statistical twins by taking from the 'not participated' group individuals and matching them with the 'participated' where the outcome variable 'employability' is identical. But the assumed effect is only identifiable when the relevant characteristics are observable. The matching technique leads to a consistent assumption of the average (mean) treatment effect only if the decision to participate in an ALMP instrument has no influence on the 'did not participate' results. This is ensured through the conditioning of the relevant observed characteristics.

⁸⁹ The official name of the One-Euro-Job is Arbeitsgelegenheit in der Mehraufwandsvariante §16d SGBII, but is pejoratively referred to in media and research as the One-Euro-Job.

⁹⁰ The decision ultimately rest with the case manager as to which type of training a recipient is placed in. With the salaried work opportunity job, participating employers are subsidized by the Jobcenter when they hire UBII recipients who are in need of labour market support who otherwise, for various individual reasons, have found it very difficult—if not impossible—to find regular work. The UBII recipient can receive up to 75 percent of the regular wage for the job done for a length of 24 months (as opposed to the previous five years). In order to participate the UBII recipient has to be considered long-term unemployed and have had at least two additional problems, based on either placement constraints or obstructions that they can prove, that prevented them from being mediated into the regular employment. The recipient must receive intensive mediation support for at least six months, after which time it can be determined by the case manager that integration into the general labour market appears hopeless and the recipient is thus advised to participate in the support for work conditions training (Hohenmeyer and Wolff, 2012).

hour. Participation is limited to 30 hours per week so that the recipient has time remaining to look for regular work. On average the participant earns an extra €200.00 a month in addition to the UBII benefit received. Prior to the discontinuation of the Entgeltvariante (salaried work opportunity programme), participants receive a regular salary (or an hourly wage) in a job with compulsory insurance (which until the end of 2008 also included unemployment insurance).⁹¹ Both are considered skill trainings (Maßnahmen). In the 2012 law to Improve the Integration Chances of the Unemployed in the Labour Market (Gesetz zur Verbesserung der Eingliederungschancen am Arbeitsmarkt §16e SGBII) the Federal Employment Agency combined the salaried work opportunity programme with the employment subsidy scheme and thus the salaried work opportunity programme ceased to exist. The One-Euro-Job remained unchanged. With c. 436,000 participants in 2011 alone, at the start of this research the One-Euro-Job was the most used active labour market policy instrument for the professional integration and activation of the unemployed on UBII. In comparison, only 39,000 UBII recipients participated in the salaried work opportunity programme in 2011 (Statistik der Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2011). The One-Euro-Job embraces both the principle of Fördern (to support the recipient in finding work) and the workfare element of Fordern (demand/activate). Thus One-Euro-Jobs provide a recipient an opportunity to become ‘employable’ while at the same time if a recipient refuses to participate, he or she can be sanctioned. This use of competing principles is what Bellmann et al. call ‘mixed motive decisions’ that form the basis of the One-Euro-Job (2006).

One-Euro-Jobs are considered a skill training (Maßnahme) and not a ‘job’ because the One-Euro-Job provides the UBII recipient, who may heretofore have had little or no work experience, an opportunity to accustom the recipient to regular work habits, introduce them to a professional work setting while also testing a recipient’s willingness to work. The One-Euro-Job should help generate a job for someone who is otherwise considered hard to integrate into the labour market (‘arbeitsfern’) with the goal of making the recipient “employable” (Hohendanner et al., 2011). One-Euro-Jobs usually run for six months (though in practice they last much longer) and are generally located in the public or non-profit sector. A One-Euro-Job can only be work performed in addition to (‘zusätzlich’) an organization’s regular work needs (SGBII §16d(2)); must be in the public interest (‘im öffentlichen Interesse’) (SGBII §16d(3)); and cannot displace jobs in the regular labour market or result in

⁹¹ Up until 2009, the actually hourly wage was not set and varied from location to location. After 2009 the Federal Employment Agency recommended a sum of 1000€ per month which was instituted in 2010. The length of participation in a work opportunity job can last up to one year and often results in the person being hired full-time (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2009b).

regularly employed employees losing their job ('wettbewerbsneutral') (SGBII §16d(4)). This last legal point is to prevent crowding out effects and distortion of competition. The additional €1.00-€2.00 euros earned per hour is not considered a 'wage' or 'salary' and therefore no 'regular' employment takes place. This is an important nuance because since the recipient is not 'working' rather he or she is being 'trained' the employer is not required to make social insurance contributions (Wulfgramm, 2011). Thus the employer is not to expect that his or her workload or employment needs will be met through the recipient's work. While some recipients may (and do) welcome the opportunity to supplement their income by taking part in the One-Euro-Jobs and may (and do) actually seek participation, as Hohendanner et al. (2011) and Kettner and Rebien (2007) point out, the implementation of the One-Euro-Job is stuck between two contrary goals: "Zwischen Arbeitsmarktintegration, die über unverzichtbare Tätigkeiten besser gelänge und der Vermeidung von Missbrauch durch Eingrenzung der Tätigkeiten auf verzichtbare Arbeit" (Between the goals of labour market integration and the prevention of abuse. Labour market integration would benefit from permitting indispensable activities while restricting activities to dispensable/unnecessary labour would help prevent abuse) (Hohendanner et al., 2011:8).

To-date, there have been few studies (and thus few findings) on the effect One-Euro-Jobs have had on integrating recipients into the regular labour market. Hohmeyer and Wolff (2007) used a stock sample of UBII recipients from January 2005 who participated in a One-Euro-Job from February to April 2005. They were then followed for 20 months after the start of the programme to determine whether there was an uptake in employment as a result of participating in a One-Euro-Job. At the end of the observation period they found insignificant effects on employment uptake for men and slightly positive effects for women, especially female immigrants in West Germany.⁹² Using the same data Hohmeyer and Wolff (2012) analysed a cohort who participated in either the One-Euro-Job *or* the salaried work opportunity programme (Entgeltvariante) in order to analyse the effect each workfare programme had on the recipients' ability to find regular work. The salaried work opportunity programme distinguishes itself from the One-Euro-Job in that it is actual work the recipient is doing and he or she is placed in a job that matches his or her interest and skills. The job

⁹² Several shortcomings may cast doubt on the reliability of the estimates. The One-Euro-Job was introduced only at the beginning of 2005 and it took almost a year to implement. Moreover there were known data collection and data transmission problems in the Jobcenter offices during this time, which may have affected the results. Second, relying on a stock sample of UBII recipients may result in biased estimates due to an over-representation of the long spells. Although the sample was drawn at the end of January 2005, UBII recipients originally were transferred from formally social assistance and unemployment assistance and thus they could have been registered in the system for several years already. In addition, the sampling design did not take into account the exact timing of treatment during the UBII spell.

usually last for one year or more and the recipient is paid an actual wage that comes directly from the employer. Given that both training programmes have the same objectives but are designed differently, it makes for an interesting and important point for comparing the effect programme design has on integrating the unemployed into regular work. Overall the direct comparison of the participant effects shows that the support provided through the work opportunity jobs is a better alternative to the One-Euro-Jobs: the employment effects for participation in the work opportunity jobs are significantly higher (Hohmeyer and Wolff, 2012). However in the short-term both types of skills trainings had slightly (negligible) reduced the chance of participants finding regular work. This effect was stronger with the salaried work opportunity programme as opposed to the One-Euro-Job and was due to the lock-in effect of the salaried work opportunity job.⁹³ In the mid-term both types of skills trainings improved the likelihood that the recipient would move into regular work. But participation in the salaried work opportunity jobs resulted in faster and higher numbers being integrated into the regular labour market compared to One-Euro-Job participants. Indeed, the long-term view showed that after one year, participants of the work opportunity jobs had more positive employment effects. One-Euro-Job participants generally have positive support effects (Förderwirkung), but these effects are delayed and clearly weaker.

For Hohmeyer and Wolff (2012) the possible reasons for these results rest in the different composition of the participants and the different design of the programmes. The support (Förderung) provided by the salaried work opportunity programmes is more attractive to the UBII recipient because he or she receives an actual wage. It offered the UBII recipient a wider field from which to choose a job and given that the recipient received more intense support, the jobs they performed were more interesting and germane to the recipient. Here programme design is highly relevant. That the salaried work opportunity programme was not viewed by the recipient or the employer as a ‘training’ per se, like the One-Euro-Job, the salaried work opportunity job was not work done in addition to the actual work performed by the regular employees. This meant that the recipient conducts actual work that resulted in experience that could translate into future employment opportunities that increased the integration probability of the participant. Hohmeyer and Wolff (2012) argue that a better fit

⁹³ Work opportunity programmes should increase the employment chances of the participants, through for example, obtaining work experience, getting used to working regular hours and working in a professional environment. But the time taken out to participate in the training results in time taken away from the actual job search. This lock-in effect can be stronger if the recipient is participating in a training that last for a substantial amount of time and/or is paid well. Thus the lock-in effect of the work opportunity jobs is stronger than for One-Euro-Jobs because the work opportunity job is better paid, is an actual job, last longer and is a more intensive work experience than the One-Euro-Job. (Hohmeyer and Wolff, 2012).

between participant and training (Maßnahme) are the reasons for this result.⁹⁴ Overall the results demonstrate that the recipient's selection into, as well as the design of, the training is important for the effectiveness of the support (Förderung) measure.

Huber et al. (2010) evaluated the effects of a set of active labour market programmes including the One-Euro-Job on regular employment uptake. They investigated short- and longer-term training with a planned duration of up to three months that aimed at increasing regular employment rates. They also analysed the One-Euro-Job aims at improving the employability of UBII recipients with particularly poor employment prospects. Using data on a stock sample of UBII recipients who participated in programmes from October 2006 and March 2007, they considered the short-run outcomes up to 17 months after programme start. They found that short-term training programmes, which are a combination of job-search assistance, work tests and minor improvement of general skills, on average, increased participants' employment perspectives. But they did not find significant treatment effects for participation in One-Euro-Jobs or further training programmes.⁹⁵ Thomsen and Walter (2010) evaluated the effects of working in a One-Euro-Job on the chance of exiting UBII and taking up regular employment for immigrant and German recipients. For the empirical analysis they used an inflow sample of UBII recipients from 2006 who were followed until July 2008.⁹⁶ Using propensity score matching techniques to estimate the average effect of treatment on the treated, their empirical results showed strong lock-in effects of participation, independent of sex and ethnic group, resulting in negative employment effects during the time of programme participation. After programme's end, the employment effects tended to increase only slightly and remain negative or at best insignificant until the end of the observation period in all groups. The negative effects are a bit more pronounced for Germans than for immigrants and therefore they conclude that the One-Euro-Job fails to achieve the intended purpose of providing a means for integrating UBII recipients into the regular labour market (Thomsen and Walter, 2010).

⁹⁴ The authors argue that one cannot conclude from this study that the work opportunity jobs instead of the One-Euro-Jobs should be expanded because the results are dependent on a small sample from the support group. Plus the analysis of the effects is predicated on participants who were supported very shortly after the induction of SGBII in 2005.

⁹⁵ There is some indication that the training courses may result in regular employment and that further training has had some positive employment effects. But the sample size was too small to draw definite conclusions based on the estimated effects being insignificant. Moreover, their evaluation window was too short to draw any conclusions with respect to mid- and long-term effects, especially for the One-Euro-Job.

⁹⁶ Thomsen and Walter argue that they overcome prior studies limitations by using an inflow sample of UBII recipients in Germany in 2006 who are followed until July 2008. In addition, the size of the sample allows for a meaningful comparison of estimated treatment effects for immigrants and Germans.

As part of the Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs' 2011 progress report on the effectiveness of the government's active labour market instruments, IAB researchers (Heyer et al., 2011) analysed the effect One-Euro-Jobs had on moving East and West German men and women into the regular labour market and compared their labour market success with those who were similar but did not participate in a One-Euro-Job. They found that participation in a One-Euro-Job increased the chance of finding regular employment only for specific groups of participations. This included East and West German women, persons between the age of 36 and 50 or 51 and 62 and was especially significant for the long-term unemployed. The chance of integration into the regular labour market increased by 1 to 6 percentage points after 20 months from the start of the recipient's One-Euro-Job. For young men and women, differentiated by sex, whether they lived in East or West Germany, education, apprenticeship history and work experience, the results of participation in the mid-term (28 months after the start of the One-Euro-Job) could not be traced to their success in the regular labour market. For this group of participants there are slightly positive integration effects for young East German men and West German women without an apprenticeship certificate. Their chance of integration increased by 3 to 4 percentage points compared with the comparison groups.⁹⁷ The report stresses the overall success of the One-Euro-Job in meeting its objective, though the results are nonetheless mixed and varied based on the heterogeneity of the recipients. Hohendanner et al. (2011) investigated in-firm transitions from One-Euro-Jobs to regular employment. Indeed, they explored whether the organization ended up offering permanent positions to their One-Euro-Job recipients. They found that in-firm transitions for the One-Euro-Job participant did not take place. Instead, the benefit fell on the organizations that profited from the indirect funding of regular work through the financial support received from the One-Euro-Job skill training (Hohendanner et al., 2011).

An internal audit conducted by the Bundesrechnungshof (Germany's Supreme Audit Commission) (2010) found that One-Euro-Jobs hardly helped improve the labour market chances of UBII recipients. Indeed, in more than half of audited cases, the One-Euro-Job failed to meet the conditions of 'support' (Fördern) either because the job was not, as

⁹⁷ This study uses administrative data from the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit). The data has detailed information on the socio-demographic descriptors (indicators) that included time of unemployment, whether UBI or UBII recipients, participation in skills training, etc. The participants were unemployed on April 30, 2005 and began a One-Euro-Job between May and July 2005. A similar comparison group was selected who did not participate in a One-Euro-Job. The researchers used propensity score matching techniques to match the two groups. They selected a non-treated person with a similar probability of participation as the treated person. The analysis assumes that the success of the non-treated person in the labour market correlates exactly to the success of the treated in the One-Euro-Job in terms of getting a regular job. Yet, a common problem is that one cannot glean from the data the non-treated person's motivation or personal interests that can impact decision making processes. This can result in skewed findings (Heyer et al., 2012).

prescribed by the law, ‘in addition to’ (zusätzlich) work otherwise not needed or was not work that served the general interest of the public (im öffentlichen Interesse). The long-term unemployed were found to be removing illegal waste, to be working in a building yard or were cleaning bathrooms at a retirement home. Moreover, the Audit Commission (2010) found that One-Euro-Jobs do indeed displace regular workers; One-Euro-Job participants were performing ‘regular’ work. As a result those organizations who took on One-Euro-Job participants were profiting from their labour.

Melike Wulfgramm (2011) analysed the subjective effects of ALMPs by investigating whether One-Euro-Jobs reduce the negative psychological effects of unemployment by influencing one’s sense of overall wellbeing and self-esteem.⁹⁸ She uses the PASS (Arbeitsmarkt und soziale Sicherung) panel data and created three indicators to operationalize the subjective effects One-Euro-Jobs have on UBII recipients: gesellschaftliche Teilhabe (social participation), sozialer Status (social status) and Lebenszufriedenheit (overall sense of contentment and happiness with life). She found that while participation in One-Euro-Jobs increased participants’ feelings of social participation, nothing changed in terms of their perception of their social status. Participants’ level of ‘happiness’ or ‘contentment’ was positive, but remained far behind the effect for those who are in regular employment. Indeed, overall the results of her study showed that UBII recipients belong to one of the most unhappy and least content group of Germans. They feel socially excluded with a very low social status. Yet that said, UBII participants felt that the One-Euro-Job gave them a sense of purpose. Indeed the One-Euro-Job does partly fulfil its social-psychological objective, namely to provide the participant with a feeling of inclusion in the workforce. This feeling was significantly stronger when participating in a One-Euro-Job than when not. Per the Federal Employment Agency, one of the goals of One-Euro-Jobs is to socially integrate the unemployed through participation in a One-Euro-Job and as the findings suggest, this does indeed happen. Yet, qualitative studies to-date show that UBII recipients feel limited and restricted in terms of their identity, rights, agency and participation. In addition to investigating One-Euro-Job participants ability to integrate into regular work, Schröder (2009) investigated whether participation in One-Euro-Jobs resulted in the recipient feeling less socially isolated—what Bartelheimer (2007: 24) calls a “sekundäre Teilhabe” (secondary participation). Indeed Schröder found when she asked UBII recipients whether participation

⁹⁸ For example, having a job may make you feel better, give a person sense of purpose, self-esteem, etc.

in a One-Euro-Job enabled them to temporarily overcome feelings of social isolation, the response was overwhelmingly ‘no’.

3.5 Chapter summary and conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to set the context for the subsequent research questions asked and the study conducted. Thus, this chapter has explored literature that pertains to key themes surrounding the role and function of active labour market policies in reformed unemployment insurance schemes generally and in Germany specifically. The topics selected for review are directly related to the two research questions set out in this thesis. Indeed this research aims to address empirical and conceptual gaps in relation to the following questions:

- Are the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients?
- How meaningful is the Fördern and Fordern policy discourse for Unemployment Benefit II recipients, in terms of their perception of a ‘right’ to and ‘responsibility’ in finding work?

Central to the fourth Hartz law in Germany was the policy objective to reduce benefit caseloads and thus unemployment numbers through the enhanced use of active labour market policy mechanisms such as skills training and job placement services. While these activation mechanisms have existed since the late 1970s in Germany (see Chapter Two section 2.4.1 and 2.4.2) and receipt of benefit has generally been accompanied by some form of conditionality, the advent of the fourth Hartz law nonetheless created a uniform system under which every UBII recipient now has to demonstrate responsibility (Fordern) in return for their being supported (Fördern). Given this relationship between Fördern and Fordern coupled with the objective of the reforms, it is then a question of whether the support measures in place, taking the current labour market context into consideration, actually assist in integrating participants into the [regular] labour market. As a review of the literature has shown, there is indeed little consensus on whether and if so which type of ALMP programmes actually reduce unemployment for those in receipt of unemployment benefit. That said there are challenges to any review given the limitations of data, different levels of

abstraction, the challenges with propensity score matching techniques and programme differentiation both within and across countries.

What does seem to be clear is that the nature of the German labour market has changed in the last thirty years. As Standing has argued, the change in the labour market landscape since the 1970s that has resulted in an increase in fixed-term contracts and temporary work has brought about a new class of worker—the precariat. Yet, it is not only a new class of worker that has emerged but also the precarious position that jobseekers and workers alike find themselves in as a result of the change in the labour market conditions. This rise of atypical employment and suppressed real wages are often intertwined and, without question, disproportionately affect the long-term unemployed and/or those considered difficult to integrate into the labour market. Not so long ago, Germany provided some of the highest wages to the protected and unprotected worker alike. Yet, as a review of the literature has shown, atypical work coupled with low-wage jobs is on the rise in Germany with women, the low-skilled and immigrants disproportionately affected by these changes. Indeed, as will be demonstrated in Chapter Five (section 5.3), it is these sub-groups in Germany that are disproportionately in receipt of Unemployment Benefit II.

Thus, on the one hand, UBII recipients are presented with support mechanisms that may or may not assist them in integrating into the labour market, and if they do integrate, some may find themselves stuck in the cycle of short-term contracts with low pay with the potential to end up back on benefit. It is this nexus that is hard to untangle through quantitative analysis because research, for example, employing propensity score matching techniques is limited in the questions that can be asked and the themes that can be explored. As a result, issues relating to skills training and job placement services such as purpose, utility and value of training and placement services are more difficult to capture in quantitative research. That is why the lived experiences of UBII recipients are essential to explore because it allows researchers to address and unpack these very issues. It is through an analysis of interviews with 50 UBII recipients that this research aims to better understand whether the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms (integration into the labour market through the use of support mechanisms) is reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients. This thesis employs qualitative semi-structured interview methodology to unpack a range of issues that are more difficult to uncover in large-scale quantitative analysis. As a result this study will provide a rich context for understanding

the objectives of the reforms in conjunction with the lived experience of UBII recipients who interface with this changed labour market landscape (Standing, 2011 and Doogan, 2009) and, as such, fill this gap in the literature.

Chapter Four: A Two-Fold Framework: From Foucault's Theory of Governmentality to Critical Theories of Citizenship

4.1 Introduction

As announced in Chapter One, a Foucauldian analytic—specifically premised on the concepts of immanent function and the ‘conduct of conduct’—will later be adopted to help make sense of the findings that suggest a tension or contradiction between the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms and the lived experiences of UBII recipients who participated in skills training and job placement services. This chapter will therefore present a discussion of the relevance Foucault's use of immanent function and the ‘conduct of conduct’ has to understanding the larger significance of the findings on skills training and job placement services. But Foucault is not the only analytic that will be adopted. Indeed, in order to interpret the findings that related to my second research question, I adopted a broader understanding of citizenship theory—specifically Hartley Dean's heuristic device for understanding competing constructions of rights and responsibilities as they pertain to capitalist social policies (see figure 4.1). The construction of categories is always fraught with difficulties in that there is simply never a perfect category that neatly captures all components of an issue. That said Dean's diagram nonetheless provides a context and thereby gives meaning to the categories I constructed based on an analysis of respondent responses to their perception of a right to and responsibility in finding work (see Chapter Eight). Here it is important to reiterate that the two-fold analytic consisting both of Foucault's theory of power and critical theories of citizenship were only adopted after the analysis of my data was complete. It was at that point that each theory's relevance to understanding my data was revealed. Indeed any analytic adopted here was not applied to the design of the project, but used subsequently in order to make sense of the data. Thus, before we can proceed with unpacking the evidence in the proceeding chapters, it is first important to step back and explore the significance the shift away from the Marshallian understanding of welfare as a social right⁹⁹ to the New Right's (and indeed the Third Way) perception of a right to welfare being predicated on one's ability to demonstrate responsibility has had on the type of policy interventions adopted in Germany.

⁹⁹ Marshall does address responsibility too, but from the perspective of public duty instead of seeing rights and responsibility as part of a reciprocal relationship (see for example Marshall, 1950: 41).

Therefore, in this chapter section 4.2 introduces more broadly the relevance Foucault's governmentality analytic has to social policy analysis. Section 4.3 explores further the justification for adopting a Foucauldian approach to assist in interpreting the findings from this study. Here Foucault's use of immanent function and the 'conduct of conduct' are discussed in relation to the main themes to emerge from an analysis of the evidence. Section 4.4 will then examine the meaning of *Fördern* and *Fordern* as it relates to the academic literature on rights and responsibilities. This includes a discussion of the Marshallian understanding of welfare as a social right and its implication on policy design generally but in post-war Britain specifically. This section then explores the impact the New Right's change in perception of welfare as a social right to it being predicated on demonstrating responsibility has had on social policy design in the West since the 1990s. Section 4.5 concludes by providing an overview of the two-fold theoretical analytic adopted as it relates to this thesis' two research questions.

4.2 The Foucauldian Analytic

In recent years, the use of a state-centred analytic in social policy and welfare state analysis specifically has been questioned by a growing number of policy researchers as it has failed to provide a way in which concepts can be problematized in order to make sense of the changing landscape of social policy practice (M. Dean, 2010). An analytic of governmentality re-emerged as part of the 'street-level' policy evaluations that came about as a result of welfare reforms in the US and UK in the late 1990s (see Brodtkin, 1997) because it provided a much needed framework within which to analyse the actual practices of government instead of just the institutions of government. Newman's (2001) macro-level governance approach to welfare state analysis only allows an arms-length understanding of how power and authority operate through a more traditional top-down analysis of public administration. The Governmentality analytic however provides a distinctly new form of thinking about how power is exercised within certain societies and in specific contexts and as such offers an alternative to Newman's (2001) top-down analysis. As Foucault wrote "rather than asking ourselves what the sovereign looks like from on high, we should be trying to discover how multiple bodies, forces, energies, matters, desires, thoughts and so on are gradually, progressively, actually and materially constituted as subjects" (Foucault, 2003:

28). It is not the intention of a Foucauldian analytic to remove the ‘state’ from social policy analysis but rather to reposition how we think about power, authority and the state. Using governmentality to analyse social policy allows us to “...explore the ways and means by which participants both transform themselves and are transformed as a consequence of the development and application of specific social policies” (Marston and McDonald, 2006: 4).

Governmentality as an approach recognizes that the state does not have a monopoly on power and authority, but as Marston and McDonald point out (2006), the state remains central to the exercise of power in social policy practice. Foucault’s thinking about power consists of a much broader conception of government as any activity directed towards the conduct of others and selves. In other words, and of fundamental importance to Foucault’s analytic, this is a break from thinking that power operates primarily at a macro level. This thus allows for the seemingly mundane aspects of government action to be understood as important areas where power is utilized, such as in the everyday interactions that take place in bureaucratic agencies—an important source and site of governmental power. It is within bureaucratic agencies where the complexity of power relations and forms of authority take place between multiple actors and agents who govern (Marston and McDonald, 2006).

Therefore a Foucauldian analytic provides a framework within which to analyse how the finite details impact the ‘big picture’. Korteweg argues that “the framework of governmentality directs our focus to the fine grained practices that link subject formation to the techniques by which we govern ourselves and others” (2006:112, see also Rose, 1999). It is through this micro analysis of the “fine grained practices”—in this case UBII recipients’ Jobcenter experience generally—that we are able to go beyond a mere understanding of the actions and structures of the state and instead “connect questions of government, politics and administration to the space of bodies, lives, selves and persons” and how those are managed, directed, ordered and administered (M. Dean, 1999:12). What is interesting here, is that while there has been a move in some countries, Britain particularly but Germany as well, to outsource bureaucratic state functions to non-state agencies (i.e., contracting out employment services), no matter how and by whom bureaucratic state functions are being managed, the immanent relations of power remain much the same, irrespective of how they are disguised. Given the prominence of the Jobcenter as the central source and site of service provision, one reason the German case is an interesting one to study is that the immanent relations of power are not so disguised.

4.3 The relevance of Foucault's use of immanent function and the 'conduct of conduct' to interpreting my findings

A key aspect to understanding the findings on Unemployment Benefit II recipients' experience with skills training and job placement services rest with Foucault's idea that bureaucratic processes serve an immanent function. According to Foucault, though it is possible to identify designs and strategies in power relationships, there is no one individual subject (or group of subjects) exercising or guiding this power. This means, in the context of the Jobcenter for example, that there is no master plan as such conceived of by, for example, policy makers to ensure that support mechanisms, such as skills trainings, provided to UBII recipients by the Jobcenter (and by extension, the Federal Republic) fail to meet their needs.

As Foucault writes:

If in fact they [the power relations] are intelligible, this is not because they are the effect of another instance that 'explains' them, but rather because they are imbued, through and through, with calculation: there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives...the logic is perfectly clear, the aims decipherable and yet it is often the case that no one is there to have invented them, and few who can be said to have formulated them (1998:95).

When this excerpt is put alongside the passage from *Discipline and Punish* where Foucault speaks about the prison's failure to combat delinquency—"...the prison, apparently 'failing' does not miss its target; on the contrary, it reaches it, in so far as it gives rise to one particular form of illegality in the midst of others, which it is able to isolate, to place in full light and to organize in a relatively enclosed, but penetrable, milieu" (1979: 276-77)—it becomes a question of the intelligible instead of the actual function of bureaucracies. While the perception and experience of respondents for this study indicate that the Jobcenter, generally, is not providing the level of support, for example, that they need, there is, nevertheless, an immanent logic behind the Jobcenter not meeting its said purpose. Important here is that the policy has not been consciously designed and implemented with the explicit intent of preventing rather than supporting UBII recipients in their endeavour to integrate into the regular labour market. It is instead the symbolic significance of the support mechanisms not meeting UBII recipients' needs that is important and will be revealed in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

A second key concept used to interpret the findings of this thesis draws on Foucault's notion of the 'conduct of conduct'.¹⁰⁰ In 1978 and 1979, Foucault gave a series of lectures in which he focused on the 'problem of government' or as he put it—the genealogy of the modern state (Marston and McDonald, 2006). He was interested in developing a new way of thinking about how modern forms of government shaped the conduct of others and the conduct of 'selves'—known as the 'conduct of conduct'. The 'conduct of conduct' is that which is problematized. It provides the researcher a space in which fundamental questions can be asked about how (rather than just why) knowledge, power and subjectivity are built into the social and governmental structures that we interact with on a day-to-day basis and how this shapes our conduct as a result.

Perhaps the equivocal nature of the term 'conduct' is one of the best aids for coming to terms with the specificity of power relations. To 'conduct' is at the same time to 'lead' others (according to mechanisms of coercion that are, to varying degrees, strict) and a way of behaving within a more or less open field of possibilities. The exercise of power is a 'conduct of conducts' and a management of possibilities. Basically, power is less a confrontation between two adversaries or their mutual engagement than a question of 'government'... 'Government' did not refer only to political structures or to the management of states; rather, it designated the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed... (Foucault, 2000: 341).

It is within these micro-practices that the conduct of individuals is ultimately shaped. This is not just a question of *how* authority is exercised over others, rather more about *how* we govern ourselves within the rubric of this authority. In the context of the Jobcenter, for example, the fact that the receipt of unemployment benefit II is predicated on recipients performing certain tasks, i.e., participation in a skills training or the requirement to submit to the case manager a specified number of job applications applied to, is linked to regulations and procedures which dictate how UBII recipients are expected to conduct themselves within the governed space of the Jobcenter. This is manifested and solidified through the signing of the Integration into Work Agreement between the case manager and the UBII recipient that stipulates what he or she must do to find work or face sanctions. Foucauldian concepts of disciplinarity involve any set of mundane operations, actions or social relationships that have the ability to direct and thus effect what people do and the social order in which they do it. Knowles (1999) refers to 'disciplinarity' as decentralized power that exists in timetabling, in organization, in bureaucratic structures, in the arrangement of space and the operation of the gaze—in fact in any set of procedures with a definite outcome. The daily practices of

¹⁰⁰ The 'conduct of conduct' as such never appeared in Foucault's writing. Rather his discourse on conduct was translated into English as the 'conduct of conduct'.

Jobcenter case managers are brought into relief because they constitute micro-power clusters that have the ability to determine the fate of a UBII recipient based his or her interpretation of the rules and regulations. Indeed the UBII recipient has two distinct tasks: one to find a job and the other to find a job on the terms and conditions set forth by the Jobcenter. Knowles (1999) likens the effect a case manager has on determining a recipients' behaviour on much the same terms as 'the state' itself has the authority to shape its constituents' behaviour based on government policies enacted. And indeed, the introduction of the *Fördern and Fordern* policy framework within which both Jobcenter case managers and UBII recipients operate has had a profound impact on recipient behaviour as will be disclosed in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

4.4 From rights and responsibilities to *Fördern and Fordern*

Fundamental to the practical design and implementation of the fourth Hartz law was the introduction of '*Fördern and Fordern*' into the public discourse as a way to explain the purpose of the reforms as well as galvanize public support for them. '*Fördern*' refers to the support provided by the Jobcenter to assist the jobseeker in integrating into the labour market while '*Fordern*' is the activation component—the ability of the Jobcenter to demand, in return for the support provided, evidence that the jobseeker is actively seeking work.¹⁰¹ The obligation to work under such a model is justified on grounds of reciprocity bound through the Integration into Work Agreement between the jobseeker and the state (the case manager).¹⁰² The contract outlines the route of entry or re-entry into the labour market. The agreement is designed as an instrument of support that is a two-way, legally binding, and mutually negotiated agreement (Rauch and Dornette, 2009; Konle-Seidl and Eichhorst, 2008). This is not to say that prior to the inception of the Hartz IV reforms and the adoption of the *Fördern and Fordern* framework that receipt of unemployment benefit was unconditional. Indeed, conditionality varied between the three different unemployment benefit programs (social insurance, unemployment assistance and social assistance) and

¹⁰¹ *Fordern* (demand) manifest itself through advanced job placement and stricter job suitability criteria which were set up in order to shorten periods of individual unemployment. Refusing job offers, apprenticeships or job training or resigning from work without a good reason leads to sanctions. *Fördern* (support) operates mainly through new active labour market instruments, such as public employment opportunities and skill training placements that are to assist jobseekers who cannot find work.

¹⁰² The benefit recipient is required to sign and fulfil the agreement in order to avoid a reduction of benefits through sanctions. Reinhard and Kaufman (2008) point out that in legal terms, a contract suggests that both parties have a say in what they are bargaining for and a choice with whom they negotiate. In the context of activation, legal experts argue that there is not much to bargain. If the jobseeker complies with the requirements, the relevant institution (i.e., the Jobcenter) is obliged to offer an activation measure, i.e., vocational training. On the other hand, the jobseeker has to do everything to reintegrate into the labour market.

between municipalities (See Chapter Two section 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 for more detail). What *is* new with the advent of the reforms to unemployment insurance, unemployment assistance and social assistance is the fundamental contestability of social rights and the premise of social citizenship.

The introduction of the concept of *Fördern* and *Fordern* into the policy design of the Hartz reforms can be seen as the equivalent to the Anglo-centric concept of ‘rights and responsibilities’ in the UK (Clasen and Clegg, 2006; Clasen, 2005). Indeed perhaps no concept has had such a profound impact on perceptions of welfare recipients’ relationship to work as the reinvented interpretation of ‘rights’ and ‘responsibilities’—the desire to enforce the civic responsibilities of workers as citizens. As part of the on-going steps to reform welfare, it was argued by both the American New Right and the Third Way (the shared neo-liberal strand in each) that ‘rights’ were out of sync with ‘responsibilities’ and that at the heart of the problem was a welfare state that was enabling a culture of dependency (Murray, 1984). This ‘dependency’ argument was used to rebuke recipients on benefit as irresponsible, not willing to help themselves through finding work and thus undeserving of support. Indeed, the concept of ‘social citizenship’—“those rights and duties of citizenship concerned with the welfare of people as citizens”¹⁰³—became increasingly viewed with scepticism by the New Right and Neoconservatism in Britain (Roche, 1992: 3). As Roche (1992) points out, the 1970s ‘crises’ of the welfare state and the subsequent ‘welfare reform’ agenda fostered a unified scepticism about the value and relevance of social citizenship. Thus as the concept of social citizenship has changed in the last thirty years, reliance on the welfare state has come to be understood as a sign of individual failure, rather than a means to redistribute resources to meet competing needs (Dwyer, 2004).

Ever since T.H. Marshall’s ground-breaking essay *Citizenship and Social Class* (1950) the goal of the European welfare state has been the ideal of ‘full citizenship’—citizenship, according to Marshall, entailed not only civic and political, but social rights as well—in particular the right to income maintenance (H. Dean, 2007). Arguably, T.H. Marshall’s social rights were a unique achievement of the 20th century—though one that failed to include women in his vision of ‘full citizenship’.¹⁰⁴ The induction of social rights—entitlement to

¹⁰³ For Roche (1992) ‘welfare’ here is taken in the broadest sense and includes such things as work, education, health and quality of life.

¹⁰⁴ As Lister points out Marshall is silent on the question of women’s economic dependence and the implication this had on their ‘citizenship’ status. Women being granted civil, political and social rights has traditionally lagged behind that of men. Indeed the ideal of citizenship was built around the gendered understanding of what a man should be, while women have typically been relegated to a

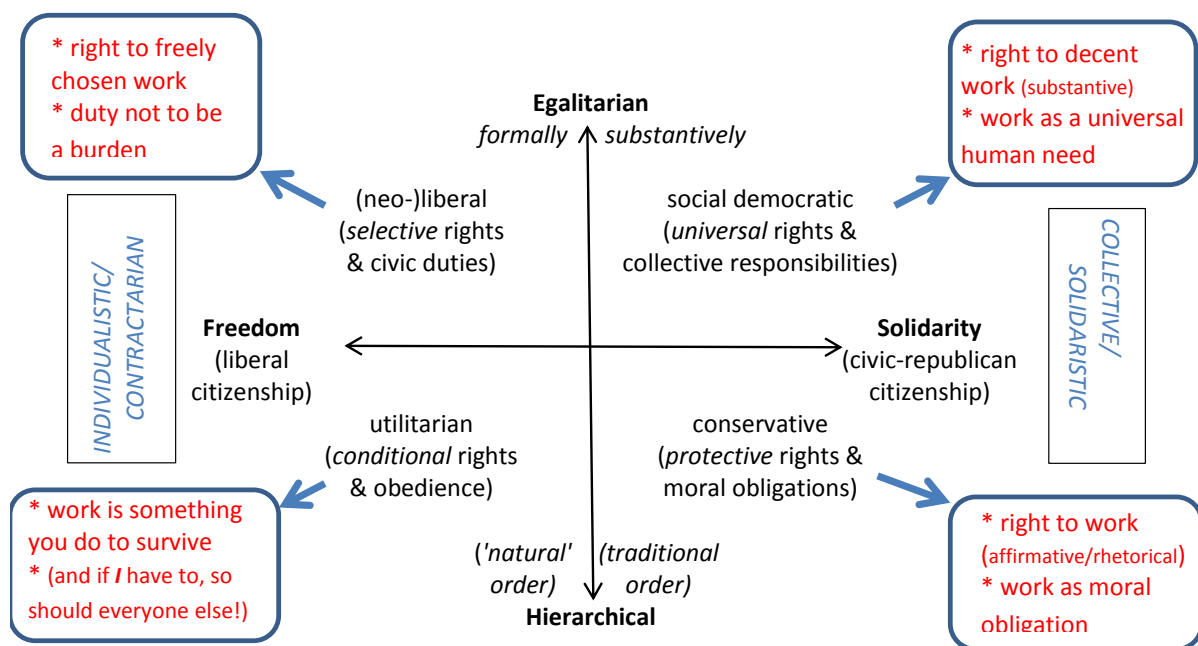
education, health, housing and income maintenance—culminated in the creation of Britain’s post-war ‘modern welfare state’ (H. Dean, 2002). Marshall later identified political democracy, a welfare state and a market economy as the three components that must exist in tandem with one another in order to guarantee full citizenship. He characterized modern “democratic-welfare-capitalist” societies as “hyphenated societies” (Marshall, 1981). Marshall conceptualized citizenship as a “three legged stool”. Here civic and political rights, while important, must be supported by some form of entitlement to welfare, that being the social right, in order for citizenship to carry any meaning for all members of a given community. Over the years, academics have deconstructed Marshall’s concept of full citizenship, particularly in an ever-changing welfare state landscape. Like Lister (2003), Twine (1994) placed the relationship between structure and agency at the centre of his analysis of citizenship and social rights. For Lister, citizenship is pivotal to the definition and interpretation of needs and necessary in order for a ‘need’ to be converted into a ‘right’ (2003). A well-rounded concept of citizenship, with the potential to enhance women’s agency in particular, according to Lister, has to embrace both the social and political dimension of citizenship because they are interlinked. “This way citizenship emerges as a dynamic process in which the two dimensions of status and practice interact with each other, linked through human agency” (Lister, 2003: 8). Yet, as Roche (1992) points out, citizenship today has been reinterpreted more widely to work obligations that have dominated the ‘duties discourse’.

The right to social and welfare rights was central to the ideal of citizenship, which in turn defined the degree and quality of welfare entitlements (H. Dean, 2002). The degree to which welfare rights are seen as an essential element of citizenship depends on how citizenship itself is understood, how rights are interpreted and how rights are then understood in relation to responsibility. Drawing on prior research, H. Dean (1999 and 2002) articulated four ideological justifications for capitalist social policies (social democratic, conservative, utilitarian and (neo-) liberal). His heuristic device (see Figure 4.1) provides a tool to help understand how social citizenship is conceptualized and how a citizen’s right to and degree and quality of welfare entitlements may be construed. In response to this thesis’ second research question of whether respondents for this study have a right to and responsibility in finding work, four categories of a right and four categories of a responsibility to work were manifested through an analysis of the evidence (see Chapter Eight). It was after my initial

secondary private sphere (Lister, 2003). Others have also criticized Marshall for his vague definition of social rights (Powell, 2002); Marshall’s failure to take into account the cost implications of social rights (Dwyer, 2000); and not only did Marshall fail to include women in his approach, but also those with disabilities and ethnic minorities (Dwyer, 2004; Lister 2003).

analysis was conducted and the categories had been constructed that Dean’s diagram (see Figure 4.1) was adopted to help understand the larger significance of the findings as they relate to our understanding of social rights and welfare regime types.

Figure 4.1 Competing constructions of rights and responsibilities



Source: H. Dean (This diagram as such has never been published by Dean. Rather this particular diagram has evolved over time and is different from versions Dean has published. See Dean 2010 and 1999.)

Dean argues that there are two distinct—though competing—constructions of citizenship: liberal and republican. The liberal or contractarian tradition places a premium on individual freedom through a notional bargain that is entered between the individual and the state. The republican or solidaristic tradition is strongly associated with civic republicanism and/or communitarism. Here the emphasis is placed on social solidarity. It is expected that the individual citizen is a protected member of a particular society. The interests of the self are bound up with the interests of others (H. Dean, 2002). This is not to say that Dean argues that the liberal-contractarian and republican-solida-ristic conceptions of citizenship do not or cannot co-exist in practice—they do. Rather for Dean, it is that their logics clearly differ. Indeed, Lister (2003) argues that the different interpretations of citizenship rights and obligations and the implications of the liberal-social rights and the republican participator tradition should be seen as complementary rather than competing approaches. And yet, broadly speaking, contemporary Anglophone welfare states represent different versions of the

liberal-contractarian citizenship model while Germany represents a less egalitarian version of the republican-solidaristic citizenship model. Given that Germany has traditionally been described as having a conservative corporatist welfare state, it is then a question of, on the one hand, the degree to which the adoption of the *Fördern* and *Fordern* policy framework marks a departure from the republican-solidaristic tradition, or at least what one would expect in terms of policy design from such a citizenship model. Or whether, on the other hand, the adoption of the *Fördern* and *Fordern* framework is the symbolic culmination of the historical threads of a liberal-contractarian citizenship model that were always, in different guises, present in the German social state.

From different understandings of citizenship, flow different interpretations of rights. Rights may mean equality of opportunity within a neo-liberal regime; entitle one to substantive equality within a social democratic regime; or entitle one, as an active participating citizen, to social inclusion within a conservative regime (H. Dean, 2002). Given the limited resources available for welfare-state services, a key question is how to allocate resources based on one's social right to benefit. Indeed how do we meet the various needs of citizens? Questions of who gets what, how they get it and why they are seen as being entitled to it are at the heart of social citizenship debates (Dwyer, 2000). The New Right argued that citizenship cannot embrace social rights because they imply a claim on resources and are therefore categorically different from civic and political rights (Lister, 2003). Critics like Hayek (1976) stressed the civil, as opposed to social rights of citizenship, with special emphasis on 'active citizenship' in the 1980s. Dean argues that the change in perception of citizenship and rights that took place in the 1980s resulted in social policy no longer being about redistributing resources to provide for individuals needs', but rather as a way to enable people to individually manage their risk. "Thus, old forms of liberal governance gave way to an individual ethic of self-responsibility" (H. Dean, 2007: 577).

It was Lawrence Mead who argued that welfare and related social programs needed to be infused with a 'new' paternalism (1997b). New paternalism called for those on benefit to take responsibility for and to sustain themselves (Mead, 1997b). New paternalism is what Mead called 'supervisory approaches'. It is based on the idea that the poor are indeed different from everyone else in that they cannot be assumed to be able to exercise personal responsibility and self-discipline. The poor therefore must be forced to be responsible and social programs that include strict supervision, mandates and sanctions will result in the poor acting like

everyone else. More importantly, Mead argued that the poor will be more likely to make progress in overcoming the personal barriers that hold them back and keep them in poverty as a result of the supervision, mandates and sanctions of paternalistic programs (1997b). For Mead, the only way to ‘cure the disease of poverty’ was to administer paternalistic social programs.¹⁰⁵

Mead (1986) and Novak & Cogan (1987) alike emphasize citizenship obligations over rights. Both identified engagement in paid work by welfare recipients as obligatory in order to support their families. The citizen is offered the opportunity to access certain entitlements but must accept the responsibility that comes with such an opportunity. The ‘worth’ of the citizen is measured by a social contract in which he or she relinquishes freedoms in return, not directly for rights, but for ‘opportunities’ (H. Dean, 2002). For the new paternalists, social policy rests on the reciprocity principle—that social rights are conditional on the obligation to participate in the labour market. Indeed, people need jobs because they are good for them and those who do not want jobs must be induced to want to accept them, because a job is *the* path into ‘social inclusion’ (Standing, 2002). This translated into one’s right to benefit becoming conditional and based on an individual’s ability to sell their skills in order to work in the labour market. As Offe (1984) argues, the welfare state went from varying degrees of de-commodification towards varying degrees of re-commodification of labour. As opposed to Murray, Mead emphasizes reducing access to welfare and wants to guide welfare recipients towards personal responsibility by upholding obligations in exchange for the right to benefits.¹⁰⁶ Charles Murray (1994), on the other hand, argued that the problem of dependency was not workfare but to end welfare altogether. If necessary, reluctant individuals should be forced into activity by the application of benefit sanctions. Only those who ‘take charge’ of their own lives are deemed to be responsible ‘active’ citizens (Wetherly, 2001). For Walters (1997) the “welfare society” of the past promised, at least theoretically, a common citizenship status which guaranteed a universal minimum of welfare rights. This today has been superseded by the ‘active society’ in which increasingly individuals can only access social rights if they are willing to become workers in the paid labour market. Today “...many of

¹⁰⁵ For Mead (1997b) new paternalism differs from earlier paternalism in two ways: First, new paternalism is not anti-government and based strictly in the private and non-profit sector. While contracting is often preferable, new paternalism starts in the public sector and is built into public programs. It involves close attention to the administration of those programs to ensure that recipients do what is expected of them. Second, new paternalism imposes obligations, not in place of rights but in addition to rights. It allows people to receive assistance, but conditions the right to assistance on the requirement to fulfil obligations.

¹⁰⁶ The 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) reform in the US was more Mead than Murray. Mead’s (1997a) emphasis on mandated participation in work programs that emphasized work over education or training has been reflected in the law.

these assumptions about the specifically social obligations and consequent rights of the citizen no longer apply with the active society...the active society makes us all workers” (Walters, 1997: 223-224). Yet, as Lødemel and Trickry (2001) argue, it is often the lack of self-efficacy that is rooted in the personal experience of failure and the sense of defeat that is the obstacle to entering the labour market rather than a lack of moral fibre.

Citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states “Everybody has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment” (UN 1948: Article 23[1] from H. Dean, 2002: 100), H. Dean points out that the availability and choice of employment are subject to market forces. While rights at work exist they are civic and contractual in nature, not social rights per se. That said such rights are understood in the EU as social rights (H. Dean, 2002). “To the extent social security provisions exist for the protection against unemployment, the rights afforded are tied to a ‘duty’ rather than a right to work” (H. Dean, 2002: 100). The moral dimension to work—readily accepted by society—is that endeavour and enterprise through work is valued over leisure. Work is ‘good’—a virtuous, dignified and worthy activity for individuals. Working becomes morally desirable irrespective of any financial or social benefit that may accrue to the individual (Anthony, 1971). Yet, Standing (2002) argues that one should also have a ‘right’ not to work. Indeed the right to work should be something other than the duty to labour. The right to work—arguably a human right—means a right to choose what one believes is rational activity for “only that can be the basis of citizenship and occupational security” (Standing, 2002: 2). Jobs for their own sake are not consistent with this sense of rationality. Indeed, a job that is chosen for someone against their wishes, however well meaning, is no right at all. While work is valuable if it contributes to human creativity and development, Standing argues that maximizing labour is not the de facto best means of optimizing the amount or quality of work in society. “The challenge is to find the means of ensuring that a growing proportion of the population has the opportunity, capacity and desire to build an occupation.” (Standing, 2002: 273-4).

4.5 Chapter summary and conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the justification for why elements of a Foucauldian analytic was adopted to interpret the findings of this study as they relate to the first research

question that explores whether the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms are reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients. Specifically, this chapter introduced how immanent function and the ‘conduct of conduct’ are relevant to understanding this study’s findings. In order to interpret the findings as they relate to my second research question that explores how meaningful the Fördern and Fordern policy discourse is to UBII recipients in terms of their perception of a right to and responsibility in finding work, H. Dean’s heuristic device for understanding competing constructions of rights and responsibilities provides a complementary analytic. Dean’s diagram illustrates the conflicting rationalities associated with the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. As my data illustrate, these different, at times overlapping, and indeed conflicting rationalities are resolved in different ways by different actors. Dean’s diagram is a useful tool to conceptualize how these very different rationales operate both theoretically and—when attached to my data—practically.

The Federal Republic’s adoption of Fördern and Fordern—an essentially neo-liberal policy discourse predicated on a rights and responsibilities framework—was an innovation in the German context. It made conditionality and activation measures uniform for everyone—irrespective if one was previously in receipt of social insurance, unemployment assistance or social assistance and irrespective of whether one lived in an area of high or low unemployment. Therefore this chapter discussed the impact welfare reforms predicated on new paternalism has had on how unemployment benefit is administered generally, but specifically in reference to the fourth Hartz law; and hence the relevance the discussion of rights and responsibilities has to contemporary German unemployment benefit politics. While personal responsibility coupled with conditionality has always been built into social insurance schemes in Germany (and elsewhere), it is the degree and measure of responsibility that has taken on new significance in the post-Hartz IV German case.

Chapter Five: Research Methods

5.1 Introduction: a qualitative approach

The epistemological position of qualitative work can be described as interpretivist, which stresses an “understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants” (Bryman, 2004: 266). In order to answer the two research questions for this thesis a qualitative research design was required because here words, rather than the quantification of data, help to explain respondents’ experiences and perceptions of the policies under examination. The semi-structured interview was the method used to obtain the data. Specifically the research questions address:

- Are the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients?
- How meaningful is the Fördern and Fordern policy discourse for Unemployment Benefit II recipients, in terms of their perception of a ‘right’ to and ‘responsibility’ in finding work?

The qualitative methodology used for this research was intended to build on the findings of existing studies. As reviewed and discussed in Chapter Three, there is a gap in the literature in that the quantitative studies conducted evaluate the effectiveness of skills trainings while the qualitative research conducted post-Hartz reforms largely rely on case study and participant observation methods to explore changes made to the administration and structure of the reforms. Thus the type of questions asked in this study implies, on the one hand, a qualitative approach because it is the subjective views, meanings and perceptions of UBII recipients that are going to be analysed, while on the other, it is a study that complements the current qualitative (and quantitative) findings. Moreover since I am not ‘testing’ a hypothesis, coupled with the fact that there has been a substantial amount of statistical analysis done using large data sets maintained by the Institute for Employment Research (IAB),¹⁰⁷ there

¹⁰⁷ The IAB is the Research Institute of the Federal Employment Agency. The IAB Establishment Panel has been in existence in West Germany since 1993 and in the East since 1996 and is a comprehensive longitudinal data set that forms the basis for research into the demand side of the labour market. This representative survey of employers covers a wide range of topics related to employment policy. Close to 16,000 establishments from all branches of the economy and of all sizes are surveyed annually. The Labour Market and Social Security (PASS) panel survey allows social processes and the non-intended side-effects of labour market reforms to be assessed empirically.

was no need for me to research a larger set of observations than has already been made public. While the surveys that are available provide useful and rich information, they do not (nor can they) clarify the rationale behind the reasons *why*, for example, Unemployment Benefit II recipients are more willing to take work that is further from home, at odd hours, and/or for less pay than individuals not in receipt of unemployment benefit (Bender et al., 2009). The purpose of qualitative research is to explore the different representations of an issue. Therefore this study allows for a more in-depth exploration of UBII recipients' experiences and perception of skills trainings and job placement services and what their right to and responsibility in finding work consists of—something other studies have not explored in any great depth. In short: respondents' subjective views matter here (Marshall and Rossman, 2006).

This chapter will describe in detail the methods adopted to obtain the data needed to answer the research questions and the rationale for choosing this approach. The methodological discussion will centre on the advantages and disadvantages of these methods and the practical and ethical issues raised during the research process. Section 5.2 considers the main ethical issues of concern to the research including informed consent and the anonymity of participants. Section 5.3 outlines the research sample and the selection of cities. This includes a discussion of the sample approach used, including the selection of cities and Jobcenters, as well as how the sample of Unemployment Benefit II recipients and Jobcenter case managers was generated. Section 5.4 explains the interview process, which includes the type of interview used, the questions posed and issues affecting the data collection. Section 5.5 outlines the issues affecting the data collection while section 5.6 describes how the data were analysed and considers the reliability and validity of the data. Section 5.7 summarizes the methodological process adopted to obtain the data for this research.

This is a nationwide survey that is repeated annually and covers approximately 12,000 households. The IAB Job Vacancy Survey surveys companies and administrations to learn more about the employment situation at individual establishments along with the number and structure of positions currently open. The survey also collects information on how the new labour market reforms are viewed by individual establishments. The IAB's Paths Into and Out of Vocational Rehabilitation survey is a survey of 4,000 persons who have completed rehabilitation measures in 2006. A repeat of the survey was conducted in 2008 with the same participants. Together with a longitudinal dimension relating to the course of schooling/training and one's previous work experience, the survey contains further dimensions of analysis such as the interaction that has taken place between the work community and employment agency; health; social integration, and continuation once the measure has ended. The third wave of Business Start-Ups survey collects information on previously unemployed persons who set up their own businesses in 2003 with the help of either a bridging allowance or business start-up subsidy (Ich-AG). This longitudinal study, with an economically matched control group, is intended to provide information about what the participants are doing now and how sustainable their business set-ups are. A further aspect includes the number of additional jobs additionally created; the way in which the new entrepreneurs are socially insured; the level of income achieved; and work satisfaction.

5.2 Ethical issues

Lewis (2003), Silverman (2013) and Wiles et al. (2007), among others, have discussed the wider ethical issues concerning the use of semi-structured interviews as a method for gathering data. Two issues that are relevant to this research and will be discussed below include obtaining participants' informed consent to be involved in the research and protecting the anonymity of those participants.

5.2.1 Informed consent

Semi-structured interviews with UBII recipients (n=50) were carried out at two Jobcenters in Germany. One Jobcenter was located in Hamburg and one in Bremen.

In addition, semi-structured interviews (n=5) were carried out with Jobcenter staff—case managers—from two Jobcenters in Bremen and three from a Jobcenter in Berlin. Initial contact was made with the Jobcenter by sending an email to a generic email address provided on the Jobcenter's website. I introduced who I was and why I was contacting the Jobcenter in the initial email sent.

I briefly described the nature of my research (outlining the research topic)

and asked if it was possible to conduct my research at the Jobcenter

(see Appendix 1). I then conducted a series of email exchanges with

the Directors via their assistants and me in which more exact questions were answered about

the nature of my research, how it would be conducted, what I needed from the Jobcenter in

terms of desk-space, material, time and resources. After a series of email exchanges it was

agreed that I could provisionally conduct my research at the Jobcenter in Hamburg and later

at the Jobcenter in Bremen, but only after first meeting in person with the respective

Directors where the 'terms' of the research were outlined. This included securing the

Directors' agreement that I could approach UBII recipients in the waiting room of the

Jobcenter; that the Jobcenter would provide me with a private office to conduct the

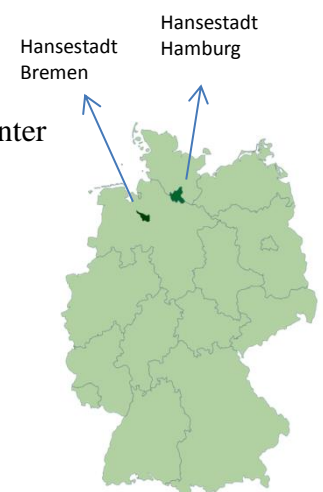
interviews; that the Jobcenter would assist in identifying case managers I could interview

after I had completed interviewing UBII recipients; how I would obtain consent from UBII

recipients; and finally that I would provide the Jobcenter with a report on my findings. After

meeting with the Director of the Jobcenter in Hamburg, and at a later date with the Director

in Bremen, it was agreed that I could conduct my research at the respective Jobcenters.



Initially I drafted a formal consent form (in German) that I was prepared to give to the UBII recipient. The form explained that as a participant who freely consented to participate in my research project, they did not have to answer any questions they did not wish to, they were free to leave at any time, the interview was confidential and that any information they provided would be recorded and only used for the purpose of my research (see Appendix 2). After reading my proposed consent form, the Director of the Hamburg Jobcenter suggested that I did not use it because the nature of the form was too formal and as a result may frighten and confuse rather than assist recipients in understanding the parameters of their consent. He suggested that instead of providing respondents with a written consent form that I verbally explain the content of the consent form and ask their permission (which I had intended to do in addition to providing the UBII recipients with the written form). As I approached potential respondents in the waiting room I briefly explained the purpose of my research and asked if they would be willing to participate. Once we were seated in the office I then proceeded to explain in more detail the objective of the research, the purpose of the interview and what issues the interview would cover. I then informed potential respondents that they were free to leave at any time and they did not have to answer questions if they did not wish to. I stressed that the interview was anonymous, that their name or address would not be required and thus would never be made public. I then asked if they were comfortable with the interview being recorded and explained that the reason for doing this was to ensure that an accurate record of the interview was obtained that could then be used for analysis later on. Potential respondents were given the option of not being recorded in which case written notes would be taken (written notes were taken in two interviews).

5.2.2 Anonymity of participants

The following steps were taken in order to ensure that UBII recipient and case manager respondents remained anonymous in the research. First, participants' names, addresses or any other personal information was never asked or required of them throughout the course of the interview. Therefore there was no need to anonymize their names. Instead participants were always referred to by their interview number (see Chapters Six, Seven and Eight). Second, recorded interviews were not shared with any other party except with the person I hired in Germany to transcribe interviews that were longer than twenty minutes. He agreed that the

information he transcribed would never be discussed with anyone. The transcripts were not shared with anyone outside of a selection I transcribed and translated in order to share with my PhD supervisors. But given the anonymity of the participant, they had no way of knowing who they were reading about. Individual Jobcenter offices and staff interviewed were not identified, though I was given permission by both Directors of the Hamburg and Bremen Jobcenters that I could use the name of the Jobcenter in my research if I wished.

5.3 Research sample and the selection of cities

This section discusses how the research sample of UBII recipients and Jobcenter case managers who were interviewed as part of the primary data collection was developed. Section 5.3.1 describes the approach taken in order to select the cities where the interviews would take place, the selection of Jobcenters and how the sample was then generated. Section 5.3.2 discusses the sample achieved and the limitations of the approach used.

5.3.1 Sampling approach

This is not a comparative study. I am not drawing a comparison between the responses obtained from the two different cities or the two different Jobcenters selected. Nor am I grouping and thus comparing respondents' responses (i.e., male versus female, immigrant versus non-immigrant or young versus old respondents). Unemployment Benefit II recipients were the units of analysis in this research and I used a natural group sampling frame for selecting my sample (see below for further discussion) (Gaskell, 2000). Given that the objective of the research was to explore the experiences and perceptions of UBII recipients who participated in skills training or job placement services, it was necessary to first identify where in Germany the study would be carried out. Since I was not conducting a comparative study, it was a question of how best to go about selecting how many Jobcenters to conduct the research at and once the number was decided, where then the study should be conducted. Should the Jobcenters be in the former East or the former West or both? Which cities should the study be conducted in—should the cities be small, medium or large? Should there be an urban versus rural element? Did it really matter? Here I drew on elements of the Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) approach to insert rigor in the selection of the location for the study. Finally, once the research cities were selected, it was a question of how to generate the main

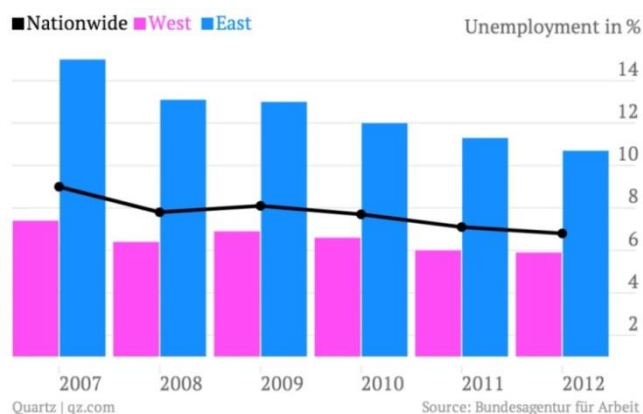
research sample through the Jobcenters. The different stages of this process are discussed below.

Selection of research sites

As noted, the first question to arise in the process of selecting my sample was how many Jobcenters I should visit to collect my sample. Initially I considered going to six separate cities (i.e., six different Jobcenters) in Germany to conduct the interviews. But in discussion with my PhD supervisors, the PhD program administrators and my major review examiners, it was decided that two locations would suffice on account that this was not a comparative study. Since the Jobcenter was simply the place I was going to collect my sample, then whether it was at one or two or three Jobcenters would not make a difference. My reasons for wanting to visit more than one Jobcenter at two different locations was to ensure that what I was hearing from respondents at one Jobcenter was not just related to that particular Jobcenter. Thus by conducting interviews at more than one Jobcenter would allow me to check responses against each other to ensure they were not based on a particular one-off experience germane to a specific Jobcenter.

Next it was a question of where in Germany I should conduct the fieldwork. At the time I was about to embark on my fieldwork in the late summer of 2011 the unemployment rate in some parts of the former East was 22 per cent.

Figure 5.1 Per cent unemployed in East and West Germany



For this reason it was decided that my fieldwork should take place in the former West.¹⁰⁸ The concern was that, owing to the high rate of unemployment in the former East, there was the potential that there would be little variation in the type of UBII recipient available to be interviewed. In other words, I did not want to be confronted with a scenario where, in a medium sized city with one in four unemployed and no prospects of finding work, respondents were relating the same experience. Therefore it was decided that my fieldwork would take place in the West and I would draw on aspects of a Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) approach to assist in the selection of the two cities where the fieldwork would be conducted. But it is important to stress that the conventional MSSD approach was not adopted. The typical MSSD approach is used in comparative qualitative research in which two areas are selected that are similar except with regard to the phenomenon being assessed and analysed (Anckar, 2007). Although I am not conducting a comparative study between two cities, two Jobcenters or groups of respondents, the sampling strategy arguably resembled MSSD insofar as it sought similar contexts for the fieldwork. Technically the application of MSSD requires researchers to choose, in this case two cities, that are similar in a number of specified variables (the ‘control’ variables) and different with regard to only one aspect—the ‘dependent’ variable under study (in this case the experiences of UBII recipients). This is done to ensure that the selection of Hamburg and Bremen as the cities to conduct my fieldwork meant that ideally any difference in the phenomena studied—UBII recipients’ experience of skills training and job placement services—would not, generally, only be dependent on external factors, such as the size of the city or the unemployment rate or the employment landscape. Of course, these factors do matter in explaining the differences in the phenomena studied. But my purpose thereby was to confirm whether or not the consistency of the resulting data might be clearly distributed by some influence relating to subtle or unforeseen difference between the two Jobcenter cities. This, though, was not the case.

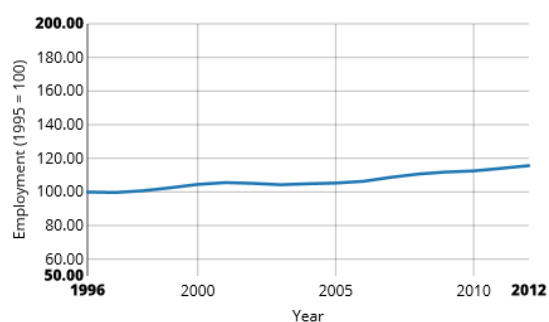
The Free Hanseatic City-States of Hamburg and Bremen were selected because they are similar in a number of criteria, though they are not an exact or perfect match. Both Bremen and Hamburg are medieval port city-states with a post-war history of left-leaning leadership

¹⁰⁸ East Germany experienced a slight decline in economic performance in 2011. Compared to the West, the gross domestic product per capita in East Germany fell from 73 per cent in 2010 to 71 per cent in 2011 (BMI, 2012). Results from Germany’s first census since reunification show that two decades after reunification, East Germany remains a very different place from the west — older, whiter and more likely to be out of work (BMI, 2012).

(SPD). While in past centuries Bremen's port was the 'key to Europe', Hamburg has long since surpassed Bremen and is now the largest port in Germany. According to the European Metromonitor produced by LSE Cities, in 2012 Hamburg's unemployment rate was 8.2 per cent while Bremen's was 11.4 per cent. Both cities have robust economies with Hamburg's gross value added (GVA) growth rate at 0.91 per cent and Bremen's at 1.44 per cent. Bremen and Hamburg have diverse economies. Hamburg specializes in renewable energies, logistics, aviation, life sciences, maritime technologies, nanotechnology and media, IT und telecommunication. In comparison, Bremen has a strong manufacturing industry, logistics, shipbuilding and foodstuffs (food and semi-luxuries industry), aerospace industry, marine technology, electrical engineering, mobile multimedia communications, material sciences, environmental research, information and telecommunications technologies and informatics. Hamburg is a much larger city than Bremen with a population of 3,250,797 million compared to Bremen's population of 738,305.

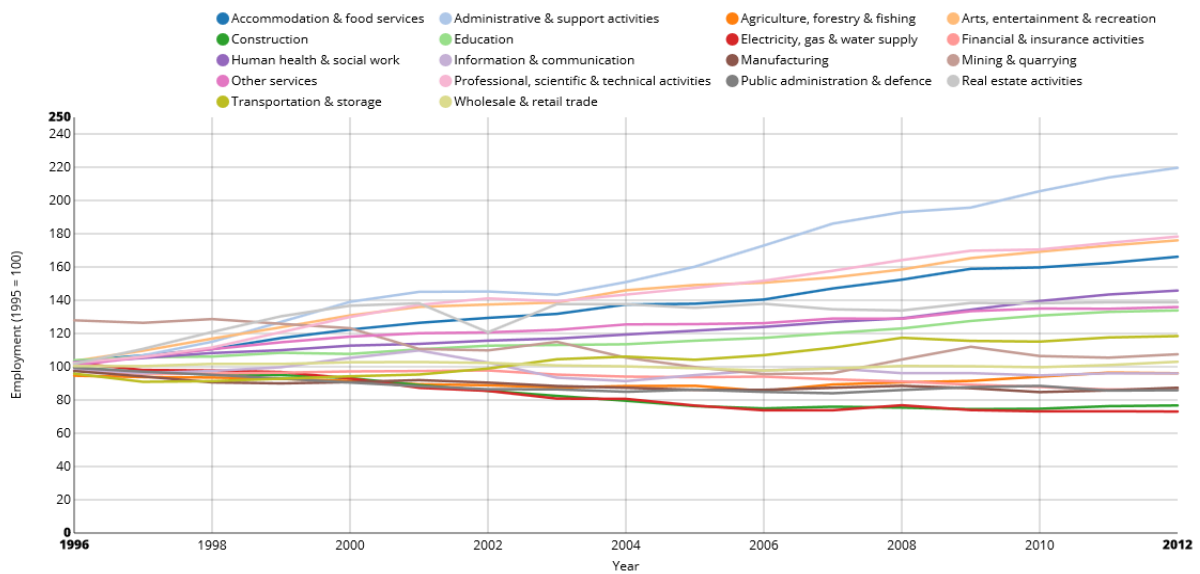
Per the European Metromonitor, in 2012 Hamburg had an employment growth rate of 1.39 per cent and was the 5th largest metropolitan region in Germany by population. In 2012 Hamburg was the 2nd metropolitan region in Germany in terms of employment growth and had been growing without interruption for nine years. From 1996 to 2012 Hamburg had known four years of negative growth rates.

Figure 5.2 Hamburg's indexed growth: Employment



Source: European Metromonitor

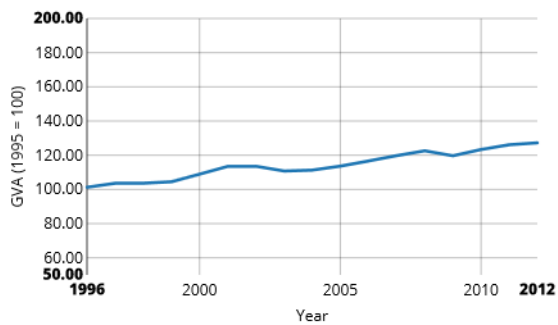
Figure 5.3 Hamburg indexed growth by sector



Source: European Metromonitor

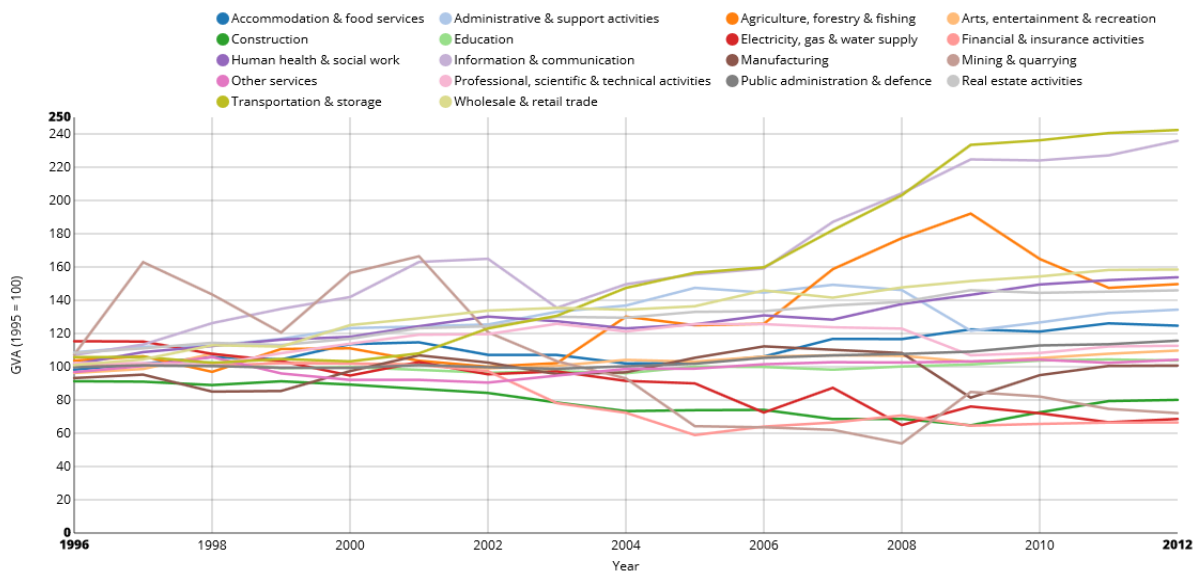
Hamburg's GVA growth rate was 0.91 per cent in 2012. In 2012 it was the 12th metropolitan region in Germany in terms of GVA growth and had been growing without interruption for three years. From 1996 to 2012 Hamburg had known two years of negative growth rates.

Figure 5.4 Hamburg's indexed growth: gross value added (GVA)



Source: European Metromonitor

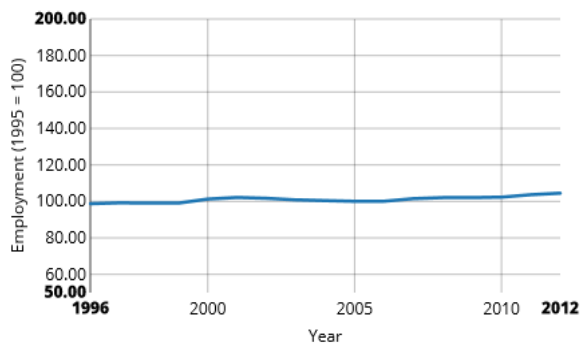
Figure 5.5 Hamburg's indexed growth: gross value added (GVA) by sector



Source: European Metromonitor

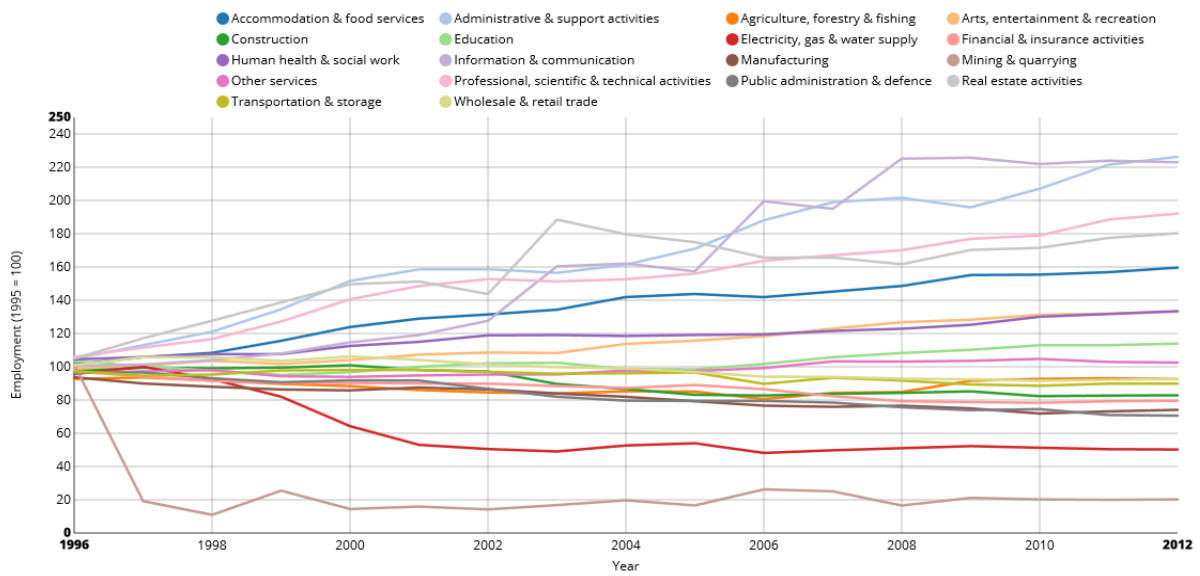
Compared to Hamburg, Bremen had an employment growth rate of 0.81 per cent. Bremen was the 16th largest metropolitan region in Germany by population. In 2012, Bremen was the 17th metropolitan region in Germany in terms of employment growth and had been growing without interruption for three years. From 1996 to 2012 Bremen had known seven years of negative growth rates (European Metromonitor).

Figure 5.6 Bremen's indexed growth: employment



Source: European Metromonitor

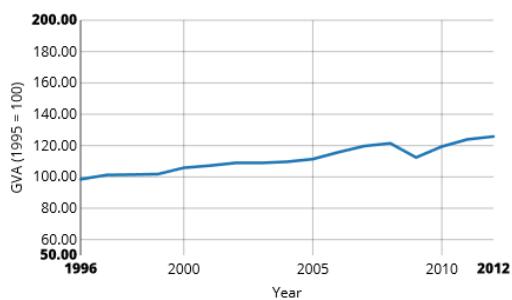
Figure 5.7 Bremen's indexed growth by sector



Source: European Metromonitor

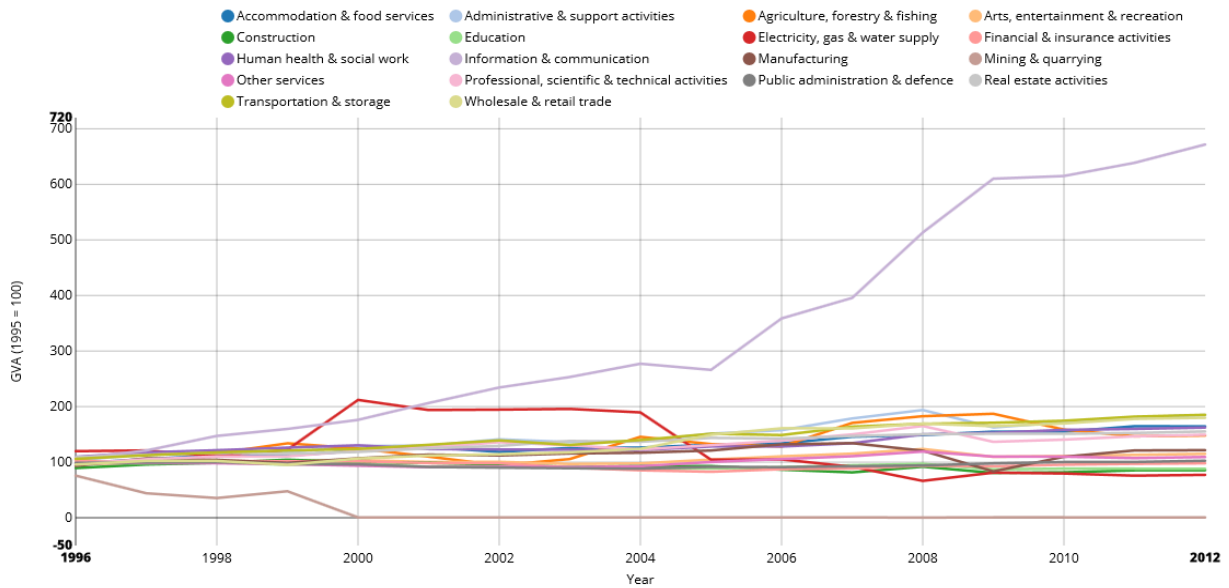
In 2012 Bremen had a GVA growth rate of 1.44 per cent. In 2012, it was the 6th metropolitan region in Germany in terms of GVA growth and had been growing without interruption for three years. In comparison to Hamburg, from 1996 to 2012 Bremen had known three years of negative growth rates.

Figure 5.8 Bremen's indexed growth: gross value added (GVA)



Source: European Metromonitor

Figure 5.9 Bremen's indexed growth: gross value added (GVA) by sector



Source: European Metromonitor

Selection of Jobcenters

Once the two cities were selected based on the criteria above, it was a question of which Jobcenters in Hamburg and Bremen would host my research. Jobcenters are the national statutory employment service for those in receipt of Unemployment Benefit II. This employment service operates through local offices (Jobcenters) that are managed at the municipal level. The delivery of services, such as skills training and to some extent job placement services, are sub-contracted out to a range of private and third-sector providers at the municipal level. Jobcenters are located throughout Germany and ‘clients’ register at a specific Jobcenter according to their area of residence based on their address.

While I could have sought to gain access to my sample in a number of different ways, my reason for wanting to access my sample at the Jobcenter directly was based on my use of a ‘natural group’ sampling frame for selecting my sample (Gaskell, 2000). Here I needed to be at a location where I could technically gain access to every type of person in receipt of benefit. The waiting room of the Jobcenter posed the most logical place for that. Once it was agreed that Bremen and Hamburg would be the cities in which to conduct my research, I then non-discriminately sent out an introductory email to all Jobcenters located in Bremen and Hamburg respectively. Thus the selection of Jobcenters in each city was essentially

determined by which Jobcenter responded positively to my initial query. Given that I was seeking a natural group sampling frame it was important to access a diverse range of individuals on UBII. While it could be argued that a Jobcenter located in a wealthier part of town might attract a different ‘type’ of jobseeker than a working class neighbourhood, the Hamburg and Bremen municipalities were generally divided in such a way that the Jobcenters were positioned in an area that usually included a diverse socio-economic demographic. For example, the Jobcenter Mitte in Bremen included the postcodes for those living in the traditionally working class neighbourhood behind the train station and the wealthy upper-middle class neighbourhood called the ‘Viertel’ along the Weser.

Accessing the sample: UBII recipients and Jobcenter staff interviewees

The decision to interview 50 UBII recipients was a pre-defined target. I decided on 50 for two reasons. First, I wanted to have a large-enough sample so that I could ensure saturation. Second, 50 respondents would capture a range of responses that would result in a rich analysis of the data. Initially the study was to be solely respondent driven because it was UBII recipient views and experiences that I was interested in accessing. The idea to interview case managers was a suggestion made by my major review examiners. They suggested interviewing a small sample of case managers in order to cross-check my initial findings stemming from my interviews with UBII recipients. As a result of their suggestion, I decided that I would seek to interview five or six case managers. In retrospect I would have expanded my sample to ten to fifteen case managers given how rich and ultimately how helpful the case manager interviews ended up being to understanding my analysis of UBII recipient responses. Interviewing a larger number of case managers would have meant a richer analysis of their responses. But it was only after the fieldwork was completed and I had started the analysis of both UBII recipient and case manager interviews that I realized these limitations.

UBII recipients

Once the Jobcenters in Hamburg and Bremen agreed that I could access UBII recipients by positioning myself in the waiting room of the Jobcenter it was up to me to approach recipients to ask if they would participate in my study. But the manager of the ‘client centre’ (Kundenzentrum) in Hamburg —generally the first point of entry for UBII recipients— suggested that her staff act as gatekeeper to the UBII recipients. The manager proposed that I

position myself in an office adjacent to the client centre counter. Unless recipients have an appointment to meet with their case manager directly, all administrative issues are dealt with at the client centre. Here recipients take a number and wait in the waiting room until their number is called and then they approach the counter. There are usually three to five Jobcenter staff who sit behind the client centre counter and manage recipients' issues. The manager in Hamburg suggested that those staff members who worked the client centre counter would, after the UBII recipient's business was completed, inform the recipient about the study being conducted and ask whether they wished to participate. If the recipient agreed, the staff member would send the recipient to me. I was not in agreement with this idea, as it ushered in a series of problems with sample selection and bias that would greatly impact my study. Moreover, this extreme reliance on gatekeepers in the research process could prove problematic given the potential power relationship between the gatekeeper (i.e., the client centre staff) and the interviewees. What kind of exchange transpired between the client centre staff member and the UBII recipient had the potential to influence an interviewees' decision (and potential consent) to participate in the study (Wiles et al., 2007). UBII recipients may have felt they had to participate in order to secure or retain their benefit. Furthermore, the staff member may have been self-selecting who they asked and did not ask to participate based on their perceived notion of who was the 'right' person to participate in the study. Thus, after the first two days of following these instructions and being sent potential respondents who generally could not be interviewed on account of them not meeting the criteria for the study (for example, one Afghan women did not speak any German and one man had just signed up for UBII and had no experience to relate), I noted this problem to the manager and it was agreed that I would sit in the waiting area and approach UBII recipients on my own. This was also the method used in Bremen. I deleted the two interviews that I conducted in those first two days in Hamburg and started afresh when I was free to approach respondents on my own. This thus eliminated the role of the gatekeeper in my sample selection of UBII recipients.

As I noted earlier, for this study I used Gaskell's (2000) natural group selection process for my sampling frame. The traditional option is to use standard statistical or taxonomic groups to select respondents, i.e., sex, age, a specific social category (i.e., refugees) or a geographical split, (i.e., urban versus rural). Gaskell argues instead for the use of natural groups as an alternative approach to thinking about segmentation. With natural groups individuals share something in common, i.e., they are all unemployed. Instead of assuming that social and

demographic characteristics will be an indication of differing views on a given topic, the selection of respondents can instead be based on relevant natural groups or social milieus (Gaskell, 2000). For the purpose of my research, I sought to achieve the maximum variation of the sample as was feasible within the confines of my methodology. In order to answer my two research questions I required a sample that captured and described a central theme but also one that cut across a great deal of variation in the type of respondents interviewed. My research objective was not to investigate the experiences of just women or just the disabled or just youth nor to draw a comparison between groups. Rather my aim was to understand how a policy, that is designed for anyone between the ages of 18 and 65 who is unemployed for more than 12-months and therefore eligible for UBII, impacts a wide swath of individuals and their circumstances. One of the strengths in applying heterogeneity sampling is that “any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central shared dimensions of a setting or phenomenon” (Patton, 2002: 235). When selecting a sample of great diversity, Patton (2002) argues that the collection and analysis will yield two findings: high quality, detailed descriptions of each case and important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance because they emerged out of heterogeneity.

Jobcenter staff

Although the main objective of my study was to focus on UBII recipients’ experiences with skills training and job placement services coupled with understanding perceptions about recipients right to and responsibility in finding work, I interviewed a very small sample of case managers in order to triangulate and thus cross check my findings derived from my interviews with UBII recipients. While these five interviews were meant to be more contextual in nature and were not a focal point of my research, they nonetheless provided important and insightful information into the thinking behind and strategy for skills training and job placements services. My original intent was to interview case managers from Jobcenters in Hamburg and Bremen. In my initial meeting with the Directors of the Jobcenter in Hamburg and Bremen it was agreed that they would provide me with the names of staff I could interview. Towards the end of my fieldwork at the Jobcenter in Hamburg I found out that my gatekeeper, the then Director of the Jobcenter, had left his position. I proceeded to make telephone calls and send emails to the interim Director asking if I could complete my research by interviewing two to three case managers, but my request was not acknowledged.

Thus through a colleague in the Department of Social Policy at the LSE I was able to make contact with one case manager at a Jobcenter in Berlin who was very willing to conduct an interview with me. After our interview he subsequently recommended two other colleagues that I could approach to be interviewed. Potential respondents for a study made through contacts from friends or acquaintances can prove problematic. The person contacted may feel obligated to participate based on the suggestion coming from an acquaintance or friend. To minimize this problem I explained to each case manager that they were under no obligation to participate in the study just because they knew the person who recommended them to me.

The interviews with the case managers in Bremen were arranged through a gatekeeper—the Jobcenter Director. Here I was provided with the names and email addresses of two case managers who worked at two different Jobcenters in Bremen and separate from the Jobcenter I conducted my fieldwork at. They were made aware that I would be emailing them asking to arrange a time for an interview. Again the use of a gatekeeper in selecting staff members to participate in my study posed potential problems with selection bias. The Director as gatekeeper may have been inclined to approach staff who he or she thinks will present the Jobcenter and its services in a non-critical and positive fashion. Moreover staff members may feel that they have to participate in the study when asked by a senior member of staff. Given that staff could only be approached in this way (i.e., they would not have agreed to be interviewed without authorization from a senior member of staff), there were few other options for accessing staff. To ensure that those staff members selected to be interviewed were there because they wanted to be, before carrying out the interviews with each case manager, I explained the purpose of the research, the purpose of the interview and I verified that they were willing to participate. In the end, staff interviewed did speak critically about the context in which they worked (and were assured of anonymity before being interviewed).

5.3.2 Sample achieved and limitations

Table 5.1 Research sample

Research site	Provider	UBII recipient interviews	Staff interviews
Hamburg	Jobcenter	25	0
Bremen	Jobcenter	25	2
Berlin	None		3
Total		50	5

The limitations of the sample reflect, in part, some of the issues discussed previously in relation to the sampling approach. By obtaining a sample through approaching UBII recipients at only two Jobcenters in Germany, the sample is essentially restricted to the experiences of a relatively small number of respondents. Moreover, the challenge with my sample is that I do not know the counterfactual. The UBII recipients with the more positive experiences of job search and placement assistance or skills training were likely to be in receipt of benefit for only a short period of time before they found employment. Hence this group of recipients was less likely to enter the sampling frame. However, this limitation can also be seen as a strength. In the natural sample I accessed, I was more likely to encounter the longer-term and/or harder-to-help recipients—members of the precariat who pose the greatest challenge to the system and whose experiences—in the context of my research questions—are arguably, therefore, most salient.

Then there is the issue of my own sample bias in selecting respondents I approached to ask if they would like to participate in my research. I was cognizant of the fact that I sorted people based on how they appeared to me. For example, I did not approach recipients who were visibly incapacitated or respondents who appeared aggressive. Phillips and Earle (2010) argue that the researcher’s biographical histories and composite identities directly affect field relationships and interactions. Thus who we are—our ethnicity, sex and class—invariably shapes “how our own positions and interests are, sometimes discretely, imposed throughout the research process, influencing the questions we ask, the ones we don’t, who we interview and who we don’t, how we interview, how we listen and how we don’t, and ultimately, how we understand” (Phillips and Earle, 2010: 363). I was highly cognizant of my position at the Jobcenter as a white, highly educated, upper middle class American. It is a question of the

degree to which my personhood invariably affected the lens through which I approached my research or in this case, who I selected to ask to participate in my research. Indeed, as Phillips and Earle (2010) argue, our position generally, and as researchers specifically, should not be ignored or isolated, rather viewed as methodologically significant. While I did not want to filter who I did and did not approach to participate in my study, nonetheless I realized that I was categorizing people based on their appearance as ‘approachable’ or ‘not approachable’. This might have to do with their general appearance; whether they dressed nicely, had a pleasant look on their face or interacted in a friendly manner with the client centre staff member. I tended to shy away from, for example, young men in their late teens or early twenties who wore a type of stone-washed jean that gave off an aggressive appearance. It was not the jeans that were aggressive per se rather the person wearing the jeans, but the type of jeans came to represent aggressiveness. I realized early on in my fieldwork that I was sorting people based on their appearance and, thus, decided to challenge myself and approach those who I normally would have shied away from. Interestingly, the person who appeared nice and approachable was often the very person who was rude or would laugh at me when I explained what I was doing and, indeed, it was the gruff appearing person who often proved willing to assist me. Moreover, after initially meeting with the client centre staff member, many recipients are forwarded to other offices in the Jobcenter. As a result, those who passed me by often could not participate as they had elsewhere to go. This sample is therefore only able to serve the purpose of a qualitative study by exploring a small number of cases in order to gain more in-depth data on respondents’ experiences and perceptions. There are clearly limitations to the inferences that may be drawn regarding the experiences of the wider population of UBII recipients based on this sample, but this is discussed in section 5.6.3 below.

Characteristics of UBII recipients

We can, however, place the sample in the wider context of UBII recipients as a whole (see Tables 5.2 and 5.3). Using data supplied by the Federal Employment Agency, Brenke analysed the demographic characteristics of individuals in receipt of UBII between 2005 and 2009. Contrary to popular belief, not even half of the workless UBII recipients are long-term unemployed according to official statistics (Brenke, 2010). During this time period, Brenke found that overall about one tenth of the population receives UBII benefits. Indeed, single parents under the age of 25 and immigrants are the groups with a very high percentage of recipients. The percentage of immigrants who are recipients is twice as high as the percentage

of Germans. Adults in couple households make up a comparatively low percentage of recipients on benefit. One in six single individuals, one in four single parents and 80 percent of all *young* single parents receive UBII (Brenke, 2010). There was a strikingly high number of UBII recipients without professional training, particularly from immigrant populations who were in receipt of benefit. The percentage of older individuals receiving benefit is relatively low. However, between 2005 and 2009 persons over the age of 55 are the only group with rising numbers of recipients. The numbers have gone down in all other age groups—especially for youth and young adults. Furthermore, recipients of UBII live more often than the average in regions with high unemployment rates and few employment opportunities (Brenke, 2010).

Table 5.2 Recipients of UBII benefits by selected characteristics

	Annual average 2008		September 2009	
	Number of persons	percentage of that population group ¹	Number of persons	percentage of that population group ¹
Germans				
Under the age of 15 ²	1 466 755	14.7	1 471 483	14.7
15-64 years	4 113 957	8.5	3 995 409	8.2
Total	5 580 712	9.5	5 466 892	9.3
Foreigners				
Under the age of 15 ²	271 792	29.4	265 407	28.7
15-64 years	966 643	16.7	971 907	16.8
Total	1 238 435	18.5	1 237 314	18.5
Total				
Under the age of 15	1 825 523	16.7	1 746 189	15.9
15-24 years	988 460	10.1	910 988	9.3
25-54 years	3 365 693	9.6	3 322 335	9.4
55-64 years	688 094	7.1	719 132	7.3
Selected household types				
Singles	1 883 477	17.0	1 950 697	17.6
Single parents ²	652 286	27.9	636 003	27.2
Thereof: under the age of 25 ²	78 277	86.0	75 223	82.7
Total	6 906 953	10.5	6 733 742	10.2

¹ Population according to Mikrozensus 2008.

² Estimations based on marginal distributions.

Sources: Federal Employment Agency, Federal Statistical Office, calculations by DIW Berlin.

Source: Brenke, 2010

Table 5.3 Unemployed persons 2009 by group and selected characteristics

Percentages

	SGB II (UBII)	SGB III (UBI)
Men	53.3	56.9
Women	46.7	43.1
Germans	81.9	89.9
Foreigners	18.1	10.1
West Germany	65.1	72.8
East Germany	34.9	27.2
Severely handicapped persons	4.5	5.6
Long term unemployed ¹	41.2	11.0
Persons without professional training ¹	54.4	25.3
15 – under 25 years	8.6	15.5
50 – under 65 years	24.2	31.5
55 – under 65 years	11.5	20.2

¹ Only unemployed persons from IT procedure of the Federal Employment Agency.

Sources: Federal Employment Agency, calculations by DIW Berlin.

Source: Brenke, 2010

Country of origin, age and sex

As well as German, the 50 UBII recipients who participated in this study were from a range of countries. Immigrant citizenship status in Germany is complicated by the fact that although a child of immigrant parents may be born in Germany, they are not automatically granted citizenship. It is common in Germany to have second and third generation immigrants who were born in Germany but are not 'German'. Thus a proportion of respondents were born in Germany but still identified themselves by their parents' country of origin (see table 5.4 for details). Eighteen of the 50 respondents were born outside of Germany. Three respondents classified themselves as German-born but of another nationality. Twenty-nine respondents were German, in that they were born in Germany and were German citizens. Of the 50 interviewed, 28 were men and 22 were women. Respondents for this study were between the ages of 22 and 64, with 40 being the average age.

Education and employment

There was a wide diversity of education and employment backgrounds amongst the respondents; from respondents who had not advanced past year nine to those with post-graduate degrees. At the time of the fieldwork, four respondents only had an elementary school education level, 11 respondents graduated from the Hauptschule, 11 respondents from the Realschule and 14 respondents from the Gymnasium.¹⁰⁹ In addition, 12 respondents had university degrees and 16 had apprenticeship certificates. Respondents' employment backgrounds were as varied as their educational backgrounds—from those who did 'odd jobs' to respondents who were teachers, architects and engineers (see table 5.5 for more detail).

Use of Jobcenter and its services

All 50 respondents were in receipt of UBII. That said seven respondents were technically on UBI but receiving UBII top-up because they had either worked for too short a time-period and/or their wage was too low so that their UBI amount, which is based on a percentage of

¹⁰⁹Students are tracked after four years of elementary schooling in Germany. Based on their performance, they are sent to either the Hauptschule (general school) which offers Lower Secondary Education, a Realschule or the Gymnasium. Students spend five to six years at the Hauptschule, from 5th to 9th (or 10th) grade. They finish at about age 15-16. Students finish the Realschule at about 16-17 and Gymnasium students finish at 18. Though there are some exceptions, only students who graduated from the Gymnasium can attend university.

one's earnings through social insurance contributions, was too low on its own. Thus, they received a percent of UBII to top up their UBI benefit. In addition, of the 50 respondents six were working but on account that their wage being too low, they too were also receiving UBII top-up. Three of the 50 respondents were on statutory maternity leave—the German government provides up to three years of statutory maternity leave. If a person has little to no prior work experience and, thus, cannot receive Elternzeit, a paid parental leave scheme for those who work, they then are eligible to receive UBII for up to three years. Two respondents were currently categorized as disabled and, thus, were in receipt of UBII but not obliged to meet work requirements, though they had prior experience of UBII. Three respondents received UBII but were categorized as 'partially disabled' which meant that they still had to meet work requirements.¹¹⁰ Of the 50 respondents interviewed, 39 participated in one or more skills training. In principle all respondents had access to job placement services given that they had a case manager. That said, some respondents cited having little contact with their case manager and/or not receiving any assistance in terms of job placement.

Table 5.4 Characteristics of UBII respondents

Interview	Sex	Age	Nationality	Family Status	Number of Children	Do you live alone or with someone?
1	Male	34	India	Married	1	With wife and child
2	Female—lone parent	39	Nigeria	Single	2	With children
3	Male (partially disabled)	32	Turkey	Married	?	With family
4	Female—lone parent	22	Albania	Single	1	With child

¹¹⁰ Unemployment Benefit II is a benefit for individuals who are 'capable to work' (§ 8 SGB II Erwerbsfähigkeit). 'Capability to work' (Erwerbsfähigkeit) places reformed UBII benefit on the one side and disability pensions or – in the absence of a pension entitlement – residual social assistance on the other (§ 4 ff. SGB IX). There are a high percent of individuals with health impairments who receive UBII (27%) (Brussig and Knuth, 2010). Long-term health impairments and severe disability are not the same as being incapable to work per the Social Code Book. Even when a person has a health impairment, so long as the person can work at least three hours per day under normal conditions of the general labour market, he or she is considered 'capable to work' per the law. Thus, both the temporarily ill or partially disabled and those currently not available for work because of caring responsibilities are considered 'able to work'. In order to determine who, with health impairments, is 'capable to work', individuals are evaluated and legally placed in either the category of 'partially' versus 'severely disabled'. Handicapped individuals who receive a grade of 50 and above and live in the Federal Republic are classified as severely handicapped according to § 2 SGB IX. For those who are partially disabled (grade of below 50) or have a health impairment but deemed capable to work, the Federal Employment Agency, its regional directorates and local employment agencies provide occupational integration assistance if no other fund is responsible. Occupational integration assistance for job seekers who are partially disabled but able to work and in need of assistance is provided by the Jobcenters serving jobseekers under Book II of the Social Code (BMAS, 2014a; BMAS 2014b).

Interview	Sex	Age	Nationality	Family Status	Number of Children	Do you live alone or with someone?
5	Female	37	German	Married	2	With husband and children
6	Female (disabled)	64	Poland	Divorced	1	Alone
7	Male (disabled)	51	German	Single	0	Alone
8	Male	42	German	Single	0	Alone
9	Male	28	Kazakhstan	Single	0	Lives with parents
10	Male	45	German	Single	0	Alone
11	Female—lone parent	32	Born in Germany, Tunisian	Divorced	2	Lives with two children
12	Female (partially disabled)	29	German	Single	0	Alone
13	Male	38	German	Single	0	Alone
14	Male	38	German	Single	0	Alone
15	Male	61	German	Single	0	Alone
16	Male	64	Cambodia	Married	0	With Wife
17	Female	58	German	Divorced	3	Alone
18	Female	28	German	Single	0	Alone
19	Female	34	German born, Turkish	Married	2	With family

Interview	Sex	Age	Nationality	Family Status	Number of Children	Do you live alone or with someone?
20	Male	34	Indian	Married	2	With family
21	Female—lone parent	36	Ghana	Single	3	With children
22	Male	30	German	Single	0	With girlfriend
23	Female—lone parent	33	German	Single	2	With two children and her mother
24	Male	60	Iran	Divorced	2	Alone
25	Female	24	German	Single	0	Alone
26	Male	63	Ghana	Married	5	Alone
27	Male	27	German/ American	Single	0	Alone
28	Female	33	Lebanon	Married	5	With husband and children
29	Female—lone parent	50	Iran	Divorced	1	With daughter
30	Female—lone parent	48	German	Divorced	7	With children
31	Female—lone parent	32	Nigeria	Single	1	With daughter
32	Male	33	German	Single	0	Alone
33	Female	32	German	Married	1	With husband and daughter
34	Male	40	Turkey	Single	0	Alone

Interview	Sex	Age	Nationality	Family Status	Number of Children	Do you live alone or with someone?
35	Female—lone parent	49	German	Single	1	With son
36	Male (partially disabled)	52	Turkey	Single	0	Alone
37	Male	32	German	Single	0	Alone
38	Female	40	German born, Turkish	Married	2	With family
39	Male	23	German	Single	0	Alone
40	Male	32	German	Single	0	Shared accommodation
41	Male	25	German	Single	0	Alone
42	Male	36	German	Single	0	Shared accommodation
43	Male	59	German	Single	0	Alone
44	Female—lone parent	33	German	Single	1	With child
45	Female	46	German	Single	0	Alone
46	Male	39	Ivory Coast	Married	2	With family
47	Male	58	German	Divorced	0	Alone
48	Male—lone parent	48	Morocco	Divorced	1	Alone
49	Male	38	German	Married	1	With family

Interview	Sex	Age	Nationality	Family Status	Number of Children	Do you live alone or with someone?
50	Male	40	German	Single	0	With girlfriend

Table 5.5 UBII respondent education and employment characteristics

Sex/Family/ Immigration status	Grade School	Haupt- schule	Real- schule	Gymnasium	University	Apprentice- ship	UBI	UB II	Working, receiving UBII top- up	State Maternity Leave	Currently registered disabled	Last Job	In receipt of UBII since	Unemployed with interruption (i.e., worked)?	Last Job Temp Work
Male/German		X				X		X			X	Cook	2005		
Male/Indian									X			Cook	Three months		
Male/German		X				X		X				Sales	One year		X
Female/ Tunisian/Lone Parent				X				X		X		Assistant	One year		
Female/ German		X					X	X				Hospital/food purchaser	Nov. 2010		X
Male/German		X						X				Janitor-One- Euro-Job	March 2011		X
Male/German					X	X		X				Engineer	One year		X
Male/German	X							X				One-Euro- Job	2005		X
Male/German		X				X		X				Painter	One year		X
Male/ Kazakhstan			X			X		X				Call centre agent	Nine months		

Sex/Family/ Immigration status	Grade School	Haupt- schule	Real- schule	Gymnasium	University	Apprentice- ship	UBI	UB II	Working, receiving UBII top- up	State Maternity Leave	Currently registered disabled	Last Job	In receipt of UBII since	Unemployed with interruption (i.e., worked)?	Last Job Temp Work
Female/ German/Lone Parent			X					X		X		Finishing school	Five years		
Female/ German				X	X			X				Graphic design	2005	X	
Male/Ivory Coast				X	X			X				Engineer	Three months		
Male/German		X						X				Mechanic	2005	X	
Male/Morocco/ Lone parent				X				X				Home care for elderly	2007		
Male/German				X	X			X				Student	One year		
Female/ German			X									Seamstress	One year		

Sex/Family/ Immigration status	Grade School	Haupt- schule	Real- schule	Gymnasium	University	Apprentice- ship	UBI	UB II	Working, receiving UBII top- up	State Maternity Leave	Currently registered disabled	Last Job	In receipt of UBII since	Unemployed with interruption (i.e., worked)?	Last Job Temp Work
Male/German				X	X			X				Architect	2006	X	
Female/ German								X			X	Nestle Factory	Five years		
Male/German				X				X				Packaging warehouse	Four years	X	
Female/ German born Turkish citizenship			X			X			X			Cleaner	Six years	X	
Male/German	X							X				In process of completing school	2.5 years		
Female/ Albanian/Lone parent								X		X		One-Euro- Job Bakery	Several years	X	
Male/German				X	X			X				Teacher	1.5 years	X	
Male/German			X					X				Packaging warehouse	Nine months	X	X
Male/German				X	X			X				One-Euro- Job art gallery	Two years		
Male/German						X						Sales	2007		
Female/ Nigerian		X						X				Homemaker	Six months		

Sex/Family/ Immigration status	Grade School	Haupt- schule	Real- schule	Gymnasium	University	Apprentice- ship	UBI	UB II	Working, receiving UBII top- up	State Maternity Leave	Currently registered disabled	Last Job	In receipt of UBII since	Unemployed with interruption (i.e., worked)?	Last Job Temp Work
Male/German				X	X			X				One-Euro- Job	2006		X
Female/ German			X			X			X			Bakery	One year	X	X
Male/Turkey	X							X				Odd jobs	2008	X	
Female/ German/Lone Parent			X			X		X				Secretary	Two years		
Male/Turkey		X				X		X			X (partially disabled)	Electrician	Two years		
Male/German		X						X				Stacked boxes warehouse	1.5 years		X
Female/ German/Lone parent		X						X		X		One-Euro- Job kitchen	Several years		
Male/Iran				X		X		X				One-Euro- Job library	2000	X	X
Female/ German			X			X		X				One-Euro- Job	2009		X

Sex/Family/ Immigration status	Grade School	Haupt- schule	Real- schule	Gymnasium	University	Apprentice- ship	UBI	UB II	Working, receiving UBII top- up	State Maternity Leave	Currently registered disabled	Last Job	In receipt of UBII since	Unemployed with interruption (i.e., worked)?	Last Job Temp Work
Male/ Ghanaian		X				X		X				Seaman	Three years		
Male/German			X			X	X	X				Tires	Eleven months		
Female/ Lebanese	X							X				Homemaker	2005		
Female/Iran/ Lone parent				X	X			X				Bakery	Two years		
Male/Turkey								X			X	One-Euro- Job Drycleaners	2005	X	X
Female/ German/ Lone Parent			X					X				Divorced, homemaker	2005		
Male/ Cambodian								X				Restaurant owner	Two years		
Female/ German			X					X				Divorced, homemaker	2005		
Female/ Ghanaian								X				Cleaner	Three years		
Female/ German					X			X				Graphic designer	Oct. 2010	X	X

Sex/Family/ Immigration status	Grade School	Haupt- schule	Real- schule	Gymnasium	University	Apprentice- ship	UBI	UB II	Working, receiving UBII top- up	State Maternity Leave	Currently registered disabled	Last Job	In receipt of UBII since	Unemployed with interruption (i.e., worked)?	Last Job Temp Work
Male/Indian				X	X			X				Consultant	One year		
Female/ Nigerian/Lone parent						X		X				Cashier	Two years		
Female/ German/ Turkish				X	X			X				Social worker	August 2012		

5.4 Interview process

Qualitative interviews provide the basic data for the development and understanding of the relationships between social actors and their situations. “The objective is a fine-textured understanding of beliefs, attitudes, values and motivations in relation to the behaviours of people in particular social contexts” (Gaskell, 2000: 38-39). This section will explore the type of interview used, how the interview schedule was developed and adapted and the type of questions posed to respondents.

5.4.1 Type of interview

The different types of qualitative interviews are categorized in the literature, generally, as structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Patton, for example, distinguishes between the ‘informal conversational interview’, the ‘general interview guide approach’ and the ‘standardized open-ended interview’ (Patton, 2000). Yet the categorization of interviews into ‘structured’, ‘semi-structured’ or ‘unstructured’ has been criticized by some researchers as unrealistic, given that most interviews, including the ‘unstructured’ interview, have some sort of structure to them. Indeed, a combination of structured and unstructured may be used in the same study, if not interchangeably in the same interview (Pole and Lampard, 2002). A semi-structured interview schedule was adopted and used for this study. On the one hand, an interview schedule was needed to ensure consistency in the topics covered and the questions asked across all interviews. But on the other, in order to gain insight into respondents’ experiences and perceptions of skills training and job placement services, it was important to have a flexible interview schedule that ensured set questions were asked but allowed for room to explore issues further, should the need arise. This was particularly important when posing questions to respondents about their perception of a right and responsibility to work. For a high proportion of respondents, the concept of a ‘right’ and ‘responsibility’ to work were new to them. This meant that questions posed often had to be explained or rephrased or additional questions needed to be asked when short ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers were given. A structured interview schedule would not have easily allowed for this. Ultimately the semi-structured interview schedule was used more as a guide or a checklist. This enabled topics to be explored appropriately. For example, if a respondent started discussing their experience of skills trainings prior to the question being asked, then I adjusted the interview schedule to

allow for this, rather than sticking rigidly to the format and sequencing of questions set out in the interview schedule. I made sure to steer the interviewee back to the other questions after they had answered the questions on skill training placements, for example.

The interview schedule used for this study was initially developed for the major review and was used in my interviews in Hamburg (see Appendix 3). A small pilot study was not conducted prior to the commencement of the fieldwork in Hamburg. The interview schedule was somewhat modified after the first 12 interviews were conducted in Hamburg, particularly the questions pertaining to rights and responsibility. In discussion with my PhD supervisors, it was decided that I needed a more straightforward approach to asking whether respondents thought they had a right to and responsibility in finding work (see Chapter Eight, section 8.2 for more detail). The probe that I had been using for those questions was, it was thought, too symbolically loaded and, thus, needed to be changed.

The questions posed in the interview schedule for UBII recipients was intended to address the research questions as they relate to respondents' experience and perception of skills training and job placement services and their perception of a right to and responsibility in finding work. Topics explored included (see Appendix 3 for details):

- Respondents' age, family status, education and employment background, including how long they have been unemployed and in receipt of UBII.
- Initial impression of the Jobcenter; what kind of general assistance had they been provided; what was their initial impression of their case manager?
- Experience of skills trainings; which skills trainings did they participate in, for how long and where; did they find the skills trainings helpful; did the skills trainings assist them in entering the labour market?
- Experience of job placement services; did they receive any type of consultation assistance; did they receive any type of job placement or mediation assistance? What was required of them to demonstrate they were searching for work?
- Respondents' views regarding whether they felt pressured or influenced by their case managers to take temporary work, work in general, participate in a One-Euro-Job or other skill training.

- Respondents' perception of their right to and responsibility in finding work; had they heard of the concept of Fördern and Fordern and if so what was their impression of the concept?

The interview schedule for Jobcenter case managers had two purposes. First, based on an initial, cursory read of the data obtained from the interviews with UBII recipients, the interviews with case managers was meant to provide an opportunity to cross-check information provided by respondents about the structure of the Jobcenter and the administration of benefit generally. For example, a very high proportion of respondents repeatedly cited being moved from one case manager to the next within a short period of time. This constant change disrupted any work made towards securing a skills training, for example, or resulted in changed requirements for respondents. Respondents often surmised that this was intentionally done by the Jobcenter because management did not want recipients to form a bond to or relationship with their case managers. Yet, in my interviews with case managers, it was explained that cases often moved from one case manager to the next owing to a high caseload coupled with high staff turnover and that there was no master plan by management to keep recipients from forming working relationships with their case managers. Second, the interviews with case managers provided an opportunity to better understand how they implemented policy, i.e., whether and to what degree they had to follow guidelines in the decisions they made concerning a given recipient's case. In addition, it was an opportunity to clarify any general administrative and operational questions about how UBII was administered coupled with any questions surrounding UBII rules and regulations. The interview schedule was written after the interviews with UBII recipients were completed (see Appendix 4). Topics explored included:

- Background information on the case manager; their prior education and employment history; how long had they worked at the Jobcenter; how many cases they had; did they work with a specific type of client, i.e., under 25s, the disable, etc.
- The process of assessing UBII recipients and the provision of particular skills training or job placement service based on that assessment.
- The process of determining the degree and level of activation that was stipulated in the Integration into Work Agreement.

- What constraints, if any, they were under in determining the degree of support and/or activation provided a UBII recipient.
- The role pressured played in the decisions they reached about the type of support and/or activation applied to recipients.

The fieldwork took place between August 2011 and January 2012. The interviews in Hamburg commenced on August 21, 2011 and finished on September 28, 2011. The interviews in Bremen were conducted from October 30, 2011 to January 12, 2012. The Bremen interviews were conducted in short segments because I was teaching at the time. I would thus travel for long weekends to Bremen so that I could conduct the interviews on Mondays and Tuesdays and then return to London for teaching on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. I spent a three-week period in Bremen from December 11, 2011 to January 12, 2012 conducting interviews. The interviews with case managers in Bremen were conducted at their office at the end of January and the interviews with the Berlin case managers were conducted over Skype in February, 2012. The interviews with UBII recipients lasted, on average, 45 minutes. The interviews with the case managers lasted one hour. All interviews with UBII recipients were digitally recorded except in the case of two interviews. All five interviews with case managers were digitally recorded as well.

5.5 Issues affecting the data collection

Ultimately there were few issues that directly affected the data collection. That said, my position as an American, female researcher asking sensitive questions no doubt had an impact on respondents' responses. Three issues to arise were the issue of language, the location of the interview, and subtle cultural differences.

Language

The interviews were conducted in German except with a few respondents from foreign countries. Here particularly the Ghanaian and Nigerian respondents preferred to be interviewed in English. While the interviews with Germans and with most immigrants were conducted without any problems understanding one another, some immigrant respondents' level of German language proficiency varied. As a result those interviews tended to be

shorter because they could not fully express their views and experiences. Moreover their limited language ability made it difficult to probe the respondents to the degree I would have liked. Therefore, some interviews with immigrants were shorter in length and less in-depth data were obtained than was the case with other immigrant respondents who were fluent in German. Nevertheless, their experience as immigrants with limited German language proficiency was particularly important to include in the data collection in order take into consideration their experience and perception of the responsiveness of case managers to their needs as immigrants with limited language ability.

Location of the interviews

Initially concern was raised about conducting the interviews at the Jobcenter in an office provided by the management. It was felt that the respondents may not be as forthcoming with their answers because they could not ultimately trust that I was not connected to the Jobcenter in some capacity. It was suggested that I would obtain more honest responses if the interview was conducted off-site, at a café for example. Yet conducting the interviews on-site had several advantages. First, I was acutely aware that, though unemployed, time was an issue for everyone. The idea of asking someone in the waiting room to participate in the study and then asking them to go to a café to conduct the interview seemed to be an extra step that might actually prevent UBII recipients from participating. Moreover, I was concerned about conducting an interview in public given noise levels at a café and the capacity to be distracted. The office provided offered a quiet, focused setting that did not require the UBII recipient to take any extra time out of their schedule than was necessary to conduct the interview. The primary concern that recipients may not believe that I was not associated with the Jobcenter and, thus, would be less forthcoming with their answers proved ungrounded. The fact that I was an American who spoke German with an accent proved very helpful in this area. Not only did I stress that neither I nor my research was associated with the Jobcenter, but I always pointed out that I was from the US and that I was here to learn, based on their experience, how the German system worked. Respondents did not appear to doubt this and overall, based on the quality of responses, did not appear to have problems speaking openly about their experiences.

Cultural references

In terms of the interview process itself, some issues regarding gender and cultural reference points were observed that affected some interactions with interviewees. First, much has been written about women researchers and their experience interviewing men, particularly on sensitive topics (Pini, 2005; Gailey and Prohaska, 2011). The literature has focused on the power dynamics of an interview that can make the male participant feel vulnerable because of the perception that the female researcher is in an authoritative position (Sinding and Aronson, 2003), whereas it has been argued that there exists a more relaxed and protected atmosphere and environment between women who interview women (Sinding and Aronson, 2003).

While the majority of male and female respondents did not appear affected by my position as a highly educated, American woman interviewing them, there were a few cases, especially among younger German male respondents, where men sought to challenge my position of authority. As a result, a few male respondents attempted to game the interview by not taking the questions asked or their responses seriously. They appeared to flirt with me which came across as an attempt to undermine my position of authority by not taking me or my research seriously. Second, while I am fluent in German—both in language and in understanding the culture—nonetheless my American upbringing at times imposed on the tone of the interview. For example, it is not uncommon for women in America to go back to work within a six-week to six-month period of time after the birth of a child because there is no Federal maternity or paternity leave policy in the US. Women in Germany have recourse to three years of statutory maternity leave which means they can receive Unemployment Benefit II without the activation or support requirements during this time. In one interview with a woman whose child was two-years old the discussion turned to work. I mistakenly made the assumption, which came across in the manner in which I posed the question, that after two years she would naturally want to go back to work. To which she responded—indignantly—no, because she would not leave her child with a total stranger when she could be home caring for him. This type of situation did not happen often, but it reminded me that, although I know the German socio-political and cultural context extremely well, there were cultural points of reference where I had to remind myself that how things are done in Germany is not how they are done in America.

5.6 Data analysis

Data analysis took place after all 50 interviews were completed. That said, a small proportion of interviews had been transcribed and read by me (translated copies were given to my PhD supervisors) prior to completion of the fieldwork in order to explore some of the emerging themes. All interviews were transcribed but were analysed in German because inference and cultural issues can be lost in the translation. This section will cover the process of coding and analysing the full interview data. It will also address issues concerning the reliability and validity of the data.

5.6.1 Use of NVivo

Fundamental to any qualitative data analysis is ensuring that overarching themes are supported by excerpts from the raw data and that the data interpretation remains directly linked to the words of the respondents (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006). In order to do this, I coded my data using the qualitative data analysis software programme Nvivo9. The software is a way to organize the information and to link research themes and remarks through coding. The software does not interpret the research for me (Kelle, 2000). Instead it enabled me to classify evidence and place the data into nodes so that patterns and themes could emerge in a coherent fashion. Overall, the analysis of the evidence involved three stages. First, all the interviews were read through prior to commencing with the detailed and systematic data analysis using NVivo. Here brief notes were made on emerging themes in relation to the research questions coupled with other themes to emerge outside the scope of the research questions. Second, systematic, detailed analysis of each interview was carried out using Nvivo. The advantage of using qualitative data analysis software was that it facilitated the organization of the data and the coding process. This made it easier to compare texts according to one or multiple codes that then allowed patterns in the data to be identified. Third, specific themes were selected based on the analytical framework and structure of the thesis. Here passages were re-read and another layer of sub-coding took place prior to selecting the headline themes and examples for the thesis.

As noted in Chapter One (section 1.2) the analytical process was highly iterative. This thesis did not set out to originally test a hypothesis or a theory. Nor did this thesis generate a new

theory, so much as a new theoretically informed interpretation and understanding of the Hartz IV reforms. The critical analytics described in Chapter Four were applied after an analysis of the evidence had taken place in order to help explain the findings. The criterion employed in the initial identification of themes was the analytical framework that was originally based on my interview schedule. That said additional themes arose inductively from the analysis that were not a part of my original analytical framework (see box 5.1 and 5. 2). Here thematic analysis was used to establish themes (codes) that emerged as being important to the description of the phenomenon. The process involved the identification of themes through a careful reading of the data (Rice & Ezzy, 1999). Thematic analysis is a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Boyatzis defines a theme as “a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon” (1998: 261). As a result, though my original analytical framework for UBII recipient interviews consisted of 38 codes, 110 additional codes emerged from an analysis of the data. For the case manager interviews, there were 35 codes based on the analytical framework and an additional seven codes that emerged from an analysis of the data. Below provides a list of the codes and sub-codes used in the analysis of the data. Owing to space, not all themes based on the codes or sub-codes were included in this thesis.

Box 5.1 Analytical framework: codes and sub-codes for UBII recipient data (* delineates codes derived from the initial analytical framework)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal Details* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Age* 1.2 Marital status* 1.3 Number of Children* 1.4 Education history* 1.5 Employment history* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5.1 Length of unemployment* 2. Jobcenter, general experience at* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Length of time on UBII* 2.2 JobcenterPlus initiative 2.3 Benefit, enough to live from?* 2.5 Personal initiative versus assistance received from Jobcenter 2.6 Pressure by Jobcenter to work* 2.7 Pressure felt generally* 3. Skills trainings* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Skills training, types of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1.1 One-Euro-Job 3.1.2 Mini or Mindi Jobs 3.1.3 Short-term 3.1.4 Umschulung (re-training) 3.2 Skills training, effective* 3.3 Advocacy

- 3.3.1 Ability to advocate for oneself
- 3.3.2 Limitations to advocacy
- 3.4 Choice: Ability to choose which training
 - 3.4.1 Did/did not welcome opportunity
 - 3.4.2 'I know best'
 - 3.4.3 'I don't need it but it was a must'
 - 3.4.4 Autonomy
- 3.5 Entrapment
 - 3.5.1 Sense of being 'busied',¹¹¹
 - 3.5.2 Participation as way to move respondents off statistics
 - 3.5.3 Training as escape Jobcenter demands
 - 3.5.4 Demoralized
 - 3.5.5 Beneath ability/qualifications
- 3.6 Informative
 - 3.6.1 Quality of training*
 - Formulaic nature of trainings
 - Not informative
 - Training lacked relevance to prior employment/future options
 - 3.6.2 Question of purpose
 - Use of time
 - Cost of time
 - 3.6.3 Positive: provided needed information
 - Provided structure and routine
 - Provided needed material
 - Stepping stone
 - Opportunity to work/earn extra cash
- 4. Job placement Services*
 - 4.1 Job placement services generally*
 - 4.2 Job placement services effective*
 - 4.3 Job placement as busy work
 - 4.4 Job placement service as consultation to understand what one wants to do
 - 4.5 Tricking Jobcenter system
 - 4.5.1 Fraudulent Activity
 - 4.5.2 Resistance
 - 4.6 Job advertisements provided to UBII recipient*
 - 4.6.1 Professional match
 - 4.6.2 Helpful
 - 4.6.3 Waste of time
 - 4.6.4 Paternalism: 'I know what is best for me'
 - 4.6.5 Burden
 - 4.6.6. Not current
 - 4.6.7 Already investigated
 - 4.6.8 Required to send by recipient
 - 4.6.9 Structural difficulties in applying
 - 4.7 Activation: meeting number stipulated*
 - 4.7.1 Lack of jobs
 - 4.7.2 Finding relevant jobs to apply to
 - 4.7.3 Personal circumstances
- 5. Rights and responsibilities*
 - 5.1 Perception of a right to work*
 - 5.1.1 Support
 - 5.1.2 Freedom to choose
 - 5.1.3 Quality earnings
 - 5.1.4 Work not a right
 - 5.2 Perception of Responsibility to work*
 - 5.2.1 Duty to state, society, family

¹¹¹ I introduced the word 'busied' as a thematic code during an analysis of the data. In this context 'busied' is used to demarcate respondent responses to random allocation in skills trainings as a way to 'engage' them, keep them active or keep them from sitting home being, as some respondents said, 'lazy'.

- 5.2.2 Pay household expenses
- 5.2.3 Oneself
- 5.2.4 To get off benefit
- 5.3 Responsibility to find work*
 - 5.3.1 Personal instinct
 - 5.3.2 Social norms
 - 5.3.3 How job search conducted
 - Job applications sent
 - Freedom
 - 5.3.4 Jobcenter help/hinder search*
- 5.4 Jobcenter change sense of responsibility*
 - 5.4.1 Freedom from Jobcenter
 - 5.4.2 Sense of dependency
 - 5.4.3 Benefits of activation
 - Positively reinforcing responsibility
 - Lacking motivation
 - Jobcenter strengthened work search
 - Jobcenter weakened work search
- 5.5 Loss of social democratic values
- 5.6 Fördern and Fordern*
 - 5.6.1 Meaning*
 - Give and take
 - Not fair bargain
 - Structural impediments to work
 - 5.6.2 Impression*
- 6. Case manager*
 - 6.1 Equal treatment
 - 6.2 Case Manager, differences between
 - 6.3 Case Manager, helpful*
 - 6.3.1 Support received
 - 6.3.2 Support needed
 - 6.3.3 No support
 - 6.4 Case Manager, informative*
 - 6.4.1 Quality of consultation
 - 6.5 Case Manager, influenced*
 - 6.6 Case Manager, relationship to*
 - 6.7 Respondent understanding of Case Manager limitations
- 7. Sanctions
 - 7.1 Motivation to get off benefit
 - 7.2 Obedience
 - 7.3 Fear
 - 7.4 Threaten
- 8. Entrapment
 - 8.1 What recipients want to do versus what they can or are given to do
 - 8.2 Recipient motivation to work or do something
 - 8.3 Restrictions
- 9. UBII recipients
 - 9.1 Attitude to work
 - 9.2 Shame
 - 9.3 Stereotypes of ALGII recipients*
 - 9.4 Speculative
- 10. Work
 - 10.1 Age, pressure of
 - 10.2 Ausländer and work (immigrants and work)
 - 10.3 Labour market, changing nature of
 - 10.4 Lone mothers and work
 - 10.5 Low-wage*
 - 10.6 Commute*
 - 10.7 Qualifications*
 - 10.8 Willingness to work*

- 10.9 Mothers and work
- 10.10 Pension
- 10.11 Working and receiving ALGII
- 10.12 Working more than one job
- 10.13 Temp agencies
- 10.14 Precarious
- 11. Wage
 - 11.1 Wage versus benefit
 - 11.2 Wages in Germany

Box 5.2 Analytical framework: codes and sub-codes for case manager data (* delineates codes derived from the initial analytical framework)

- 1. Personal Details*
 - 1.1 Length in position*
 - 1.2 Education history*
 - 1.3 Description of position*
- 2. Mediator*
 - 2.1 Role of*
 - 2.2 Process of mediation*
 - 2.2.1 What is required of client*
 - 2.2.2 What is required of mediator*
 - 2.2.3 Integration into work agreement*
 - 2.3 Number of clients*
 - 2.3.1 Reassignment*
 - 2.3.2 Reassignment and frustration*
- 3. Activation*
 - 3.1 Case manager decision making process*
 - 3.1.1 Number of interviews assigned*
 - 3.1.2 Number of interviews required to demonstrate*
 - 3.2 Structural and behavioural consideration in decision making*
- 4. Relationship with companies/industry?*
- 4.1 Temp agencies?*
- 4.2 Recommend clients apply to temp agencies?*
- 5. Skills training services*
 - 5.1 Training services offered*
 - 5.2 How assessed/who needs*
 - 5.3 Do trainings assist clients?*
 - 5.3.1 Link between training and finding work?*
 - 5.4 Must client participate?*
 - 5.4.1 Ramifications for not participating?*
 - 5.5 Umschulung*
 - 5.5.1 Circumstances for recommendation*
 - 5.6 One-Euro-Job*
 - 5.6.1 Circumstances for recommendation*
 - 5.7 Short-term trainings*
 - 5.7.1 Circumstances for recommendation*
 - 5.8 Financing of trainings
 - 5.8.1 Pressure to place
- 6. Case manager pressure*
 - 6.1 Job performance indicators
 - 6.2 Job performance pressure
 - 6.3 Pressure effect decision making?
 - 6.4 Constraints
 - 6.5 Capacity to assist

5.6.2 Reliability and validity of the data

It has been argued that the application of the quantitative research criteria—reliability and validity—should not be replicated to qualitative research. Reliability and validity have long been important criteria used in establishing and assessing the quality of quantitative research. Some have therefore questioned the relevance of applying typically quantitative modes of assessing quality to qualitative research (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003). As Bryman points out “...even writers who do take the view that the criteria are relevant have considered the possibility that the meanings of the terms need to be altered. For example, the issue of measurement validity almost by definition seems to carry connotations of measurement. Since measurement is not a major preoccupation among qualitative researchers, the issue of validity would seem to have little bearing on such studies” (2004: 272). But as Lewis and Ritchie point out, “in their broadest conception, reliability meaning ‘sustainable’ and validity meaning ‘well grounded’ will have relevance for qualitative research since they help to define the strength of the data” (2003: 270). It is for these and other reasons that Lincoln and Guba (2000) were prompted to propose criteria for assessing qualitative studies that were more germane to the methodology, introducing the use of *trustworthiness* and *authenticity*. While there are different approaches to addressing reliability and validity—Lincoln and Guba’s four criteria for “trustworthiness” (1985: 290); Kirk and Miller’s (1986) six reliability and validity checks; Hammersley’s (1992) “subtle form of realism”—this section will draw on four of Silverman’s (2013) five approaches to ensuring validity in data analysis: the constant comparative method, comprehensive data treatment, deviant-case analysis and using appropriate tabulations. Silverman’s first criterion, the refutability principle, addresses the problem of anecdotalism by having researchers seek to refute their initial assumptions about the data in order to achieve objectivity (2013:289). The point here is to seek and refute assumed relations between phenomena. Only if the researcher cannot refute the existence of a certain relationship, is he or she in a position to speak about ‘objective’ knowledge. I do not use his first method because this criterion is satisfied by using Silverman’s remaining four methods as “an interrelated way of thinking critically during the data analysis” (2013: 290). As such this method was absorbed into the other four methods to test the validity of my data analysis.

The ‘constant comparative method’ means that the qualitative researcher should always attempt to find another case through which to test a provisional explanation. In other words,

having isolated a specific case or instance of a phenomenon in the data, the researcher should then search through the data to obtain a larger sample of cases that support the initial phenomena found which can then be compared. This method is particularly relevant to researchers who only analyse aspects rather than the whole of a given data set. To ensure that I was not simply selecting one-off cases and then generalizing the case to the larger sample of UBII recipient experiences and perceptions, all of my data were inspected and analysed (see below for more detailed information on how). The instance of a specific phenomenon was put into a code (or sub-code) according to the analytical framework and the themes it represented. There were many purposes for doing this, but one was to get a sense of how many times the phenomenon arose under a specific code or sub-code (theme) and to then be able to compare and see if there was commonality between the cases. This gave me a sense of proportion within the data set and allowed me to ascertain whether a theme was a one-off event specific to someone's circumstance or whether the theme could be generalised to the larger sample.

In terms of 'comprehensive data treatment', which requires all data to be incorporated in the analysis in order to avoid anecdotalism (selecting data based on it fitting into the analytical argument), every interview for this study was transcribed and uploaded into NVivo and systematically coded and analysed by me as the themes and categories emerged from the analysis. All 50 interviews provided crucial evidence for this research. Even those interviews that, at first glance, appeared void of useful information. In order to ensure validity of the data analysis the data were read, coded and re-coded on three separate occasions. First all interviews were read directly after they were transcribed. Here I made initial notes on possible themes. This process took place both during and after the fieldwork, as initial interviews from Hamburg and Bremen were transcribed during fieldwork. Second, after all the interviews were complete and transcribed, I uploaded the interviews (i.e., the data) into NVivo. Here each interview was read and systematically coded and recoded where sub-themes emerged. The final analysis took place prior to drafting the findings chapters. Here the codes were re-read and organized according to the headline findings to emerge from an analysis of the data. I then established a structural framework for each of the findings chapters. At this point it was less about coding as themes emerged and more about organizing the codes and, where necessary, re-coding based on sub-themes to emerge. The themes were selected that were relevant to answering the research questions and at this point specific codes were re-read to select the best quotes to illustrate the findings.

A comprehensive examination of the data also allows for what Silverman (2013) defines as ‘deviant cases analysis’. Comprehensive data treatment implies actively seeking out and addressing anomalies or deviant cases that do not fit a particular theme or analytic argument. For example, in analysing respondents experience of participating in skills trainings, it was apparent from the start, that a very high proportion of respondents experience of participating in a skills training did not result in that training assisting them in entering the regular labour market. But an analysis of the ‘deviant cases’ showed that for a proportion of respondents the skills training proved helpful and useful in other ways. They provided respondents with a sense of direction and purpose and an opportunity to interact with the community—to be a part of something on a daily or weekly basis (see Chapter Six, section 6.5 for further discussion). An analysis of the deviant cases provided a more in-depth understanding of why some respondents may have found skills trainings helpful and beneficial beyond the standard objective (of the Jobcenter) to provide support to move recipients into work.

Finally, Silverman’s (2013) fifth approach to ensuring validity in data is ‘using appropriate tabulations’. This involves quantifying or using simple counting techniques, theoretically derived and ideally based on the codes and categories deduced from the analysis of the data. This approach can be used to survey the whole corpus of data in order to get a sense of how often a theme emerges across all the interviews (Silverman, 2013). Here I wanted to ensure that I was not ‘cherry picking’ themes or that I did not select themes that were relevant to only a handful of respondent experiences and perceptions, rather than prevalent across a majority of interviews. In addition to counting instances of a phenomenon in a specific code, I also created a very crude excel spreadsheet where I counted whether a theme appeared in an interview. This helped me establish a sense of proportion and therefore how relevant a theme was to an overarching finding.

Hammersley (1992: 67) defines reliability as “the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions.” While it was not possible to have more than one person read and code the data, as noted above, the data were read and coded on three separate occasions. Moreover, a select number of interviews were transcribed and translated for my PhD supervisors to read. Further to that, my interpretation of the data was discussed with my PhD supervisors as well as with other researchers and staff members in the Department through presentations and informal

discussions on the findings. This also facilitated critical reflection on the data analysis. In terms of the ability for this study to be replicated in order to ensure reliability, as LeCompte and Goetz point out, it is “impossible to ‘freeze’ a social setting” (1982: 32). That said, given the parameters of the research methodology that have been outlined in this chapter, this study could be replicated and conducted at different Jobcenters throughout Germany. Moreover, given that saturation was reached by the 40th interview—in that by that point any and all responses substantiated and replicated respondent responses from previous interviews—it may reasonably be inferred that there is a strong probability that similar themes would emerge from a similar study conducted in different parts of Germany.

5.6.3 Numbers and generalisability

Lewis and Ritchie (2003) explore the issue of generalisation from three perspectives: theoretical, inferential and representational generalisation.¹¹² For Lewis and Ritchie representational generalisation specifically is the extent to which findings can be inferred to the parent population that was sampled. Some authors, such as Miles and Huberman (1994) and Arksey and Knight (1999) argue that the particular methods of qualitative research studies undermine the scope for representational generalisation because qualitative research involves small samples that are not selected to be statistically representative. Others such as Hammersley (1992) view the existence of confirmatory evidence from other research conducted with the parent population as being necessary to assert that a study’s findings can be generalised—indeed Seale (1999) particularly stresses the role of quantitative research data here. If we take the basic concepts of representational generalisation—the emphasis on probability sampling and measurement—when simply applied to qualitative research it is easy to come to the conclusion that representational generalisation cannot be supported in qualitative research (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003). However, the basis for representational generalisation in qualitative research is very different from quantitative research. Qualitative research cannot be generalised on a statistical basis. But as they point out:

It is not the prevalence of particular views or experiences, nor the extent of their location within particular parts of the sample, about which wider inference can be drawn. Rather, it is the content or ‘map’ of the range of views, experiences, outcomes or other phenomenon under study, and the

¹¹² To help with clarification Lewis and Ritchie (2003) suggest that generalisation can be seen as involving three linked but separate concepts. In addition to representational generalisation explained above, inferential generalisation explores the question of whether the findings from a study can be generalised or inferred to other settings or contexts beyond the sampled one. Theoretical generalisation draws theoretical propositions, principles or statements from the findings of a study for more general application.

factors and circumstances that shape and influence them, that can be inferred to the researched population. Although individual variants of circumstances, views or experiences would undoubtedly be found within the parent population, it is at the level of categories, concepts and explanation that generalisation can take place (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003: 269).

Drawing on other research findings can indeed help in assessing how far the findings from a study can be generalised to the parent population, but it is not a requirement for representational generalisation. Thus in order to assess representational generalisation the researcher needs to ensure accuracy with which the phenomena have been captured and interpreted in the study sample, which will depend on the quality of the fieldwork, analysis and interpretation. Second, it is the degree to which the sample is representative of the parent population sampled. Here Lewis and Ritchie stress that representation is not a question of statistical match but of inclusivity; “whether the sample provides ‘symbolic representation’ by containing the diversity of dimensions and constituencies that are central to explanation” (2003: 269). Validity and reliability are thus used in order to establish representational generalization—though with different implications than how they are used in statistical research as discussed above.

Thus in terms of raw ‘numbers’, the inference that can be drawn from qualitative data rests on the nature of the phenomena being studied and not the sheer number of times a given phenomena happens or its statistical distribution (Silverman, 2013). That said, as I noted above, simple counting techniques based on the categories and themes analysed can offer a means to survey the whole corpus of data in order to gain a sense of proportion of the data as a whole. This, Silverman (2013) argues, allows the researcher to test and to revise their generalisations in order to remove any concern about the accuracy of the researcher’s impressions about the data. As such, numbers are presented in the next three empirical chapters. While these are not ‘representative’, the aim where they are used is to contextualise the patterns identified within the larger data set.

5.7 Chapter summary and conclusion

This chapter described the methods used in the collection and analysis of the data. The epistemological position for this research can be described as interpretative in that in order to answer this study’s research questions, it was essential to understand the experiences and

perceptions of Unemployment Benefit II recipients. The data were obtained by conducting 50 semi-structured interviews with UBII recipients and five semi-structured interviews with case managers. This chapter has outlined the practicalities of the research process as well as the problems associated with adopting the methodology used to obtain the data. The next three chapters will present the findings derived from an analysis of the data.

Chapter Six: Findings on the Role of Skills Training in Assisting Unemployment Benefit II Recipients Find Work

6.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents a thick description¹¹³ of the findings as they pertain to the first research question:

- Are the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients?

This chapter will focus on the experience and perceptions of the sample of UBII respondents for this study who participated in skills trainings at the Jobcenter in Bremen and Hamburg (n=39). The expressed objective of fourth Hartz law in the provision of skills training for UBII recipients rests in the notion of support (Fördern) provided to assist in labour market integration.

Specifically, according to paragraph §1 SGBII, overcoming or reducing the need for assistance through gainful employment is the general goal of the provision of basic security (Unemployment Benefit II) for the unemployed (BMAS, 2008). The function of the provision of basic security is to assist recipients in either maintaining their current employment, help improve their employment options or to assist them in integrating into the labour market altogether. Alongside this, the overarching objective of SGBII §1(1)(1) is to strengthen the personal responsibility of the person affected (i.e. the unemployed) so that he or she contributes and ensures that his or her livelihood is earned independent of receipt of basic security and is done so through one's own personal means and strength (BMAS, 2008). In order to achieve this goal, a key component of the fourth Hartz law is the assistance provided by the government in the form of 'support' instruments (Arbeitsförderung) to help integrate UBII recipients into the labour market. Support comes in two forms: job placement services,

¹¹³ The concept of 'thick description' in qualitative research was first introduced by Geertz (1993). While the notion of thick description has been interpreted in many ways, essentially it requires the researcher to provide sufficient detail of the original observations or commentaries (and where warranted, the environment where they occurred) as a way of providing the reader a way to gauge and assess the meanings attached to the descriptions (or quotes). That said, the description of findings in this and the following two empirical chapters is not 'thick' in the ethnographic tradition.

which will be discussed in Chapter Seven, and skills training known as Maßnahmen zur Aktivierung und beruflichen Eingliederung (skills trainings to activate and occupationally integrate the unemployed). The policy objective here is to provide targeted skills training in an area deemed necessary to assist UBII recipients integrate into the labour market (BMAS, 2011). This support (Fördern) provided is arguably an essential component of the fourth Hartz law. In fact, as recently as April 2012 the law to improve the integration chances in the labour market (Gesetz zur Verbesserung der Eingliederungschancen am Arbeitsmarkt) was implemented with the objective of improving on the degree and level of ‘support’ (Fördern) already provided to UBI and UBII recipients established in the fourth Hartz law.¹¹⁴

Therefore, based on the experiences, perceptions and expectations of a sample of respondents in this study who participated in a training, this chapter explores the findings of whether respondents’ participation enabled them to meet the objective of the skills training, i.e., to assist in labour market integration. Yet as noted in Chapter Five (section 5.3.2) a discussion of the evidence in this chapter is to be understood in the context of an important feature of the sample selection: namely the sample consists of those UBII recipients for whom the support mechanisms have not been terribly helpful or successful. Those UBII recipients who were able to find permanent employment, either on account of the support they received at the Jobcenter, or because of their own characteristics, are not those individuals who were at the Jobcenter at the time I sought to obtain my sample. Thus, there is the potential that the experience of those UBII recipients who were at the Jobcenter and available to be interviewed were likely to over-represent negative experiences with the support services. After all, the very fact that they were still in receipt of UBII meant that they had not found work (or work that paid enough), whether with the assistance of support services or not. But therein lies an important caveat. Unemployment Benefit II is the benefit for those considered ‘long-term unemployed’. These are the messy, difficult and trying stories of individuals, whether on account of agency or structure (or a mixture of both), have not been able to integrate into the labour market. As a result the question remains: what do to with them? The sample for this study is diverse; it includes young and old, citizens, residents and non-residents, those with qualifications and those without; lone mothers and fathers, families and single men and women for whom labour market integration has proved challenging. Thus

¹¹⁴ While the 2012 law predominantly addresses UBI recipients under the jurisdiction of SGBIII, the objective of §16e SGBII “Förderung von Arbeitsverhältnissen” (Support for Work) is to provide more targeted and flexible ‘Fördern’ (support) in assisting UBII recipients find employment.

while this is effectively a sample of the stock rather than the flow, it is nonetheless the experience of the ‘precariat’ (Standing, 2011) that deserves closer inspection.

The initial analytical coding framework used in this and Chapters Seven and Eight consists of a sequence of main themes that have been subdivided by a series of related subtopics. These main themes and subtopics explored in this and Chapters Seven and Eight derived from an analysis of key themes, concepts and emergent categories that fed into the larger thematic framework. The initial coding framework (themes) corresponded with the topic guide used to conduct the interviews (see Chapter Five, section 5.6.1 for more detail). The evidence presented in the following three empirical chapters will be guided by this thematic framework. The two-fold critical analytic discussed in Chapter Three (section 4.2) was applied after an analysis of the evidence had taken place in order to help interpret the findings and thus did not play a role in the framework used in the initial data analysis. It is relevant for explaining and giving meaning to the findings which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Nine. Therefore, in this chapter section 6.2 presents the findings of respondents’ experience and perception of short-term trainings. Section 6.3 presents the findings of respondents’ experience and perception of vocational (re-) training placements. Section 6.4 presents the findings of respondents’ experience and perception of One-Euro-Jobs while 6.5 will provide an account of respondents’ positive experiences with participating in a skills training. Section 6.6 summarizes the chapter findings and conclusion.

6.2 Unemployment Benefit II recipients’ experience of short-term trainings

This chapter will focus on respondents’ experience of participating in short-term skills trainings. The framework initially used to analyse the findings in the following sections include the thematic codes listed below that will act as a guide for unpacking the evidence:

Massnahmen, types of
 One-Euro-Job
 Short-term
 Umschulung (re-training)
Influenced
 Advocacy: ability to advocate for oneself
 Limitations to advocacy

Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did/did not welcome opportunity Gratitude “I know best” ‘I don’t need it, but it was a <i>must</i>’ Autonomy
Entrapment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sense of being 'busied' Participation as way to move respondents off statistics Participation way to escape Jobcenter demands Sanctions Demoralized Beneath ability/qualifications Perception of wage
Informative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of trainings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulaic nature of trainings Not informative Training lacked relevance to prior employment/future options
Question of purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of time Cost of time
Massnahme, effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided needed information Provided structure and routine Provided needed material Stepping stone Opportunity to work/earn extra cash

Types of Maßnahmen

What constitutes a skills training (Maßnahme) depends on the degree of support needed by the UBII recipient. The support (Förderung) provided means that the Jobcenter absorbs all cost associated with participation in a training for as long as is necessary to cover the purpose and the content of the training. During the duration of the training, the UBII recipient still receives benefit so long as they are in need of it and while not officially ‘employed’ they are considered ‘engaged’ and are therefore removed from the unemployment statistic. All total 39 respondents in this study participated in a skills training. While there are a range of trainings that constitute a ‘Maßnahme’, the three categories of trainings that will be analysed in this Chapter are based on the types of trainings respondents participated in for this study. First—kurze Trainingsmaßnahmen—short-term trainings were the most commonly provided trainings that respondents participated in (n=26). These are short one-two- and three-week to

three to six month trainings in CV building or refresher courses, computer training or refresher courses, how to become self-employed (Existenzgründung), interview coaching, project management, presentation skills, and German or English language courses among many others. Vocational (re-) training—Berufliche Weiterbildung—comprised the second category in which some respondents participated (n=11). Here vocational (re-) training consisted of the Jobcenter supporting the UBII recipient in completing his or her secondary school diploma, participation in an apprenticeship or a vocational re-training into a new career. The final category of training that respondents participated in was the One-Euro-Job—Arbeitsbeschaffungsmaßnahmen (n=15). Of the 39 respondents who participated in a skills training, many participated in more than one training, including both One-Euro-Job and a short-term training (n=10) or a vocational re-training and a short-term training (n=6). Of those who participated in a short-term training, 15 participated in more than one short-term training while on UBII.

THEMATIC CODES

Short-term trainings: Autonomy, Advocacy and Choice

There is a debate in the academic literature about what is meant by and the degree to which the concept of autonomy can be used in the welfare policy context (Rössler, 2002; Darnwall, 2006; Bothfeld and Betzelt, 2013). The concept of autonomy, in relation to active labour market policies like skills training implies more leeway for the individual to dictate favourable policy outcomes that directly affect him or her rather than having a specific behaviour prescribed for her/him (Bothfeld and Betzelt, 2013). In this context, it is a question of the degree to which participation in a skills training affects an individual's autonomy over her/his life situation. Individuals are never fully autonomous in relation to their social environment. But Rössler (2002) argues that the major condition for autonomy is based on the capacity of individuals to reflect on who they want to be and what they like to do combine with their capacity to figure out the 'authentic' motives for their decisions. In relation to the ability of an individual to exercise autonomy over life choice, the theme to arise out of an analysis of the data was whether respondents were able to advocate their position for or against participating in a skills training.

Ultimately it was a question of how much choice or say respondents had in being placed in a skills training that matched their interests, prior employment history and/or future

employment prospects. Here some respondents clearly sought to advocate their position as to whether they wished to participate or not in a given (re-) training. But at the same time there were a confluence of factors which respondents highlighted that potentially impacted the outcome they wished. This confluence of factors includes both whether their case manager was open to their suggestions and the degree to which the respondent themselves had done the necessary research on a given training, such as which training, reasons for participation, when it was starting, for how long and where. If both these factors were in synch with each other, then a review of the data suggests that the respondent was somewhat more likely to be able to participate in the training he or she desired. But if one or both of these aspects were not aligned, then the chances were less so. That said, some respondents did not necessarily perceive that they were being randomly assigned to a given training. Indeed for this group of respondents, it was more a general sense of confusion as to why they were being put into a training they perceived as not relevant or useful to their job search. But for other respondents, the fact that they repeatedly cited their placement as a way to remove them from the unemployment statistics suggests that they felt they were being randomly allocated to trainings as a way to engage them. Here the interviews with case managers are relevant insofar as it shows whether or not the respondents' perceptions were an accurate reflection of that reality. Indeed interviews with case managers suggest that UBII recipients can end up being placed in a random training simply to fill space and, thus, meet targets.

The ability to advocate for oneself—to give reasons why the respondent did or did not wish to participate in a given training did not necessarily have the intended outcome respondents hoped for (n=9). This was because those respondents who sought to advocate for themselves experienced limitations in their ability to argue for which short-term training they would or would not like to participate in. A proportion of respondents who sought to advocate for themselves tended to acquiesce to their case manager's suggestion(s) when it became clear that they were lacking progress. They lacked the energy to continually push their interests when they realized early on in the process that their interests were not central to the case manager's decision making process. Bowing to pressure coupled with the desire to avoid strife with their case manager or the Jobcenter, this group of respondents simply gave in. This group acquiescence was not necessarily because they were indifferent to how their time was utilized. Depending on what type of case manager they were assigned coupled with their prior experience at the Jobcenter, this group of respondents had learned that there simply was

no point in protesting because the decisions made were often perceived by the respondent as being out of their control.

I12: All I ever really wanted to do was work. I did not want to participate in a training because I have done enough trainings. The main [work] experiences I have acquired were in warehouse-logistic. And then all at once it started, that one must do a ten-hour per week training. But not that which was important, rather banal things like for example, how one behaves in public and how one addresses someone or stuff like that. Then we talked about pyramids and how one creates one and this and that and then two hours of 'fit for work' and gymnastic and stuff like that and I did not want to do any of that. Then I went to the instructor and I said that I had no desire to do this because I didn't need any of it. I know how to behave in public, I know what is important, or how to save electricity. I did not need that, *but it was a must*. And then I went to the case manager and I said that I did not want to participate. But I had no chance. That was just one big sitting around and then I had to go to the case manager and listen to what he had to say and sometimes he had something instructive to say, but generally nothing special. Then I suggested, well if I have to sit here [in the skill training] can't I do something important like internet? No it was already established what I must do. You can lay out what you would like to do, but the themes are already prescribed. You can't just change that with them [the Jobcenter]. Then I stopped asking. I simply had no desire anymore. (29 year-old female single German)

A recurring theme to emerge from the interviews was respondents' perceived inability to choose which training they would participate in (n=11). A proportion of respondents did not feel they were given the opportunity nor had the freedom to ask for a specific skills training they perceived as having the potential to assist their integration into the regular labour market. As a result respondents were often frustrated but resigned to the fact that they were put in training placements that they perceived as not being of assistance to them.

AMB: You said to me, you do not like computers, but still you have to participate in a computer training? I23: Yes, yes. I had to participate.
AMB: Really. You had no choice? I23: No, no. There was nothing else available at the time. And then she [case manager] said to me, you either participate or... (33 year-old female German lone parent)

Respondents repeatedly noted that they, not their case manager, knew best what they needed to assist them in integrating into the regular labour market. Three respondents were even put into the same training on multiple occasions that again was not relevant to their work search objectives, their skills or their professional interest.

I30: Then in May I had to go to a so-called job application centre where one is taught how to apply to jobs and how to write a job application. I already did that several times, that was nothing new. And that is what I did here in Bremen. Then I tried to get a vocational re-training, but that was

denied. I want to work, that is not the issue. When I lived in the country it was hard without a driver's license and car and to only rely on the regional trains. There [in the country] I was put into even more trainings. They were always happy to put me in trainings, but the trainings never did anything for me. (48 year-old divorced female German lone parent)

The inability to choose the skill training that this proportion of respondents perceived as helpful had the potential to result in a missed opportunity to participate in a specific training that could potentially otherwise assist them in finding work in their field. For example, respondents' forty and older often cited that their inability to speak, read and write English prevented them from finding work in their field. They cited the change over the years between when they first started and where English was not a pre-requisite to it now clearly being one. Yet, when a number of respondents asked their case managers if they could participate in an English course (n=6), for example, and provided documentation supporting their request, two respondents' requests were accepted while the remaining respondents were denied the training (n=4).

I14: And when I do a training in 'Office'—five days 'Office'—I am off the statistic. That does not do anything for me. I mean, in the labour market I am asked 'do you know the Cartier programme?' That is a CAD-programme. That programme is expensive, a training in Cartier costs at least six to twelve months. Well good [instead] I am starting an SPS continuing education course in two weeks and that last five months. I am curious what that will bring. (38 year-old single male German)

This group of respondents often wondered why, if they were placed in trainings that were perceived by them as not of use or interest but cost money, they could not at least be put in a training that they perceived as—at a minimum—helpful; along the lines of what I32 said *if I have to do a training, then can't it at least be something I want to do?* Some respondents viewed the failure of the Jobcenter to place them in appropriate skill trainings as an irresponsible use of state funds, especially when the funds could be spent more appropriately on a relevant training.

THEMATIC CODES

Use of time; sense of being busied; question of purpose

For all respondents who participated in a short-term training, it was a question of purpose. Indeed, was the skill training of interest to them and/or relevant to their prior work history and/or their future work prospects? Of the 26 respondents in this study who participated in short-term trainings, a substantial number of respondents (n=15) had participated in more

than one short-term skills training during their receipt of UBII. Here a sense that they were being ‘busied’ was particularly acute among this group of respondents. A group of respondents (those who participated in more than one training) felt that they were simply being placed by the Jobcenter into a training as a way to ‘engage’ and move them off the unemployment statistic (n=12).

I14: For most of the [UBII recipients] there appears to be only one solution: to be put into temp work or Mini- or One-Euro-Jobs. And in truth, I notice that the [Jobcenter] will do anything to make the statistics look good. I don’t know if it would be better to just confront people with the bare facts. I mean, one is not stupid. I have this feeling that they sometimes think we are stupid, but we [UBII recipients] notice what is going on. (38 year-old single German male)

Thus when asked whether the training was useful to them, this proportion of respondents questioned the utility of a training that ‘busied’ rather than supported them in their endeavour to find work.

Moreover, it was a question of whether participating in the short-term training was the best use of the respondents’ time—or whether their time could be better spent looking for work (that said, respondents who participated in trainings often had to demonstrate to their case manager they were looking for work too). Eleven out of 26 respondents who participated in short-term trainings felt that they would rather be spending their time looking for work or simply working than participating in the skills training. Indeed it was perceived by this group of respondents that the training was an ostensible waste of time and resources both for the respondent and the Jobcenter.

AMB: Have you had to participate in a skills training? I22: Up to now, not yet. Up to now I have avoided that because I would like to work and not have to participate in a training where I don’t have any chance anyway of integrating into the labour market. (30 year-old single German male)

Some respondents were simply confused as to why they were told to participate in a training that they perceived as having little to no relevance to their employment interests or future prospects(n=5). This is perhaps best illustrated by the 63 year-old Ghanaian respondent who has lived and worked as a sailor in Hamburg since 1981. He was laid off in 2008 as a result of the recession.

AMB: And what kind of school is that? I26: Language. They say if I stay home I will be lazy. So I have to go to school. AMB: And do you want to take a German language course? I26: Ahh. I am here for money. I am here to get a job. AMB: To do whatever you have to do to get a job... I26. My sister, when I finish this course, what am I going to do?! Because now that’s left maybe one year or two years or one year I go on Rente [retire] what am

I going to do? Because when somebody talks to me, I understand what he is saying. Yes, what is the purpose? The school is a waste of time!...I have been to the school for 11 months... AMB: 11 months? The school lasts for 11 months? I26: No, it is lasting for almost 17 months. AMB: And while you are going to school you are still looking for work? I26: I am looking for a job. (63 year-old married Ghanaian male)

This group of respondents generally viewed their placement in a skills training as random and not necessarily aligned with the support they needed in order to integrate into the regular labour market (n=17). Taken together, this group of respondents' experiences highlights two possible challenges with the provision of short-term skills trainings for some respondents with diverse employment and educational backgrounds. On the one hand, it is a question of whether the formulaic design of some of the short-term trainings offered to respondents are able to meet the needs of a wide variety of UBII recipients' employment backgrounds. On the other, it is a question of whether the purpose of the skills training—to support (Fördern) the UBII recipient in their endeavour to integrate into the labour market—is lost in the Jobcenter's pursuit to activate (Fordern) or keep the UBII recipient engaged.

THEMATIC CODES

Pressure effect case manager decision making; job performance indicators

Given the number of respondents who had mentioned being placed into short-term trainings that seemed to have no relevance to assisting them find work (n=11), I asked all five case managers who I interviewed why some respondents might have this perception. The interview with Case Manager Five proved highly informative in helping to explain one of the possible reasons why some respondents simply felt 'busied' by the training placement. Some of the standard short-term skills training spaces are pre-paid for by the Jobcenter. This has the possible effect of management putting pressure on case managers to place anyone who fits a specific training profile, for example, respondents over 50 years old, into the training for the sake of filling the space so as not to lose out financially. As the interview with CM5 noted:

CM5: We have integration targets. Management dictates our integration target numbers. It is a very important goal of the Jobcenter to meet those targets and therefore, it is really paid attention to [by management]. Management follows the weekly statistics and if they notice that we have not met our targets [to integrate UBII recipients into the labour market], then they get angry and put pressure on us [to meet targets]. They send around an email instructing us to arrange 35 meetings with clients in the next week because they think the reason we have not met our target is because we have not done a good job of supervising our clients. AMB:

You mentioned 'pressure'. Do you feel pressured by the Jobcenter? CM5: Um...ah...yes. Pressure is there. But I have to honestly say, I do not pay too much attention to their target goals because I have noticed, even when we don't meet our targets 100 per cent, no one gets fired or penalized... AMB: And does this pressure placed on you influence you in how you manage your clients? CM5: I try not to let the pressure placed on me by management spill over to my clients. It's not their fault that my employer tells me that I have to integrate so many clients within a week. No. I try not to let it because I know that even if I do not make my target, nothing bad will happen to the case managers...an example from the skills trainings. There is a certain amount of pressure because we are told [by management] that we have to place clients into a skills training. The Jobcenter purchases a certain number of places in a skills training and we have to fill those places with clients. That means the skills training has to always be full. Management has a list to see who has been placed in the skills training. And if the list is empty or not completely full, then they get angry at the case managers and tell us 'you have to fill the skills training [with clients]'. But, I personally, don't believe in that. And when I get those kinds of emails then I just delete them...But it has happened now and then—it has happened to me—that my team director has looked at my client list. They look to see what types of clients we have. For example, the Jobcenter had a skills training for clients 50+ and it was our job to place 150 clients who fit the age category into the skills training. And then we all received daily emails alerting us to the fact that the skills training was not yet full and they asked us to please fill the skills training. But then an email was sent around instructing us that every client we had in our portfolio who was 50+ was automatically to be placed in the skills training. Then it happened to me that my team director came to me and told me that I had five clients in my portfolio who were 50+ and that I did not put them on the list for the skills training. And I said that I did not place them in the training because it was not relevant to their professional profile. And then he said to me, 'well, you have to place them in the skills training. You have to place all of your clients who are 50+ into the training.' But I found an opportunity and I spoke to the clients and told them that I would have to stop managing their cases because otherwise I would have to place them in this skills training if I continued.

The point here is to try and triangulate UBII recipients' evidence about their confusion, suspicions and frustration as to why some perceive themselves to be placed in random trainings with what I learned from the interviews with case managers. Thus, to what degree and whether if at all pressure to place respondents into pre-paid trainings played any role in the reasons why respondents in this study felt confused about why they were participating in a given training, is an absolute unknown. But the interviews with case managers does beg the question more broadly of the degree to which they are able to freely assess the employment needs of UBII recipients in the face of possible pressure from management to meet targets. Furthermore, the interviews with case managers shed possible light onto the perceived limitations of respondent use of choice and advocacy in determining their own outcome.

THEMATIC CODES

Quality of training; training as escape

A number of respondents cited the failure of the skills training they participated in to provide them with any new or helpful information that would actually assist them in integrating into the regular labour market (n=15). This was a problem for the highly skilled UBII recipient who was placed into trainings they perceived as being able to teach themselves or the low-skilled recipient who already knows for example, how to conduct him or herself in the work place.

I20: So, I said, ok give me what you want. Because my German is still not that fluent; I thought I can write my CV in German and get these people to help me correct it. Ok. That was my intention and I thought I can get something out of it. Then I go to this place and they are teaching me how to open Word and then they are telling me how to key A, ok? And I wasted four days for that purpose. To key A, Z, E, etc . The other thing, some people really need these kind of things, but not me. Ok. So I ask them, can you correct my CV? I gave them my German CV and asked them, can you correct it? The person who was correcting, now I realize, has to really be an MBA or engineer guy with fluent German. So they corrected it and the whole meaning was changed. So the main point to going to this place was totally nothing. I mean, I didn't get anything out of it. And they are spending some money for this course. Ok. Fine. I mean, you have the money...(34 year-old married with children Indian male immigrant)

Moreover, a small group of respondents (n=4) viewed participating in the skills training as a way to escape the demands placed on them by their case manager. Respondents often cited not wanting to participate in a training, but viewing it as an opportunity to be 'free' of Jobcenter demands for a given period of time .

I20: And I can say, I don't want to go to this training, but I feel much better there than dealing with them [the Jobcenter] because then I have to sort out these 20 job applications...I feel better because by being at the training I am not forced to deal with the Jobcenter and their 20 job applications. Because I am in training, I am officially off the statistic. (34 year-old married with children Indian male immigrant)

For these respondents, their reason to participate had nothing to do with them being interested in the training. A sense of purpose in the training was absent given that one of the only benefits they perceive the training to provide them was the opportunity to escape from and as a way to 'deal' with the Jobcenter. From their perspective, they were simply at the training because they had to be. Here again, this type of response begs the question of whether an opportunity for respondents to potentially learn something new or capitalize on knowledge

they already have is missed in the possible pressure case managers experience to ‘activate’ the unemployed.

A final issue cited by a number of respondents was often the poor quality of the teaching and/or curriculum of the various skills trainings (n=11). Thus, while some respondents found the idea of participating in a training placement useful, they were frustrated to experience poor quality teaching and/or curriculum. The experience of poor quality training was, in part, the result of placing skilled or highly skilled UBII recipients into 'one size fits all' trainings that are meant for anyone and everyone in recipient of UBII.

I40: At the beginning I was supposed to participate in a skills training that, excuse me, was total bullshit. I could have run that training based on what I learned during my studies at university. (32 year-old single German male)
Moreover a challenge was the lack of consistency in the quality of the training that was cited by a proportion of respondents. As a result, [highly] skilled respondents placed into a CV course, for example, experienced boredom which in turn resulted in frustration. Thus, for a proportion of respondents, whether the training proved beneficial depended on the quality of the curriculum and the instructor. If one or the other were out of sync with each other, all respondents—skilled or unskilled—felt bored, busied and frustrated and perceived the training as, again, a waste of their time. But, if the instruction and the curriculum were seen to be good, respondents profited from and found the training beneficial.

AMB: And you are now participating in a training? I12: Yes, exactly. That is directly related to my occupation: secretarial work. So, a re-fresher course in the whole of secretarial work. That was recommended to me because it is so, that [because of my back] I can no longer work in production. Otherwise I will throw my back out completely. AMB: And did you already start the training? I12: Yes, I have been there for two weeks. AMB: And how is the training? I12: It is fun. It is something different. It is not like the last two trainings I participated in. This course is how to be a secretary from start to finish. It covers freight, logistic, how to write office letters—when I was in this last course, the teacher just stood in front of the class and talked and talked at you. It was really boring. (29 year-old single German female)

6.3 Unemployment Benefit II recipients' experience of vocational (re-) trainings

THEMATIC CODES

Type of Maßnahme: vocational re-training; case manager guidelines

A vocational re-training into a completely new field is a costly and lengthy undertaking and for obvious reasons is not something the Jobcenter takes lightly. The Jobcenter will pay for a re-training so long as it is warranted, i.e., the recipient has exhausted all other possibilities to find work in their occupation or on account of an injury where they are no longer able to remain in their current field of work. A re-training, which includes both the classroom instruction and an on-site apprenticeship, can last anywhere from twelve to thirty months and during this time the Jobcenter is paying both for the re-training and the UBII recipient's monthly unemployment benefit. Because of the time and costs involved, case managers do not simply move just any UBII recipient into a vocational re-training. That said, as an analysis of the interviews with case managers for this study suggests, case managers do not follow a specific set of guidelines when determining who is or is not granted a re-training. Rather the decision to re-train stems from a review of the UBII recipients' employment history and the reasons for their current inability to find a regular source of work. If it is decided that all options to enter the regular labour market have been exhausted, then the case manager will consider the option to re-train a recipient.

I5: ...and I was told [by the case manager] that since I have been out of my profession for longer than four years that I was considered a beginner, so statistically I was a beginner in my profession and that with two children and being a 'beginner' I would not be hired [in my field]. Therefore I was advised to do a vocational re-education into a new field. (37 year old married with children German female)

For those who do re-train into a new field, after they completed their re-training the Jobcenter will only assist them in finding work in their new career and not in their prior area of work. Therefore respondents cannot seek work in their prior and new field at the same time because they are now considered to have more qualifications and expertise in their new field as opposed to their prior field, no matter the length of time they may have worked in their prior field.

I5: I told them, if I do a vocational re-education into a new field than I am still a beginner with two children. The problem was, according to the statistics, when one comes directly from a vocational re-education, one should have better chances of getting a job rather than having left the field for several years and then coming back. So, I did the vocational re-education. (37 year old married with children German female)

At the time I5 was interviewed, she had finished her re-training into IT and completed her apprenticeship. She explained to me that the company where she completed her apprenticeship was contemplating hiring her but permanently but owing to the recession, that opportunity was lost. Thus, at the time of the interview she was currently looking for work in her new field.

THEMATIC CODES

Advocacy and choice in re-training; case manager approving re-training; cost of lost time

In this author's judgement, that the German government provides the resources and the jurisdiction for Jobcenter staff to enable UBII recipients to re-train into a new vocation is an invaluable opportunity for those who do indeed require this level of support. The ability to re-train into a new profession provides recipients with an opportunity they might otherwise not have (or not be able to finance themselves) while also acknowledging that there are structural limitations to integrating some UBII recipients into the labour market. Eleven respondents had either participated or were in the process of participating in a vocational re-training. Yet, when respondents were asked to relate their experiences of participating in a re-training, it was not the re-training itself that was poor, rather it was respondents' experience of requesting a particular re-training that proved problematic. The overarching challenge for respondents was their inability to necessarily select which re-training they would like to participate in. Here it appears that the case manager had the potential to wield an enormous amount of power over the professional direction of the respondent because it is the case manager who grants the permission to participate, or not, in a given training generally, but a vocational re-training specifically.

While a respondent's ability to advocate for themselves was important in every aspect of their interaction at the Jobcenter, their advocacy skills became especially important in requesting a specific re-training placement. Indeed a key theme to emerge from an analysis of the evidence was that respondents' ability to choose which re-training they participated in was largely dependent on their ability to advocate for themselves. There are two particular cases, I5 and I48, that highlight the tension between the ability to and limitations in advocating for oneself.

I5: I ask around wherever I can, but not at the Jobcenter. I seek out information through the internet or from acquaintances, friends, etc. Then when I have all the information I need, I go to the Jobcenter

and I say 'I want this and this'. (37 year old married with children
German female)

As noted in section 6.1, the ability to articulate reasons for or against participating in a given training was extremely important. Yet, at the same time it is difficult to untangle the degree to which advocating for one's position necessarily helped. On the one hand, an analysis of the evidence suggests that those respondents who were not able to articulate their reasons for or against wanting a specific training and/or could not advocate for themselves properly were, to some extent, those who were often moved from one training to the next. By contrast, respondents who did their own research concerning what trainings were offered by the Jobcenter, what the Jobcenter would pay for, or what was available in the community in terms of apprenticeships, re-training or other skills trainings, were somewhat more likely to secure the training they desired. This being said, it is important to note that respondents' ability to advocate for themselves only went so far and by no means guaranteed them the outcome the respondent sought. The final decision was inevitably dependent on whether the case manager they were assigned was open to their suggestions and perhaps to a lesser extent on whether the relevant training places were accessible to case managers.

Ultimately it appears that, depending on the type of case manager assigned to a recipient, the case manager has the ability to determine what a respondent can or cannot do professionally since all vocational re-trainings have to be approved by the case manager. Of the 11 who had participated in or were in the process of seeking approval for a re-training, five found their ability to request which training they wished to participate in problematic. Nine of the 11 (of whom the five are included in this count) mentioned the importance of being able to advocate one's position in securing the re-training they wished. Of the nine who mentioned the need to advocate, four related experiences of advocating for a particular re-training that they were ultimately denied. This suggests that which vocational re-training a respondent desired to participate in versus which re-training they were offered by their case manager did not necessarily align.

I48: They had me take an aptitude test to test whether the career as a computer scientist is suitable to my strengths and abilities. Even though other people have done this job without taking such a test. For example, my brother has no idea about computers. He does not even know how to turn one on. His case manager offered him a re-training in computer science. But I was denied, even though I have a background in computers—technically with computers, I have so much experience with computers and I can do so much with computers—repair, build, everything. But, I was denied the re-training... and then my case manager gave me

additional time to apply for jobs and to find a job. Then my case manager arranged for a meeting with me so that I come round to speak to her about my future training and work. So then I went to her and she said, ok I have found a retraining for you as an optician. (48 year old, Moroccan male immigrant, lone parent)

I48 highlights a possible tension between the case manager taking labour market conditions into consideration while suggesting a specific training to a recipient. Here, for example, it appears that his case manager possibly made a suggestion as to which re-training I48 should participate in based on benchmarks that did not necessarily align with the respondent's professional background and interests. Although I48 had a history working in computers and had studied physics and chemistry at a university in Morocco (without, however, completing his studies), he was unable to choose which re-training he wanted to participate in without demonstrating, by taking a test, that he had the necessary aptitude and ability to complete the re-training.

I48: I wanted to do this re-training course in computer science. But, then they started with this test. They said „you have to first take this test. If you pass this test, then you can take the computer science training.“ It is possible that when one is already a computer scientist that they still would not pass this test. And then I was just so dissapointed because I wanted to train to become a computer scientist because I sought out this profession for myself so that I would have a chance to find a job.

Several months after he found out that he had not passed the test and, thus, could not participate in the re-training as a computer scientist his case manager requested a meeting to inform him that she had found a re-training for him as an optician—if he passed the test—which corresponded well with there being a high number of positions available in the field. It appears to be less about whether I48 wanted to be an optician, rather it was perceived as a position he could get a job in (so long as he passed the test for the re-training). As this example illustrates, the driving factors for why the case manager is interested in placing a UBII recipient into a given re-training can be quite different from those that drive the UBII recipient. It is a question of whether the UBII recipient should re-train into a new field because there are a high number of positions potentially available, irrespective of whether the recipient desires to work in the field. It makes sense for the Jobcenter to think in these terms; after all the Jobcenter's objective is to move the unemployed into work quickly in order to reduce the unemployment statistics and a re-training is a costly endeavour for which the government would like a return on its investment—namely the UBII recipient to find a job. Yet, while on the surface this approach seems logical, it has the potential to be counterproductive for the UBII recipient because they are not necessarily maximizing their

skillset in the field of their choosing. Again, this highlights a potential missed opportunity for UBII respondents through conflicting policy objectives that can result in sub-optimal results manifested through an ostensible miss-match of UBII recipients skills and experience.

Irrespective of cost, even when the prospect of obtaining work is directly dependent on the respondent getting the necessary training, in this case a truck drivers licence, what the UBII recipient wants to do versus what the case manager claims is best for the respondent are outweighed by the case manager's decision not to grant the training.

I38: For example, my husband, he had—we have the same case manager—he wanted to get his truck drivers licence. But then instead she put him in a training. The man is 38 years old, he wants to have a future, he does not want to sit in a school...he had a letter from a potential employer who wrote „Mr. so and so, we are prepared to hire this man when he has obtained his truck driver license. He would be paid 1,700 Euro after taxes...” He would not have to come to the Jobcenter and I would not have to be here either! Do you know what they did? They did not sign off on the truck driver license course! They are so stupid! Instead they offered him a...training as Berufskraftfahrer [commercial goods or passenger transport] for three or two years. He can not even do that. (40 year-old German born Turkish nationality married female)

Here, this pragmatic approach to deciding what the UBII recipient will re-train into results in decisions being made that are again not aligned with the respondent's professional interests, skills or desires.

The fundamental problem here is that when the case manager denies the respondent the re-training they would like to do, time is lost—time that could have been spent starting the re-training, eventually finishing and then looking for employment in their new field.

I38: Either the money is not there [for the training] so “no” or “yes, we will have a look if that works.” I am not stupid. I know what they mean when they say, “we will have a look”, that that essentially means no, it will not work. But why? I would not be sitting here.

When a respondent is denied the training they wish, then they have to start from the beginning—continue to seek employment while exploring other re-training options with their case manager. The case manager may finally decide to allow for a different re-training placement, but that is after months have passed that could otherwise have been spent by the respondent in the originally suggested re-training.

I48: I would really like to work. But, they did not give me the opportunity nor did they support me. Because if I had done the original training, I would have been done a long time ago and been a computer scientist. I wanted to do this training, but they said no, otherwise I would have been done a long time

ago.

For I48 well over a year had passed between the time when he originally proposed the re-training into computer science, then the test to see if he had the aptitude for the position, then awaited his results, then met with his case manager to learn that he was denied the re-training, then had to search for work, then heard from his case manager that she had an idea for a new re-training as optician, then her requirement that he again take a test to determine aptitude, then waited for the results and learned that he had passed, until the time I interviewed him in January 2012 and learned that he was waiting to meet with his case manager to find out whether she would approve the re-training that would start in February 2012 and last two years. Only after the two-year re-training as an optician could a man at the age of 48 envision finally entering the regular labour market.

6.4 Unemployment Benefit II recipients' experience and perception of the One-Euro-Job

THEMATIC CODES

Type of Maßnahme; welcomed/did not welcome opportunity to participate

As outlined in Chapter Three (section 3.3.1) the One-Euro-Job is considered a skills training and not a 'job' because it is meant to act as a form of training for UBII recipients who have little or no prior work experience. The objective of the One-Euro-Job training is to test a recipient's preparedness to enter the regular labour market by introducing the UBII recipient to a regular work schedule while working in a professional environment. Key here is that the UBII recipient is, supposedly, not doing work that would otherwise be done by a regularly employed member of staff. Essentially it is ghost work, work that otherwise does not exist. Perhaps the most striking finding to emerge from an analysis of the evidence is that respondents tended to view the One-Euro-Job as work rather than as a skills training per se. This, of course, is diametrically opposed to how the Federal Republic packages the objective of the One-Euro-Job. An analysis of the evidence found that of the respondents' who participated in the One-Euro-Job (n=15), there were those who welcomed the opportunity (n=8) and those who found the One-Euro-Job problematic (n=7). Of the 15 who participated, seven participated in a One-Euro-Job on multiple occasions. Their experiences and perceptions of One-Euro-Jobs were wide and varied indeed.

THEMATIC CODES

Welcomed opportunity: One-Euro-Job as escape; stepping stone; opportunity to earn extra money/work; sense of gratitude

As noted, for some respondents (n=8), the One-Euro-Job was welcomed and even desired. Indeed, a proportion of respondents repeatedly asked their case managers for a One-Euro-Job placement but were not necessarily granted one. Of the eight respondents who welcomed the opportunity to participate in a One-Euro-Job, the reason respondents desired this was three-fold. First, UBII recipients who participate in a One-Euro-Job do not have to meet the demands of the Jobcenter as outlined in their integration into work agreement (Eingliederungsvereinbarung) during their placement. Therefore this group of respondents viewed the One-Euro-Job as a win-win; one still received benefit plus an extra c. €200.00 per month, but the respondent was no longer obligated to meet the demands of the Jobcenter, so long as they were 'engaged'. Here one of the underlying motivations was to avoid the Jobcenter.

AMB: You would take a One-Euro-Job if it was offered to you?

I12: Exactly. And it is not an issue of I 'must'. I would do it. The

issue is that one is out of the system and on top of that you get additional money [per month]. (29 year-old single female, German)

Second, some respondents viewed participating in a One-Euro-Job as a stepping stone to something more permanent and/or better paid. Specifically, this group of respondents perceived the One-Euro-Job as either an opportunity to move into their field and to obtain a permanent position.

I23: I also did a One-Euro-Job, so in that sense...AMB: And you would

do a One-Euro-Job again? I23: Of course. First, so long as I do not have

any other offers. AMB: Regarding the One-Euro-Job, would you rather

have a regular job that paid you a regular wage? I23: It does not

matter to me. I think one can always work their way up in a job. There,

where I worked [in the One-Euro-Job], they would have hired me but

unfortunately I got pregnant otherwise they would have hired me. (33 year-

old female lone parent German)

Yet, for those respondents who ended up working at a One-Euro-Job that was in their field and/or was interesting work, the placement nevertheless did not result in a permanent regular work (n=4). Inevitably the contract came to an end, because that is the nature of One-Euro-Jobs. They simply are not permanent positions. Given that the employer is paid by the state to take on One-Euro-Job participants, they have no incentive nor do they necessarily need additional employees. Inevitably the respondents found themselves back at the Jobcenter after the completion of their One-Euro-Job.

I24: But I find I have not had a good experience with this miserable work

or One-Euro-Jobs. I did three [One-Euro-] Jobs in the public school system as a librarian. They always said to me “you are good”. I was given a certificate where I earned an ‘A’, but I was never hired. (60 year-old divorced Iranian immigrant)

The third type of response was from respondents who simply were desperate to work and earn a little extra money (n=4). Here respondents perceived the One-Euro-Job as an opportunity to earn much needed additional money per month coupled with the chance to ‘work’, i.e., to be engaged on a daily basis. This group of respondents were not concerned with what type of work they were necessarily doing nor did they mind doing menial jobs.

AMB: When you have a One-Euro-Job, then at least you are not...

I8: ...without work, without anything. You are right. I am really happy that I am not standing there with nothing and only alone.

One says in Germany, ‘the ceiling falls on the head’. In other words, I am happy that that is not my situation. That is why I am happy that I got the One-Euro-Job. I am really thankful. (42 year-old single German male)

Given respondents inability to find work in the regular labour market, their desire to participate in a One-Euro-Job was underpinned by a desperate need to work in order to earn extra money.

I26...The situation is very bad. I sometimes go to him [case manager] and even I tell him, I want One-Euro-Job. Because that will help me a bit because the money I am taking is not sufficient, my family they are not here...You see, it is very terrible. I have been telling him [case manager] my experience, but no help. AMB: He does not give you...

26: Never. (63 year-old male married with family Ghanaian immigrant)

THEMATIC CODES

One-Euro-Job problematic: Sanctions; beneath ability; demoralized; qualifications; perception of wage

For other respondents who participated in a One-Euro-Job, it was presented to them as something they had to do or face sanctions (n=4). This group of respondents perceived the ‘job’ as being beneath their ability and if they participated, the experience left them feeling demoralized (n=6). Low-skilled respondents with no qualifications in this sample were often funnelled into and out of various One-Euro-Jobs over a long period of time (n=5). For them the option or possibility of finding or moving into regular work seemed almost foreign to them, something that simply was not an option for them. For those respondents who viewed the One-Euro-Job as problematic, their experiences can be put into two categories: The experience of respondents *with* and *without* formal qualifications. Respondents who did not complete primary or secondary school or did not complete an apprenticeship found

themselves repeatedly placed in One-Euro-Jobs (n=4). For them a One-Euro-Job placement had become a source of continuous (though precarious in nature) work. Once the respondent finished their placement, and after they completed their compulsory break, their case manager arranged for another placement.

I15: Yes, I have actually been doing One-Euro-Jobs for a longer period of time. That started in 2005 where I was put in a computer training on Thursdays and Fridays and the other days I raked leaves or stuff like that... then in 2007 I landed in a Gymnasium, ten months as the janitor. So also raking leaves, then looking to see what was broken in the toilet... then there were three months where I had no job, the so-called required break... and then after three months I landed here in the Hamburger port, well not in the port, oh what is that called? There in the port, there are bridges, cranes and ships and they need to be cleaned, the old paint removed with a machine and then repainted and that kind of stuff. I did that for two years. And then I had another required three-month break. And then, like I said, back to the school. That is in Bergdorf. I was in a primary school for 1.5 months and then I was sent to a Gymnasium...collecting papers, sorting papers, filling the waste bins and then emptying them. (61 year-old single German male)

When asked how respondents felt about earning between €1.00 and €2.00 per hour for the work they completed—often for the same work that an employed person did for higher earnings per hour—some expressed outrage while others were resigned to the fact and would rather have the One-Euro-Job earnings instead of nothing. The additional sum of c. €200.00 earned per month for the thirty hours worked per week was often perceived as a bonus. The extra earnings allowed respondents to put a little aside in savings or buy a favourite CD, for example. When asked if respondents would rather have a job in the regular labour market, respondents of this group noted the difficulty they have in accessing work in the regular labour market.

I15:...well one cannot not forget how old I am. Here in Germany, it is so that after 30 it's over. And I am 61—'Oh then we prefer to hire the younger one'. Let's say I go to Karstadt and ask if there is anything in their warehouse, so boxes that need to be stacked, 'yes and how old are you? 61? 'We will think about that'. That is how it was at SATURN. I applied for a job in their CD department...I was really excited [about the prospect of working there]. Then the letter came 'Mr. Holzhauer, we are very sorry, but we decided to hire someone else.' Bumms! Why? Because I was too old. That is how it was at Alster-Haus in their CD department WOM. And then they hired everyone from SATURN to run their WOM CD department. I didn't have a chance anyway. And when they see how old I am...then one can just be happy that one has a One-Euro-Job...so that one can somehow work their way in. (61 year-old single German male)

Yet, respondents also noted that even if they were to find work in the regular labour market, their lack of qualifications would result in employment where they would hardly be earning more than their combined One-Euro-Job plus Jobcenter benefits. On account of such low wages, they would inevitably have to apply for wage top-up from the Jobcenter which would mean they would still be in receipt of a ‘benefit’ from the Jobcenter. Therefore work in the regular labour market did not necessarily mean freedom from the Jobcenter. Respondents were aware of the precarity of their situation. While they acknowledged that their participation in a One-Euro-Job training meant they were ‘off the statistic’ and no longer had to meet Jobcenter demands—as respondents would say “man ist raus” (you are out)—they nonetheless knew that within a period of time they would be back at the Jobcenter in the same unemployed situation they were prior to accepting the placement. Thus, on the one hand, respondents were grateful even appreciative that they had the One-Euro-Job because of the opportunity to earn a little extra money while having a ‘job’ that provided a regular schedule. Yet, respondents also knew that these, in the end, were superficial benefits that did nothing to ultimately change their unemployment status.

For the second category of respondents with qualifications, the One-Euro-Job was beneath their skill and qualification level. They were therefore less willing to put themselves in the position of taking on a One-Euro-Job and if they did, they did so for a period of time and then resolved to never participate again on account of the work being beneath their skill and intellectual niveau (n=4).

I24: For me, the One-Euro-Job was a disappointment...one time she [case manager] spoke to me about doing a janitorial job, but I said that is not for me. I am not prepared to do that [job]. I completed my Abitur in my home country [Iran]. I was a pilot. (60 year-old divorced Iranian immigrant)

Although willing to do whatever they could to find work, this group of respondents acknowledged the limitation of One-Euro-Jobs. While all respondents were cognizant of the earnings discrepancy between them and those who did the exact same job but earned a normal wage, this second category of respondents did not perceive a benefit to the trade off—working to stay active for €1.50 per hour or not working. Respondents simply were not prepared to work for such a nominal hourly compensation. While they acknowledged the pressure placed on them by the Jobcenter to participate in a One-Euro-Job, they did not let this pressure dictate their choice of work when the job was beneath their skill and qualification level.

I24: These people with their One-Euro-Job attitude. I have always discussed this with these people [case manager]. I have said, for me personally, my work is worth more than one euro per hour. (60 year-old divorced Iranian immigrant)

Although the objective of the One-Euro-Job is to test UBII recipients' readiness to work while introducing those to a regular work schedule and not to provide a 'job' per se, nonetheless, it cannot be ignored that UBII recipients do in fact do some form of 'work' while at their One-Euro-Job placement. Therein lays the challenge with One-Euro-Jobs. On the one hand, the One-Euro-Job recipient is not actually 'working' because the 'work' done cannot replace the work of a regularly employed employee; but on the other hand, their time is indeed being occupied with some form of 'work activity'. The result in effect is that UBII recipients cannot do work that has meaning attached to it otherwise it would be work that should then be performed by a regularly employed person.

I49: Because the joke about One-Euro-Jobs is that your work is not allowed to replace an employed person's work. That means in German, when one speaks frankly, you are only allowed to do useless work. Because the moment the work you do has meaning attached to it, is the moment that your work will be given to a regularly employed person who is paid to do the job. (38 year-old German male married with children)

Thus, it begs the question of what kind of experience the UBII recipient is actually gaining from their purported skill training? While the objective of the One-Euro-Job is not to provide the UBII recipient with a job, inevitably the perception transmitted from the case manager to the UBII recipients is that the One-Euro-Job is indeed a 'job'. With the experience gained—be it stacking boxes, cleaning toilets, emptying waste bins or working in a dry cleaners—all but one respondent (n=14) who participated in a One-Euro-Job could not say that as a result of their work experience they were able to find regular work in a warehouse or as a janitor for a school or hospital or a permanent job in a dry cleaners. It is not that this work is not valid or that people should not be taught how to do this work. But as a result of their experience doing a specific job, respondents would therefore like to be able to move into the regular labour market, but were unable to. Moreover, an analysis of the evidence begs the question of whether, from a policy perspective, it is fair to assume that the work being completed by UBII recipients would not end up being valid work that an organization or company benefits from. Indeed, the evidence from this study and others indicates that employers do benefit from hosting One-Euro-Job participants (see also BMI, 2012). Respondents cleaned schools, stacked boxes in warehouses and worked in the Hamburger port, among other things. If the

UBII recipient is not going to stack the boxes, then who is? Furthermore, the organization supporting the One-Euro-Job participant has no financial incentive to integrate him or her into the workplace environment beyond what they are assigned to do. Thus to what degree does the UBII recipient actually experience a ‘work’ environment?

I28 It is really demeaning what one does. One is in the warehouse, filling boxes. The hour does not pass quickly and one is constantly moving, one does not have many...how do you say? Not many rights, even when you are sent by the Jobcenter, do you understand? When you come from the Jobcenter and you have to work there, then you are treated like dirt. (33 year-old female married with children Lebanese immigrant)

6.5 Unemployment Benefit II recipients’ positive experiences with skills training

THEMATIC CODES

Sense of purpose; structure and routine; helpful information; provided needed materials

Some respondents related that while participation in a skills training did not assist them or improve their chances of entering the regular labour market, participation did provide a group of respondents with a sense of purpose and structure to their daily routine (n=12). The significance of this finding is bolstered by other research, including the 2011 German government evaluation of skills trainings (BMAS, 2011). In addition to skills trainings providing respondents with a sense of purpose and routine, they also provided respondents with computers and other materials needed to apply for positions (folders, paper, and envelopes)—items they did not necessarily have at home. While many respondents did not want to participate in a PC or CV course and at the outset did not think they would get anything out of the training, a few respondents who did participate found the training unexpectedly helpful (n=3). They cited tips and strategies they were given on how best to manage the application process—this included strategies on how to interview for a position.

AMB: Did you participate in a skills training? I42: Yes, that was a two-week job application course on how to write a job application.
AMB: really? I42: At first you think as someone with a university degree you don’t need such a training. But on the other side, I got emotional support through the training. At first it was degrading so... because...one thinks you have to go to a course with other idiots so...and...yes there were ex-convicts in the course, but they were all really nice. So, in retrospect I did not find the training that bad.
(36 year-old single German male)

The tips provided were particularly helpful for those respondents who had otherwise been in a secure job for many years and now found themselves unemployed and as a result were out of touch with the current CV format and methods used to apply for work.

I36: Yes, where I am now unemployed, I learned the modern way to write a job application, so printed on the computer, with your picture and stuff like that. AMB: Did you find that helpful? I36: Yes, a little, naturally because that is required today, that everything is well formatted with a picture. That is how it has to be. That is ok. But most people do not know how to format a job application. There are little tricks you learn and that is what you learn there [at the training]. That was really good, yes. (52 year-old single male Turkish immigrant)

Here it is important to recognise that there can be and are multiple objectives to providing and participating in skills trainings. While one objective for the provision of skills training should be as mechanisms to fill a gap in knowledge that will assist the UBII recipient enter the labour market, a training can and should provide auxiliary objectives as well. That is clearly born out of the analysis of the evidence. When asked whether the skills training they participated in assisted them in finding work, respondents often cited that that was not necessarily the purpose of the training to start with. For this proportion of respondents, they were aware from the start that their participation in the training had to do with factors beyond simply finding work—factors they acknowledged they needed and were beneficial to them. As I25 notes, the purpose of her training was not to integrate her into the labour market, rather to teach her how to do something every day, give her a place to be.

AMB: And what was the purpose of the training you participated in? Did it help you enter the labour market? I25: That was not the objective of the training. AMB: What was the objective? I25: The objective was that I do something. AMB: Ok. And you knew that? I25: Yes. AMB: And that did not bother you that that was how your time was being spent? I25: No. (24 year-old single German female)

In this sense, it is important to recognize the need to have trainings in place that address a wide network of needs of respondents. For some, that their time is structured, that they have a sense of purpose when they get up in the morning, that their day is occupied doing something they perceive as constructive, that they are meeting people are as—if not more—important to them then whether they find work as a result of their participation in a skills training.

6.6 Chapter summary and conclusion

This chapter has explored the research findings regarding respondents' experiences of participating in three categories of skills trainings offered by the Jobcenter under the rubric of *Arbeitsförderung* (work support) as they related to the research question:

- Are the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients?

While trainings provided some respondents with structure, a routine and social contacts along with access to material to apply for jobs and helpful information, the majority of respondents who participated in all types of trainings available noted the lack of choice to freely choose which and whether they participated in a given training. This inability to choose resulted in respondents being put into trainings that were not necessarily perceived as being relevant to their prior work, their occupational interest or their future career or job prospects. Moreover, a respondents' ability to advocate for themselves coupled with being assigned a case manager who was open and willing to work with the respondent to find the right placement were key factors that determined whether respondents' experience of the training was beneficial to them. The case manager assigned to the respondent had the capacity to make or break his or her experience at the Jobcenter generally, but their ability or inability to participate in a training specifically. This was particularly important for respondents who participated in or were seeking to participate in a vocational re-training. The inability of respondents to choose which re-vocational training they participated in directly affected what the respondent might end up doing for the remainder of their professional career—assuming that respondents do eventually (re)enter the labour market in an occupation for which they have been (re)trained. Therefore, it appears that respondents were either lucky or unlucky with who they were assigned for a case manager. If the respondent was assigned a thoughtful case manager who took his or her interests and wishes into consideration then his or her experience had the potential to be positive in nature. But respondents often cited case managers who hindered or made their ability to choose which re-training they participated in, and thus their career trajectory, difficult. This resulted in respondents having to change their previously conceived notion of which career they would develop while feeling stuck in a seemingly never ending cycle of unemployment. Therefore, advocating alone did not necessarily result in respondents

able to obtain what they viewed as best for themselves nor did it necessarily determine the outcomes respondents desired given that no matter how well they argued their position, respondents were not always able to successfully negotiate what they wanted.

Indeed, it appears that the case manager inevitably wields an enormous amount of power over the job or career trajectory of respondents. That said, case managers are subject to constraints that may not be visible to respondents, but it is albeit the respondent who ultimately bears the consequence of such constraints. Thus the effect (instances which have been related in this Chapter) is to compound respondents' sense of powerlessness. Moreover, regardless of the intentions of policy makers or administrators, the effect of being required to undertake inappropriate trainings, though apparently counterproductive and demotivating, is effective in lowering recipients' aspirations while aligning their expectations with market conditions. Indeed, the effectiveness of the support recipients receive in this respect appears to be part of a game of chance—just like the labour market for which they are supposedly being prepared.

Chapter Seven: Findings on the Role of Job Placement Services in Assisting Unemployment Benefit II Recipients Find Work

7.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents a thick description of the findings as they pertain to the first research question:

- Are the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients?

This chapter will focus on the experience and perceptions of the sample of UBII respondents for this study who received job placement consultation and support at the Jobcenter in Bremen and Hamburg. The government's expressed objective for providing job placement services for UBII recipients rests both in the notion to activate (*fordern*) and to support (*Fördern*) those UBII recipients perceived as needing assistance in their endeavour to integrate into the labour market.

In addition to skills training, the Hartz reforms introduced new and expanded job placement services to those previously on social assistance (and to a lesser extent unemployment assistance) who, prior to the reforms, had little, if any, recourse to such services (Bernhard and Wolff, 2008). This type of support presented itself through the introduction of Jobcenters with a case management approach to supporting clients find work. For the purpose of this chapter, job placement services are defined as mediation (*Vermittlung*) which includes profiling and case management; depending on the type of 'client' profile, the case manager may provide the UBII recipient with job advertisements coupled with all UBII recipients having access to a central Jobcenter database (*Jobbörse*) listing job openings in the community.¹¹⁵ The German government views job placement services as an essential

¹¹⁵ The introduction of new public management was an important aspect of the reforms and in order to maximize on cost-efficiency and effectiveness, job placement services contracted out to private providers became more pronounced with the introduction of Social Code II (SGBII) at the beginning of 2005. Until 1994 only the Federal Employment Agency was allowed to provide placement services. The legal framework for contracting out aspects of placement, that included profiling and case management, was introduced in the year 1998 as §37 Social Code III (SGBIII). In 2002 the placement voucher (§421g SGBIII) was introduced that was, under certain conditions, delivered to the unemployed. The placement voucher guarantees a premium for an external provider in case of a successful placement. Contracting out all placement services with the aim of immediate placement was introduced in 2002 (§36 SGBIII). Additionally, there was a very similar instrument called contract out of reintegration services (§421i SGBIII) between 2003 and 2007. External providers were supposed to design and to put in tender innovative strategies to reintegrate the unemployed into the labour market. Thus there exist two quasi-market options for

activation measure used to assist UBII recipients integrate into the labour market (BA, 2013). Job placement was one of the aspects embedded in the concept of ‘Vermittlungsprozess’ (mediation process) that was an important component of the fourth Hartz law. This mediation process is manifested in the use of the Integration into Work Agreement (Eingliederungsvereinbarung) that the case manager and the UBII recipient enter into together. The agreement outlines exactly how the UBII recipient will demonstrate personal initiative to find work (i.e., the number of job applications the recipient will send out per month) and in return, the level and degree of support the recipient can expect to obtain from their case manager. The agreement is solidified under public law, which means that a breach of the agreement by the UBII recipient will result in legal consequences in the form of sanctions. In the eyes of the Government, this agreement encapsulates the concept of Fordern and Fördern. But in the eyes of some critics, the support (Fördern) that is provided in the agreement is based on an asymmetrical contract relationship that, because of the threat of sanctions, results in a highly stratified, hierarchical and unbalanced relationship between the case manager as the foci of support and the jobseeker. The relationship between the case manager as ‘mediator’ and the UBII recipient as ‘client’ is one based on reciprocity as defined through and based on the rights and responsibilities policy logic (Baethge-Kinsky et al., 2007; Osiander and Steinke, 2011).

An important aspect of SGBIII was the introduction of a new case management approach to providing services. Here the Federal Employment Agency redefined itself based on a corporate-friendly-service-oriented model, where the Jobcenter provides the ‘client’ with better and more job placement and service options with the explicit objective to assist recipients in their endeavour to integrate into the labour market. It was argued that consultation and support service should be client-friendlier, faster and qualitatively better and less bureaucratic; that staff should provide support to the ‘client’ in a “professional and client-oriented service that addressed the heart of the individual problem and sought to find a solution to that problem” (BA, 2009c: 4). Van Berkel and Van Der Aa question whether activation work should be organized as a “rule-oriented function or as a professional task” (2012: 495) to which this chapter will go one step further and consider whether the observed

involving external placement providers: contracting out and the placement voucher (Bernhard and Wolff, 2008). Initially in 2005 there was a particularly large inflow of UBII recipients participating in contracted out placement services. Bernhard and Wolff suggest that this large inflow is related to the introduction of the new benefit system and the establishment of Jobcenters. In the first year after the induction of the fourth Hartz law, Jobcenters did not yet have the capacity to implement the activation policies as outlined in SGBII. Moreover, the Jobcenters were short of experienced case managers, thus contracting out placement services were used to reduce their workload (Bernhard and Wolff, 2008).

conduct of the case manager, where job placement services fall into his or her job description, amounts to that of a professionally trained career development and/or job search and job placement specialist or simply in-house staff? Given the importance placed on case management as a key component of placement services, this chapter will examine the role and function of the case manager as ‘Vermittler’ (mediator between the unemployed and employment opportunities) and ‘Berater’ (consultant) in providing job placement ‘support’ to the UBII recipient.

With these issues in mind, this chapter explores the findings of the research regarding UBII recipients’ experiences and perceptions of job placement services provided to them by the Jobcenter via their case manager. The framework used to generate the findings in the following sections of this chapter employed the thematic codes listed below and these will act as a guide for unpacking the evidence:

Support: Job advertisements provided to UBII recipient

- Professional match
- Helpful
- Waste of time
- Paternalism: ‘I know what is best for me’
- Burden
- Not current
- Already investigated
- Structural difficulties in applying
- Resistance
- Tricking system

Activation: meeting number stipulated

- Lack of jobs
- Finding relevant jobs to apply to
- Personal circumstances

Case manager

- Support received
- Support needed
- No support
- Job placement
- Career development
- Quality of consultation
 - Case manager helpful
 - Case manager, informative

In the following sections of this chapter, the thematic codes used in the analysis of the data are italicized and emboldened to create subsections within each section. The point here is to provide a direct link between the description of the evidence and the thematic codes used to analyse the data.

Section 7.2 explains the use and role of profiling in determining the type of placement services UBII recipients receive from their case manager. Based on an analysis of the evidence section 7.3 then explores the types of job advertisements respondents received from their case managers and in turn section 7.4 describes respondents' experiences of meeting the stipulated number of job applications to be sent out per month. Section 7.5 outlines respondents' experience of and their relationship with their case manager as consultant and mediator (Berater and Vermittler) in so far as this impacted their search for work. Section 7.6 summarizes the chapter findings and conclusion.

7.2 The role of profiling in job placement assistance

As noted, the Integration into Work Agreement outlines the level of activation required and support a jobseeker can expect to receive from their case manager. It is agreed that the case manager will provide mediation assistance that includes supplying the UBII recipient with job advertisements. There are no specific guidelines as to if, when and how many job advertisements a case manager is obligated to forward to the UBII recipient. Yet, when the UBII recipient does receive a job advertisement forwarded to them by their case manager, the UBII recipient must do one of two things: either apply for the job and demonstrate to their case manager that they have done so within a prescribed period of time. Or if, for whatever reason, they do not wish to apply to the job, the UBII recipient must submit in writing a reason why they declined to apply to the job. Thus, the paradox inherent in the support provided is the underlying 'must' that accompanies any assistance provided to them by their case manager. Moreover, while some respondents wished to receive job advertisements (n=10), as they fundamentally viewed this as helpful, there was, nonetheless, great variation in the number of (if any) job advertisements a respondent may or may not receive from their case manager in a given period of time. Therefore, the underlying theme to emerge from the evidence was the lack of uniformity from one respondent to the next as to the quality and quantity of job advertisements a UBII recipient received. This lack of uniformity, as will be explained and explored further in this section, is based on the one hand, on a lack of guidelines that outline how many job advertisements a case manager is to supply their 'client' with and on the other, on the use of Profiling and Client Differentiation. Here UBII recipients are classified for re-entry into the labour market according to the probability of their 'profile type', which has changed how support is provided to the jobseeker by the Jobcenter.

Profiling was introduced to all employment agencies (UBI) and Jobcenters (UBII) in 2005.¹¹⁶ As Klevenow and Knecht (2013) point out, while Profiling and Customer Differentiation has its origins in the business sector, the procedures for the Federal Employment Agency follows a medical logic: the exact description of a person's characteristics first makes it possible to identify symptoms and second, to diagnosis an illness to which a treatment can be prescribed (Sainsbury, 2008). Categories can be made where 'patients' with the same 'illness' receive a similar treatment, while those with different 'illnesses' receive different treatments. Klevenow and Knecht (2013) argue that the Federal Employment Agency uses this type of medical evaluation and classification of 'clients' as a way to identify symptoms that result in a diagnosis, such as 'low or absent motivation'. UBII recipients are then classified into 'client groups' which results in those recipients with the same 'diagnosis' receiving similar treatment (Klevenow and Knecht, 2013). The UBII recipients' general employment strengths and weaknesses coupled with their skills, abilities, qualifications and interests are put into a computer profile for case managers and employers to access. It is a part of the obligatory arrangement when one first signs up for benefit that the recipient must create a profile. It is through this profile system that labour market relevant characteristics of the client are ascertained and at which time the client is put into one of four 'diagnostic groups' or 'customer types'. In 2005 the customer types included the market customers (Marktkunden) who were considered easy to integrate into the labour market because they were viewed as able to find work relatively easily on their own with little to no support from the Jobcenter. The second customer type was the 'client in need of consultancy and activation' (Beratungskunden fordern) for UBII recipients who lacked motivation and needed to be activated. The third customer type was the 'client in need of consultation support' (Beratungskunden fördern) for recipients who lacked qualifications and/or had additional constraints that could be diminished, reduced or removed through training and support programmes. The fourth customer type was the 'client in need of care' who fell into both categories two and three and was considered the recipient in most need of support (Klevenow and Knecht, 2013).

¹¹⁶ Legally the use of profiling was integrated into SGBIII and put into law in 1998. But it was only in 2003 that a standard for profiling was established in the employment agencies that administer UBI. With the reform of 'client centres' profiling became a legally binding standard with the induction of the fourth Hartz law in 2005. Since 2009 the concept of 'profiling' can be found in §37 of SGBIII (Oshmiansky, 2011).

Based on criticism that ‘care customers’ might be deprived of certain services or that this type of profiling could lead to disregarding clients’ interests, in 2009 a Four-Phase Model (4PM) was introduced (BA, 2013). This model unified the intra-organisation procedures of the Federal Employment Agency, which is responsible for SGBIII (UBI) and the procedures of the municipalities that finance the Jobcenters (UBII). It was also thought that the four-phase model would facilitate communication when moving cases through the system (from UBI to UBII) or from one case manager to the next. The first phase includes profiling the UBI or UBII recipient by analysing their strengths and the possibility and potential for integration into the labour market. In phase one the profile type is determined. This analysis includes entering into the profile the educational achievements, professional experience, qualifications and competencies of the UBII recipient. The analysis here includes categorizing the recipient in terms of their ‘capacity to work’ and ‘motivation’. Second, a profile of the recipient’s social environment is created that explores their personal situation (i.e., family, financial and living situation). This is then juxtaposed to current labour market conditions. Instead of their being four client types there are now six, which are directly connected to the recommendations made for a course of action. These include the market profile, activation profile, assisting profile, development profile, stabilizing profile and supporting profile. If a UBII recipient falls into one of the first three profiles, they are considered ‘close to labour market integration’ (Arbeitsmarktnah). If a UBII recipient falls into one of the last three profiles, they are considered a ‘complex’ case or far from labour market integration (Arbeitsmarktfern). Profiling is followed by the next three phases: setting of personal targets, the selection of an integration strategy and finally the creation of an Integration into Work Agreement based on their profile-type (Oshmiansky, 2011). The level of ‘support’ or activation a UBII recipient receives from their case manager depends heavily on which profile-type they fall into. But depending on a case manager’s line management or based on the discretion of the case manager, the case manager may or may not choose to follow the suggested course of action determined by their profile-type. In other words, the case manager may choose to ignore the profile type and provide the level of assistance they feel the UBII recipient needs.¹¹⁷ Here my interviews with the five case managers were particularly insightful in providing both a sense of the degree to which and indeed whether at

¹¹⁷ Behrend (2007) found that not all case managers were aware that they were not obliged to follow the suggestion of the profile system. Case managers who choose a different category from the one suggested by the system ran the risk of having to ‘defend’ themselves to their line management. Line managers used profiling and category types to influence targets and the distribution of cases (Behrend 2007:108). Additionally, the case managers found that how their ‘clients’ were categorized had a significant influence on determining their workload (Behrend et al. 2006; Behrend 2007; Bieber et al. 2006).

all they use their own discretion in the decisions they make about their clients. As my interview with a case manager in Bremen noted:

AMB: Do you look for and provide your clients with job advertisements?

CM1: Yes, we have to do that. That is required of us, especially for those clients who are, for example, considered easy to integrate into the labour market. Those who, for example, have completed an apprenticeship or have graduated from school with very good grades, we must always and regularly look for job advertisements for them. That is no problem. You go to the profile of the client and then you click on 'job search' and then... but it is then, well, sometimes I do not send my clients job advertisements because I really do not want to send my clients every little shit job that is available. I know that most [of my clients] do not want to go to temporary job agencies. I know that that they do not necessarily—especially young jobseekers—want to travel to Achim or wherever every day. Or too, for example, when I have a young woman who wants to work in food and beverage—that does not mean she wants to work at some corner pub. Then I would not like to well, it is hard...it is the law, when one is capable to work—legally there is no possibility for a UBII recipient to refuse a job on the grounds of it not being compatible with his/her qualifications. Well, theoretically one can do every job so long as the job is moral and ethical and healthy. I am not of that opinion though. I have seen hourly wages that are so terrible and when you quit [that job] one can, for example, get sanctioned [by the Jobcenter]. But when I see that and I must say, Mr. Wash—that place makes me want to vomit—they have hourly wages from €2,30 and when you work there 40 hours a week, well that is really hard work and then you are yelled at by the management and if you quit that job, well then I would not give that person a sanction for quitting. So then, based on experience, I would not send out a job announcement from Mr. Wash. I would not send someone to that place for work. So, I try to find a job that is a match but naturally not everything I send to my clients is a match. That is very subjective. It is important to discuss the job [with the client], perhaps, but when there are legal consequences if the client does not apply, then we say, 'you have to apply' but if not, then we discuss [the situation] together.

In order to understand the experience and perceptions of the respondents' interaction with their case managers in terms of job placement, it is important to note that the UBII recipient does not know that they have been placed into one of the six profile-types. They do not know that—potentially—the type of support or activation requirements they are (or are not) receiving is based on which profile-type they fell into.

7.3 Unemployment Benefit II recipients' experience and perception of job advertisements provided to them by their case managers.

THEMATIC CODES

*Support: job advertisement received helpful, burden, professional mismatch, waste of time; not current; already investigated*¹¹⁸

Based on the experience of UBII recipients, this section will explore the complexities of job placement assistance in terms of receiving job advertisements supplied to respondents by their case manager and the UBII recipient in turn assessing whether the job was a suitable match for them to apply to. Given the potential effect profiling has on categorizing and, thus, placing UBII recipients into different levels of support or activation, the number of job advertisements supplied to respondents by their case managers varied greatly. What we do not know is whether this was on account of the respondent's profile-type or whether it was based on the discretion of the case manager—or a little of both. Overall, when asked, of the 22 respondents in this study who had received job advertisements from their case managers, ten respondents liked the idea of receiving job advertisements sent to them, irrespective of whether the job advertisement was a match to their skills and interests. Overall, they viewed this as helpful support that had the potential to assist them in entering the labour market.

AMB: And how do you find that [receiving job advertisements]?

I46: Good, because they simply send you something. They have my CV. They look at what jobs match my qualifications. I find that good. Yes, but sometimes they send you something and you notice that 'no I can't manage that, I can't do that'. But still, I find the decision to send job advertisements very good. (39 year-old married male Ivory Coast)

In fact some respondents (n=5) mentioned that while they did not receive any job advertisements, they indeed wished that they had.

AMB: And did you receive any job advertisements? I22: Not this year.

AMB: Really? Do you have a sense of why that might be? I22: I don't know why. It probably has something to do with the 'men' [case managers]. Maybe he does not like me or, I don't know. Maybe he does not like my nose, I don't know. AMB: But you are young, capable... I22: I know. Last year I got five, six, seven announcements AMB: Per month? I22: No, not per month, in the whole of the year. (30 year-old single German male)

While in principle a group of respondents either liked the idea of receiving job advertisements as a form of support and/or wished that they had received advertisements when they had not, for those respondents who did, the challenge often rested in the fact that

¹¹⁸ These are the thematic codes used in the analysis of the evidence presented (see above).

those advertisements received had either already been investigated by the UBII recipient, were no longer current or were not a professional match (n=17).¹¹⁹

AMB: Do you receive any assistance in integrating into the labour market?

I13: Yes, they seek to mediate me to different firms, where I then have to apply...but that doesn't matter, because that was only supposed to be for a short period of time until I found regular work. But the problem is, when you get a letter [job advertisements] from the Jobcenter, from the mediation, that you have to apply there and there, it is often passé, because the job has already been filled or the person that you are supposed to contact no longer works there. Sometimes, it is somehow a little confusing. (38 year-old single German male)

Moreover, when respondents did receive job advertisements that were either out of date or not a proper professional 'match' to the respondents' skills, the respondent was faced with either having to apply to the job anyway (and providing evidence to their case manager that they had done so) or providing their case manager with a reason why they were not applying to the job. As a result, a group of respondents ultimately felt more burdened than supported by the job advertisements sent to them (n=7). For this group of respondents, their time was too often spent contacting human resources departments sorting out which job advertisements were current and whether they had already applied to the job in addition to writing time-consuming job applications, sensing that they would not end up getting the job anyway.

I10: Sometimes it is so, that when you are going through job advertisements, you call before you apply. And then they tell you if the job is still open or not. And if it is no longer open, then you put the job advertisement to the side. You do not bother with those [that have been filled], only those jobs that have not been filled. Then in the morning you get a letter in the post [from the Jobcenter with job advertisements] and then I think 'oh that company is somehow familiar to me'. I had already called that firm about the position. You make a note of the person you spoke to so that you know whether you have contacted them or not. Sometimes it has happened to me that I call [the company] and they say 'why are you calling when you already called on Monday—I already told you that the position has been filled.' (45 year-old single German male)

Some respondents perceived that the time spent addressing the job advertisements sent to them by their case manager was often time taken away from their own job search (n=9).

Furthermore a group of respondents simply did not know that they had the option not to apply to a job forwarded to them by their case manager, so long as they provided a reason (n=7).

I33: *I must apply, naturally. I can also say, 'no I don't want to apply', but then I will get a sanction. That's it.* Respondents also noted that their case manager often obtained the job advertisements from the same source that they have access to—the Jobcenter Jobbörse

¹¹⁹ This is compared to 7 respondents who did perceive the job advertisements they received as suitable to their skills and experience. Of this total number (n=24) two respondents had mixed feelings, in that they had received both suitable and unsuitable job advertisements.

(www.arbeitsagentur.de). In this sense, respondents did not feel that much time, if any, was invested in finding suitable potential job matches when those offered them were obtained from the same source they used. Thus, while in principle the idea of receiving job advertisements was seen by some as helpful and welcomed, overall of the 22 respondents who had received job advertisements, the majority felt that it would be more helpful if their case manager performed the role of mediator in terms of having internal contacts to local corporations and organizations rather than just pulling out job advertisements from a central database that everyone already had access to (n=14).

As noted, for those respondents who received job advertisements, a common problem cited was the failure of the job advertisements supplied to match their skills, abilities or job interest. Case managers rely on the UBII recipients' profile for information about their job history. As a result, job advertisements are sent to the UBII recipient based on what skills, prior work experience and qualifications are itemized in their profile. In theory, the profile should be a valid source for case managers to identify a UBII recipient's skills, abilities and past work experience in order to determine if a job advertisement is a proper match. But because of the formulaic nature of any type of computer profiling system, it fails to pick up nuances. For example, a specific 'skill' might be ticked but it may be a secondary skill and not focal to what the recipient can or wants to do.

I20: In my position, in every company they have SAP [software]. So I have to open SAP to fill in my number of hours I am working, and to see—I work on leans—so how much waste is being produced in this place, etc., etc. So they [case manager] gave me a form to fill out and I just wrote that I have SAP user experience. And they are now sending me jobs that say 'SAP implementation' or 'SAP programming'. They are sending me these kinds of job advertisements and saying you have to apply or call within this period of time and tell us why you are not applying for this job. AMB: The job advertisements are not even in the area of what you do. I20: No, not at all. I am doing MNA consulting and lean consulting. (34 year-old married Indian male)

As a result, respondents repeatedly cited receiving job advertisements that simply did not match their interests or their skills adequately.

I18: I already declined to apply to two jobs that they sent me. I wrote to them that the job did not match my apprenticeship, thus, I cannot do what they required. And yeah, the job announcements are never really meaningful. And if they are, then they are in Cologne or Würzburg or so. (28 year-old single German female)

In addition to receiving job advertisements that do not match the skills of a recipient, a group of respondents repeatedly cited being given job advertisements that required skills they simply did not have (n=10).

I12: He [case manager] put job advertisements on the table in front of me and I said 'I can't apply to them'. AMB: And why? I12: Russian, Spanish, English language competence—well there I do not need to bother applying. These applications just fall through the cracks because the required language skills are not there. If the job application makes it very clear that, without question, these language skills are definitely needed and required in word and writing, well then I don't need to apply...the Jobcenter does not really look at who you are. They do not really look at what you have done, what you would like to do. Sometimes it is strange. You speak to these people and clarify why you can't apply to a certain job, why you do not want to apply to the job and yet, they do not listen to you. (29 year-old partial disabled single German female)

It appeared to respondents who received mis-matched job advertisements that little time or thought went into supporting their employment search through providing job advertisements. Respondents were missing proper consultation with someone who had the professional know-how to properly assess them and then assist them in securing an appropriate job (n=18). For respondents this meant, being able to meet with a case manager professionally trained in job search and/or career development—and to a lesser degree job placement. Here it is important to distinguish between job search, job placement and career development.¹²⁰ Job search specialists focus on assisting individuals with preparing their resume, improving their interview techniques, assisting in company searches, and providing information about a given profession that the individual may want to apply to. Job placement specialist will assist in placement into a job through providing contacts, job advertisements or brokering a relationship between the individual and the employer by making calls on their behalf to the employer. Career development specialists explore what field an individual would like to work in, for example, secretarial, nursing, retail or consulting. Here it is not so much about providing assistance in getting a job, rather assisting the individual in deciding on a specific career. While the Jobcenter does not provide career development—or even job search assistance—the challenge is that some respondents came to the Jobcenter expecting some form of job search or career development assistance. This is not unsurprising given how the Jobcenter, with its use of case management and its stressing the value and importance of mediation, has been branded to the public. It comes back to the use of the word *Fördern* (support). In this study, a group of respondents expected that they would indeed receive support in finding work that went beyond simply receiving job advertisements. Based on the

¹²⁰ The distinction made between the three are based on established categories created and used in the job training and development sector (see for example the website TargetJobs.co.uk)

perception of some respondents, on the surface, the ‘support’ provided in terms of job placement services is presented to them as both a combination of job placement and job search support—and depending on a UBII recipient’s case manager, they may indeed get help in both areas. It appears that based on the evidence, some respondents would like job search support but are simply getting basic job placement support, i.e., they are sent job advertisements to apply to, which is the extent of the support provided.

THEMATIC CODES

Paternalism; resistance

Moreover, a minority of respondents viewed the actual act of the case manager sending job advertisements to the UBII recipient as paternalistic—as if the case manager knew better than the respondent what jobs they should apply to (n=4).

AMB: And did you receive job advertisements? I14: I received job advertisements, which I find a little...well, what really irritates me is when you sit in the office [with the case manager] and every time they look at the computer screen and every time they print something off from the computer, as if I cannot look for myself. After all, I am the one who can best determine what is and is not a match. (38 year-old single German male)

This sense of paternalism stemmed from case managers often making assumptions, based on the UBII recipient’s profile, of what they can or cannot do instead of discussing job options with respondents.

AMB: Did your case manager send you job advertisements? I42: No, actually not. I wasn’t upset about that but at the same time, if they had been good job advertisements, I would have definitely applied. And actually, I recently asked—there was an internship opening at the Art Gallery—I studied to become an art teacher. And when I spoke to my case manager about the opportunity she said ‘What? No. What do you want to do with that then?’ Maybe her reaction was because I had studied art to become a teacher. So she only thinks of me, well as [getting a job as a teacher]. With my case manager, I have this feeling—she knows that I have really tried. I don’t want to do just any job, but I also know that she really does not have any desire to find something suitable for me. (36 year-old single German male)

It was the lack of give and take—the absence of discussion about the respondents’ future that frustrated respondents. It was respondents’ perception that their case managers had little time and put little thought into finding job advertisements that adequately matched their employment history. Some respondents felt that the case managers were simply fulfilling their duty, as outlined in the Integration into Work Agreement, rather than taking the time to inquire and think what was best for the respondent. Ultimately respondents learned early on

that, for whatever reason, be it too many cases, too little time, they could not expect adequate assistance and support in the form of job advertisements being sent to them that were worthy of their time.

AMB: They have not sent you any job announcements? 14: No. No. I had to do all the looking on my own. Then I said 'ok' then I found work and I said 'I don't need them any more'. The Jobcenter only searches for One-Euro-Jobs anyway—they can't think of anything else. Or they threaten you with sanctions—with a three-month sanction and that is all they do for you. (38 year-old single German male)

Moreover, respondents exhibited a sort of 'spectrum of resistance' to the administration of job placement service. Those who were given job advertisements that did not match their skills or interests, either 'tricked' the system by sending in bogus applications or did what they had to do in order to avoid strife with their case manager and the possibility of receiving a sanction.

AMB: Now, let's talk about the three job applications. Now if I understand this right, there is pressure from both sides. On the one hand, if the Jobcenter finds a job for you and they give it to you, you have to apply correct? I27: Yup. AMB: And has that happened to you that they have said...? I27: Nope, no. Because I always apply to the [job], I do my thing that I have to do. (27 year-old single German-American male)

This spectrum of resistance comprises of, at one end, respondents who were genuinely surprised that their case manager was so unhelpful (n=11). The help may have not been useful, but this group complied with requirements. In the middle of the spectrum are those who are passively cynical about the character of the 'service', but who simply 'put up' with what was required of them (n=23). Then there were those respondents who covertly resisted or subverted requirements through token compliance, such as sending in bogus job applications to meet their monthly quota, i.e., tricked the system (n=8). At the opposite end of the spectrum are those respondents who openly resisted the job placement requirements and simply said 'I am not doing that' (n=8). They did this knowing that they would most likely face legal consequences, but their resistance outweighed the possible consequences that they are prepared to deal with.

7.4 Unemployment Benefit II recipients' experience of meeting the stipulated number of job applications to be sent to employers as agreed in their Integration into Work Agreement

THEMATIC CODES

Activation: difficulty in meeting number stipulated; lack of jobs; finding relevant jobs; personal circumstances versus job availability

Parallel to respondents possibly receiving job advertisements from their case managers, the Integration into Work Agreement outlines the degree of activation required and, thus, how many job applications a UBII recipient is expected to send out per month. The number of job applications—indeed whether it was required at all—varied greatly among the respondents for this study, anywhere from three to twenty per month.¹²¹ As discussed in section 7.2, depending on which profile-type a respondent fell into greatly determined the degree of activation required. Therefore, those respondents who fell into one of the three profile-types that were considered ‘easy to integrate’ into the labour market technically would not be required to demonstrate to their case manager that they were applying to jobs. On the other hand, those who fell into the last three profile-types that were considered ‘difficult to integrate’ into the labour market technically would be required to demonstrate that they were looking for work. Yet, while the profile system categorized the UBII recipient, the actual decision was ultimately at the discretion of the case manager. Here there are no guidelines as to how many job applications a recipient is to send out per month. While respondents were unaware that the profile system categorized and determined the degree of activation required, they nonetheless surmised why some UBII recipients were required to demonstrate that they were applying to jobs while others were not. The feeling among respondents was that those UBII recipients who were perceived as ‘easy to integrate’ into the labour market and/or demonstrated tenacity in their job search where those who did not necessarily have to demonstrate to their case manager that they were sending out job applications. While those UBII recipients who were considered ‘hard to integrate’ into the labour market were those who had to demonstrate that they were applying to jobs. This perceived reason by respondents was corroborated in my interviews with the five case managers who concurred that the stipulation could be used as an activation tool for motivating those who appeared unmotivated to find work. It appears from an analysis of the evidence that a wide variety of

¹²¹ Two respondents were required to send out three, four respondents were required to send out five, two respondents were required to send out six, seven respondents were required to send out ten, one respondent was required to send out 15 and one respondent to send out 20.

respondents in this study—often their skill and education level having little to do with who was required or not—were mandated through their Integration into Work Agreement to demonstrate that they were sending out a given number of job applications per month (n=17).

AMB: Yes, that is what I have not understood. In my interviews, some Have to submit 5, some 10, some 15, so the decision rests with you? CM2: Yes, exactly. AMB: And what are your criteria? CM2: Well, first it has to do with what I can trust the client to do. When I, for example, have an academic, someone who has just finished their studies, in my office, and he says he is applying across Germany—across Europe [for a job] I do not hesitate to require that he demonstrate to me that he has sent out ten job applications per month. He will do it without me asking him. If I have clients who work in the service area, then I know that with one click [in the job database] 30 jobs will appear. But if I have clients who work in office administration, and I know that there are not a lot of jobs in that area, thus it depends. If I have a mother with six kids who can only work in the mornings and can only work close to home, then I cannot require that she submit 15 applications per month. So, I have to know the situation of the labour market before I require anything. AMB: That is interesting, I would have thought that the number you prescribe is dependent on whether the client is motivated or not. CM2: Absolutely, yes. I have clients where I know that they are so motivated, that I do not have to bother with establishing in the Integration into Work Agreement that they demonstrate that they are applying to jobs...But naturally we also have clients who are as nice as one would like or as approachable as one would like or are as trusting as one would like but they will also have a negative attitude towards me in my role as mediator, towards the Jobcenter, towards the law, towards everything. They also do not want to work. There are only very, very few who are like that, but they do exist. And that is where the Integration into Work Agreement comes in, where there are clients, who for example, refuse to sign the agreement, for that there is the possibility in the administrative law to force [them to sign] and that can be used as a method to apply pressure. Because naturally in Unemployment Benefit II there is a duty to find work. When I make that clear, or signal [to the client] that I am not going to play any games, then every mediator must have a method at hand that can be used to counteract [such behaviour].

Respondents who were mandated to demonstrate to their case manager that they had sent out a specified number of job applications cited the difficulty in meeting the number for three main reasons. First, this group of respondents cited that the number required of them was too high given the lack of jobs available to apply to in their field and/or where they lived (n=5).

AMB What did you say, how many was it? I30: Ten to fifteen, well ten was the minimum and I never was able to meet the minimum. AMB: And why were you not able to meet the minimum? I30: Because there simply was nothing available that I could travel to or I did not have the required skills and knowledge...and then she [case manager] expected me to go from Axstedt to Wallhöfen with my bike—in all sorts of weather. I said,

‘I am not doing that’. (48 year-old divorced lone parent German female)
Respondents were cognizant of the structural impediments to entering the labour market. And here the number required of them per month was perceived as unrealistic given the lack of jobs available where they lived and/or in their field. As a result, three respondents said that in order to avoid sanctions they sent out applications just to fulfil what was required of them.

Second, it was a question of respondents’ ability to send out relevant job applications—defined by respondents as job applications that were directly related to and matched their skills and interests—versus random jobs that they knew they had no chance of getting in the first place. Seven respondents cited the fact that it took time and effort to find job advertisements that they considered relevant. The time and effort required to find job openings in their field (and in proximity to where they lived) did not necessarily correspond to what was required of them within a one-month period of time.

I12: When I find the right job advertisements, then I have no problem applying. It is not like how my case manager demanded of me—he wanted me to demonstrate that I had sent in 20 per month—that is just too many...it always has to do with the situation of the labour market. It always comes back to this point, in this sense. I cannot simply write non-stop job applications. I mean, I can do it like my case manager wants. I can take the Yellow Pages and go through and I can call here and ask there. That is all no problem. I can do that. To make calls and ask question, no problem. But, to put together a written application that is really good—that takes time. (29 year-old partially disabled single German female)

If job openings were plentiful in their field, then respondents generally did not have any problems meeting the number required of them per month (n=6). But, if job openings were not then it became difficult for respondents to meet what was required of them.

I20: For me, in my experience, to find the right job, I get maybe six, seven jobs that I find personally that I am searching, applying and also getting interviews. It is not like I am applying and not getting interviews. Every week I have interviews. Last three weeks I was having interviews. Tomorrow I have an interview. So they do not understand really how to treat every person individually. Just because they are telling me to make 20 applications, I cannot apply to all the 20, everything that I find in the market and keep getting rejections. (34 year-old married Indian male)

Because of the difficulty in finding suitable openings for this group of respondents, pressure placed on them to meet their required job application submissions proved stressful. Indeed it was generally viewed by some respondents (n=13) that the number stipulated per months was arbitrary and did not necessarily reflecting what one can realistically achieve in a given month.

Third, based on the experience of the respondents, the number stipulated did not reflect the reality of their situation, i.e., mothers with small children who were limited in what types of jobs and what hours of the day they could work, individuals who had limited transportation options or individuals who suffered physical or emotional impediments which limited the types of jobs available to them (n=7).

AMB: What support do you receive from the Jobcenter to help you find work? I36: Support? Yes, well, not much. I actually had more difficulties recently than...so job applications that I absolutely cannot use. I am supposed to apply, but I get the sense that they are trying to make life difficult for me.

AMB: Can you please describe that a bit more? What do you mean? I36: Yes, well job advertisements, where I do not—at all—have a chance of getting the job. And if I don't apply, then there are problems. I did not bother to apply to a few job advertisements sent to me. I called them [the company] up and explained that I am partially disabled and they said 'no, we don't need that'. And they never called back. So there are a few applications [from the Jobcenter] that I just did not respond to and now there are problems to come.

(52 year-old single partially disabled Turkish male)

It is difficult to ascertain the degree to which case managers took these issues into consideration when deciding how many job applications a respondent had to apply to per month. In my interviews with case managers they indicated that they did, but how uniform this was or how dependent it was on the personal approach of the case manager is an unknown.

7.5 Unemployment Benefit II recipients' experience of working with their case managers in a job search or job placement capacity

THEMATIC CODES

Case manager as foci of support; perception of support received versus support needed; absence of support; job placement versus career development

According to Klevenow and Knecht (2013), there are c. 13,700 case managers who work at Jobcenters throughout Germany. Case managers are not necessarily trained social workers, job search or career development specialist. Their educational backgrounds vary, with some having university degrees and others not. According to my interview with a case manager in Bremen, it is customary for case managers to be trained at one of two training facilities in Weimar or Nordheim Germany. The training facility is run by the Federal Employment Agency and offers a range of trainings—from trainings for individuals new to the Jobcenter

to additional qualification programmes for staff at all levels of the Jobcenter. But it is unclear whether every case manager hired by the Jobcenter is trained at this facility. Furthermore there are two types of case managers. The Fallmanager (case manager) handles the more difficult cases—individuals with addiction or debt problems, those who are limited in their capacity to work based on health-related problems or those who lack care options. It is their job to work with the client to find something that they can do with their time. The Vermittler (mediator) handles all the standard cases. It is their job to assist in skills training placement and manage recipients' integration into the labour market. It is only when the Vermittler has a particularly difficult case that the Fallmanager will step in and assist or take over the case. I have used 'case manager' throughout this thesis as a general title for someone who manages UBII recipients' cases, which refers more to the job of the Vermittler than the job of the Fallmanager. And, indeed, the majority of respondents in my study were advised by Vermittler instead of Fallmanager (though some had both). Nonetheless, there is a certain amount of ambiguity inherent in the case manager's title in terms of the degree of support a UBII recipient can expect to receive from him or her. Respondents often referred to their case manager as Vermittler (mediator) and Berater (consultant) interchangeably. For example I26: *Herr Bein, he is my Berater [consultant]*. The challenge here is that these terms imply very different objectives in terms of role of the case manager. A staff member referred to as a 'consultant', for example, could be expected by the UBII recipient to consult with him or her on how best to manage their job search or discuss career options. A staff member referred to as a 'job mediator', for example, could be expected by the UBII recipient to assist them in direct job placement.

I33: They should mediate me into decent work, so that I never have to come back here. That is what I demand of the Jobcenter. But that is not what happens here. (32 year-old married German female)

Many respondents were cognizant of both the irony in the nomenclature used and how Jobcenter titles imply support not necessarily received.

I32: This agency is not in the position to support (fördern) anyone.
AMB: And why not? I32: Because this agency is unworldly. I mean, look at the terminology: I am the 'client'. Today I received an 'invitation' to come here. My placement officer is called 'case manager'. An institution that...that...that has only given me three job advertisements in six years, that they could have financed on their own, calls itself 'Jobcenter'. I mean, that is all totally crazy! (33 year-old single German male)

Irrespective of how the case manager was referred to (whether as Berater, Vermittler or

Fallmanager), both by the Jobcenter and respondents, the important point here is that many respondents anticipated meeting a professional who was prepared to work with them to manage their case, provide job placement and job support, if not career guidance (n=26). But an analysis of the evidence suggest that, instead, respondents received conflicting messages from the Jobcenter about the degree of 'support' a UBII recipient could expect to receive from their case manager. As a result, respondents who came to the Jobcenter expecting support and guidance in their job search and/or career development were often bitterly disappointed by the lack thereof. They were often left to their own devices, while being pressured to meet the requirements set out in their Integration into Work Agreement without the promised job placement support from their case manager, as outlined in the agreement.

Based on respondents' experience, the job placement support provided to them by their case manager can be placed into those who received some form of support and those who did not. While a group of respondents cited the inability of their case manager to provide job placement, job search or career development advice, other respondents did note that when they met with their case managers that they were friendly and helpful in that they asked essential questions, such as what job-related experience they had (n=8). What would they like to do professionally? What skills did they consider themselves good at? Not all case managers appeared disinterested. Some case managers did take the time to ask important questions concerning what the respondent would like to do professionally based on their employment history. Moreover in three cases the case managers were actively involved with the respondent and keen to help them develop a job/career trajectory by addressing any gaps in their skills or education. Yet in the majority of cases, even the sympathetic case manager was ultimately only able to provide support that went so far.

I34: The consultation...naturally...they ask you what you have done, in which profession you have worked, what you would like to do, which profession you would like to try out...that all gets asked. Naturally, how you answer is up to you. Only, like I said, with me it is so, I still am not 100% sure which professional direction I should go into. AMB: And did the case manager help you figure out which direction that might be? I34: No. So concretely that one sits down with you and tries to figure out which direction one would like to go professionally, or even, where one might imagine oneself working...that is not done here. That is missing here. (40 year-old single Turkish male)

Thus, for a large group of respondents, when asked to relate their experience of meeting with their case managers to discuss their unemployment situation, they received little to no support

beyond the basic and formulaic job placement support provided (if they saw their case manager at all) (n=19). Respondents were either placed into a skills training (as discussed in the previous chapter) or were instructed to look for work on their own.

I38: The last time I saw her [the case manager] I said to her, I would really like to work in a hospital. She then looked at me and said ‘yes, well, go look’ [for a job then]. That was her answer: ‘yes, well, go look’! That completely knocked the wind out of me. Her response made me so mad!
(40 year-old German born Turkish nationality married female)

The fact that respondents were instructed to look for work was not what was problematic. Indeed, respondents were aware of their responsibility to attend to their own job search (see Chapter 8). What they had not anticipated was not receiving any support beyond the basic job placement assistance, especially when the perception of this group of respondents was that the case manager was there to assist and support in their job search, as outlined in the Integration into Work Agreement.

I30: ...The only thing you hear [from the Jobcenter] is: “You must, must, must!” There is the internet, there is the newspaper. How many newspapers have I looked through? I get this newspaper [from the Jobcenter] that everyone gets, this Gazette, you can find it in Osterholz as well. It is called the Hammer-Report. They tell you: “Look in the Gazette!” “Apply to jobs!” “Submit documentation that you have done so!”
(48 year-old divorced lone parent German female)

Respondents knew how and where to look for jobs. The challenge lied in some respondents expecting (and in fact often needing) assistance that extended beyond basic job placement to include job search or career development support (n=14). Yet it appears that what this group of respondents expected and, indeed, needed to assist them in their job search clashed with the reality of case managers’ situation. On the one hand there were the resource constraints of the Jobcenter—the case managers interviewed for this study were assigned anywhere from 300-400 cases. On the other hand, the case manager was not necessarily trained nor was it necessarily in their job remit to provide, for example, career development guidance—a level of support and assistance that some jobseekers required and desired.

I48: The Jobcenter did not offer me any jobs; they did not provide me with offers in that sense. They always say, “we are not job mediators”. I mean every person has to look for work. They give me material, such as when I put my resume together, they give you the folders and stuff, and they will pay for that. But job offers, in the sense that they can offer me jobs...they have not done that, they do not do that. (48 year-old divorced lone parent Moroccan male)

This begs the question of whether the level of support provided can be anything more than the superficial support expected of someone who has anywhere from 300-400 cases: material for putting together a resume, permission to attend a skills training or a voucher for

placement at a third-party job search centre. As Van Berkel and Van der Aa (2012) point out many authors, among them Sainsbury (2008) and Brodtkin (2011), consider the issue of high caseloads an important determinant to case managers' ability to adequately carry out their work. The combination of a lack of time for recipients coupled with a lack of resources to provide adequate services means that high caseloads result in an additional barrier to case managers being able to work according to professional standards (Van Berkel and Van der Aa, 2012).

THEMATIC CODES

Quality of case manager consultation

While a group of respondents received some form of job placement assistance, another group of respondents rarely saw their case manager (n=9). Moreover those who did see their case manager, even infrequently, questioned the quality of the assistance they received.

AMB: Can you describe your relationship with your case manager to me? I47: We seldom see each other. And good suggestions have not been provided. And I have to look for work myself. (58 year-old divorced German male)

Here respondents often described the inability of the case manager to provide even the most basic assistance. Respondents who had been out of the labour market for a substantial period of time and were now confronted with re-entering it, for example, recently divorced women and/or women with children, were in particular need of not only job placement assistance but some form of job search or career guidance. Yet, it appears that when case managers were confronted with more challenging cases that required more attention and guidance it was at this juncture that respondents felt let down.

I30: Yes, well simply a little change, because for the last thirty years I have only known housework and children... awhile back my case manager forced me to participate in a skills training, from which I fled after three days. The skills training was called 'Home Economics and Food Service'. Their argument was—I could not seek out the training on my own, I was just put in the training, was not even asked if I wanted to participate—with the argument “yes, well you can run a household, you raised a large family.” To which I replied “Yes, I did and do you think that that was so much fun that I would like to do that professionally too?” No, no, I said, I do not want to do that. When I work, then I would like to do something completely different and not this same old household crap that I already do from morning till night. I really just fled [from the skills training] and I said I am not doing that. (48 year-old divorced lone parent German female)

While the Jobcenter's objective coupled with its lack of resources' is not to run a career

development advice centre, nonetheless, one cannot ignore that case managers, whether it is in their job description or not, do end up advising respondents in some form on their job possibilities. The level and degree of advice had an impact on respondents' behaviour and their motivation. Thus, at its most basic, guidance or advice of any sort had the capacity to frustrate some respondents, especially those who were highly vulnerable. The way the job placement or job search guidance was transmitted and the level of the support provided had the capacity to directly affect how respondents in this study sought work.

I34: And that is what is missing here at the Jobcenter, concerning work, that they concretely ask you or seek to find out through talking to you, how can this person be helped...or in which direction or which profession could I recommend for this person? (40 year-old single Turkish male)

Respondents were cognizant that their case managers were not necessarily professionally trained or qualified to assist in a job search or career development capacity.

I38: You hand it in [your paperwork to the case manager] and she says, "You still have not found anything?" –and I think "but why are you here? Why are you sitting here...it's your job to mediate me." After all your title is 'work mediator'. In that sense they do not do their job at all. She looks at me. I say, "I am a medical assistant, I could..." I think, a job mediator should be qualified—I don't know if a work mediator has to have a university degree [to have this job]—or how they are trained, but I could do this job much better than she can. But they should know, they sit between the unemployed and the labour market; they must know how it works. (40 year-old married German born Turkish nationality female)

This perceived lack of qualifications can be linked to what was written in section 7.2 about the ability of a case manager to provide different levels of job and career advice that extended beyond basic job placement services. As noted, case managers come from a variety of backgrounds and education levels. And while the Federal Employment Agency is taking steps to introduce a new consultation concept (Beratungskonzeption) and professionalize the case manager position, it is unclear if and the degree to which respondents' case managers were trained to professionally manage anything beyond basic job placement service, such as job search or career development guidance.¹²² Indeed a group of respondents often cited that the degree of job placement assistance took the form of case managers suggesting that they participate in One-Euro Jobs or go to temporary work agencies to get a job (n=14).

AMB: What support do you receive from the Jobcenter to assist you in entering the labour market? I41: Um, yes, well they gave me addresses

¹²² In 2012 the Federal Employment Agency introduced a new consultation concept (Beratungskonzeption) that at the time had been tested at two Jobcenters and in 2013 was to be rolled out at an additional 20. The cornerstone of this initiative is to introduce 'professional and competent consultation' into case management (BA, 2013: 27). Training combines theory with practice. Jobcenter staff is being trained on how to structure and manage a consultation discussion, how to identify and target resources, especially for those clients who are considered hard to integrate, and how to make apparent recipients' talents so that they can maximize those talents in their job search.

where, for example, after my training I did a One-Euro-Job and then a skills training and then I said ‘none of that works for me, that is too boring for me’ and then they gave me addresses to local temporary work agencies and I went and I got a job. AMB: And that is the support you received? I41: Yes. (25 year-old single German male)

As a result of the perceived lack of professional training and know-how to provide assistance beyond basic job placement, any form of assistance provided often came across as superficial in nature by respondents. This was particularly acutely felt by those respondents who were not necessarily easily placed in One-Euro-Jobs or sent to temporary work agencies. It was the group of respondents who had been educated or trained (i.e., completed apprenticeships) who found themselves at the Jobcenter with skills and capability but often no direction and thus who required but did not receive quality consultation.

I49: In my discussion [with my case manager] she essentially said, ‘well, I have no idea what we should do with you’. They looked at my skill profile—everything I have ever done—but led me to understand that ‘yes, well no idea’...and then I went back and tried once more and I said, ‘That can’t be all. You have to give me something—provide me with an opportunity or give me some tips or have a discussion with me’. I did not say, ‘I want you to present me with a job’, rather I need to have someone with whom I can discuss [my possibilities] someone who can help me get on track, who can clarify to me how this all works, what one does here. I have never been unemployed. And I have never been through such an unknown application process. (38 year-old married German male)

Ultimately it appears from the perspective of the respondents for this study that case managers were more focused on what they can ‘do’ with them rather than focusing on what the respondent actually needs in terms of job placement or job search support and assistance. The job placement support provided by the case manager appears to focus on placing respondents into something such as a skills training, a One-Euro-Job or suggesting some respondents work for a temporary work agency. This raises a question: when case managers are confronted with a profile-type that falls into the ‘hard to integrate’ category, is it indeed the case that the UBII recipient is hard to integrate or it is that the recipient may require guidance beyond the basic and formulaic nature of job placement assistance provided that proves ‘hard’ for the Jobcenter.

I50: In retrospect, it would have been much better if someone had said to me “good, how can we help you, what are your strengths”? I think about the past and wonder why I have not managed to find work and wonder how I can change my approach to finding work. Here it would be helpful to have someone say “let’s try doing it this way and see if we can get you into a job through this avenue.” Or “here we have a part-time job, go and see if that is a way in for you.” The point is to provide you with more

opportunities and especially to offer you more job opportunities. I did receive job announcements sent to me, that, with the skills I have, I could never do. For example, wind energy. Although I am an energy consultant and I do have some idea of what wind energy is about—but to be able to calculate wind strength, to administer wind energy and to plan wind energy—those are completely different jobs. And...what else have I done...I also applied to temporary agencies for jobs; I have searched for jobs on my own but summa summarum when you look at it. If one had looked at my case file, then one would have seen that actually my strengths lie elsewhere. And in that sense, these questions they ask you...I found that all a bit superficial. That is really just to process you through the system. Yes, my wishes were taken into consideration when I said I would like to do this and this. But at the end of the day, what really would have personally helped me is if someone had taken me by the hand and said, ‘here, we are offering you this path’. Because personally I have had difficulty getting from A to B. (40 year-old Single German male)

7.6 Chapter summary and conclusion

This chapter has unpacked the research findings as they relate to this thesis’ first research question that explores respondent experiences and perceptions of job placement services. Job placement services are a part of the larger activation and support mechanisms provided to UBII recipients to assist in meeting the objective of the reforms, namely labour market integration for the long-term unemployed.

- Are the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients?

The findings in this chapter highlight the complexities of a case management/profiling approach as part of job placement service provision—issues that are already well-known in the academic literature. Indeed the main themes to arise from the findings in this chapter are supported by other research (Sainsbury, 2008; Wright, 2011; Behncke et al., 2007, Brodtkin, 2011). At the heart of a case management approach to job placement services is the frontline worker, or in this case, the case manager. And here Lipsky’s (1980, 2010) seminal study of street-level bureaucrats is still highly relevant. Lipsky argued that frontline workers’ decisions “effectively become the public policies they carry out” because of their discretionary decision making ability which directly impacts the benefit recipient (Lipsky, 1980: xii). Here it is the case manager’s discretionary decision making ability which is the

key component to any discussion of case management. At the heart of job placement is the case manager who determines, in conjunction with the profiling system, whether the UBII recipient requires support (Fördern—receiving job advertisements from their case manager) or activation (Fordern—required to demonstrate that they are applying to jobs). This is why the discussion of the ‘professionalization’ of activation work performed by the case manager is relevant to the findings in this chapter (Van Berkel and Van der Aa, 2012). The interviews conducted with the five case managers for this study indicate that they do use discretion in the decisions they make about individual recipients. If discretion does indeed play a role in the decisions case managers make about who receives what job advertisements, when and how many, for example, it is then a question of whether case managers have been professionally trained and are thus adequately prepared to provide the level of guidance perceived as needed by recipients. While respondents in this study did not expect that their case managers would conduct their job search for them, they did expect that their case managers would have the professional capacity to assist in their job placement and job search. And here is where the issue of ‘professionalization’ comes in. Although the degree of job placement assistance received by respondents varied greatly, the majority of respondents required a case manager with the professional know-how to assist them beyond basic placement—i.e., providing job advertisements. Here professionalization is less about establishing a professional status of activation workers who are expected to act in a professional manner (Sainsbury, 2008) and instead, more about case managers being professionally trained to adequately assess the job and career needs of their ‘clients’.

Ultimately it is an issue of whether the provision of job consultation and not just placement is an objective of the case management approach at the Jobcenter. Here, the Federal Employment Agency is currently working to improve and expand the consultation and mediation expertise provided to UBII recipients (BA, 2013). This suggests that the government recognizes the importance of having competent, professionally trained Jobcenter staff who can provide the level of support needed to meet its objective of integrating recipients into the labour market. But the question remains whether this degree of support can ever ultimately be provided. As Hansensfeld (1999) points out, the mandatory nature of activation makes relations of mutual trust between case managers and benefit recipients difficult to establish; something that is largely borne out by the findings outlined above.

Chapter Eight: Findings on Unemployment Benefit II Recipients' Perception of a 'Right' to and a 'Responsibility' in Finding Work

8.1 Introduction

The following chapter presents a thick description of the findings as they pertain to the second research question:

- How meaningful is the *Fördern and Fordern* policy discourse for Unemployment Benefit II recipients, in terms of their perception of a 'right' to and 'responsibility' in finding work?

This chapter will focus on UBII respondents' perception of a right to and responsibility in finding work. As previously explained, reducing the number of those in receipt of long-term unemployment benefit was one of the key objectives for reforming the Federal Republic's social security system. To do this, the UK's 'rights and responsibilities' policy logic, where a recipient's 'right' to benefit is predicated on his/her demonstrating 'responsibility' in finding work, was adopted and subsequently manifested itself both in the policy rhetoric and design under the maxim of '*Fördern and Fordern*'. While *Fördern and Fordern* is not a direct translation of rights and responsibilities, the underlying premise is similar. The embedded assumption in this policy approach is that UBII recipients need to be made to or learn to take responsibility for finding work. Policy makers and academics have not heretofore examined UBII recipients' perception of what a 'responsibility' to find work means to them. Moreover, if UBII recipients have a responsibility to find work, do they then have a 'right' to work? Given that specific policy mechanisms have been put in place to 'activate' recipients and make them demonstrate 'responsibility', this chapter will explore whether UBII recipients' interaction with the policy mechanism might have changed what responsibility in finding (and doing) work means to them and how they actively demonstrate responsibility.

To achieve this objective, this chapter presents Unemployment Benefit II (UBII) recipients' perception of their 'right' to and 'responsibility' in finding work under the unemployment benefit system governed by Germany's Hartz IV reforms. What will emerge raises questions about the assumption by policy makers and governments that the long-term unemployed need

to be made to feel ‘responsible’ for finding work; about the extent to which recipients already feel a sense of responsibility to find work.

The framework used to generate the findings in the following sections of this chapter employed the thematic codes listed below and these will act as a guide in each section for unpacking the evidence:

Perception of right

- Support
- Freedom to choose
- Quality earnings
- Work not a right

Perception of responsibility

- Duty to state, society, family
- Pay household expenses
- Oneself
- To get off benefit

Responsibility to find work

- Personal instinct
- Shared social norms
- How job search conducted
 - Job applications sent
 - Freedom

- Jobcenter helped/hinder search

Jobcenter changed sense of responsibly

- Freedom from Jobcenter
- Sense of dependency
- Benefits of activation
 - Positively reinforcing responsibility
- Lacking personal motivation

Jobcenter strengthening work search

Jobcenter weakened work search

Meaning of Fördern and Fordern

- Give and take
- Not fair bargain
- Structural impediments to work

In the following sections of this chapter, the thematic codes used in the analysis of the data are italicized and emboldened and create a subsection within each section. The point here is to provide a direct link between the description of the evidence and the thematic codes used to analyse the data.

Section 8.2 of this chapter will focus on respondents’ perceptions of their right to work. Here respondents’ perceptions, narratives and discourses of their ‘right’ to work are categorized into four categories. Section 8.3 explores respondents’ perception of their responsibility to

work where there perceptions, narratives and discourses are grouped into four categories of responses. Each section will unpack the respective categories as they relate to Dean's (see Figure 4.1) taxonomies for understanding competing constructions based on rights and responsibilities. Section 8.4 and 8.5 examine respondents' perception of whether they are personally responsible to find work. Respondents' perception of personal responsibility is then explored in the context of receiving benefit and going to the Jobcenter. It is a question of whether Jobcenter requirements appeared effectively to have changed their perception of personal responsibility. While section 8.4 explores whether perceptions have changed, section 8.5 discusses whether respondents felt Jobcenter regulations had changed their behaviour in terms of taking personal responsibility to find work. After a discussion of respondents' perception and experience of a right and responsibility to find work, section 8.6 discusses what Fördern and Fordern means to respondents in the Jobcenter context. Section 8.7 summarizes the chapter findings and conclusion.

8.2 Unemployment Benefit II recipients' perceptions of their right to work

Translation issues posed an initial challenge when asking respondents whether they had a right to work. The concept of a 'right' to work has a different linguistic and cultural connotation in the German than it does in the Anglophone context. Generally, there are two popular understandings of a 'right to work' in the German context. First, the right to freely chosen work is a legal concept. Although the German constitution (Grundgesetz der Bundesrepublik Deutschland) does not state that one has a right to work, article 12 does state that one has the right to *freely* choose one's work, place of work and training facility.¹²³ The challenge here was that a group of respondents tended to conflate the right to freely choose employment with the right to work (n=8). Thus, when respondents were asked whether they had a right to work, this group noted that the constitution stipulates a right to work for everyone. I10: *When I take a look at the German constitution, everyone actually has a right to work.* While there was confusion about what the constitution actually stipulates, the fact that some respondents initial reaction was to ground their response in the legality of a 'right' demonstrates the extent to which the concept of a right to work is grounded for some in a legal understanding of rights generally. Second, there is a well-established discourse in

¹²³ 1) Alle Deutschen haben das Recht, Beruf, Arbeitsplatz und Ausbildungsstätte frei zu wählen. Die Berufsausübung kann durch Gesetz oder auf Grund eines Gesetzes geregelt werden. (2) Niemand darf zu einer bestimmten Arbeit gezwungen werden, außer im Rahmen einer herkömmlichen allgemeinen, für alle gleichen öffentlichen Dienstleistungspflicht. (3) Zwangsarbeit ist nur bei einer gerichtlich angeordneten Freiheitsentziehung zulässig.

Germany about the extent to which the government has the ‘Pflicht’ (duty) to legally ensure work. A right to work—“Recht auf Arbeit”—is typically used by the German political left and is a part of the party platform of Die Linke (The Left). The Left argues that the state has a responsibility to provide work for everyone who claims the right. That said, the German left certainly does not agree whether everyone has a duty (Pflicht) to work. Thus, the challenge with extracting the concept of a right to work, as it is used and understood in the Anglophone social policy discourse, and translating that to the German proved to be complex. It appears from the analysis that for historical and linguistic reasons, Germans are arguably attuned to different meanings of rights and responsibilities.

Moreover, in the first set of interviews conducted in Hamburg, a prompt was used to transition from the discussion of respondents’ experiences of skills training and job placement services to questions about rights and responsibilities to work. The intent was to ease the transition from what I perceived as practical questions to more theoretical questions. Therefore I started by asking respondents “would you say, this is perhaps somewhat theoretical, but would you say you have a right to work?” or “now, for a few theoretical questions. Would you say you have a right to work?” While I initially thought that this was a good way to bridge the practical questions, with what I thought the respondents would perceive as more theoretical questions, it was decided that when I conducted my second set of interviews in Hamburg that I would drop the ‘theoretical’ prompt and simply ask “do you have a right to work?” The objective here was for the respondent to respond plainly, without me influencing their answer through a prompt. Initially there was concern that as a result of this change in approach, I would have two different sets of answers. But my analysis has concluded that while there were variations in the type of answers, this variation was not a result of whether a prompt was used or not, as I will demonstrate.

That said a large portion of my sample was either very or somewhat taken aback by the question. It was clear that many had never before been posed such a question and six respondents said they had never thought about what an answer to such a question would or should be. In short, many found this question difficult to answer. Some found the question funny such as a 61 year-old unemployed German male who when asked responded with (I15) *Right to work? [Laughs] I don't know whether I now have a right to work. Pfff...* Others were simply flummoxed by the question as exemplified in my interview with a 28 year-old unemployed German woman whose response to my question was: I18 *Hm. What does right*

mean? That is a hard question. Right to work? Right to work? Hm. Well, that is definitely a funny question. Right to work. I can't really answer that. Or as a 38 year-old lone mother noted (I30): *A right to work? I have never really thought about that. A right to work...* While initial reaction to the question was one of surprise and while some struggled to answer the question, nevertheless, many had a very clear understanding of what a right to work meant to them (n=44) once they were given a chance to think about it. What this variation in responses demonstrates is that the introduction of a rights and responsibilities framework into the policy design was not known or generally understood by respondents. It appears that many respondents did not draw a link between the rules and regulations that impacted their behaviour at the Jobcenter to the larger political context of 'Fördern and Fordern'. In short, respondents were not necessarily aware that what their case managers required of them was grounded in a rights and responsibilities policy logic. Thus, respondents were confused when I asked them about their right and responsibility to work because they did not necessarily understand the connection between questions on job placement and skills training and rights and responsibilities.

THEMATIC CODES

Support; freedom to choose; quality earnings; work not a right

Overall respondents' perception of their 'right' to work fell into four categories. These four broad categories constructed in my initial analysis could, after the event, be aligned with Dean's taxonomy of competing approaches to rights and responsibilities, which I discussed in Chapter Four and illustrated in Figure 4.1. Dean's taxonomy was presented as a component of a two-fold analytic in which elements of Foucault's work may be seen to resonate with a critical re-conceptualisation of social citizenship and the complex ways in which it may constitute the responsibilities of the subject. I will be discussing the relevance of Foucauldian thinking to my findings in Chapter 9, but I am introducing Dean's taxonomy at this stage since it articulates directly with the thematic coding that I have undertaken with regard to the respondents' own understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

But first it should be noted that there are clear limitations with what this kind of heuristic modelling can achieve. In this case it is used to help make sense of the categories of findings that emerged from an analysis of the evidence. The device also helps to make sense of and place the findings within the larger rights and responsibilities discourse across Western Europe. But these are imperfect categories that are limited in their ability to capture nuances

in responses that are then turned into categories. Indeed, categories often overlap or draw on one another making it impossible to illustrate ideal types. Nevertheless, with these limitations in mind, the first category comprised of those who viewed a right to work as a right to proper support in finding work (n=10). This response category corresponds to Dean's conservative quadrant where one can expect help [from the state] when one becomes in need of assistance. Second, there were those respondents who viewed a right to work as a right to choose work freely (n=17). This corresponds to Dean's social-liberal quadrant—demanding freedom of choice—but overlaps with a social democratic demand for decent work. Thirdly, there were those respondents who viewed a right to work as a right to quality earnings that enabled one to enjoy life however they defined 'enjoy'(n=9). This response type corresponds ostensibly to Dean's social democratic quadrant. This group was concerned with earning a living wage for the work done. The fourth category of responses concerned those who did not see work as a right at all (n=11). This corresponds to Dean's utilitarian quadrant in that work was perceived as simply something one did to survive.

For those respondents whose responses fell into the first category, a right to work meant a right to proper consultation and assistance in finding a job. Consultation in this context was defined by respondents as a two-way exchange between a skilled professional trained in career development, job search or placement and the jobseeker (as discussed in Chapter 7, section 7.5). The skilled professional, while not expected by respondents to be intimately familiar with every UBII recipient's profession, was, nonetheless, trained in career assessment and capable of providing meaningful career advice and guidance to the recipient. The key here was the ability of the skilled professional to match a recipient's skills and abilities to possible career or job options. But this was to be a two-way, interactive process where the jobseeker could *discuss* employment options without feeling pressured into taking any job currently available to them. As I20 noted in response to the question of whether one had a right to work:

I20: A proper consultation. I mean, if I am supposed to have a right to work or if I should work, but would also like to work, then I need proper consultation. So that when I come [to the Jobcenter] and I say, I have these and these skills, and I have these and these ideas [about what I want to do or where I want to work], what are my options? That when I come [to the Jobcenter] I will receive consultation about what my possibilities are and what kind of support I can expect to receive. And at the same time, my wishes and ideas [for what I want to do] will be taken into consideration. I see that as my 'right' in this work. It is not like you come and here you have 20 jobs, apply to them. (34 year-old married Indian male)

For the second category of responses, their idea of a right to work was a right to job prospects and future perspective that was manifested through respondents' right to choose their job and profession freely without feeling pressured to take just any job. Respondents desired that their expectations for work and their future more generally should be respected by their case managers. As an unemployed architect noted:

I50: Yes, I have a right to work! AMB: Why? I50:... I do have a right because I was born here, I have been socialized here, I live here, yes and it is here that I must and want to spend my daily routine. And I am a part of this society. So, either one accepts that I am unemployed and cannot find work here, in which case then I want money so that I can live decently and I would like to be left in peace and quiet. But that is not what happens here—society says 'no we do not want that!', in which case then one should give me the chance, should give me a job. And not just some job like sweeping streets or cleaning toilets, jobs that are beneath me, but the job that I have trained for based on my schooling.
(40 year-old single German male)

Moreover, this right to choose a job freely was combined with respondents desire to choose a worthy job, a job that pays a living wage—indeed the right to be able to work and not have to receive wage top-up from the Jobcenter.

I3: One should have a right to determine what one earns and what one wants to do. You can't send a teacher who is unemployed to a dry cleaners. That does not work. He will not do that job. And why should he do that job? And if you force him to do that job, well that is not good either. He will simply not go and do the job. And if you send him there, he will not stay there. And then in one month, he will be back sitting at the Jobcenter. (32 year-old partially disabled married Turkish male)

One-Euro-Jobs and temporary work were perceived as an affront to this group of respondents' right to choose work freely. One does not have a right or loses that right to work when respondents are instructed by their case manager to take a One-Euro-Job that they do not consider 'worthy' or face losing a portion of their benefit through sanctions. A right to choose work freely and that which is well paid was inclusive—whether one was German or an immigrant—everyone had the right to a job under these conditions.

I38: ...but I said to her [the case manager], do not come at me with temp jobs. I am really open, but I am not doing that. You don't get vacation, you don't get your money—you are paid very little for the work you do, you earn very little even though the profession of doctor assistance earns well. And when you clean or stack boxes or whatever at the [temp] job—work is work, that is ok, all well and good—but I think, every person has a right, at a minimum, to cover his living expenses or pay his rent. But they [Jobcenter] do not think about that. (40 year-old German born Turkish nationality married female)

A right to choose one's job freely was also interpreted as the freedom to determine one's type

of work based on what they have trained to do. For this group of respondents, this meant not having to tick boxes at the Jobcentre that resulted in UBII recipients being funnelled into any job—typically temporary work or One-Euro-Jobs. As a 32 year-old single German male noted:

AMB: ...And a right to work, why is that social for you? I37: ...Work is social...it is social for society and it is also social for oneself...and I think, in this system, that is the social; one can choose for himself, one does not have to ask anyone, one does not have to put x in boxes. One can do with what one wants; one can choose his life freely. That is a piece of freedom. (32 year-old single German male)

The third category of responses viewed a right to work as a right to quality earnings that enabled individuals and families to enjoy life. A right in this sense was a way to fulfil one's wishes, whether in one's ability to enjoy the work they perform and/or to live comfortably from one's earning. There was a general feeling of entrapment when respondents did not earn enough to enable them to enjoy life. 'Enjoy life' was defined as not being able to buy a CD or go to a movie or enjoy a dinner out once a year because respondents' ability to dictate their quality of life was impaired by their low earnings. Work was perceived by this group of respondents as fundamental to living and defining who they are. Thus, work was as a form of expression of that identity and in return for the work done, respondents wished to be able to express their identity through the purchases made and the lifestyle cultivated. A right to work for this group of respondents was associated with a right to self-expression or self-sufficiency through the ability to work, to choose the type of work freely and to earn enough money to live from and enjoy life.

I5: Yes, I would say, I have a right to work. But I see it differently. I have a right to work and I have a right to a reasonable wage from the money I should earn. The responsibility to work is so that there are streets [to travel to work on]; I pay for that through taxes when I work. That is correct. That is my responsibility. My right to work means for me, that I can live from the money I earn working. (37 year-old married German female)

The fourth category comprises respondents who did not view work as a right at all. For some, practically speaking, the idea of a right to work was simply impossible given that the state cannot realistically provide jobs to two million jobseekers. Some respondents questioned how one could or would enforce a right to work when there were not enough jobs available. I35: *How does one want to claim a right to work, when there are no jobs available? That will be hard to do.* Moreover, if a right to work existed the legal system would be over-taxed with

the unemployed demanding their right to work. It was a question of logistics: was one simply supposed to show up and demand work from somewhere? As a 23 year-old German male noted, from a logistical perspective, a right to work was simply impossible:

I39 ...That is a good question! No, where would a right start and where would it end? How is one supposed to claim the right? I mean, who will finance the work? No, you can't, one cannot require a right to work for everyone...one cannot hire every worker...that is...impossible.

While many see it as one's responsibility to work, from a practical level, no one can enforce a right to work, particularly when there are not enough jobs available. Several respondents argued that while one should have a right to choose the type of employment freely, there is no right to work per se. Thus, while one cannot demand a right to work, at the same time, one should not be forced or pressured into just any type of work either.

8.3 Unemployment Benefit II recipients' perception of their responsibility to work

Given that policy strategies are in place to activate UBII recipients by making them more responsible in taking personal initiative to find work, I proceeded to ask respondents whether they have a responsibility to work. My intent in posing respondents' questions about responsibility was three-fold. First, my aim was to learn whether UBII recipients think they have a responsibility to work. Second, I wished to better understand how responsibility manifested itself in the way respondents looked for work. For example, independent of the Jobcenter, how many job applications did the respondent send out per week or month and what was their daily or weekly routine in searching for jobs? Third, my objective was to better understand whether, as a result of the measures in place to activate UBII recipients, respondents felt that the Jobcenter strengthened their personal responsibility in searching for work. For example, did the number of job applications UBII recipients had to send out on a monthly basis change their perception of what responsibility means and how to responsibly search for work? Overall the evidence suggests that respondents had a very clear sense of what responsibility meant to them. Respondents knew it was their responsibility to look for work. Furthermore, they exhibited a clear sense of whether the Jobcenter effectively helped or hindered their ability to search for work.

As with the right to work question, there were translation challenges with the word 'responsibility'. The direct translation of responsibility is Verantwortung. But often

respondents would use Verantwortung interchangeably with Pflicht which means duty. Depending on how responsibility is used in German, it can also mean Pflicht. Thus I would ask respondents “sind Sie verantwortlich zu arbeiten?” (are you responsible to work?) and some respondents would respond with “ja ich habe eine Pflicht zu arbeiten” (yes, I have a duty to work). In some instances I would ask “sind Sie verantwortlich zu arbeiten” (are you responsible to work?) and where respondents were uncertain what I meant (though others were clear) I would then rephrase and ask “haben Sie eine Pflicht zu Arbeiten?”—“do you have a duty to work?”—which some respondents responded better to. After this prompt they then understood what I meant with the use of ‘Verantwortung’. Furthermore, I used ‘Verantwortung’ to get at one’s responsibility to do something, but often used ‘Eigenverantwortung’ (personal responsibility) to gauge one’s sense of personal responsibility and not just responsibility generally. While most respondents did not initially understand the link between the questions about one’s right to work and their experience at the Jobcenter, when asked about one’s responsibility to find work, respondents understood the connection between responsibility and the Jobcenter without a prompt.

THEMATIC CODES

Duty to state, society, family; paying household expenses; Oneself; to get off benefits

The majority of respondents responded to the question of whether they had a responsibility to work with a resounding ‘yes’ (n=39). That said a small group of respondents did not think it was their responsibility to find work (n=4) while another group was ambivalent, answering yes and no (n=4) to the question. While these last two groups acknowledged that if they did not work they would not have money to live from, it was earning money that was the motivation and reason to work and not necessarily out of a sense of responsibility or duty to oneself, family or society. But for the majority of respondents who thought they had a responsibility to work, four categories of responses emerged from an analysis of the data. These categories again correspond to Dean’s heuristic modelling device for understanding competing constructions of rights and responsibilities (see Figure 4.1). The first category of response focused on one’s collective duty to the state, society and family (n=11). This category corresponds to Dean’s conservative quadrant with undertones of the social democratic. Here, the shared obligation to work stems more from an obligation and a collective responsibility which is distinctly social democratic in that it embraces a collective responsibility to *provide* work as well as perform it. The second response centred on the

practicality of a responsibility to work, i.e., one is responsible to work because one has household expenses to pay (n=15). This response category falls into Dean's utilitarian quadrant: work is a means to an end. The third category was more individual in nature—the responsibility to oneself to find a job that actualizes one's skills and interest (n=16). This category corresponds with elements from Dean's liberal and social democratic quadrants in that one has a responsibility to oneself to choose work freely but that responsibility also entails selecting substantive work. Finally, the fourth category of response embodied the rights and responsibility logic—respondents focused on the responsibility one has to the state to find work in order to get off benefit (n=7). This corresponds to Dean's (neo-) liberal quadrant, in that it is about one's personal duty not to be a burden to the state.

In reference to the first category, the responsibility to work was grounded in respondents' collective sense of duty, both morally and otherwise, to their families, the state (via paying taxes and contributing to the state pension) and society more generally. But for many, this sense of responsibility was seen as a shared responsibility in that if it is one person's responsibility or duty to work, then it is everyone else's too. I10: *Yes certainly. Because it is, well, if I as a citizen [work], then it is every citizen's turn, really, [everyone] is obliged to fulfil his duty as a citizen.* A high number of respondents in this group cited their paying taxes or contributing to the state pension as the reason they had a responsibility to work. By paying taxes, respondents cited the ability of the state to provide clean streets and decent infrastructure so that they can get to and from work. Thus paying taxes was seen as a collective responsibility, a responsibility everyone had to the community they lived in and society on a whole.

I39: Yes, in every instance one has a [responsibility] to oneself... well...that one...yes, makes something out of his life...yes does not just sit around being lazy, rather is active. Perhaps also [a responsibility] to society...so...that...that everyone has his part to contribute [to society]...yes. (23 year-old single German male)

The second category of response focused on the practical reasons why one is responsible to work; I9: *Clearly if I want money, then I need to work.* Respondents felt a strong sense of responsibility to work in order to feed, clothe and house themselves or their family. Respondents are responsible for paying their rent or mortgage and their household bills. Working is the natural, responsible way to pay for living expenses. While some respondents

simply viewed responsibility as naturally linked to working, for other respondents, work was not only a duty or a responsibility but also a ‘must’.

I12: Well, I think I have a responsibility because at some point, when I have reached a certain age, I will receive my pension from the state. And I must work for this pension. So clearly I am obliged to work because I also somehow have to pay my rent and pay for all my other bills. So, I do see in that a duty that I must work. (29 year-old partially disabled single German female)

Being unemployed and receiving UBII or €364 a month was not considered by respondents as enough to live from rather enough to simply exist from. Thus, for some respondents their sense of a responsibility to work was based on simple logic. The reason one works, and hence one’s responsibility to find work, is to earn money to purchase goods. If one did not work, then one received UBII, which does not provide enough money to live from. As will be demonstrated later in this chapter, this logic proved a source of motivation for some respondents to find work and get off benefit (n=6).

Furthermore, respondents with families cited that their responsibility to work stemmed from their need to provide for their families. ‘Provide’ in this sense was viewed broadly. Respondents needed and wanted to provide the basics for their children, but respondents also wanted to be able to provide a wider quality of life that included after school activities and trips. Thus, it was the respondents’ responsibility to work in order to provide prospects and a future for their children.

I5: But I would really like to teach my children culture...and that is why I have a right to work so that I can do this. My responsibility to work is so that there are paths to work and orderly streets. That is the responsibility part. That is why I pay taxes. (37 year-old married German female)

Respondents with children also desired to set an example for their children. If one wishes to purchase something, then one is responsible and works to earn the money to afford the item. Furthermore, parents did not want their children to think that taking money from the state was [socially] acceptable.

I11: Yes, I also want to be a role model for my children. It is not just for the state, rather for them too, so that they know, when I purchase something for myself, then I have to work for that item. (32 year-old divorced lone parent German born Tunisian nationality female)

For respondents whose responses fell in the third category, a responsibility to work meant more than working in order to pay bills and taxes. Rather, similar to respondents’ response to a right to work, one has a responsibility to oneself to actualize the skills and interests one has;

not only to perform the job that one can do but also to do the job that one desires to do. Particularly for this group of respondents, the idea of being pressured into taking any type of job left them feeling, on the one hand, adamant that they would not take any type of work and on the other deflated and defeated that they could not access more strategic support from the Jobcenter to assist them in their job search on their terms. This group of respondents felt that the support provided by the Jobcenter should focus on maximizing their skills and abilities. For this group, the lack of professional and strategic support at the Jobcenter coupled with the strategies used by case managers to integrate recipients into work was viewed as irresponsible. Respondents who were funnelled into and out of temporary jobs noted that these jobs did nothing to build their long-term career prospects. This group of respondents commented on the fact that it would be equally irresponsible of them if they did not seek work that was relevant to their skills and interests. Thus, responsibility fell to both parties—to oneself to find a job that matched their skills and to the Jobcenter to provide the support needed that enable the recipient to maximize their job search in order to find the job that they are qualified for and provided regular employment. In response to whether one has a responsibility to work I38 noted:

Yes, of course...In every instance. One is responsible to oneself to find work. That is also correct...But I think, if one is already here [at the Jobcenter], then one needs to be helped. After all it is called a 'Jobcenter' and she is called a 'job mediator' (Vermittler). One needs to be helped. What is the fundamental meaning of this word 'job mediator' (Vermittler)? She mediates between the unemployed and employment opportunities. What do I have? (40 year-old married German born Turkish nationality female)

The fourth and final category of responses was grounded in the 'rights and responsibilities' policy logic. This group of respondents viewed a responsibility to work as a responsibility to get off benefit so that they did not need to receive money from the state. This group of respondents were conscious that the cash benefit they received was not theirs to have; that they had not earned it. Indeed, many were anxious about being on benefit and as one lone-mother noted

I2: No because this money that they are giving us is somebody's sweat. Some people are working for this money that they give it to us. You understand? But if you work for four or six hours, you are trying to do, you even have respect under, under the government, you understand? (39 year-old single lone parent Nigerian female)

Work is equated with earning the respect of family members, friends, the government and society generally. Taking responsibility to find work is viewed as a natural action. Thus, not

working *and* receiving UBII benefit meant that this group of respondents did not feel that they were a part of a collective, because they were not contributing by paying taxes. Indeed, they were instead taking money from the collective. I50: *Society gives me a basis to exist. Therefore I am also responsible to give something back to society.* This is also the reason why many respondents voiced anger toward the idea of someone ‘loafing’ from the state—the Arno and Dieble character who receives UBII benefit and sits on the couch all day drinking beer, doing nothing while living off of money from the state. This type of person is not taking responsibility—a responsibility that is in turn their duty to find work. If one is in receipt of benefit, then it is that person’s responsibility to find work in order to get off benefit:

I8: ...crystal clear, when one is unemployed and receives unemployment benefit from the state, and the Jobcenter is subjected to the laws of Germany, then one does something for himself to at least find something [work]. A person—an unemployed person—then exhibits the correct behaviour to do something for himself, so that he gets work. (42 year-old single German male)

That one may be in need of unemployment benefit is socially acceptable, but it is the responsibility of the recipient to find work as quickly as possible. Benefit alone is not the means to live from.

8.4 Unemployment Benefit II recipients’ perception of whether they are personally responsible to find work

THEMATIC CODES

Personal instinct; social norms; freedom to conduct job searches; Jobcenter help or hinder

After discussing whether respondents had a responsibility to work, I proceeded to ask respondents whether they are personally responsible to find work and if so, how they conduct their job search. All respondents had a clear idea of what it means to take responsibility and initiative in their job search. Thus respondents’ sense of responsibility to find work is twofold. On the one hand it stems from a personal instinct coupled with adhering to shared social norms. Indeed, a group of respondents noted that it is socially expected of individuals to take responsibility to find work (n=11). Second, again respondents grounded their perception of responsibility to search for work in very practical terms: if one desires to earn a living and to advance one’s career, it is in the individual’s interest and thus their responsibility to take action (n=21).

Respondents described how they took initiative and responsibility to find work independent of what was required of them by the Jobcenter. They outlined the number of hours per day they conducted computer searches and a quota of job applications they set for themselves to send out on a weekly or monthly basis.

I12: Personal responsibility means to me in this sense that I really—even when I am unemployed—that I sit down every day in front of the computer for at least two hours and I look through all of the job search web pages. That is what personal responsibility is for me. That I look and that I write at least three to four job applications daily.
(29 year-old partially disabled single German female)

Furthermore, some respondents associated the responsibility to conduct a job search with freedom—the freedom to define the parameters of and conduct one’s job search as one wishes (n=13). It was noted by this group of respondents that the Jobcenter was simply not equipped to assist respondents in their job searches. That, indeed, the responsibility to find work should rest with the UBII recipient as they know best what they want to do and thus what type of job they are looking for. If respondents desired to change their unemployment status, then respondents argued it was their responsibility to monitor job opportunities because the only way to change their employment status was based on their initiative alone. It was at this nexus that this group of respondents felt their job search was often hindered by the demands placed on them at the Jobcenter—that their personal responsibility was undermined by the Jobcenter's demands (n=13). The time spent applying to mismatched job announcements forwarded to them by their case managers or attending skills trainings that were of no use or interest to them, was perceived as time taken away from their own job search.

8.5 Unemployment Benefit II recipients’ perception of whether the Jobcenter changed or strengthened their personal responsibility to find work

THEMATIC CODES

Freedom; dependency; positively reinforcing responsibility; benefit of activation; lacking motivation

The responses were mixed when respondents were asked whether their sense of responsibility to find work had changed since being at the Jobcenter. While a majority of respondents responded with a resounding ‘no’ that the Jobcenter did not change their sense of personal responsibility (n=33), a group of respondents felt that the demands placed on them by the

Jobcenter prompted them to search for work even harder than they would have had they not been at the Jobcenter (n=4). For this group, respondents cited being highly motivated to find work in order to be free of the Jobcenter because they felt restricted in what they could do with their time while being on benefit. Moreover, respondents resented feeling ‘dependent’ on the Jobcenter and the benefit they received coupled with not having enough money to live on, let alone live well.

I43: No, I already have that [responsibility]. That [responsibility] is a part of me. The reason for this is very simple: It is purely a computation example. I simply have no desire to constantly get by with a few Euros [per month]. I have no desire. And to be dependent [on benefit]. That is absolutely not my thing. Absolutely not! (59 year-old single German male)

Here this group of respondents associated these feelings with that which motivated them to get off benefit. Whether this was a new or different sense of responsibility to find work from how they perceived responsibility prior to signing up for UBII benefit is difficult to say. But what is clear is that the demands placed on them at the Jobcenter did indeed prove to be a source of motivation for this group of respondents.

For some respondents, the pressure placed on them by the Jobcenter was seen as positively strengthening their sense of personal responsibility (n=6).

AMB: Did your perception of personal responsibility change since you started coming to the Jobcenter? I42: A little... yes, in the end I would say that through the pressure [placed on me] that it changed a little. (36 year-old single German male)

The Integration into Work Agreement signed between the Jobcenter and the UBII recipient that stipulates the number of job applications a recipient has to submit per month it appears has, indeed, had an impact on a small group of respondents taking initiative and responsibility to submit job applications. Furthermore, some respondents cited that meeting with their case managers strengthened their job search ability. The meetings between case manager and UBII recipient forced some respondents to address critical questions about their future; such as whether they should go into one field or another, whether they should do an apprenticeship or a re-training. Had respondents not been made to meet with their case managers and comply with what was required of them, some respondents felt that they would not have been as proactive and taken the initiative or responsibility in sorting out their current unemployment situation.

AMB: Did the Jobcenter strengthen your sense of personal responsibility to go out and find work? I49 Yes, sadly, yes. In the sense that they motivated me—negatively motivated me, but nonetheless. And that is the main point. They negatively motivated me to get out and free myself of

this situation. I believe, I would not be in this situation [currently at the Jobcenter], if I had really taken the principle of personal responsibility seriously. I was a student who just lived for myself and believed at some point someone would come along and give me a job and that needed to change. (39 year-old married German male)

Other respondents openly acknowledged that they were not always as motivated to find work as they should be (n=3). Thus, the demands of the Jobcenter were welcomed because they succeeded in putting into perspective the precarity of their situation. Either the respondent changes their behaviour and takes responsibility to find a job (thus meeting the demands of the Jobcenter) or they risk losing what they had worked hard to acquire. This feeling was particularly acute for previously homeless individuals or those without an elementary- or secondary-school diploma who struggled to maintain a basic standard of living. As one previously homeless man noted when asked if being at the Jobcenter had changed his sense of responsibility:

I13: I would say yes and no...because now and then I am a lazy person and I can happily let myself do nothing. It is really a wonder that I have an apartment that I really like. But on the other hand, I would not like to lose what I have built over time. So, I have to manage everything so that I am happy without feeling that I am under pressure. So, I have to be independent...actually it was always clear to me. That is my life. I have to decide what is and is not correct. I am no longer a soldier who just takes commands the whole time without questioning. I do think that it [responsibility] rest with me how I construct my future and not how other people would construct my future. (38 year-old single German male)

A small group of respondents felt that while the Jobcenter had either strengthened or reinforced their sense of responsibility, it was done so at a cost to their feeling dependent on the system while being subjected to a degrading process (n=3).

AMB: And did your perception of personal responsibility change since you started coming to the Jobcenter? I41: Yes, a little, yes. AMB: And how? I41: ...Yes, well you cannot live your whole life from the Jobcenter. To live from Hartz IV, it is not nice to always have to come to the Jobcenter. It is a little, a little degrading. (25 year-old single German male)

Thus, there appears to be tension between, on the one hand, acknowledging that the demands of the Jobcenter had positively prompted respondents to take more responsibility in finding work but this, on the other hand, comes at the expense of some respondents losing a sense of autonomy over how they direct and manage their lives. It seems that any new sense of responsibility obtained derives from respondents desire to be free of Jobcenter rules and regulations that constricts their lifestyles—and the only way to achieve this is to either stop receiving benefit or to get a job.

I39: Somewhat. I want to get out of here. And I keep trying and trying even when I have setbacks. It is hard when one did not do an apprenticeship, but one cannot easily bring me down, so the Jobcentre is a source of motivation to find work. The sense of responsibility to find work comes from not wanting to be at the Jobcenter. (23 year-old single German male)

THEMATIC CODES

Jobcenter Strengthened; Jobcenter weakened work search

After a discussion with respondents as to whether the Jobcenter had changed their sense of responsibility in finding work, I then sought to understand, from a practical perspective, whether the Jobcenter actually strengthened or weakened their ability to responsibly look for work. Respondents' responses again demonstrated the competing nature between what is required of them by the Jobcenter and their ability to instinctively demonstrate responsibility through their own actions. A large group of respondents did not think the Jobcenter strengthened their ability to responsibly find work (n=31). Respondents cited the time and energy lost when their case manager sent job announcements that did not fit their job or career profile but were, nonetheless, required to either apply to the job or send the Jobcenter a written reason why they declined to apply. Moreover, this group of respondents were acutely aware that it was not the prime objective of the Jobcenter to assist them in finding the work they wanted to do, find rewarding or a job in which they can grow professionally and learn new qualifications. Indeed, this group of respondents felt it was the Jobcenter that was acting irresponsibly by requiring respondents to take up irregular, temporary work that was void of future prospects. One respondent noted the irresponsibility of the Jobcenter to send UBII recipients into precarious work situations, such as temporary work, knowing that this was not a long-term solution to the recipients' unemployment status.

I14: My personal responsibility to find work comes from a personal instinct to find work. When I work, then out of personal instinct to earn a living and to get ahead in life. I am ambitious and want to get ahead and earn more money and when I want to get ahead means that I use my sense of personal responsibility to do this. But then I want a job where I can learn further qualifications and where I have future perspective (prospects). To do temp work, there is no future in that and then I am here two years later with the same story and that would not be using my personal responsibility. I would not be responsible if I were to take work like that, that would leave me with little earnings, no prospect of upward mobility and unemployed again in two years' time. (38 year-old single German male)

Some respondents felt that Jobcenter demands actually detracted from their ability to search for employment (n=9). Indeed, respondents related incidences where the Jobcenter's actions resulted in them not being able to actively seek work. An ex-convict who is Turkish though born in Germany, but does not have German citizenship, perhaps best illustrates this point. His Turkish passport expired and without a valid passport one cannot legally work in Germany. When he asked the Jobcenter via his case manager for a temporary loan of €200.00 to cover the cost for renewing his passport his request was rejected (it is within the remit of the Jobcenter to grant small temporary loans).

I34: No, if anything they prevent me from seeking work. If they would assist me in the way I need assistance, i.e., grant me a temporary loan of €200.00 to cover the cost of renewing my passport, then I could concentrate on finding work instead of concentrating on worrying about how to cover this cost. Until I get my passport renewed, I cannot legally work. (40 year-old single Turkish male)

8.6 Unemployment Benefit II recipients' perception of Fördern (to support) and Fordern (to demand, require)

THEMATIC CODES

Give and take; not fair bargain; structural impediments

Given that the fourth Hartz law was designed to activate and integrate the long-term unemployed under the maxim of Fördern and Fordern, after having discussed their perceptions of a right and responsibility to work, my objective was to understand if and how UBII recipients perceived Fördern and Fordern in the Jobcenter context. When asked, many respondents simply had not heard of Fördern and Fordern and, therefore, could not explain what this meant (n=18). If they had heard of the concept, then it was in passing or something they remember Gerhard Schröder saying in public. Yet, unbeknownst to them, respondents would describe the concept as it played out in their daily interactions at the Jobcenter and ultimately influenced their behaviour. They simply did not (nor was there any reason they should) know the policy objective behind the rules and regulations of the Jobcenter. For those respondents who were familiar with Fördern and Fordern (n=24), six respondents defined it as a “give and take”—the Jobcenter provides support in finding work and in return the UBII recipient is required to take action and find a job. When asked to describe Fördern and Fordern, the common response was indicative of Interview 25's reply: *If I expect a service, then I also have specific things I have to do [in return for that service]. That is quasi a give*

and take. Moreover, for this group of respondents they understood the political reasons for *Fördern* and *Fordern* and for them it was both acceptable and realistic of the Jobcenter to expect something in return for their receipt of benefit. I8: *When I take any type of assistance from the state (i.e., money to live from) then I have to do something for it.* And yet, for some respondents, their understanding of the ‘support’ (*Fördern*) provided was undermined by the Jobcenter’s use of ‘pressure’ and the lack of competent trained professionals to properly assist UBII recipients in their job search.

While not necessarily against the principles of *Fördern* and *Fordern*, when asked about their understanding and experience thereof, some respondents generally did not feel that it was a fair bargain (n=14). It was the poor quality or lack of actual support that frustrated this group of respondents. Respondents felt that there was a disconnect between the support provided versus using that support (or drawing on it) to address their needs. Here respondents identified support as needing to come from competent case managers who were able to professionally assess one’s skills and abilities and then assist in their job search. Therefore respondents felt that the Jobcenter did not uphold its side of the *Fördern* and *Fordern* relationship. Respondents felt that they generally met the demands made of them to demonstrate they were looking for work, but the Jobcenter failed to provide quality or professional support in return.

I38: I think...I think, this „*Fördern* und *Fordern*“... They require something from you, so that they can support you in return. They want to know from you, for example, whether you are good enough for the support provided. Whether you can do it...that is how I would define these two „*Fördern* und *Fordern*“... They require your strengths so that in return they can support [those strengths]. But, they do not actually do that. They do not live up to their own duty [to provide support]. That does not exist here at all. That is missing. (40 year-old married German born Turkish nationality female)

Thus, while in principle respondents understood and even agreed with *Fördern* and *Fordern*—even when they were unable to link their experience with the actual name of the concept—some respondents felt frustrated because from their perspective, they were demonstrating responsibility and meeting the demands that were required of them, but the Jobcenter was not necessarily providing adequate support in return.

Moreover, some respondents noted the complexity of the *Fördern* and *Fordern* relationship given the structural impediments that prevent respondents from integrating into the labour market (n=7). As one respondent noted, “it is not so simple as ‘we support you, you go and

get a job””. Respondents readily acknowledged structural barriers that prevented them from entering the labour market. Muslim women faced discrimination because they wore a headscarf; women (whether married or single) felt they were unemployable because they had young children; respondents age 50 and older complained of age discrimination; and those respondents who suffered from poor health (especially those who suffered from depression or work-related injuries such as back problems) had a difficult time finding a job that was amenable to their health status. Thus, it appears for some respondents, the Integration into Work agreement that the UBII recipient enters into with the Jobcenter is already skewed for some respondents given the structural impediments to entering the labour market. Moreover, while respondents generally agreed with the premise of *Fördern und Fordern* because work was viewed as worthy and obtaining support from the state to enter the labour market was welcomed, a group of respondents noted the lack of cooperation between the Jobcenter and recipient on one side and the employers and society (*Gesellschaft*) on the other. For some respondents it was quite simple: if the Jobcenter acknowledges the usefulness of a recipient’s skills, then there should be employers who need and will use these skills. While this may be a simplified, if not naive, approach to labour market economics, what it represents is the thinking among respondents that *Fördern und Fordern* provides only a one-sided approach to finding work—jobs are available, go get one—but this does not take into account the larger structural impediments to entering the regular labour market. What seemed evident to these respondents was that society generally and the labour market specifically has no responsibility to the UBII recipient or to the Jobcenter.

8.7 Chapter summary and conclusion

This chapter has explored the research findings regarding respondents’ perception of their right to and responsibility in finding work. Four categories of respondents’ perception of a right to work emerged from an analysis of the evidence. First, there were respondents who perceived a right to work as a right to proper support in finding work. Consultation was understood to be a two-way exchange that should take place between a trained professional who assessed career options and job search and placement based on the UBII recipient’s skills, job qualifications and interest. For the second category of responses a right to work meant a right to choose work freely. Respondents’ right to choose their profession freely was integral to their identity. This group of respondents bristled at the thought of being told or

instructed to do a job that was not of their choosing. Third, a right to work meant a right to quality earnings that enabled one to enjoy life however the respondent chose. The fourth category of responses did not view work as a right at all, rather it was simply something one did to survive.

With regard to a responsibility to work, four categories of responses emerged from an analysis of the data. The first category of responses perceived a responsibility to work as a responsibility to the state (by paying taxes) and one's family and society more generally. This was perceived as a collective as opposed to an individual sense of responsibility. The second category centred on the practicality of a responsibility to work, i.e., one is responsible to work because one has household expenses to pay. The third category focused more on the individual—the responsibility to oneself to find a job that will actualize that person's skills and interest. The fourth and final category of responses embodied the rights and responsibility logic. Here respondents focused on the responsibility one has to the government to find work in order to get off benefit. The categories of perceptions of a right to and responsibility in finding work that emerged from an analysis of the evidence resonated with Dean's (see Figure 4.1) competing constructions of rights and responsibilities. As Dean writes "In the real world we encounter hybrid ideologies founded on compromises and contradictions" (2010: 21). And, indeed, what is interesting here is the variety of responses from respondents who live in what has been categorized as a conservative corporatist welfare regime. While one might assume that respondent responses might fall principally in the conservative, with some overlap in the social democratic, quadrant the fact that response categories span all four of Dean's quadrants suggest that the popular discourse and understanding of a right to and responsibility in finding work among this sample is perhaps not so distinct or dissimilar from the Anglophone or even the Nordic world.

Finally, respondents' perception and understanding of *Fördern* and *Fordern* were examined. While some respondents had never heard of *Fördern* and *Fordern* in the Jobcenter context, those who did were not against the underlying principle and appreciated that if they were receiving benefit from the state, then it was acceptable for the state to demand something in return. What respondents found problematic was the lack of quality support (*Fördern*) provided by the Jobcenter to assist jobseekers find work. Indeed, *Fördern* and *Fordern* provoked a degree of scepticism, but not because the concept was alien to respondents' way of thinking, but because it appears disingenuous.

Chapter Nine: Work, Skills and Support: The Problematic Trilemma of Welfare-to-Work Reforms

9.1 Introduction

This thesis has had two objectives: first, to explore the experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients who have participated in skills training and/or job placement services in order to understand the degree to which these mechanisms engage with their needs and whether their experiences reflect the policy objectives for the provision of such support and activation tools. In line with the first objective, the second examined how meaningful the *Fördern* and *Fordern* policy discourse—in terms of their right to and responsibility in finding work—is to those UBII recipients who experienced the support and activation mechanisms. As set out in Chapter One, this thesis has sought to answer two main questions:

- Are the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz IV reforms reflected in the manner and substance of the lived experiences of Unemployment Benefit II recipients?
- How meaningful is the *Fördern* and *Fordern* policy discourse for Unemployment Benefit II recipients, in terms of their perception of a ‘right’ to and ‘responsibility’ in finding work?

The main finding to arise from an analysis of the evidence for this study is that there appears to be significant tension between, on the one hand, the policy objectives informing the need for and use of skills training and job placement services to assist the long-term unemployed integrate into the [regular] labour market and, on the other hand, the aspirations and real-life experiences of the respondents interviewed for this study. Indeed, it appears that the provision of support (*Fördern*) to respondents may be undermined by them having to demonstrate—rather than effectively to exercise—responsibility (*Fordern*) in finding work: in some instances, at least, *Fordern* may constrain rather than promote *Fördern*. It seems that where *Fordern* (demand/require) exists in conjunction with the threat of sanctions for non-compliance, based on an analysis of the evidence for this study, there is some likelihood that *Fördern* (support) can be used to regulate the conduct of and discipline respondents rather than provide support that is perceived as meaningful to them. This thus suggests that the

support provided has the potential to break down when *Fördern* (activation) is inserted into the policy framework.

The above are the ‘headline’ conclusions that arose from an analysis of the evidence. But indeed, what is the larger meaning that can be attached to the findings of this study? Here it is Foucault's governmentality approach that can help make sense of these findings. In light of the findings presented in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight, the governmentality approach helps us to understand something about the German Hartz IV reforms that is not necessarily obvious, namely that the Federal Republic's use of support and activation measures—in this case skills training and job placements services—ultimately serves an immanent function. As discussed in Chapter Four (section 4.2), since the introduction of welfare reforms predicated on a rights and responsibilities policy logic in the 1990s, academics have sought to understand the significance of reconstituting social citizenship as conditional on one's conduct. In terms of this new politics of welfare provision, Foucault identified the rise of disciplinary power that focused on maximizing the utility and docility of individuals (Rose, 2000). This has helped to explain the effect the reconstitution of social citizenship has had on individuals' conduct and behaviour within the governed space of reforms made to unemployment benefit. It is a question of *how* disciplinary power operates and here Foucault directs our attention to an analysis of governmental power as it operates at the micro level. Indeed, bureaucratic institutions at the micro level become the foci of analysis because it is through them that power relations are made manifest. As Foucault argues, it is not to deny the importance of institutions in the establishment of power relations but, rather, to suggest that one should analyse institutions from the standpoint of power relations rather than vice versa (Foucault, 1994). “Using here the restricted meaning of the word “government,” one could say that power relations have been progressively governmentalized, that is to say, elaborated, rationalized, and centralized in the form of, or under the auspices of, state institutions” (Foucault, 1994: 345). Given that the Hartz reforms place emphasis on regulating one's conduct through the interpretation of *Fördern* and *Fordern* as constructed through Jobcenter rules and regulations, it is then this conduct that is made manifest at Jobcenters which is problematized. Rose argues that the rise of Third Way politics based on a rights and responsibilities policy logic ushered in the transformation of “caring professionals into agencies of control concerned with risk management and secure containment” (2000: 1407). In line with Rose's thinking, this study has explored the overarching policy intention of providing support to (and assumptions attached to the need to activate) UBII recipients versus

the lived experiences of those respondents who, for this study, participated in said support (and activation) mechanisms.

Thus, what Foucault helps us to understand about the evidence stemming from this study is that so long as receipt of benefit is predicated on meeting specific requirements, there is then some likelihood that the end result will be a system that disciplines rather than supports the UBII recipient. As discussed in Chapter Four (section 4.3) while, in the case of the Hartz IV policy interventions, policy makers may have intended the Jobcentre to provide legitimate 'support', and indeed, the aim of the support mechanisms in place are clear and comprehensible, the intelligible function of the support provided ends up instead primarily disciplining the UBII recipient. Further to that, in *Discipline and Punish* Foucault (1979) argues that in its failure to prevent delinquency, the penitentiary system, nonetheless, succeeds within its own milieu: it defines and manages the 'problem' of delinquency and the criminals in our midst. Applying this thinking to the Hartz reforms suggests that while on the surface it appears that, based on an analysis of the evidence, the Jobcenter 'fails' to provide the type of support respondents for this study needed to assist them in integrating into the labour market, its immanent function lies in the symbolic significance attached to 'support' mechanisms. Namely, this support gives the appearance that something is being done in order to manage the problem of idleness and the unemployed (while at the same time seemingly moving respondents off benefit and thus reducing unemployment numbers). The Federal Republic has invested heavily in assisting the long-term unemployed (often the 'hard' to employ) find work. If, as a result of the support provided, UBII recipients cannot find work, then their inability to find work is not because they have not been supported by the government. This shifts the responsibility away from the German government and instead on to the UBII recipient. The inability of the UBII recipient to find work is a result of their shortcomings and not the inability or unwillingness of the Federal Republic to adequately address labour market short-comings through the need for alternative economic policies.

Moreover, the Jobcenter succeeds in regulating respondents' conduct by making them feel unsettled by the demands placed on them by their case managers to participate in Jobcenter activities that are not necessarily relevant to their employment needs. Jobcenter staff may believe that they are supporting their clients. But when stepping back and reviewing the evidence on the role of case managers in Jobcenter settings more broadly (Fletcher, 2011; Sainsbury, 2008; Brodtkin, 2011), the pressures and constraints to which case manager staff

are subject, coupled with the limitations of their professional ability to adequately mediate and consult with recipients, suggests that they end up imposing different priorities and behaviours that may then impact the type of support recipients ultimately receive.

The previous three empirical chapters have presented evidence to support these claims and this conclusion. In this final chapter, I will link the findings as they pertain to each research question. Section 9.2 will briefly summarize the main findings explored in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight. The objective is to draw on a Foucauldian analytic to connect and make sense of the findings to emerge from the empirical chapters. Section 9.3 presents a discussion and analysis of the findings, exploring three specific themes: the value placed on ‘work’, ‘skills’ and ‘support’ in unemployment benefit. Section 9.4 presents an alternative to Foucault’s arguably nihilistic approach while section 9.5 will conclude by suggesting future themes for research that stem from an analysis of the evidence presented in this thesis.

9.2 A summary of the findings

9.2.1 Skills trainings as a form of support (Fördern) to assist in labour market integration

What emerges from the findings in relation to short-term and One-Euro-Job trainings that respondents participated in is a pattern that equally resonates with the findings on job placement services. The support instruments offered—in this case, the skills training—tended to be tokenistic and ineffectual. From a Foucauldian perspective, the fact that some skills trainings ‘failed’ to provide the necessary support many respondents required in order to integrate into the labour market was not necessarily an indication of the system ‘failing’ altogether. Rather this ‘failure’ serves an immanent function—that has not been consciously embedded in the policy design by policy makers—namely, to shift a sense of responsibility for learning and skills development onto the individual. Respondents often noted the waste of resources and time that resulted from their being instructed to participate in skills training(s) that were not perceived as useful to them. And yet, while many respondents felt that their time had been ostensibly ‘wasted’, in actuality their time had been *filled*—as surely as if a respondent for this study had been placed on a treadmill. Respondents may or may not have been unrealistic when they sought a training within an occupation of their choice. But what

they actually experienced was the way in which the ‘system’ not only kept them moving, but moving in a direction that was not necessarily of their choosing. Moreover there is an immanent logic to respondents’ perception that the trainings and placement mechanisms were a waste of resources. Indeed, this perceived ‘waste’ was not actually wasteful at all. The process has symbolic significance. If the German government is unwilling, for example, to invest in demand-side policies or create jobs that pay living wages, then although the supply side activation measures may not serve the interests of those engaging with them, nevertheless, the public perception is that UBII recipients are being supported. And if as a result of that support they are unable to find work, then, as noted above, it is they themselves who are to blame for their failure to integrate into the regular labour market.

Calmfors et al. (2002) point out that from an economic theory perspective, participation in active labour market policies (ALMPs) should help to maintain the motivation to actively seek work (i.e. counteract the discouraged worker effect of unemployment). This includes increasing the productivity of jobseekers (Calmfors, 1994) through labour market training and work experience programmes. Moreover, ALMPs can serve two functions at once, namely to help both preserve or increase the skills of the unemployed while stimulating competition for jobs. Indeed, employers may perceive unemployed participants of ALMPs as more attractive than the unemployed who do not participate, which could result in ALMPs having a positive effect on labour force participation rates (Calmfors et al., 2002). In the aggregate and from a purely economic theory perspective, this may be the case. But as Funnell and Rogers (2011) argue, micro and macro-economic studies have a tendency to treat active labour market policies and interventions as simple, often ignoring the complex contexts in which these programmes operate. Indeed, a more intricate picture emerges when utilizing different questions combined with qualitative methodology to explore, as this study did, UBII recipient experience of active labour market policies in the German context. Although this is a small qualitative study whose findings are not generalizable to the greater UBII population (Lewis and Ritchie, 2010)¹²⁴, nonetheless, the findings suggest that the extent to which skills trainings increased the skills of the respondents for this study and thus matched the policy objectives expressed by the Hartz reforms—potentially making them

¹²⁴ As Lewis and Ritchie write “Qualitative research cannot be generalised on a statistical basis—it is not the prevalence of particular views or experiences, nor the extent of their location within particular parts of the sample, about which wider inference can be drawn. Rather, it is the content or ‘map’ of the range of views, experiences, outcomes or other phenomena under study, and the factors and circumstances that shape and influence them, that can be inferred to the researched population. Although individual variants of circumstances, views or experiences would undoubtedly be found within the parent population, it is at the level of categories, concepts and explanation that generalisation can take place” (2010: 269).

more ready and thus attractive to potential employers—should be viewed cautiously. The significance of this finding is bolstered by other research. This includes a qualitative study by Murphy et al. (2011) where two-thirds of their sample of 150 welfare recipients in Australia, who participated in the Job Network Programme, cited negative experiences with the skills trainings they had participated in. While a small percentage of their sample cited similar positive benefits found in this study with participating in short-term trainings, i.e., provided a routine, an opportunity to interact with other individuals and something to do, the majority of Murphy's respondents noted that the trainings were irrelevant, repetitive and uninformative coupled with being led by inexperienced trainers.

Indeed, the evidence from this study suggest that those respondents who had few skills, no secondary school and/or apprenticeship diploma, were older and immigrants were those most often funnelled into and out of One-Euro-Jobs. While some respondents were simply thankful to have the opportunity to earn a little extra money, they, nonetheless, felt trapped in a cycle of One-Euro-Jobs. One-Euro-Job participants were cognizant that even if they were to enter the regular labour market, their wage would not necessarily equate to more than what they were currently 'earning' via the One-Euro-Job. The significance of this finding is bolstered by other research including Schröder's (2009) findings in a study conducted for the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. Here she interviewed 50 UBII recipients in the East German state of Brandenburg and found that One-Euro-Job participants did the same work as the regularly employed person and that the training rarely improved recipients' chances at integrating into the regular labour market.

Arguably this type of activation falls into what Farnsworth has coined 'corporate welfare' where private companies and organizations are recipients of welfare provision whether financially, in-kind, direct or indirect (2012, 2013). Publically subsidized employment falls under Farnsworth's 'corporate-social welfare' continuum (2013: 15). Here corporate-social welfare provides direct benefit to businesses. The provision of welfare is shaped as much by the needs and demands of businesses as it is by the needs of individuals. For Farnsworth, make-work schemes and job subsidies are common corporate-social welfare policies. Thus while the provision of corporate-social welfare may disadvantage the individual, in that such policies may pressure the individual to take a job they otherwise would not take at a low-wage, the benefit to the corporation and by extension the economy outweighs the negative impact such policies may have on the individual (Farnsworth, 2013). While the ostensible objective is to provide support to those UBII recipients who are considered difficult to

integrate (‘arbeitsmarktfern’) the real benefit falls to the organizations who host One-Euro-Job participants.

While not all trainings proved ineffective or unhelpful, respondents - with a few exceptions - did not feel that the training they participated in provided them with new skills or knowledge that could (or did) assist in their being hired. From a policy perspective this finding contradicts some of the findings from German government evaluations that have relied on non-experimental data using propensity score matching techniques to assess causality in relation to the effect participation in a skills training has on employment uptake. This is not to say that the results stemming from the use of propensity score matching are invalid. But as a statistical technique used in labour market policy evaluations to assess whether changes in policy and the introduction of new programmes influence outcomes such as employment and earnings for those subject to the policy change, it is important to be aware of the problems inherent in such techniques that can result in biased estimates (Smith, 2000; Bryson et al., 2002). The point here is not to argue that quantitative evaluations of programme effects on labour market uptake produce incorrect results, but rather to call for more diverse research methods that include both quantitative and qualitative evaluations so that policy makers obtain a more balanced understanding of the complexity both of the policy under investigation and the evaluation results. While this study is not an evaluation of the efficacy of German active labour market policy interventions, depending on the type of research questions asked and the different methods used, we can get a more robust picture of an individual’s experience of support mechanisms. Such variation in findings has the ability to provide us with a more complex, nuanced understanding of the role such interventions play in the lives of those searching for employment and whether their needs are being met.

Finally, a proportion of respondents did cite benefits gained from participating in short-term trainings, such as access to computers and material for putting their resumes or job applications together. Some respondents, though initially dreading having to participate in a training placement, were pleasantly surprised to find that the training proved helpful or even beneficial. But for the majority of respondents, participation in a skills training was too often perceived as a ‘must’. While some voiced objections to participating in a training, many often acquiesced to their case manager’s suggestion because they wanted to avoid the threat of sanctions. Others did not want to participate in the training, but viewed it as a chance to be free of Jobcenter demands. Thus, when confronted with not participating in the training or participating as a form of escape from Jobcenter demands, they chose the latter. Here again,

Foucault helps us to better understand that skills trainings can end up controlling the behaviour of the UBII recipient. Instead of respondents being able to discuss with their case manager options that would better match their interests and future job prospects, they were told to participate in trainings that largely busied them, provided them with some useful information and materials, but little in terms of lasting employment options. The outcome of the policies in place appears to infantilize rather than empower UBII recipients. Like children, it appears that UBII recipients often have to cower to their case manager (and by extension the system). Rather than being able to have an adult discussion about what measures and tools they think would best assist and support them, respondents for this study learned to trick the system on the one hand or be passive agents on the other. It is at this nexus where German activation policies broke down and failed to serve the interest of this study's respondents.

9.2.2 Job placement services as a form of support (Fördern) and activation (Fordern) in labour market integration

The Integration into Work Agreement is an important support and activation tool at case managers' disposal. Both the level of support and degree of activation required that is outlined in the agreement is predicated on the UBII recipient's profile type, as discussed in Chapter Seven (section 7.2). UBII recipients do not know that they have been put into a profile type according to their skills, education and prior work history. That said, the profile type alone does not necessarily dictate the level of activation or support a jobseeker receives. As is evidenced by the interviews with case managers, it appears that they do use their own discretion in determining the type of support required and degree of activation needed. Indeed, this suggests that discretion could be a feature of front-line practice with potentially profound implications for UBII recipients. The inference is supported by other research, including the findings of Fletcher's (2011) study into the role of front-line practice at Jobcentre Plus in the UK. He found that competing agency goals coupled with the inadequate training of front-line staff provide the necessary 'space' for front-line workers to undertake their own interpretations of the advisor role (Fletcher, 2011:456). The larger implication of this finding suggests that when put together with other studies of similar issues, where reforms that incorporate a combination of New Public Management tools based on a rights and responsibilities policy logic, some of the challenges to arise appear to be similar in

nature. This suggests that Germany is not especially different from other countries that have adopted similar welfare-to-work reforms.

The findings reflect a larger symptomatic problem with job placement services, namely any placement assistance provided by the case manager—particularly the type of job advertisements supplied to UBII recipients—is dependent on the case manager’s ability to professionally assess recipients’ job or career needs. Professional in this context implies something different from what Van Berkel and Van der Aa’s (2011) ‘professionalization of activation work’ refers to. Here professionalism refers to professionally trained and qualified career development or job search specialist. On the one hand, some respondents initially expected that their case manager could and would provide guidance and advice beyond the standard, basic job placement information they received. On the other hand, whether they expected this level of service or not, some respondents simply needed someone who could professionally assess and provide career and job guidance. Indeed, that there was such a high incidence among respondents of mismatch in, for example, the type of job advertisements supplied to them by their case managers, suggest that, be it because of a lack of time, resources or skill, case managers did not or could not adequately assess their ‘client’s’ professional needs. The significance of this finding is supported by Schröder’s (2009) research. She found that respondents missed having a personal integration into work plan that would act as a guide to moving recipients into the labour market and that while respondents thought that their case managers were nice and well-intentioned, they lacked the ability to adequately provide job and support placement options. Moreover, Murphy et al.’s (2011) study of the Australian Job Network Programme found that over two-thirds of participants cited negative experiences with their case managers. This included excessive and complicated administration, poor treatment from their case managers, a lack of individualized attention and a general sense that the Job Network Programme had been unhelpful in assisting in their search for employment opportunities.

One of the possible reasons why case managers do not provide more advice and guidance, beyond their simply lacking the professional know-how to do so, is that, as the evidence base has shown, case managers are often overworked, their caseloads are excessive and they have few resources at their disposal. In addition, case managers are confronted with managing internal pressure placed on them by their management to meet specific targets which often conflict with meeting jobseekers needs. This results in case managers unable to adequately

carry out their work (Sainsbury, 2008; Bodkin, 2011) and in a professional manner (Van Berkley and Van der Aar, 2012). Further to that, a study conducted by Stafford et al. (2012) highlights the difficulty in addressing the individual needs of vulnerable members of society¹²⁵ at the UK's employment service while managing a large and complex service system. They found that the move to minimization of face-to-face contact at Jobcentre Plus, by redirecting customers to self-help and call centre outlets, further reduced the already limited time spent offering job search-related support.

Foucault (1979, 1998) argued that power is 'immanent' within all human relationships and that over time distinctive 'technologies' of power evolve. Key here is that while those 'technologies' of power have not been consciously designed by policy makers to serve a disciplinary function per se, they nevertheless have the capacity—often subtly—of prescribing behaviour that comes to be regarded as 'normal' (M. Dean, 1999: 2). As Miller and Rose argue "in advanced liberal democracies...these technologies increasingly seek to act upon and instrumentalise the self-regulating propensities of individuals in order to ally them with social-political objectives" (1990: 28). Indeed, as Foucault writes:

It [power] is defined in a strangely restrictive way, in that, to begin with, this power is poor in resources, sparing in its methods, monotonous in the tactics it utilizes, incapable of invention, and seemingly doomed always to repeat itself. Further, it is a power that only has the force of the negative on its side, a power to say no; in no condition to produce, capable only of posting limits, it is basically anti-energy. This is the paradox of its effectiveness: it is incapable of doing anything, except to render what it dominates incapable of doing anything either, except for what this power allows it to do (1998: 85).

As the evidence suggest, characteristics of disciplinary technology are embedded in the job placement service function. Here disciplinary technology manifests itself in the banality of what is required of UBII recipients: In this study, job advertisements supplied to respondents that they had to apply to (or provide a reason why not) but were not relevant to the work they did (or were seeking to do) or required skills they simply did not have; respondents made to meet a quota of jobs applied to per month but the number often not reflecting structural impediments to the labour market; considerable variation in case manager support provided to respondents that often resulted in decisions not made in consultation with the respondent; and the use of a profiling system that suggests a secret process of disciplinary categorization

¹²⁵ Vulnerable or disadvantage groups in the labour market for this study are considered disabled people, ethnic minorities, lone parents, individuals over 50, women, unskilled workers and young people.

of respondents. The disciplinary technology embedded in the job placement services can thus be likened to a (post) modern treadmill. The treadmill represents a process by which some respondents are required to engage in futile job search activity that, within a rights and responsibilities policy framework, is to atone for their failure to find employment or their sluggishness in seeking work. Like the workhouse treadmill, pointless job-searching results in emotionally exhausted and demoralized UBII recipients. Furthermore the ‘support’ respondents received was never without ramifications or consequences. This suggests that the provision of support—under the pretext of help—took on a different function, namely to busy or hassle the respondent who must willingly comply or face legal consequences. Thus from a Foucauldian perspective, the actual, as opposed to the perceived function, of the job placement services is to hassle, keep respondents occupied, irrespective of their skills or education level, their motivation or employability.

9.2.3 A right to and responsibility in finding work

Overall four categories of respondents’ perceptions of a right to work and four categories of respondents’ perceptions of a responsibility to work emerged from an analysis of the data that corresponded to Dean’s (see Figure 4.1) heuristic modelling device for understanding competing constructions of rights and responsibilities. The significance of these findings suggests two points: First, that the four categories to emerge from respondents’ perception of a right to work and the four categories to emerge from respondents’ perception of a responsibility to work seems to suggest that the popular discourse and understanding of a right to and responsibility in finding work in Germany is not necessarily so distinct or dissimilar from the Anglophone or Nordic world. Second, and drawing on the first point, on the surface the introduction of Förden and Forden into both the policy rhetoric and design of the Hartz IV reforms implies a significant shift with some cultural significance—from social solidarity to individual responsibility. But the evidence suggests that this shift in policy and its impact on UBII recipient perceptions is complex and less straight forward than it might at first appear. Indeed, based on an analysis of the evidence for this study, I would argue that the manner in which the rights and responsibilities of citizenship are themselves socially and discursively constructed reflect not one immanent logic or function, but competing and evolving logics that may, on the one hand, be more or less compliant with, and on the other, resistant to attempts by policy makers to steer them.

Finally, the finding suggests a positive outcome of Foucault's conduct of conduct. For Foucault, hierarchical structures of power within society depend on and operate through more local, low-level 'capillary' circuits of power relationships (Gordon, 2000). Foucault made the link between the 'micro' and 'macro' analysis of power through an analysis of practice that informed the analysis of institutions. Although not necessarily intended by policy makers, the fact that an outcome of the demands and requirements placed on UBII recipients within the rights and responsibilities framework was to change their behaviour to more align with Jobcenter expectations—and by extension government expectations—is an example of the degree to which power operates at the local level. The job placement and skills training policies, for example, are the power capillaries that, as a result of how they are designed, have the ability to direct and control the behaviour of individuals to align with macro policy objectives. In this case, reducing benefit dependency and unemployment numbers. The role of case managers as street level bureaucrats plays a vital role in the performance of policy and, by extension, directing the conduct of conduct.

9.3 Discussion and Analysis

At the heart of this thesis lies the question of whether the policy objectives, as outlined in the fourth Hartz law, of *Fördern*—to reduce benefit dependency and increase employment for the long-term unemployed through the provision of support—and the policy assumptions of *Fördern*—that the long-term unemployed need to be made to demonstrate responsibility through activation measures—reflects the experiences of those who participated in the skills training and job placement services. And indeed, therein lies the fundamental relationship between the labour market—work, skills and training—and social insurance protection for the unemployed. If we step back and explore the changes made to unemployment benefit in many countries since the inception of Clinton's reform of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) in the US, changes made since the mid-1990s have not only impacted the duration, the amount and entitlement to benefit, but have fundamentally changed how work is valued through the deployment of a workfare component. This is not to suggest that prior to reforms in the US, the UK, the Netherlands, Denmark, Australia and now Germany that unemployment insurance was not conditional nor that, workfare, welfare-to-work, flexicurity or other forms of LMA schemes were not previously in place. But it was the reconstitution of

social citizenship through the introduction of an explicit ‘rights and responsibilities’ policy logic in social policy design generally and unemployment policy specifically that has arguably proved to be a watershed.

Indeed here Germany is an interesting case study because it is a question of how ‘new’ the rights and responsibilities logic is to the German welfare regime. The introduction of the neo-liberal rights and responsibilities policy intervention into the design of the Hartz IV reforms suggests, on the surface, a possible departure from the Federal Republic’s traditionally described conservative-corporatist welfare regime. Yet closer analysis of the historic development of Germany’s social insurance system since Bismarck indicates that threads of liberal, individualistic responsibility were always a part of the design of the German social state. That is why the findings of UBII recipients’ perception of a right to and responsibility in finding work are interesting because the diversity of responses in many ways reflects the hybridity of the German social state itself. While this is not a representative sample and thus we cannot generalize the findings of this study to a larger population, nonetheless, it is noteworthy that in addition to responses falling in Dean’s (see Figure 4.1) conservative quadrant, a proportion of responses also fell into or overlapped with the liberal, social democratic and utilitarian quadrants. Given that Germany has traditionally been described as a conservative-corporatist welfare regime with underlying principles of solidarity, one might expect that respondent responses would fall principally in Dean’s conservative—with some overlap in the social democratic—quadrant. But this was not the case. As discussed in Chapter Two, there is evidence of substantive and ethical continuity in German unemployment insurance policy overtime. While the Hartz IV reforms introduced concrete changes into the structure and administration of unemployment benefit, the reforms nonetheless draw on pre-existing Catholic as well as variants of Protestant social doctrine. Indeed this ideological and moral complexity is reflected in UBII respondent underlying perceptions’ of their right to and responsibility in finding work.

9.3.1 Work

Active labour market policies predicated on a rights and responsibilities logic are now a staple part of social insurance in countries across Western Europe, North America and Australia. Although the actual type, structure and administration of active labour market

policies adopted varies across countries, the focus on ‘work as the best form of welfare’ (UK Department of Social Security, Press Release, 6 May 1997) is a constant across countries that adopted welfare-to-work policies, irrespective of their regime type. Work is unilaterally perceived as a social good. Not working or not demonstrating that one is seeking work is perceived as bad. This perception of work as *the* alternative to benefit has become so normalized in popular and political discourse—especially by mainstream politicians, whether to the left or the right of the centre ground—that its salience appears to be rarely questioned. Indeed, a good example of this was during the 2012 US presidential campaign. There was an interesting, though little publicized, spat between Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney and President Barak Obama about the degree to which work requirements were mandated in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the federal welfare-to-work programme. In July 2012 the Obama Administration directed the Department of Health and Human Services to grant state waivers which would give states more latitude in running TANF. As a result, the Romney presidential campaign accused the Obama Administration of being lax on the work requirements for TANF recipients by providing waivers to states that would allow them to lessen the work requirements. In other words, the President (and by extension, the Democrats) were seeking to provide welfare money without encouraging TANF recipients to find work. What ensued was a lot of back and forth between the two campaigns about who was tougher on welfare recipients, i.e., who required tougher work requirements. In a letter of July 2012 Kathleen Sebelius, the Health and Human Services Secretary argued that the proposal “strengthens the law’s purpose to move people off of welfare and into jobs by utilizing state-based innovation...Our goal is to accelerate job placement by moving more Americans from welfare to work, and no policy which undercuts that goal or waters down work requirements will be considered or approved by the department” (Berg, 2012).

This example highlights the degree to which the discussion is focused on the individual who needs to [be made to] ‘work’ and individual behaviour rather than exploring the complexity of work and working in an ever changing labour market landscape (Standing, 2011; Doogan, 2009). Popular and political discussion about the structural impediments to finding and staying in work are rarely a part of the larger political and social discourse on ‘work’ and unemployment benefit. At times it appears that there is little in terms of an alternative voice to challenge conventional thinking that ‘work’ is necessarily the best route out of benefit. As the evidence from this study suggests, work opportunity programs, such as the One-Euro-Job

serve an immanent function. It is the symbolic perception that one is doing something other than being a passive agent on benefits. Indeed, this ‘something’ is better for them than doing ‘nothing’. Yet based on an analysis of the evidence for this study (bolstered by Schröder’s (2009) and the Supreme Audit Commission’s (Bundesrechnungshof, 2010) findings), UBII respondents are not necessarily in a better financial or emotional place based on the work performed to meet Jobcenter requirements. Temporary jobs provide no security or job protection and are often lower-paid jobs for the same work done by regularly employed employees paid at a higher wage. Subsidized work experience programmes like the One-Euro-Job may have the objective of testing work readiness but, as the evidence for One-Euro-Jobs suggest, recipients end up doing substantively productive work that employers profit from for a meagre or nominal wage (Supreme Audit Commission, 2010). Finally in a country like Germany that does not yet have a minimum wage,¹²⁶ often low-skilled workers’ only options are working at service-sector jobs like the car wash chain, Mr. Wash, for example, that pay c. €2,50 an hour after tax. Individuals may be ‘working’ but it is questionable whether they are ‘living’ in any satisfaction sense.

9.3.2 Skills

Like work, skills are often perceived by policy makers as the cornerstone to creating and maintaining a country’s human capital, innovative, productive and competitive workforce. Indeed, in recent years it has been argued that country’s like the UK, the US and Germany have been confronted with a ‘skills gap’, that is a shortage of skilled manufacturing workers, including highly skilled ‘advanced manufacturing’ positions in energy, technology, health care and communications. While a discussion about the reasons for this skills gap is beyond the scope of this thesis, as the evidence stemming from this study suggests, a call for more ‘skills’ is not necessarily the answer to the problem of unemployment for UBII recipients. Skills trainings remain a cornerstone of the Hartz policy interventions. In terms of German policy makers utilizing skills trainings as an important component of the support (Fördern) provided in the Hartz reforms, then it is a question of the type and quality of and reasons for recipients participating in a training placement that is crucial.

¹²⁶ In April 2014 German Chancellor Angela Merkel approved the country’s first minimum wage set at €8.50 an hour to start in 2015.

As the evidence suggests (see Chapter Six, Section 6.2) it appears that there is internal pressure from management to fill training spaces that have been purchased as a package by the Jobcenter. In other words placing UBII recipients in trainings currently meets the double purpose of both filling a space previously purchased so as not to lose money *and* keep a Jobcenter's unemployment numbers low, so as to meet targets for placing recipients in 'work', i.e., engaging them. The driving factor for placing an individual into a training should ideally rest with meeting the professional needs of the UBII recipient. It is striking that an analysis of the evidence for this study suggests that for most respondents, the skills training(s) they participated in tended to be either training down or, at a minimum, training across, skill levels—but training up in only two cases.¹²⁷ Based on an analysis of the evidence for this study, a skills training should be used as a support instrument if *and* only if it is ascertained by a professional in consultation with the UBII recipient that a specific training could help fill a gap in skills that may then better position the recipient to find a job. If it is perceived by the UBII recipient that the training will not be helpful to their professional development, then the recipient should not be made to participate. The findings for this study suggest that this is not necessarily happening. Thus, while some respondents benefited from skills trainings in that they provided them with contact to others, material for applying to jobs and inserted some regularity into their daily schedule, these 'benefits' are not enough to claim that 'skills' trainings are the type of trainings needed to meet both demand, i.e., fill a 'skills gap' in the workforce, and supply, by providing UBII recipients with the skills needed that will translate into a concrete job. But the challenge here is that from a Foucauldian perspective, the 'inappropriate' training is not a 'missed opportunity' if it keeps the unemployed benefit recipient busy. This begs the question of whether there is an underlying motivation or policy makers are blithely unaware of the immanent function fulfilled by the politics they pursue.

9.3.3 Support

My research suggest that so long as the intelligible function of the Jobcenter and its support and activation requirements are to, as Foucault would argue, discipline; to make the unemployed visible in a particular way by regulating their conduct, then support through job

¹²⁷ By training up, I mean acquiring new skills either in addition to the skills one already has or an altogether new set through a re-training, that will potentially make the individual more attractive to employers in their job search.

placement and skills training services can be difficult to provide in such a manner that meets the needs of recipients. While respondents for this study were required to and, seemed to a great degree, to meet the demands placed on them in return for the support provided, the actual support provided to them in terms of consultation with a case manager, general job placement and skills training mechanisms offered were perceived too often to be tokenistic and ineffectual. As a result UBII recipients are caught between meeting competing job search demands—theirs and the Jobcenters—which results in ostensibly wasted time and resources for both Jobcenter staff and the UBII recipients. It therefore comes back to Hasenfeld (1999) who questions whether support (Fördern) and activation (Fordern) can ever naturally work in tandem together. Can a Jobcenter ever really provide the mediation and consultation support needed when ‘support’ is predicated on recipients meeting requirements knowing that if they do not, they will be sanctioned?

With the introduction of welfare reform in the US, a right to benefit became predicated on the benefit recipient demonstrating responsibility in finding work. The onus of responsibility is placed on the recipient because, it is argued, they are the ones who are at fault for not having work, they fail to take responsibility to find work and therefore they need to be activated through active labour market policy schemes (Murray, 1994; Mead, 1986). But there is an inherent flaw with this argument. Namely it ignores the structural factors that prevent individuals of all skill levels from integrating into the regular labour market. Indeed, Germany’s deregulation of its temporary work sector perhaps best illustrates the impact government policy has had on individuals’ inability to find regular work. The Federal Republic’s ongoing effort to liberalize its traditionally ‘rigid’ labour market regulations has resulted in a markedly changed labour market landscape. As pointed out in Chapter Three (section 3.3.1) the gradual reform of the Labour Placement Act between 1972 and 2003 to allow for the use of temporary agency work contracts is an example of a changed German labour market landscape. While the Labour Placement Act has gradually been reformed starting in 1972 through to its current status in 2003, the end result is a German labour market that welcomes temporary agency work and, to a great degree, relies on it to keep labour costs down while integrating the unemployed into the labour market in order to keep unemployment numbers low (Antoni and Jahn, 2009). Indeed, as noted in Chapter Three (section 3.3.1) based on micro census data, between 1997 and 2007 standard (regular) employment declined by 1.53 million jobs (8.5 percentage points) and atypical employment increased by 2.58 million. Over a twenty year period, Germany went from not allowing any

temporary work to gradually allowing corporations to rely more and more on the temporary work sector. The correlation between the increase in the percentage of workers employed in irregular work and the deregulation of temporary work cannot be ignored. When respondents were asked what type of work was offered to them by the Jobcenter, most of them disclosed that they had been instructed by their case manager to go to the temp-agencies to find work, both case manager and respondent knowing that they would be back at the Jobcenter within a certain period of time.

9.4 A path out of the gloom?

Foucault was not interested in exploring ‘solutions’ and therefore a Foucauldian analytic does not suggest alternatives to the operation and consequence of a given polity. Indeed, a Foucauldian analytic is arguably nihilistic. Yet, although an analysis of the conclusions from this study have partly been framed using a Foucauldian approach, the evidence does not suggest that the established authority in place is so corrupt or that there is no objective basis for truth or that the operation of unemployment benefit in Germany must be overturned in order to rebuild a just policy. Foucault's nihilism was a posture against conventional ideological discourse. Thus, if we set aside the nihilistic aspects of a Foucauldian analytic, I would argue that ultimately the evidence suggests that a foundation for support is in place and that it has the potential to better meet the needs of UBII recipients. But this would depend on making key policy changes and here, in the context of my analysis, any policy change (incremental or otherwise) would only be worthwhile if policy makers acknowledged and subsequently disowned the immanent function of the Hartz IV 'reforms'. Thus there is a path out of this Foucauldian gloom, but it would require policy makers to turn away from the neo-liberal labour market activation paradigm and instead towards something different.

The underlying objective of the fourth Hartz law—to support the long-term unemployed in their endeavour to find work—is not incorrect or misguided. A system has been built and put in place that could have the capacity to meet the needs of the unemployed—be it further training, job counselling or assistance with placement. But as an analysis of the evidence for this study suggests, changes in the system would need to be made in order for these support services to work to the advantage of the unemployment benefit II recipient. Here the intent to ‘support’ would have to be genuine and not confused with objectives to discipline or regulate recipients’ behaviour. Thus, when ‘skills’, for example, are referenced as that which the

unemployed lack and, therefore, need more of in order to integrate into the labour market, I would argue that what is instead needed is a much more nuanced discussion about what type of skills and thus training is being referred to. Presently it appears that skills and skills training must be a part of any policy solution to sort supply and demand in the labour market generally and something the unemployed need specifically. Like ‘work’ being perceived as that which will solve the problem of the benefit scrounger, skills are perceived as that which the unemployed do not have and is thus needed to assist in integrating the long-term unemployed into the labour market. It is this neo-liberal discourse that has resulted in policy makers insinuating that the unemployed are not getting jobs because they lack skills, which subsequently puts the onus of blame and responsibility on them instead of investigating structural barriers to the labour market that are preventing the unemployed from finding work with the skills they do have. Thus one way to change the discourse is to stop blaming the unemployed while acknowledging the need for demand-side policies in Germany. Such policies include mandating that employers pay employees living wages, decreasing the ability of employers to rely on short-term, fixed-rate contracts while allowing the government to play a more active role in creating jobs.¹²⁸ The fundamental question here is how to employ demand side policies that can better assist at integrating the ‘precariat’ into the labour market.

9.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has summarized and discussed this thesis’ research findings. There is scope for further study, expanding on some of the themes to emerge from an analysis of the evidence but not discussed in this thesis. For example, there is room for further research into the role of the case manager in steering policy in Germany. Drawing on Lipsky’s (1980, 2010) seminal study of street-level bureaucracy, the last decade has witnessed a renewed interest in exploring how street-level bureaucrats impact policy (Wright, 2003; Brodtkin, 2011; Fletcher, 2011; van Berkel and van der Aa, 2012). While changes made to the structure of Jobcenters as client-friendly, service-orientated institutions has been researched in Germany (Schütz and Oschmiansky, 2006; Greifenstein et al., 2007; Baethge-Kinsky et al., 2007), more research is needed that examines the micro-level effects New Public Management tools, such as targets coupled with limited resources, has on case managers interaction with and the decisions they make regarding their ‘clients’ employability.

¹²⁸ It should be noted that during the recent recession, the German government ran a successful policy subsidising the continued employment of over a million workers employed in smaller businesses. This helped to keep down the unemployment rate even during a severe slump in national output.

Secondly, there is always more room for further research into the role of responsibility in social security provision. Dean, H. calls for a collective responsibility of employers as well as the nation state to accept some responsibility in employing “a range of workers who cannot become immediately productive” (2014: 164). If we apply this logic to Unemployment Benefit II, then it becomes a question of responsibility as perceived by the UBII recipient, the state *and* employers in which case questions about how the state and employers perceive their role in the responsibility of employing a range of workers become crucial. Indeed, what then does responsibility mean to German employers and to what extent do they think it is their responsibility to employ the unemployed—especially the hard to employ?

The notion of a ‘responsibility’ in finding work and in working will always be a part of Western society as it is currently constituted. But it is a question of *whose* responsibility it is to find work. We are at a policy juncture in which it is time to shift the terms of the debate away from the discussion about ‘responsibility’ as it pertains to the individual and instead explore the responsibility of the state to its citizens and non-citizens alike in creating balanced labour market policies that do not undermine workers ability to integrate into the regular labour market *and* employers responsibility in hiring a range of workers at living wages. Building on previous work, my study suggests that it is time to stop penalizing the unemployed and instead explore how more fairness and greater stability can be inserted into the labour market so that the onus of responsibility in finding and staying in work need not always be placed at the hearth of the jobseeker.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Initial Introduction Letter to Jobcenters

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

ich schreibe Ihnen, um zu fragen, ob es möglich wäre, mein Forschungsprojekt bei dem Jobcenter Oldenburg durchzuführen.

Mein Name ist Anne Marie Brady. Ich stamme aus Washington, DC. Zur Zeit bin ich aber an der London School of Economics im Fachbereich Sozialpolitik tätig, wo ich derzeit promoviere.

Meine Doktorarbeit beinhaltet ein Forschungsprojekt, indem ich die Auswirkungen der relativ neuen Hartzreformen (Arbeitslosengeld II) auf die Empfänger dieser Bezüge untersuchen werde. Genauer betrachtet, mich interessieren die Maßnahmen der JobCenter und wie die ALGII Empfänger damit klar und zurecht kommen.

Um herauszufinden, welche Auswirkungen die Massnahmen auf die Empfänger hatten, ist es für meine Forschung notwendig, Befragungen mit Arbeitslosengeld II Empfängern durchzuführen. Eine Möglichkeit würde beinhalten, dass ich im Warteraum des Jobcenters die Betroffenen treffe und frage, ob sie ein Interview mitmachen könnten. Dies geschieht natürlich auf freiwillige Basis. Dabei werden die Betroffenen nicht namentlich erfasst und bestehende Datenschutzbestimmungen genauestens eingehalten. Hierzu würde ich erklären, dass die Informationen des Interviews nur für mich und mein Forschungsprojekt sind, und dass niemand ausser mir Zugang zu diesen Informationen hat.

Um den Prozess an einem Jobcenter genauer zu verstehen und auch um die Interviews mit den Empfängern noch weiter zu ergänzen, möchte ich wissen ob es auch möglich wäre, Interviews mit einigen Mitarbeiter aus dem Jobcenter zu führen? Dies geschieht wieder auf freiwillige Basis und würde den Ablauf des Arbeitstags nicht stören.

Es würde mich freuen, mein Forschungsprojekt in der Stadt Bremen durchzuführen und mehr über die Hartz IV Reformen von der Seite sowohl der Empfänger als auch der Mitarbeiter zu lernen und verstehen.

Ich würde mich sehr freuen, wenn Sie mir mitteilen könnten, ob dieses Projekt überhaupt in Ihrem Haus möglich wäre.

Wenn Sie zu meiner Anfrage weitere Fragen haben, stehe ich natürlich zu jeder Zeit zur Verfügung.

Ich verbleibe hochachtungsvoll und mit freundlichem Grüßen

Anne Marie Brady

Appendix 2

Consent Form

English Version

Dear

By signing this letter you are consenting to voluntarily participate in my research by being interviewed. The interview will take between 40 and 60 minutes. I will ask you a series of questions about your employment history, your views on employment and your future employment prospects. You are free to decline any questions which you do not wish to answer. Furthermore, if at any time you wish to end the interview and leave, you are free to do so. If you agree to the interview, you will be recorded for transcription purposes.

All information that is shared in the course of the interview is kept strictly confidential. Your name will not be associated with the information you share in any of the analysis or in the final write-up of the report. The information you provide will only be used for the purposes of this study.

The information you share will be written up in a PhD thesis and in papers for publication in academic journals. You will not be identified in any of the publications.

I agree to take part in the study described above:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

German Version

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

mit dieser Unterschrift erklaren sie sich bereit, freiwillig an meiner Forschungsarbeit teilzunehmen und von mir dazu befragt zu werden. Die Befragung dauert zwischen 40 und 60 Minuten. Ich werde sie zu ihrer vergangenen Beschaftigungssituation und ihren beruflichen Zukunftsaussichten befragen. Es steht ihnen frei, jede Frage, die sie nicht beantworten moechten auszulassen. Zusatzlich koennen sie jederzeit das Interview beenden oder verlassen. Wenn sie sich mit der Befragung einverstanden erklaren, werden sie ausschliesslich zu Transkriptionszwecken (Verschriftlichung) aufgenommen.

Jede Information, die sie waehrend der Befragung mitteilen, wird streng vertraulich behandelt. Ihr Name wird nicht mit Informationen, die sie waehrend der Befragung mitteilen oder der Analyse in meiner Doktorarbeit in Zusammenhang gebracht.

Die Informationen, die sie mir geben werden ausschliesslich zu Forschungszwecken fuer meine Doktorarbeit oder wissenschaftlichen Veroeffentlichungen gebraucht. Ihre Daten werden anonymisiert.

Ich erklare mich hiermit bereit, an dieser Forschungsarbeit teilzunehmen

Ort:

Datum:

Name:

Unterschrift:]

Appendix 3

Interview Schedule (Unemployment Benefit II Recipients)

English version

How old are you?

Are you single or in a relationship?

- Do you live alone or with others?

Do you have children?

What is your citizenship status?

Can you tell me about your prior education and/or apprenticeship history?

Can you tell me about your employment history?

- Where was your last place of employment?
- How long were you there for?

How long have you been unemployed?

How long have you been in receipt of UBII?

- Have you previously been on benefit? If so, when, how long and what has happened that you are back at the Jobcenter?

To-date, what is your experience, generally, with the Jobcenter?

- For example, have the staff been helpful and friendly?

What kind of support is provided to you by the Jobcenter to assist you in finding work?

- Do you find this helpful?

Have you participated in skill training sessions provided by the Jobcenter or another third party?

- What, when, where and for how long?
- Have you found the training helpful?
- Has the training assisted you in gathering skill(s) needed to find a job?
- Has the training matched the type of work you are looking for or want to do?

What type of work is available to you and does this match what you have previously done or would like to do?

- Does it match your prior wage?

Do you feel under pressure by the Jobcenter to find work?

- Has this pressure influenced the type of work you have taken or would take?
- Do you feel pressure by the Jobcenter to take any job?

How would you describe your relationship to work?

- Would you sooner have a low-paid job (or a boring job for which you are overqualified) than no job at all?
- Would you take a job that is below your education level/previous occupation/position?
- Let's say you won the lottery. Would you still continue to work?

Prompt: clearly you want to work. Do you think work is a right?

Do you have a responsibility to work?

- Has your experience of claiming benefits while unemployed and/or the way the Jobcenter helps you, change the way you feel about personal responsibility?
- How as the Jobcenter demands placed on you impacted your own sense of personal responsibility [to find work]?

Let's talk about Fördern and Fordern. It has been in the media.

How would you define Fördern and Fordern in the Jobcenter context?

- What do you think about Fördern and Fordern?

How do you think people around you regard the unemployed? The Hartz IV recipient?

Is the monthly stipend you receive from the Jobcenter enough to live from?

German version

Wie alt sind Sie?

Sind Sie ledig oder verheiratet?

Haben Sie Kinder?

Leben Sie alleine oder mit jemanden?

Sind Sie Deutsch oder...?

- Wenn nicht, seit wie langem sind Sie in Deutschland gewesen?

Könnten Sie mir bitte etwas über Ihren Bildungsweg sagen?

Könnten Sie mir bitte etwas über Ihr letztes Angestelltenverhältnis sagen?

- Wie lange waren Sie bei Ihrem letzten Arbeitgeber angestellt?

Seit wann sind Sie arbeitslos? Bzw...

Seit wann erhalten Sie Arbeitslosengeld II?

- Haben Sie zuvor schon mal Hartz IV erhalten? Wenn ja, was ist passiert, dass Sie erneut Hartz IV beantragt haben?

Gross und grob, wie ist Ihre Erfahrung mit dem Jobcenter bis jetzt?

- Sind die Mitarbeiter hilfsbereit, zum Beispiel?

Welche Unterstützung bekommen Sie von dem Jobcenter, damit Sie wieder Arbeit finden?

- Finden Sie diese hilfreich?

Haben Sie an Fortbildungsmaßnahmen des Jobcenters oder anderen Anbietern teilgenommen?

- Wenn ja, was war das fuer eine Maßnahme?
- Wann, wo, wofuer und viel lange hat die Maßnahme gedauert
- Fanden Sie diese Maßnahme hilfreich?
- Wenn Sie in der Vergangenheit an solchen Maßnahmen teilgenommen haben, hat es Ihnen geholfen, wieder Arbeit in Ihrem Bereich zu finden? Und haben diese Maßnahme Ihnen geholfen, in dem neuen Bereich, in dem Sie ausgebildet worden sind, einen Job zu finden?

Welche Art von Arbeit könnten Sie zur Zeit annehmen? Passt das zu dem, was Sie vorher getan haben. Ist das, was Sie machen möchten?

- Verdienen Sie so viel wie vorher?

Verspüren Sie Druck von seiten des Jobcenters, einen Job zu finden oder is es ok gewesen?

- Wenn Ja, hat dieser Druck Sie beeinflusst, welche Art von Arbeit Sie angenommen haben bzw. annehmen werden?
- Fühlen Sie sich vom Jobcenter beeinflusst, irgendeinen Job anzunehmen?

Sind Sie bereit einen Job anzunehmen, bei dem Sie weniger verdienen, weniger Stunden arbeiten und/oder wo die Wegezeiten länger ist? **Wenn ja, warum?**

- Würden Sie einen langweiligen oder einen Job annehmen, bei dem Sie überqualifiziert sind, sodass Sie wenigstens einen Job haben?
- Angenommen Sie würden im Lotto gewinnen, würden Sie weiterhin arbeiten?

Prompt: Es ist Klar, dass Sie arbeiten wollen.

- Meinen Sie dass die Arbeit ein Recht ist (meinen Sie, Sie haben ein Recht auf Arbeit)?
- Finden Sie, dass Sie eine Pflicht haben zu arbeiten? Sind Sie dafür verantwortlich Arbeit zu finden?
- Finden Sie, dass Sie eine Verantwortung haben zu arbeiten?

Has anything that has happend to you at the Jobcenter changed the way you feel about that? (work, responsiblity).

- Hat Ihre Einstellung zur „Eigenverantwortung“ geaendert seitdem Sie am Jobcenter sind?
- Staerkt das Jobcenter Ihre Eigenverantwortliche Suche nach Arbeit?
- Oder wuerden sie sagen, dass das Jobcenter Sie in ihrer Eigenverantwortung einschraenkt oder behindert, indem es Sie zu Massnahmen auffordert bzw noetigt?

Hat sich während der Zeit, in der Sie Arbeitslosengeld II beantragen, Ihre Einstellung zur Arbeit geändert?

Haben Sie vom Fördern und Fordern gehört? Es ist oft in den Medien in Zusammenhang mit dem Jobcenters bzw. den Hartz IV Reformen besprochen.

Was bedeutet Fördern und Fordern im Zusammenhang mit dem Jobcenter fuer Sie?

Was meinen Sie, wie betrachten die Menschen, die entweder Sie begegnen oder die um Sie herum sind, die Arbeitslosen? Und Sie als ‚Hartz IV Empfänger‘?

Reicht das Geld, das Sie monatlich vom Jobcenter erhalten, für Sie (und Ihre Familie)?

Appendix 4

Interview Schedule (Case Managers)

What is your position and how long have you held it?

Can you describe your position to me?

As I understand, a key role you play is to act as mediator between the employer and the unemployed. To what degree are you able to actually do this in practice?

Can you walk me through the process, starting with the first time a client meets with you to discuss their unemployment status through to them finding employment:

- What is required of the client?
- Can you explain to me the role of the integration into work agreement that the client must sign?

How many clients are you assigned to oversee?

- In my interviews with the clients, many noted that they found themselves reassigned a new case manager on a regular basis. How long do you work with the clients before they are reassigned?
- Is there a reason why clients are reassigned so often?
- In my interviews, clients often found this change stressful and frustrating because they would have to start from the beginning with each new case manager. How do you find the frequent change of clients in your ability to assist them find work?

In my interviews, clients noted that they were required to demonstrate to the Jobcenter that they had sent in a specified number of resumes per month. Interestingly that number varied from one client to the next. Some were not required to demonstrate a number, others had to demonstrate 5, 10, 5 and 20 a month.

- How do you determine how many job applications a client has to send in a month and why the vast variation from one client to the next? Are there guidelines you follow?
- To what degree are you able to take the individual circumstances of each client into consideration why you are working with them, i.e., determining how many jobs to apply to, what jobs, etc?

If I understand this correctly, any job application that you find suitable for your client and then forward to him or her, that client must then apply to the job, correct? In my interviews with the clients, many often felt that the jobs forwarded them were not suitable to their professional profile or what they wanted to do. But, since there is a requirement to apply, they do so.

- Do employees ever complain that they receive applications from UBII recipients via the Jobcenter that are not suitable for the job?

Does the Jobcenter generally, you as case managers specifically, have contact to companies/industry?

- Are you able to assist in placement via such connections?

Many clients have noted their experience with temporary work. Many find this type of work difficult because, as the nature with temporary work is, they find themselves at some point unemployed again.

- Do you have contacts with the temp agencies specifically?
- Do you recommend that your clients apply for jobs via temp agencies?

Let's talk about training services.

What training services are offered?

How do you assess who needs what training?

Are you able to demonstrate a direct link to the clients' participation in a training session and their ability to find work as a result of the training?

What happens if clients do not want to participate in a training? Do they have to?

Can you please explain the One-Euro-Job to me?

- What is your role in recommending a One-Euro-Job to a client?
- Who typically performs One-Euro-Jobs?
- How do you determine who is best suited for a One-Euro-Job?

Retraining into a new vocation is a big step for a client. How often to you make such a suggestion? Under what circumstances would you make such a suggestion?

In my interviews with clients, many have noted the problem their lack of English ability has had on them not obtaining work. Yet, when I asked if they were offered an English language course from the Jobcenter, some said they were not allowed to participate.

- Why would a client be denied an English language course when they are able to demonstrate the necessity of said ability in finding work?
- Is it an issue of money?

Many clients feel trapped in a system that provides them with more busy work than real assistance in finding work. In your professional opinion, do you think the Jobcenter has the capacity to realistically assist each client in finding work?

What pressures are you under to move clients off unemployment into employment? How much of your job performance is based on the number of clients you successfully move off unemployment benefit?

- Does this pressure affect how you interact with clients? The degree of support and assistance you are able to provide?

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