

# SO FIE

Support for empowerment and integration of refugee families

## Guidelines for Best Practice of Inclusion based on Needs Analysis of Refugee Families

 *Sweden National Report*

[support-refugees.eu](http://support-refugees.eu)



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## **I01 – Guidelines for Best Practice of Inclusion based on Needs Analysis of Refugee Families**

### **Sweden National Report**

Prepared by:  
Folkuniversitetet

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## 1. Introduction

With the increase in the number of refugees and migrants in Europe, the European Union set as a priority the integration of refugees and migrants that reach Europe. It acknowledged on one hand the challenges that third-country nationals (TCNs) face in the education system, on the labor market and in accessing decent housing, and on the other hand the positive impact that TCNs can have on the local economies when they are well integrated (European Commission 2016). In 2016 the EU adopted the Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (European Commission, 2016) setting key policy priorities in the areas of pre-departure / pre-arrival; education; labor market and vocational training; and access to basic services (European Commission, 2016). The Action Plan highlights that education and training, especially learning of the local language, are among the most powerful tools for integration. The combination of language learning with the acquisition of other skills and competences is a gateway to integration, employment and social inclusion. Finally, the Action Plan recognized that women face extra challenges in their integration and proposed that a special effort should be made to ensure that such programs reach both women and men (European Commission, 2016).

This research is part of SOFIE<sup>1</sup>, a European project funded by Erasmus+, which aims to contribute to the social inclusion of refugees by provision of educational trainings targeting women and children on the one hand, and on the other hand by training trainers and volunteers in order to better prepare them for the needs of the refugee families. SOFIE is implemented by a consortium of five civil society organizations, Verein Multikulturell from Austria, CESIE from Italy, CARDET from Cyprus, Mozaik from Turkey and Folksuniversitetet from Sweden.

In order to be able to develop and deliver training material and tools targeted to the needs of refugees and volunteers, the first phase of the project consists of a research and needs analysis. This report presents the results of the national research conducted in Sweden. It identified the needs and challenges that refugee families face, especially in terms of integration and training support, best practices on the integration of refugee families as well as the training needs of volunteers.

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<sup>1</sup> [support-refugees.eu](http://support-refugees.eu)



## 2. Methodology

The aim of this research is to identify and understand the needs and challenges of refugee families in European countries, the training needs of persons volunteering with refugees as well as best practices on the integration of refugee families. The research is the first part of the European project SOFIE and it will inform the development and delivery of training tools that will be tailor made on the specific needs of the target groups. This report presents the research results for Sweden.

The methodology adopted to produce this report consists of a 5-step process with the use of different qualitative and quantitative research tools, implemented from November 2017 to February 2018:

1. Desktop research and literature review on the needs of refugee families, existing tools and best practices for empowerment and integration support to refugee families.
2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with at least 15 refugees or asylum seekers to identify the needs and challenges of refugee families, especially in terms of integration and training support. Special attention was given to have a representative sample of refugees with different nationalities and ensure the inclusion of refugee women.
3. Interviews with representatives of five organizations working with refugees, to identify the needs of refugee families from an experts' viewpoint.
4. Collection of qualitative and quantitative data on the experiences and training needs of volunteers with the use of a questionnaire. The goal of the questionnaire was twofold: i) to identify needs of refugee families, especially in terms of integration and training support. ii) to gain an understanding on the experience of volunteers, especially to identify any specific challenges they face while supporting / engaging refugees and their training needs.

CARDET, the lead partner of this research, developed detailed guidelines and research tools. The guidelines consisted of a description of each task, specific instructions on how to deliver all the research activities by all partners, as well as templates such as consent form, instructions and interview guides.

The FGDs and interviews were semi-structured with the use of a research guide and open questions, in order to allow participants to expand on the issues they felt were most important. At the same time, this approach enabled the researcher to investigate in more depth on the key issues. The set of questions included two types: demographic questions and main questions directly related to the subject of the research. The aim of the initial questions was to make a comfortable atmosphere and help the participants to



start a discussion as well as to collect demographic information on the sample. The main questions explored the daily life of refugees and their needs, their views around learning the local language, the knowledge of their rights, access to information and access to services and finally, their training needs both in terms of learning information about to support their integration as well as other trainings needs they may have. The questions were flexible could be reviewed and modified by the researcher to meet the situation during the focus group / interview session.

Two FGDs were conducted in Sweden, with a total of 20 participants, from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Armenia, Kurdistan, Nigeria, Lebanon, and Bangladesh. All were refugee women. Furthermore, five interviews were conducted with representatives of one NGO organization and one municipal organization arranging daily activities for migrants and refugees, a public authority educational institution, and a high school teaching refugee youths. All the FGDs and interviews were audiotaped to ensure the quality and validity of the data. For the FGDs an interpreter was also used when necessary. The data were transcribed and a qualitative analysis was done.

Interviews were done with a Swedish teacher for migrant women, a pedagogue working at an open day care with migrant women, an operations manager at course activity and daycare center for refugees, a consultant special needs educator working with asylum seekers who recently received their residence permit, and a high school teacher working with refugee youths. All interviewees had several years' long experience working with migrants and refugees, whereas one had once been a refugee.

During the interviews and especially the FGDs, strict ethical considerations were followed. At the beginning of each session, the researcher introduced himself, his organization and the SOFIE project and to give participants an overview of the project's aim. He further explained ethical considerations and their rights as participants, including that their participation is voluntary; they can answer only the questions they are comfortable with; they can leave any time if they do not feel comfortable anymore and that this will not affect in any way their asylum or refugee status. He also explained that the discussion is recorded and notes are taken strictly for the purpose of this research and will be treated with confidentiality.

The volunteers' questionnaire included both structured and open questions and was distributed both in printed and electronic forms. The online tool surveymonkey was used for the collection of data and their analysis. In total 64 questionnaires were filled in Sweden.

As a result of the analyses, categories were developed indicating the challenges and need of refugees and volunteers, and best practices on integration were identified.



Specific national level recommendations were proposed, related to refugee integration and training needs.

### **3. Literature review**

#### **1. Refugees in Sweden**

This section provides brief information about migration to Sweden, demographic data on asylum applications during the recent years, and statistical data on asylum seekers, refugees and their nationalities.

Sweden has not always been an immigration country. From the second half of 1800 to the first decades of 1900, Sweden faced a period of major emigration to other countries by virtue of the difficult living conditions such as high unemployment and lack of housing. Until 1930, the level of emigration from Sweden was higher than the level of immigration. Those who immigrated to Sweden constituted of individuals who had previously emigrated, returning to Sweden after a period abroad (SCB, 2016). The first census was taken mid-1700, showing the population of Sweden to be 1.8 million. As for 2017, the population of Sweden passed 10 million (SCB, 2017).

There has been a rapid trend of migration to Sweden during the last 50 years (Hammarstedt, 2001). After the Second World War, from 1950 to 1970, immigrants who came to Sweden as labor force were mainly from Nordic countries. After 1970 however, migration reasons changed from labor demands to family ties and refugees (Södersten, 2004).

Being one of the countries receiving refugees and migrants during what is referred to as the 'European Migrant Crisis', 1,6 million of the population of Sweden constituted of foreign born individuals. The biggest driver of the migration over the Mediterranean Sea to Europe during that year was conflict in Syria. In 2015, more than one million refugees and migrants entered Europe, causing a crisis as the European countries struggled to cope with the influx (BBC, 2016). According to the website of the Swedish Migration Agency, during that year a total number of 162 877 people applied for asylum in Sweden (Migrationsverket.se, 2017).

In 2014, only 81 301 asylum applications were made in Sweden. In 2016 and 2017, the number of asylum applications were reduced by 5.5 and 6.8 times respectively compared to 2015, given a total number of 28 939, and 23 816 asylum applications respectively. (Figure 1)



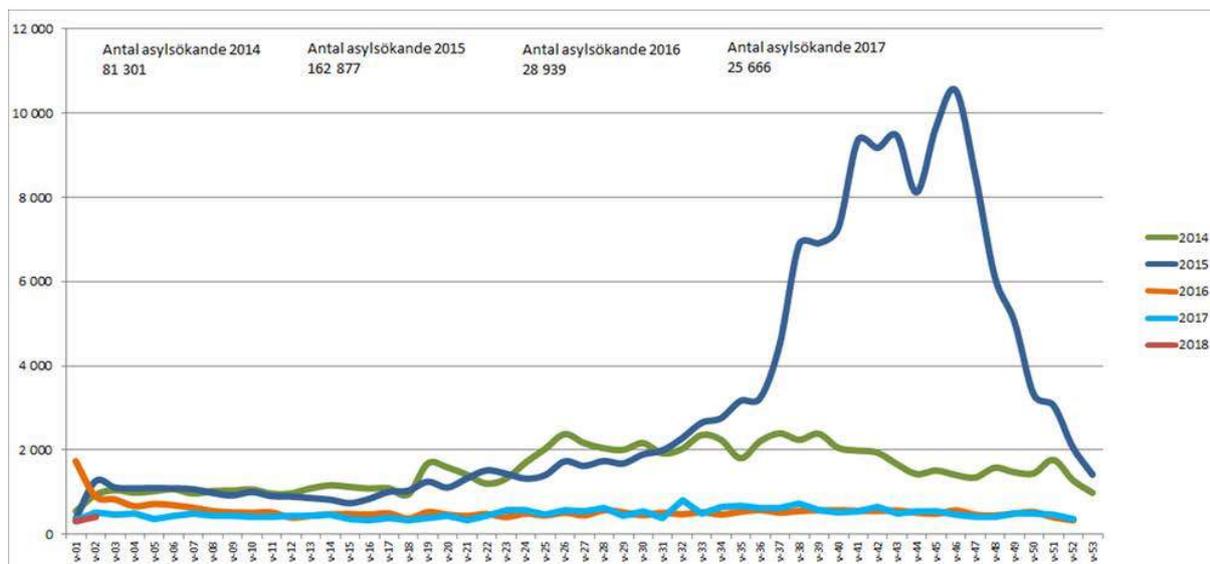


Figure 1 Weekly overview over number of asylum seekers 2014-2018 Source: SCB, 2018

Syria, Iraq, Eritrea and Afghanistan are the four main countries from which asylum seekers come from. During January-December 2017, 1201 stateless individuals applied for asylum in Sweden, constituting the fifth main category of asylum seekers. (Figure 2) (Migrationsverket.se, 2017).

Medborgarskap	jan-dec 2017
Syrien	4 718
Irak	1 887
Eritrea	1 691
Afghanistan	1 681
Statslös	1 201

Figure 2 Main countries of origin of refugees in 2017 Source: SCB, 2017

### Applications for asylum received in 2017

In 2017, a total number of 25 666 asylum applications were made in Sweden. Of that, 10 031 individuals were women, including girls; and 15 635 men, including boys.

## 2. The rights of refugees

This section provides information about law and policies for refugees and asylum seekers in Sweden.

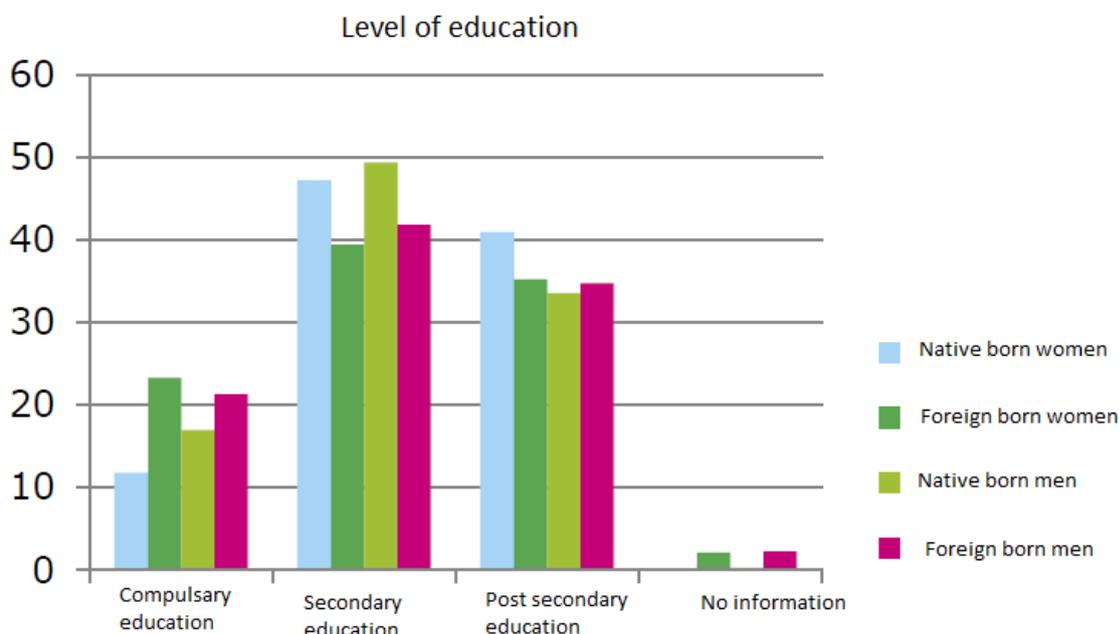
## Healthcare

Medical and health care services in Sweden are low cost hence they are owned by the state. The primary part of the medical costs are covered by county and municipality taxes. The cost for a doctor's visit is around 150 SEK. From the age of 85 and up most health and medical care is free of charge, as well as medically motivated surgeries (Migrationsverket.se, 2016). The cost of a doctor's visit is 50 SEK for asylum seekers, which will, when receiving their residence permit, increase to the same cost as for a Swedish citizen (1177.se, 2017).

## Education

The country of birth plays a significant role in the education level of the population. 20% of the foreign born individuals have low education, whereas this applies only 10% of those born in Sweden. By virtue of this fact, the education level of foreign born individuals is slightly lower than those born in Sweden. Asylum seekers in Sweden have generally a lower educational level than those who have immigrated to Sweden for other reasons.

Regarding the level of education for men and women, generally the percentage of highly educated women is slightly higher than men, which also applies to foreign-born individuals in Sweden. Among various groups of foreign-born women, the education level differs depending on country of birth.



Among those born in Africa, the proportion of women at the age of 30 who had post-secondary education was 26%, while on the other hand, the same proportion for those born in Asian countries was 43%, and for those born in South America, 46%. The greatest proportion of individuals with only compulsory schooling is found among nationals of countries in Asia, Africa, European countries outside the EU as well as other Nordic countries. Another key fact to remember is that the number of foreign-born women with only compulsory education has increased among those who arrived after 2010 and the number of illiterate women has increased (SCB, 2016).

Asylum seeking children have the right to go to school from the semester they turn six years old. (Migrationsverket.se, 2018)

### **Employment**

The Swedish labor market was provided an excessive supply by the recent wave of immigration (Södersten, 2004). Until 1970 the employment situation was in good condition for both natives and immigrants in Sweden. According to previous research, the employment level during that period was higher among immigrants than natives. Towards the end of 1980s, the fraction between employment among immigrants and natives increased for every year during booms and recessions until mid-1990. Thereafter, the differences in employment vary in line with the economic climate (The Swedish Integration Board, 2003). Research has long shown that foreign-born have skilled occupations to a lesser extent than native born, and also enter the labor market with more difficulty. Women with foreign background and foreign born women encounter dual thresholds on the labor market. Less than half of women born outside of Europe were employed in 2014, resulting in them having the lowest employment rate. The lower employment rate among women with foreign background and foreign born women can be explained partly by the individual's own characteristics and qualifications, such as language skills or education, and partly by the unfavorable structure of the labor market. Foreign born individuals and individuals with foreign background are excluded from the Swedish labor market due to various conditions. One recurring factor in research is the importance of social networks for recruitment. Jobs are generally conveyed via personal contacts, putting foreign born and especially newly arrived in a disadvantaged place (Carlsson and Rooth, 2007). Among foreign born individuals, the main occupational groups were cleaning jobs, followed by sailors, home care and retirement homes (SCB,2016). In order to be able to work as a refugee in Sweden, you must have obtained proof that you are exempted from the obligation to have a work permit (AT-UND). The following requirements have to be fulfilled: submit of acceptable identity documents, or otherwise contribute to clarifying your identity, if the asylum claim is to be tried in Sweden, if the application is well founded. You do not have AT-UND if you have received a rejection decision to be taken immediately. If the requirements are fulfilled, the refugee will receive an LMA card saying that they have



AT-UND. This means that they are freed from the requirement to have a work permit. An AT-UND usually applies until a residence permit is given or the person leaves the country. (Migrationsverket.se, 2018)

## **Housing**

The Migration Agency offers temporary housing for asylum seekers who are still waiting for decision on their claim. If the individual is not in a good economic condition, the Migration Agency will cover the cost of the housing. During their stay, they may have to move to other locations in order to make room for new asylum seekers in need for housing. That is to say, individuals are provided housing based on what cities have as available housing. The housings are generally apartments which families share, yet with their own rooms. Single individuals share housing with others of the same sex. If they receive an expulsion order, they can no longer live there, if they are above the age of 18 and not guardians of under aged children with whom they live.

When receiving their residence permit, the Migration Agency will help them to find a new place to live. During that time, they are allowed to stay at the Migration Agency's housing. Asylum seekers have also the opportunity to arrange housing on their own, by staying at their relatives or friends' house. The Migration Agency does not cover any costs for housing arranged by the individuals. If they are no longer able to live in a self-arranged housing, they can move to the Migration Agency's available housing (Migrationsverket.se, 2018).

## **Social welfare**

While waiting for the decision on their claim, asylum seekers have the right to apply for welfare benefits such as housing support, daily allowance and special allowance. Housing support is provided for those who have received a job or a job offer with an employment period longer than three months; which requires moving to a new city where the Migration Agency does not have any housing. The housing support is:

850 SEK/month for families

350 SEK/month for singles

Those without own assets can receive daily allowance. The amount of daily allowance differs for those who live in housing provided by the Migration Agency where food is or is not provided. Besides food, the daily allowance shall cover costs for clothes, health- and medical care, dental care, hygiene products, leisure activities and other consumables. Those who receive daily allowance receive a bank card through which they have access to the money.

Daily allowance where food is included in the housing:



- 24 SEK / day for adults alone
- 19 SEK / day per person for adults sharing household expenses
- 12 SEK / day for children up to 17 years old

Daily allowance where food is not included in the housing:

- 71 SEK / day for adults alone
- 61 SEK / day and person for adults who share household expenses
- 37 SEK / day for children 0-3 years
- 43 SEK / day for children 4-10 years
- 50 SEK / day for children 11-17 years

Special support is an additional allowance for individuals who are in need of a service or product, such as glasses or winter shoes, and whose cost the daily allowance cannot cover.

## **Social Life**

Many Non-governmental Organizations in Sweden arrange activities for asylum seekers and newly arrived. They are primarily involved in integration by providing language teaching, counseling and human support, and do not have activities at the borders for the refugees when they first arrive (Temaasyl.se, n.d.).

### **3. The system of support and integration for refugees in Sweden**

This section provides information about the concept of Integration in Sweden, the problems and integration needs of refugee families and challenges underlying refugee's integration.

#### *The concept of integration in Sweden*

The Migration Policy Institute defines integration as “the process by which immigrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups” (Migration Policy Institute 2003). During the 1970s, as part of the multiculturalism debate, the concept of integration was introduced into Swedish politics and policies. Later in the 1990s, alongside Australia and Canada, Sweden was celebrated as a successful example of immigrant integration. That is to say, that the Swedish integration policy is defined in line with policies of multiculturalism. Generally, multiculturalism in Sweden has been understood as the ethnic mixture of the population, and political strategies and ideologies. It is important to say that this definition of multiculturalism mediates how the concept is understood in Sweden, and does not provide an explanation of the notion of multiculturalism. The critiques towards multiculturalism in Sweden are as follows:



the first concerns the ethnic mixture of the population is seen as something problematic, whereas the second concerns the political strategies and ideologies used to manage ethnic diversity. It is important to note that the main target for the policies of multiculturalism has been immigrants and not the host society (IM Swedish Development Partner, 2017).

### *Problems and integration needs of refugee families*

In July 2016, a temporary asylum rule was introduced in Sweden, severely restricting the opportunities for family reunification (Regeringskansliet, 2018). The most common reason behind migration to Sweden has been family reunification, with 49,085 people having received residence permit to move to a relative to Sweden. The effect of the law change will have a clear impact on the statistics for 2017 (Migrationsinfo.se, 2018).

Segregation and labor market integration are the two main challenges regarding the integration of refugees and immigrants. Segregation has been identified as main reason for failed integration. While Sweden has been seen from the outside as a country with progressive housing policies, well planned cities and good welfare state, there has been a continuous debate within the country regarding the ethnic segregation which has turned into a politicized issue. At first, the focus of segregation issues laid on class dimension, yet, in 1980s, the social class segregation was separated by an ethnic factor (Andersson, 2007). During 1985-1994 Sweden had an official policy called “All of Sweden Strategy” in order to break the concentration of immigrants in city regions by placing refugees in pre-chosen cities. When receiving their residence permit, they were allowed to settle freely, resulting in a concentration in urban peripheries of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö (Andersson, 2003). Housing discrimination has also been an issue for immigrants (Andersson, 2007).

The labor market integration has been briefly mentioned in the prior chapter. The integration of immigrants, foreign born and refugees in the labor market has been as follows: during the post-war era, the participation of immigrants in the labor market was 20% more than native Swedes (Ekberg and Gustavsson 1995). During the 1950s and 60s, immigrants began to be less integrated into the labor market decade after decade. As the immigrant population increased inevitably, this became an important issue. The unemployment rate was still low. One reason was that most immigrants came from Nordic countries. Year 1977 and after, unemployment rates were reported separately by nationality. It was noted that compared to native Swedes, the unemployment rate was twice as high for foreign born individuals, and increased to three times as high from 1993-1995 (Bevelander, 1999). The economic boom in mid-1990s which resulted in decreased unemployment rates to 1-2%, did not affect the unemployment among immigrants and refugees which remained high (Andersson,



2007). In 2017, among OECD countries, Sweden was one of the countries with the highest unemployment rates among foreign born women and men (OECD 2017).

### *Challenges underlying refugees' situation*

In July 2016, a new temporary law came into force and will be valid for three years. The new law, proposed by the Parliament of Sweden, limits the possibilities for asylum seekers and their relatives to receive residence permit in Sweden. The new law means that the person in need of protection receives a temporary residence permit. The person who is deemed a refugee is granted a residence permit valid for three years and the person eligible for subsidiary protection will receive a 13-month permit. If the person is still eligible for subsidiary protection after the temporary residence permit expires, they can receive an extended residence permit. If the person is able to support himself or herself, they can receive a permanent residency permit. Unaccompanied children and families with children under the age of 18 who are eligible for subsidiary protection receive permanent residency permit if they applied for asylum no later than November 24, 2016. Relatives can receive residence permit only if the person with residence permit in Sweden is able to support himself or herself and the relative who applies for residence permit and have enough space in his residency for the relatives to live there (Migrationsverket.se, 2017).

## **4. Tools and initiatives for empowerment and integration of families**

This section provides information about various tools and initiatives for empowerment and integration of families, such as language courses and other integration tools, with references to two relevant EU funded projects.

### *Language courses for refugees and migrants*

While waiting for their asylum decision, asylum seekers can participate in a range of language courses provided by Adult Education associations and NGOs. In 2015, an integration campaign was launched for refugees by the Swedish government, providing language courses while waiting for their residence decision, with focus on social orientation and everyday Swedish life at voluntary basis. In 2017, 10 Liberal Adult Education Associations and 95 out of 154 Folk High Schools launched such courses all over Sweden (Folkbildningsrådet.se, 2018).



Svenska från dag ett	<p><a href="http://www.folkbildningsradet.se/Folkhogskolor/Vad-ar-en-folkhogskola/folkbildning-med-asylsokande/svenska-fran-dag-ett/">http://www.folkbildningsradet.se/Folkhogskolor/Vad-ar-en-folkhogskola/folkbildning-med-asylsokande/svenska-fran-dag-ett/</a></p> <p>Svenska från dag ett, (Swedish from day one) is a Swedish course for asylum seekers and refugees, launched by Liberal Adult Education Associations and Folk High Schools.</p>
SFI	<p><a href="https://www.uppsala.se/skola-och-forskola/vuxenutbildning/svenska-for-invandrare-sfi/">https://www.uppsala.se/skola-och-forskola/vuxenutbildning/svenska-for-invandrare-sfi/</a></p> <p>SFI, Swedish for Immigrants, is an introduction program organized by the Public Employment Services.</p>

After receiving their residence permit, all refugees are permitted to participate in an introduction program organized by the Public Employment Services. The program constitutes three compulsory sections, Swedish for Immigrants (SFI), Social orientation and lastly activities leading to employment. The courses are free of charge (Flyktingmottagningen, 2018). By committing to participation in the introduction program, the participants will receive introduction benefit. Those who live alone can also receive housing support. The amount of the introduction benefit may vary depending on the individual's employment status (informationsverige.se, 2018).

### Other integration tools & initiatives

#### *Housing, education and healthcare*

Refugees Welcome Housing Sweden	Refugees Welcome Housing Sweden sees the need for alternatives to migration and municipal housing facilities where people are isolated without the possibility of mutual integration. Living together allows us to create a welcoming culture where we meet and get to know each other.	<a href="https://refugees-welcome.se/">https://refugees-welcome.se/</a>
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<p>Korta vägen (The short way)</p>	<p>Korta vägen is for are foreign-born graduates with academic degrees or at least three years of academic studies from their home country. This education increases the participants' chances of getting a job in their profession. It also prepares them for college studies if they need to complete their education.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.folkuniversitetet.se/Arbetsmarknad/korta-vagen/">http://www.folkuniversitetet.se/Arbetsmarknad/korta-vagen/</a></p>
<p>Uppsala University</p>	<p>Uppsala University has extensive knowledge in a number of important areas related to new arrivals in Sweden. There is training for newly arrived skills development for professionals, a wide range of research and collaboration within different networks.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.uu.se/samverkan/initiativ-for-nyanlanda/">http://www.uu.se/samverkan/initiativ-for-nyanlanda/</a></p>
<p>Sweden's municipalities and county councils in cooperation with with Uppdrag Psykisk Hälsa (Mission Mental Health)</p>	<p>Together with Sweden's municipalities and county councils, Uppdrag Psykisk Hälsa helps improving asylum seekers' and newly arrived people's mental health in the program "Hälsa i Sverige för asylsökande och nyanlända" (Health in Sweden for asylum seekers and newly arrived)</p>	<p><a href="https://www.uppdragpsykhalsa.se/asylsokande-och-nyanlanda/">https://www.uppdragpsykhalsa.se/asylsokande-och-nyanlanda/</a></p>

*Examples of EU-funded projects*

<p>Igma3 (Shortening Distance to Labour Market for young people with risk for unemploy- ment and social exclusion - Distance Education for Coordinated Measures by Regional Stakeholder Networks)</p>	<p>In 2011 the Grundtvig project igma1 was started. The goal was to develop a methodology for effective guidance of low-skilled immigrants into adult education/labor market through coordinated measures on stakeholder level.</p> <p>Stakeholder networks in all partner countries confirmed that igma methodology is highly relevant for improving quality of services with individual needs in the center.</p> <p>The methodology was further developed in igma2 (2013) through development of training curriculum for improving competences of coaches working with counselling of the low skilled to labor market through adult education. Average success rate of target group integration into education/employment in pilot activities was between 60 and 70 % in all partner countries. Both project results are sustained in all partner countries. Igma3 aims at improvement of quality in adult education and career counselling with focus on individual learners, professional development of staff, and common service delivery by providers. This directly corresponds to three horizontal/sectorial priorities of Erasmus+. In order to achieve the purpose of the project, a</p>	<p><a href="http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/plus-project-details-page/?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/ae1c9b32-e169-421c-9eb6-6e1ce7ed565b">http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/plus-project-details-page/?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/ae1c9b32-e169-421c-9eb6-6e1ce7ed565b</a></p>
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	<p>comprehensive work plan has been developed that will result in following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of igma3 methodology for professionals</li> <li>2. Development of igma3 training plan for stakeholders in regional networks</li> <li>3. National survey of existing advisory services for young adults and the importance of different regional / local association in the guidance process</li> <li>4. Brochure with marketing information for employers</li> <li>5. A PR website with access to an e-education platform containing igma3 training materials</li> </ol> <p>The effects of the introduction of igma3 methodology in regional stakeholder networks will lead to better opportunities for job placement of young adults, based on their needs and capacity (igma3 Newsletter, 2016).</p>	
KISA	<p>KISA is based on a preliminary study conducted in Uppsala County in 2014, focusing on identifying development areas in order to reduce newly arrived individuals' exclusion from the labor market. The three development areas identified were:</p> <p>The need to develop forms of structural cooperation.</p> <p>The need to develop knowledge about newly arrived individuals' health and illness.</p> <p>The need for vocational training sites and</p>	<p><a href="http://kisaprojektet.se/">http://kisaprojektet.se/</a></p>

	<p>alternatives to traditional language learning.</p> <p>Starting from the three identified developmental areas of the first study, the KISA project aims at achieving the goal of facilitating the establishment of women and men within the establishment mission.</p> <p>KISA aims to strengthen, improve and supplement efforts aimed at newly arrived within the establishment mission through collaboration. The overall objective of the project is to make the establishment of newly arrived in working life more effective (KISA Projektet, 2018). The methodology developed in IGMA is being implemented in eight municipalities in Uppsala region with the target group newly arrived (Ec.europa.eu, 2018).</p> <p>The KISA project's objective and indicator for measuring goal achievement and impact at individual level, organizational level and project level are:</p> <p>Individual level: Aim: shorter time for the establishment of new arrivals in society. Indicator: The time from permanent residence to self-sufficiency</p> <p>Objectives: Increased knowledge of the role and responsibility of the establishment process. Indicator: Strengthened self-confidence and targeting. Indicator: Increased satisfaction and better knowledge of the continued path into the labor market.</p> <p>Organization Level: Objectives: Implement a Collaboration Model (Igma) to create a well-structured collaboration between participating authorities to facilitate the establishment of women and men in the labor market. Explain</p>	
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	<p>the authorities' respective assignments within the establishment assignment. Indicator: Actual cooperation between the authorities in the establishment mission by using the local agreements and being relevant (Application KISA project, 2015).</p>	
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*Examples of best practices*

<p><i>KVISFI – kvinnor i samverkan för integration (Women in collaboration for integration)</i></p>	<p><b>The challenge:</b> the difficulties for immigrant women to enter the labor market.</p> <p><b>The project:</b> Örnköldsvik Folk High School (prev. Hampnäs Folk High School) and Örnköldsvik Municipality started this project during 2008-07-01 – 2009-12-31 with focus on immigrant women.</p> <p><b>Details:</b> the aim was to give immigrant women who are far from the labor market an opportunity to train their new language in an informal and natural way, while at the same time getting contacts out in the community that can provide an opportunity for an extension. The group participants were partly from the Employment and Development Guarantee from the Employment Service, resulting in the group being a mixture of long-term unemployed Swedish women and women from different nationalities, which created a good environment for more effective language development. The belief is that language improvement is easier by engaging in activities that are of the group's interest. In addition to practical activities, work on topics in Swedish,</p>	<p><a href="https://www.esf.se/en/Resultat/Projektbanken/Behallaren-for-projekt/Mellersta-Norrland/KVISFI--kvinnor-i-samverkan-for-integration/">https://www.esf.se/en/Resultat/Projektbanken/Behallaren-for-projekt/Mellersta-Norrland/KVISFI--kvinnor-i-samverkan-for-integration/</a></p>
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	<p>social sciences, health and wellness and the computer as aids, etc. is included. By offering internships within and outside the school, the participants will be able to create their own social network through which they will find longer internships and eventually work (esf.se, n.d.).</p> <p><b>The organization:</b> Örnsköldsvik Folk High School (prev. Hampnäs Folk High School) is a folk high school located in central Örnsköldsvik.</p> <p>It is a multicultural venue where providing basic and special qualifications to further study at higher level (Rvn.se, 2018).</p>	
<p><i>Begripligt hela vägen (Understandable all the way)</i></p>	<p><b>The challenge:</b> the challenges of integration of newly arrived children. <b>The project:</b> Stömsund Municipality started this project during January 2012 – June 2014 with the aim to develop a method and educational tools to create better conditions for newly arrived children during their first two years in Sweden.</p> <p>In short, it was about making the migration process more understandable for children and young people. <b>Details:</b> The project's mentor team, which worked practically with support for children, parents and staff, became a permanent department in the municipality of Strömsund under the name Resource Center Integration. The Future and Development Administration within Strömsund Municipality has carried out a number of development projects with co-financing from the European Refugee Fund and the European Return Fund for a number of years. In the projects, they have developed materials, methods and models to develop the reception of children and young</p>	<p><a href="http://www.begripligt.nu/projekt.shtml#">http://www.begripligt.nu/projekt.shtml#</a></p>

	<p>people (Begripligt.nu, 2015).</p> <p><b>The organization:</b> The Future and Development Administration (FUF) mission is to develop the municipality and its citizens, women, men, girls and boys. The administration is also a coherent organization for the municipality's investments in raising skills, growth and social development (Stromsund.se, 2018).</p>	
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#### 4. Support and Integration needs of Refugee Families (analysis of FGDs with Refugees)

##### a. Participants' characteristics

The focus group discussions were held in two sessions with a total number of 12+8 women between the ages of 20-45 years old. The average age of the participants was 31. Two persons did not share their age. The majority of the women were from Middle Eastern countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Kurdistan, Lebanon and Syria, a small number were from African countries such as Nigeria, Ethiopia, Guinea and Morocco, and from countries such as Bangladesh, and Armenia.

One of the participants had arrived to Sweden 9 months prior to the FGD, and the longest duration of time living in Sweden was 3 years. The majority of the participants had been living in Sweden 1-2 years. Many of the participants were married, and had between 1-5 children. One did not share her marriage status. Among them, only four participants had relatives in Sweden.

12 participants had graduated from high school in their countries of birth, two had no education. Two had studied at university level. The rest of the participants had elementary education.

Beside their mother tongue Arabic, Dari, Kurdish, Tigrinya, Armenian, English and Persian, most of them also spoke another language, such as Arabic, Urdu, Amhara, Yoruba, Russian, English, Persian and Spanish. Two participants possessed the skill of tailoring, and one participant knitting, while four mentioned their culinary skills in baking and cooking. One participant had worked as a hairdresser in her country of birth, another sew curtains, one had worked as an account officer and human resources manager, two had been teachers while another one had worked at daycare. None of the



participants worked at the time of the FGD. The reason is that as asylum seeker, one is not allowed to work with payment.

They described their daily life tasks consisting of cooking, cleaning, washing the dishes and learning Swedish. During their spare time, they went to the library, church, language cafés, took walks and met with friends. The participants stated learning Swedish is crucial since they are living in Sweden. They were all in the process of learning the Swedish language by attending a language course and also reading the news in easy Swedish since it is much easier to understand. They also read children's books for their children and watched children's TV programs. The learning process was sometimes difficult and sometimes easy, new words were the hardest.

#### b. Challenges of refugee families in their daily life

Regarding the challenges they found in their daily life, all participants agreed on language being a barrier in their daily life. One stated that the language barrier made it difficult to establish new contacts. Another factor such as the climate was also mentioned. One participant expressed that "getting into the system" is challenging. Another expressed that much is expensive.

#### c. Analysis of the specific needs of families

The participants mentioned the difficulties of establishing contacts with Swedish families hence they did not know where to encounter new contacts. In order to get information on important issues, the women received support from their family or relatives.

#### d. Specific Challenges of refugee women

Regarding specific challenges of refugee women, many women experienced a shock due to the different lifestyle and culture in Sweden. The expectations on becoming integrated into the society without having time to process the heavy change of having moved to another country were identified as a challenge. The language was identified as a challenge, but some expressed it had become easier with time. Some identified housing and work as a challenge, and not having any relatives in the country.

#### e. Specific Challenges of refugee children

The participants' children were in pre-school. The worries of the families were related to the children's integration and balancing the culture of origin with the culture of Sweden.

#### f. Access to information on their rights and to public services



Information brochures for public services are available in many languages, also many websites such as the Migration Agency and Social Insurance Office offer translation in many languages such as Arabic and Dari. The participants received mostly help from their family, relatives or friends in order to access public services. Examples of services they had used were health center, Migration Agency and employment services.

g. Identification of education/training needs for refugees

Regarding identification of education or training needs, many participants emphasized the importance of language classes and training in the structure of the society. Another subject mentioned was learning what public services are related to what kind of errands and how to approach public services. They had not participated in any training programs in Sweden. Further suggestions, which they would like to participate in, were English classes, cooking classes, painting and tailoring, and computer classes. They were also interested in trainings led by midwives, pediatricians, nurses and pre-school teachers. The subject violence against women was also mentioned in order to make their daily life easier. If they were given the opportunity, they would like to learn more about topics mentioned above, and work with children, or as midwives, and against violence against women.



## 5. Mapping the needs of refugee families and existing best practices (Analysis of Interviews with NGOs)

### a. Participants' characteristics and experience working with refugees

Interviews were done with a Swedish teacher for migrant women, a pedagogue working at an open day care with migrant women, an operations manager at course activity and daycare center for refugees, a consultant special needs educator working with asylum seekers who recently received their residence permit, and a high school teacher working with refugee youths. All interviewees had several years' long experience working with migrants and refugees, whereas one had once been a refugee.

### b. Identification of the specific needs and challenges of refugee families

To the questions of specific needs and challenges of refugee families, the teacher stated that learning the Swedish language and getting in touch with native Swedes could be difficult for newly arrived families. Due to the busy work- and family life of Swedes, there is a lack of opportunities for natural encounters between Swedes and newly arrived persons. Depending on cultural background and country of origin, women from traditional cultures can face challenges in terms of lack of socialization with others due to their differing lifestyle from the open and outgoing lifestyle in Sweden. Regarding families, she stated that understanding the structure of society in Sweden could be a further difficulty of newly arrived families. In accessing public services, the telephone queues one has to endure in order to access most public services could be another challenge. By offering Swedish language courses and social orientation, their organization addressed such needs and challenges. Weekly consultations with midwife and professionals from the childcare centers were also offered.

The pedagogue worked with migrant women who came to the open daycare on a daily basis in order to spend time with their toddler children and with other migrant women. According to her, when refugee families and persons first arrive to the host country, they shall be given time to land and recover from the traumas they have experienced in the departure from their home country and loved ones, not least the events happening in their home country. Many times, the fast paced integration of newly arrived does not have a positive effect on the individual, she stated. She also identified language as another challenge. Further, regarding women facing any additional challenges, she referred to the shock on women suddenly being the family member on whom the biggest responsibility lies. Suddenly, the mother is the one who is expected to attend meetings at school, being in touch with child health center and pre-schools. In addition to that, she lacks knowledge in the language. Regarding the needs of refugee families, she said, *"You are not in need of that you don't know you are lacking."* When one first



arrives to a new country and does not understand the way in which society works, it is hard to know about one's needs. By working with the family as a main point, their organization collaborated with child health center, midwives and the organization "Råd & Stöd" (Advice & Support), a family support group as part of the Municipality's healthcare department. Their work required being flexible and responsive, through which they helped addressing such needs and challenges. Speaking the language of Arabic had been a major help in understanding the women and families' needs without them directly expressing it. In her experience, many refugees and asylum seekers knew more about their rights than their obligations, which she expressed an interest in focusing on, since, as she expressed, "*obligations are paired with rights*". According to her, there was a lack of information about the healthcare system, resulting in confusion about the prescribed medicines differing from the ones prescribed by doctors in their home countries, such as antibiotics.

The operations manager at course activity and daycare center for refugees mentioned regarding the main challenges of refugee families, managing the seemingly never ending wait for residence permit that affects their life being a challenge which prevents them in making plans for the future. As a result, they are not able to support the needs of their children due to the stress caused by the uncertainty. Regarding additional challenges for women, she mentioned how the men find their way, learn Swedish, and are outside participating in activities. She expressed that the gender roles tend to become reinforced. If the women have small children, they tend to get isolated at home with their children. According to her, the women were very smart and bright and sometimes were found to hold back in order to not run past the men. The main needs of refugee families according to her were routines in their daily life, where they would be able to establish new relations and a new social network. She also mentioned the need to understand their asylum process. Their organization had a lawyer working part-time to help them with understanding their asylum process. By having access to a lawyer, referring to the Migration Agency, and trying to establish a social network with Red Cross and Swedish Church their organization helped addressing such issues. Many tend to learn about their rights through friends, which not always tends to be correct information. New participants at the center were offered an introduction course in social orientation, where basic topics such as health and corporal punishments of children were covered. Further topics covered were rights and obligations, and also what happens after receiving residence permit. Another course was orientation with topics such as democracy and politics. The organization had also received support in order to organize seminars about occupational guidance. The lawyer was at disposal for further guidance in applying for work permit. According to her, there was a lack of information within the areas of health and healthcare, especially about telephone queues and having to choose options in order to get to the destination. She mentioned



that the more computerized services get, the farther away one comes from humans and the less accessible the services become. There is also a difference between young and elderly, regarding challenges. The families needed support in accessing public services, she expressed. The family support section in “Råd & Stöd” as part of the Municipality’s healthcare department, offers families help in such issues, yet it is not always easy when one does not know how to receive help.

The consultant special needs educator mentioned children’s responsibilities and the challenge to understand one’s place and how the components of the environment interact with each other. There tends to be a great responsibility on children to understand the context, she expressed. Most women in particular have been housewives and it is a mental challenge to understand the never before experienced expectations of the host society, such as having to work. Despite high education, many women might have chosen to get married, have children and live as housewives. The main needs of refugee families were friends who provide support as friends, and not because of a good deed. “They need real friends, not volunteer friends”, she said. They need friends who are capable of accepting the families’ improvements and personal developments. Refugee families need to find their roles and find a platform in which they speak without facing judgement. Despite not working very closely with migrants as a municipal organization, they addressed the needs of the families by showing patience and showing a good attitude towards their needs. Through social orientation in mother tongue, asylum seekers learn about their rights in Sweden. Further she expressed the lack of information for refugees regarding “small” rules such as what will happen when one does not wear safety helmet when riding a bike. In accessing public services, challenges may occur depending on the course of action. “Uppsala Träffpunkten” arranged by Red Cross help in these issues, however, if one does not know about them, it is difficult. Websites can be complicated; she proposed that there should be call services with clear instructions for newly arrived in order to guide them to their destination.

The high school teacher working with refugee youths named the uncertainty of whether they will receive their residence permit or not as a challenge for refugees, as well as coming to a new country with new rules, norms and attitudes. Besides departure from their home country, language is another challenge. Women face additional challenges facing new expectations on behavior and lifestyle. According to him, the main needs of refugee families were warmth and friendliness. In addition, knowing what kind of help there is to receive and receiving support when applying for help. When a new student arrived at school, the school met them with a warm and kind reception. The teachers were also at disposal to guide the students in the right direction in order to receive help. That said, the organization addressed the need of the refugees



in that way. The students learned about their rights through school and the Migration Agency. There was an unevenness in how much information the students have about the structure of society and their rights, thus he has not experienced a lack of knowledge in a specific area. Language is the main challenge in accessing public services, he stated.

c. Identification of education/training needs of refugees

Regarding education or training needs of refugees, the teacher stated that information about the school system in Sweden would be beneficial. Further, information about daycare/pre-school and their responsibilities, together with what kind of mutual expectations there is to have between families and daycares would also be beneficial. Another important key was information about the healthcare system, such as when it is suitable to contact the health center and when to go to the hospital, and information about children's health center. Another subject suggested was on how and where to meet new people. Lastly, the subject of family roles in Sweden, such as identities, equality and rights, and what to do if a problem occurs, are important to talk about. To conclude:

- School system in Sweden (Responsibilities and expectations of/from daycare/pre-schools towards the families and vice versa)
- Healthcare system, when to contact health center and hospital
- Where to meet new people

The pedagogue stated that a compulsory training on parenting was crucial, where they not only learn that corporal punishment of children is not okay, but how parents must treat their children instead. Many may already know that corporal punishment of children is not okay, but now know what other ways there are to treat their children. It can be easy to forget that individuals coming from the third world can be high educated and illiterate. Illiterate people do also want to work, but obtaining the language when illiterate is difficult. Opportunities must be also available for illiterates in order for them to start working. There must be a balance where everybody gets the opportunity to find their own way. Information that could be useful for the daily life of a refugee would be

- Social orientation,
- To learn about the structure of the Swedish society,
- The parental program Triple P (Positive Parental Program)
- Children's rights

The operations manager at course activity and daycare center for refugees stated that training on the Swedish language, and the way society works from basic knowledge to



more advanced knowledge are important topics. For example, paying for pre-school and how to hire an apartment. Costs that can come as a shock when one finally has a job and earns money. Further she suggested information within the following areas:

- Healing on the way. What can happen in a family where the roles are mixed up? Referring to the book *Children in our hearts* by Sonia Sherefay in which the parenting role in Sweden is discussed and taught.
- Entering the parenting role, safety thinking, night reflexes, not much candy, parent role despite stress
- Managing stress levels.

The consultant special needs educator stated that refugee families need well organized programs, such as Swedish from Day 1, a Swedish course free of charge for asylum seekers, run by professionals and not volunteers. The reason behind that, she explained, is the risk of volunteers not being able to engage in long-term participation due to changes in life. She suggested training in the following areas:

- Typical information in school environments, such as weekly letters, information from pre-schools what it consists of. Maybe asking the pre-school how they expect the parents to prepare their children. How the children shall be dressed, why it is not okay to have candy or Coca Cola at school etc.
- Pronunciation.
- A brief social orientation about families.

The high school teacher working with refugee youths stated that it is important to offer trainings on obligations and rights, and social issues in order to operate in a democratic society. Rights of children, girls and women. He suggested training in the following areas:

- Differences in women's rights
- Employment
- Education
- Children's (girls') rights, corporal punishment of children

#### d. Identification of training needs for volunteers

The teacher expressed that volunteerism does contribute to the integration of newly arrived, and referred to a friend who worked at a school, where they arranged language cafés at the school one day a week where discussions were either related to a decided topic or could be made freely. Their organization had volunteers covering Swedish-speaking meetings. According to the teacher, language cafés with volunteers could easily turn in to an interrogation if the volunteers do not have a common ground with



the participants, resulting in one-sided questions. It is important to pair the volunteers with participants who are in relevant age and lifestyle with the volunteers. *“A challenge is when the integration turns into a project instead of a mutual interaction”*, she expressed. Both parts must enjoy and gain something of such exchange. *“A give and take relationship that is not focused on ‘receiving help’”*, she continued.

The pedagogue stated that volunteerism is good, yet one can get tired due to lack of support. There may be difficult to find others who can volunteer instead of one, and if one aimed to include volunteerism as a considerable part of their life, one must work very hard in order to achieve this. There were two volunteers at the organization, covering the subjects Swedish and social orientation. A challenge that volunteers faced in their work with refugees was the language, however, it is easier if the participants speak English. If the volunteers have no prior work experience in the area they volunteer in, or are new in the environment they want to volunteer in, they should be trained in the following areas:

- How to meet with and treat other people
- Leadership, on how to lead groups
- Knowledge in the subjects that may be brought up in the group. Shaping the content of the subjects with the help of regular employees who meet the participants on a daily basis and know their needs and wants.

The operations manager at course activity and daycare center for refugees expressed that volunteerism help a lot to the integration of families. Relationships are established in a completely different way than with professionals. Volunteerism shall be done safely for the sake of the participants and not the volunteers. Sometimes, as a volunteer it is important to reflect on *“For whom am I doing this?”* Their organization had two volunteers in the mother and child-Swedish group. There were further retired teachers who previously worked for church perishes which ran such services. They volunteered for leading Swedish groups. At total, 11 volunteers had group activities per week. A challenge for the volunteers was the uncertainty about how many participants would show up every time. This was a common issue since many of the participants had small children where unpredictable issues could occur. She listed the following training subjects for volunteers:

- Learning about the asylum process
- Trauma
- Being illiterate



The consultant special needs educator expressed that volunteerism is good as long as it is done on the right basis. The challenges volunteers may face in their work could be that they become a representative of the new society and may need support in order to reflect over their role. She listed the following training subjects for volunteers:

- The close society
- Values and norm/criticism. Reflecting on why they want to be volunteers.
- Training on pronunciation

The high school teacher working with refugee youths stated that volunteerism is good, and can engage the families in activities such as sports. However, it should not replace professionals' skills, she stated. Volunteers could face challenges in finding balance between professionalism and volunteerism, and also possible skepticism from the environment. He listed the following training subjects:

- The importance and meaning of language/mother tongue
- The boundary between professional and volunteer
- Training on the countries of origin.

#### e. Identification of Best practices

The teacher stated that the most successful integration initiative in Uppsala has been "Borrow an Uppsala resident" by the city library. The opportunity was given to residents of Uppsala and newly arrived persons to get to know each other. One positive remark on that initiative is that men and women were not necessarily paired with the opposite gender hence to some persons, it is a crucial matter. Another initiative has been "Swedish from day 1" free language courses and social orientation for newly arrived, offered by the Adult education associations in Sweden. The operations manager mentioned that the County Administrative Board has received the coordination responsibility for efforts for asylum seekers. She mentioned that integration begins already on the first day in Sweden, and not on a later occasion. The consultant special needs educator mentioned the integration aspect becoming a part of the local agreement between the Municipality and associations with the help of SIU (Cooperation Organization for Immigrant Associations in Uppsala). The high school teacher working with refugee youths mentioned the integration project "Together Strong" which aimed to include refugee youths in sports. This gives the youths the opportunity to meet on equal basis, he explained.

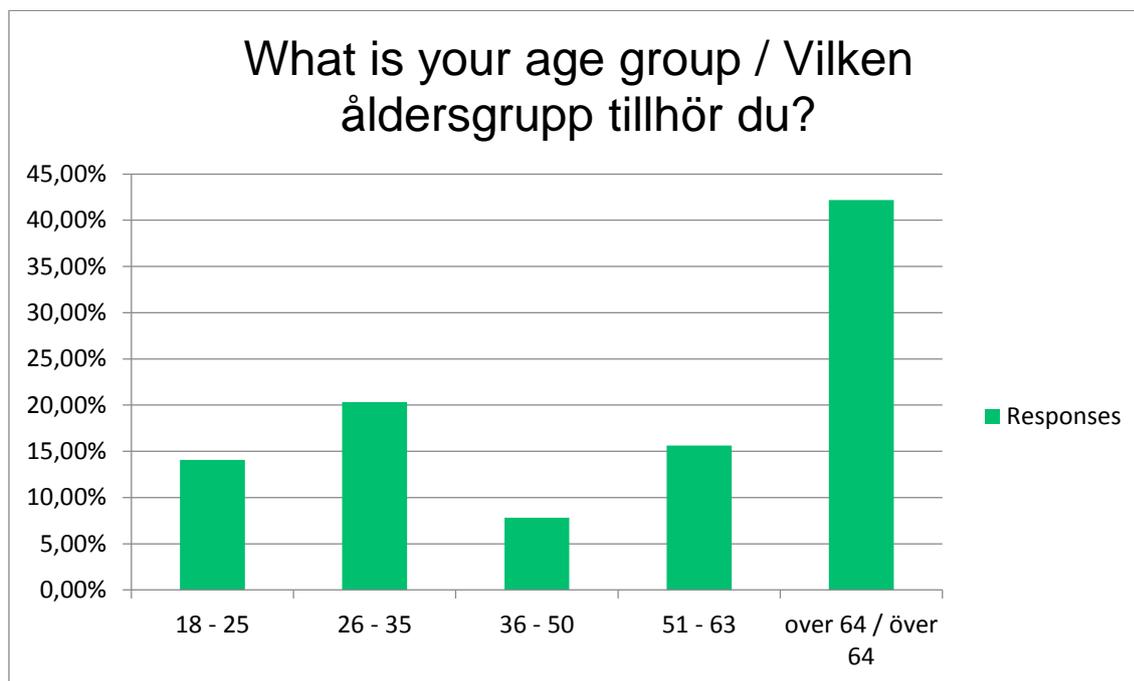


## 6. Mapping Volunteers' Experience (Analysis of Questionnaires with Volunteers)

In order to map the volunteers' experience working with asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, and identify any specific challenges they face while supporting or working with refugees, a questionnaire was sent out to various organizations managing volunteer activities. The questionnaire covered aspects of identification of education/training needs of refugees from the volunteer's eyes, as well as the challenges that they have faced as volunteers. The questionnaire also covered identification of training needs experienced by the volunteers in order to be able to improve/offer better volunteering working with the target group. A brief analysis of the current initiatives to train/educate volunteers will conclude this section.

During the period of December 2017 – February 2018, a total number of 64 volunteers answered the questionnaire targeting volunteers' work with the target group.

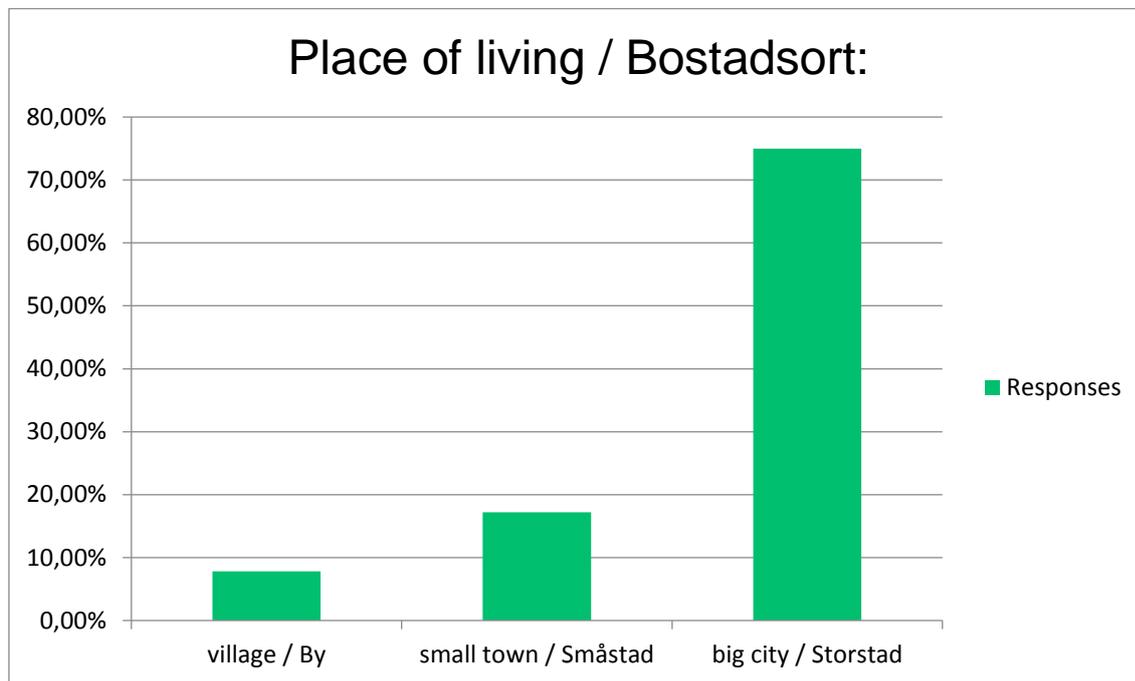
### a. Participants' characteristics



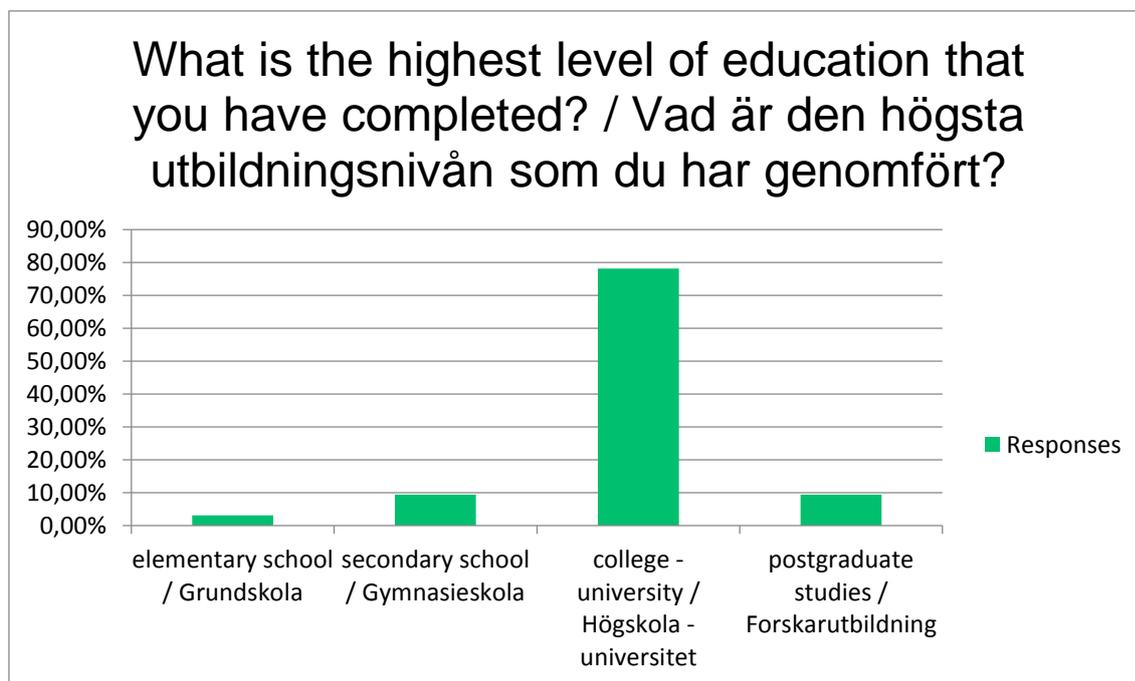
In total, 54 women (approx. 84%) and 10 men (approx. 15%) took part in the questionnaire, where up to 42 % were over the age of 64, constituting the majority of the respondents. The next largest group were between the ages of 26-35, constituting approx. 20% of the respondents. The majority of the respondents identified as Swedish. Other nationalities such as Russian/Swedish, German, Danish, Persian, Kenyan, Afghan,



and Somali were represented by mostly single individuals. Those who were not from Sweden had lived in the country between 3.5-47 years.

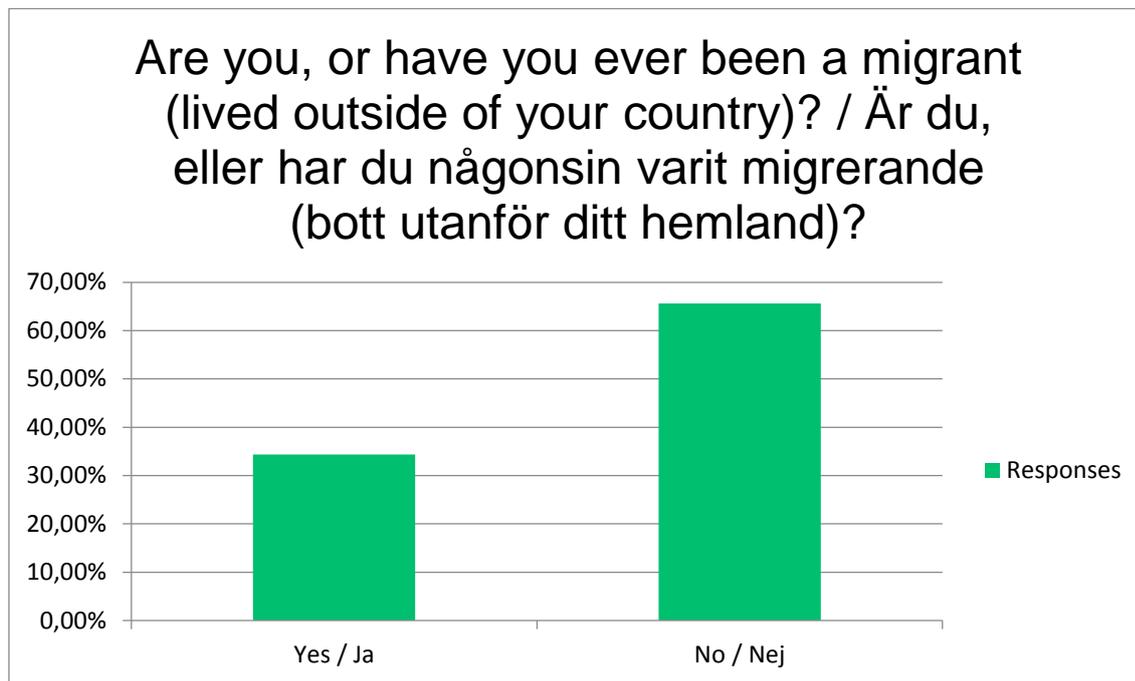


As seen in the table above, 75% of the respondents lived in city, while approx. 17% lived in a small town and approx. 8% lived in a village.

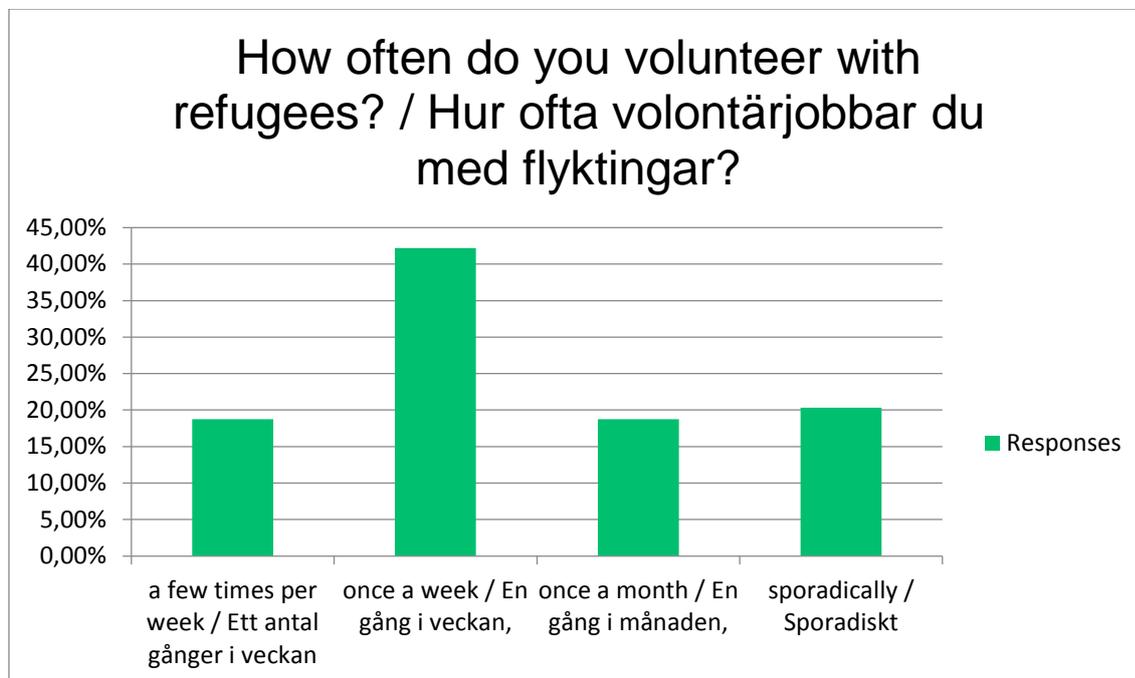


Regarding level of education, the table above shows that approx. 78% of the respondents had college/university education, approx. 9% had completed secondary school and postgraduate studies, and only 3% had completed only elementary school.

Examples of the participants' occupation were psychologists, librarians, entrepreneurs, students, and a number of retired participants.



Approx. 4% answered yes to the question of being a refugee/Internally Displaced Person or coming from a refugee/IDP family. Further, approx. 34% had lived outside of their country, and approx. 65.6% had not.



The table above shows that 42% of the participants worked with refugees once a week while the number of participants volunteering once a month, a few times per week and

sporadically were equal, each category constituting approximately 19-20% of the respondents.

Answer choices	Responses	
	Percentage	Count
Provide trainings - classes	34,38%	22
Provide healthcare services	4,69%	3
Assist to find employment	4,69%	3
Assist to find housing	7,81%	5
Organize or participate in recreational activities with refugees	29,69%	19
Collect material (food, clothes, toys etc.) for refugees	10,94%	7
Offer interpretation - translation	14,06%	9
Accompany refugees in government offices and other services	18,75%	12
Offer transportation	4,69%	3
Other (please specify)	48,44%	31

The multiple-choice question “What kind of volunteer work do you do?” provided the above answers. While approx. 34% provided trainings in form of classes; approx. 29% organized or participated in recreational activities with refugees, constituting the third largest group of categories. The largest group of category offered other forms of volunteer work, constituting approx. 48% of the respondents. Other forms of volunteer work constituted of participation in language café, the municipal library’s integration program “Lend an Uppsala resident” where volunteers spend a day with a new inhabitant of Uppsala and practice speaking Swedish, offering group exercise training for newly arrived women, giving legal advice, and helping individuals to get in touch with relatives in other countries.

b. Identification of education/training needs of refugees from the volunteer’s eyes.

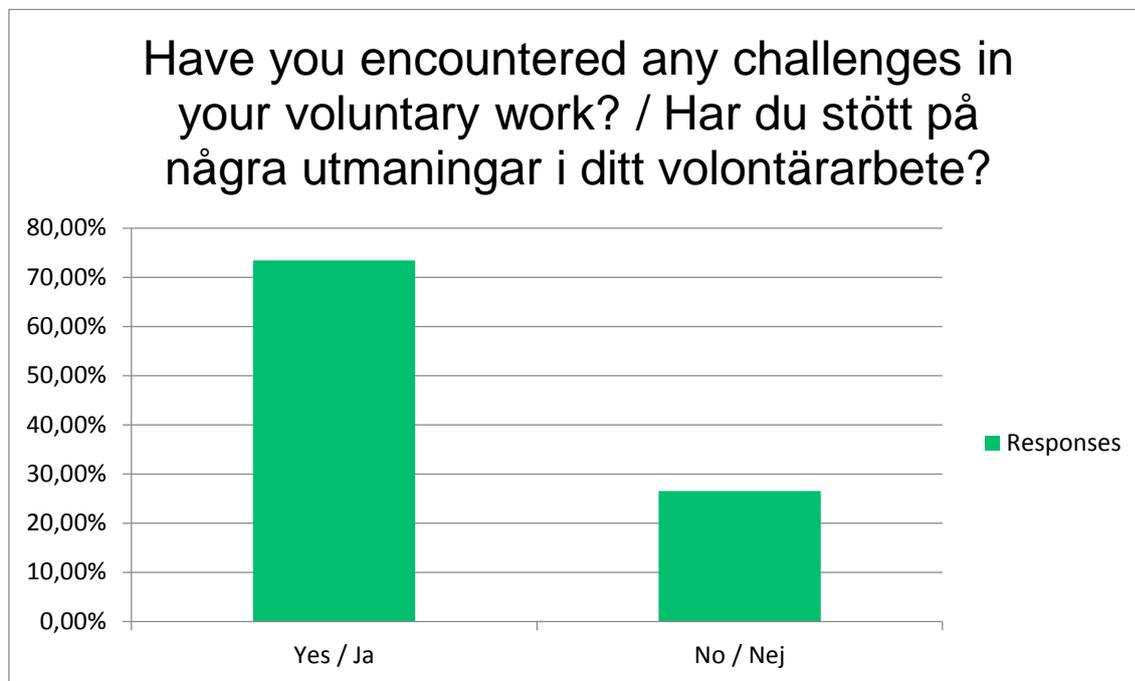
Regarding the greatest challenges refugee families face in Sweden, the volunteers were asked to specify up to three subjects. The main themes identified in the provided answers are as follows:

- Socializing with Swedes
- Finding housing and employment
- Learning the Swedish language



- Lengthy asylum process that affects their health
- Cultural differences

c. Challenges volunteers face

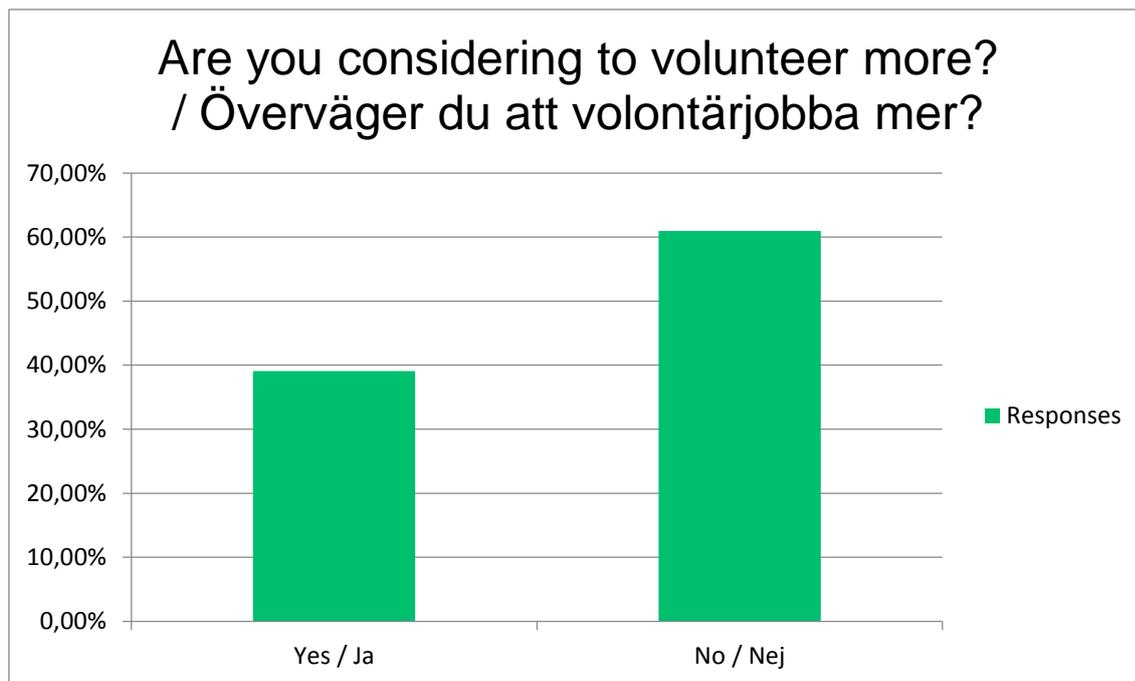


Approximately 73% of the volunteers had encountered challenges in their voluntary work. When asked to describe the challenges, the main themes identified in the provided answers were:

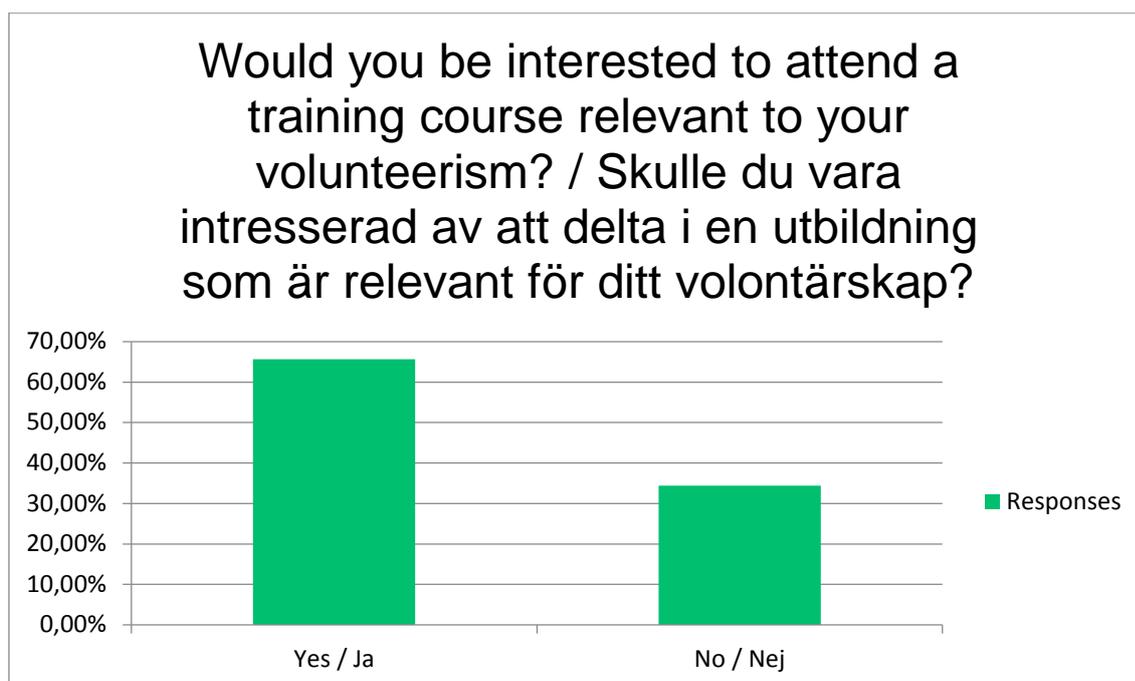
- Differences in education and language knowledge among the refugees
- Lacking knowledge in teaching
- Encountering mental illness due to waiting for asylum claim
- Difficulties dealing with authorities
- Not being able to help as much as they want

d. Identification of training needs for volunteers





While the majority of the participants did not consider volunteering more, 70% of the respondents did not have extra time and/or had other obligations, whereas 20% mentioned other reasons such as mental strain, already being engaged in volunteer activities and due to studies. One person stated, *“You cannot get involved eventually. It affects oneself, one’s own family; those one engage in become one’s friends, and it becomes difficult to draw reasonable limits. You get well pumped out, even though you get back and I feel that I’ve lost faith in my country’s potential and want to help people in need.”*



However, approx. 65% showed interest in attending a training course relevant to their volunteerism. When asked to provide up to five subjects on which they would like to receive training, the main themes identified in the provided answers were:

Psychological:

- Trauma
- Things good to know of when dealing with people with PTSD
- Support in order to be able to cope helping vulnerable refugees
- Dealing with crisis
- Psychological first aid
- How not to be affected by the stories one hears on a personal level
- How to think/what to do in order to not be worn out when dealing with people in difficult situations
- Group support for volunteers
- How to address refugees' problems as a volunteer

Family and women oriented:

- Parenting
- How to reach mothers with children
- How do women live in the countries of origin, what is customary there
- How to get older women to meet refugees as well as Swedes

Legal/social oriented

- Everyday legal advice
- Sweden's routines for receiving immigrants
- Information about the process of rejection to expulsion
- How refugee reception works in various municipalities (who is in charge of what)
- Information about Swedish employment agency
- Helping refugees contact authorities
- Education in Swedish legislation - in the field of refugee reception
- Helping refugees to find work
- Helping refugees to find housing
- How to help the refugees to become integrated in society
- How we can see things from different perspectives. Thoughts and expectations of newly arrived about Sweden and gain knowledge about what people think of Sweden



- What is needed to enter the Swedish society without risking getting paperless, getting into criminal circles or just not being able to enter the society despite having paper, etc.?
- Organizing activities
- How to a build continuous social network

#### Pedagogy/teaching/culture

- Teaching (pedagogy)
- Differences between the Swedish language and other language branches. What are the specific challenges?
- How to teach Swedish as a second language, specially to illiterates
- Suggestions on easy books and other easy literature
- Information about cultures and religions
- Differences in culture
- Geography and social science in the countries of origin
- Training on equality for newly arrived

#### Individual oriented

- How one would like to be treated, what one would like to know as newly arrived
- How to help them keeping themselves busy while waiting for their asylum claim
- Ethics

e. Analysis of current initiatives to train/educate volunteers





Approx. 70% of the respondents had not attended any volunteer training sessions. However, approx. 30% had attended a training session through organizations such as Red Cross, Church of Sweden, City Mission (Stadsmissionen). A number of the respondents had also participated in trainings/courses provided by study associations such as Medborgarskolan and Vuxenskolan. In general, the trainings were found useful, having provided an informative picture of the needs of the refugees, information about the current situation in exposed countries, legislation and routines for searching for lost family members.

## 7. National Level Recommendations

In conclusion, the results of the FG discussions, interviews and questionnaires show that training is needed in several areas targeting refugee and asylum seeking families and volunteers working with refugees and asylum seekers. The suggestions made by the focus group participants on subjects of training focused on training in computer



skills, crafts and tailoring. Suggestions were also made on trainings in healthcare led by midwives, pediatricians and nurses. Further, the subject of violence against women was suggested.

The interviews with representatives of organizations working with refugees and asylum seekers resulted in suggestions for subjects of training for refugees and asylum seekers in the following areas: Primarily, trainings targeting families shall be implemented for refugee and asylum seeker families in order to shape and refine the roles of the family members, not least the children. Children's rights shall be covered also. Further suggestion is training on the structure of society and democracy. Also suggestion for training in Swedish school system with focus on pre-school and elementary school, where the mutual expectations and responsibilities between families and pre-school is explained, together with routines such as weekly letters from schools, dress code for children according to weather etc. Another subject, which is useful, is socialization, where to meet new people. Regarding families, training on what can happen in a family when the family roles are mixed up was suggested, with reference to the book *Children in our hearts* by Sonia Sherefay in which the parenting role in Sweden is discussed and taught. Further parenting roles shall be included, i.e. information on the reason behind why too much candy is not good for children, especially at school, and the importance of dressing children in reflexes during dark times of the year. It is also important with training in managing stress due to the uncertainty about whether or not families will receive their residence permit. The families shall have access to support in order to understand their asylum process and their status.

Regarding the greatest challenges refugee families face in Sweden, the volunteers were asked to specify up to three subjects. The main themes identified in the provided answers are as follows:

- Socializing with Swedes
- Finding housing and employment
- Learning the Swedish language
- Lengthy asylum process that affects their health
- Cultural differences

The subjects of training for volunteers provided in the questionnaire enabled the identification of five major areas in which training is needed: psychology, family/women, legal/social, and pedagogy/teaching/culture and on individual level. Suggestions were made on trainings providing the volunteers to learn how to handle encounters externally and internally; gaining knowledge about parenting and women's situation in countries of origin, information about refugee reception in Sweden, providing help to find employment and housing, language teaching and gaining



knowledge about cultural differences, and also differences in religion. Subjects such as ethics, what one would like to know as new in Sweden and how to help someone keep themselves busy while waiting for asylum claim were also suggested.



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# SO FIE

Support for empowerment and integration of refugee families

## Contacts



### Verein Multikulturell

[www.migration.cc](http://www.migration.cc)

*Barbara Bitschnau: [b.bitschnau@migration.cc](mailto:b.bitschnau@migration.cc)*



### CESIE

[www.cesie.org](http://www.cesie.org)

*Giovanni Barbieri: [giovanni.barbieri@cesie.org](mailto:giovanni.barbieri@cesie.org)*



### CARDET

[www.cardet.org](http://www.cardet.org)

*Irini Anastassiou: [irini.anastassiou@cardet.org](mailto:irini.anastassiou@cardet.org)*



### Mozaik Human Resources Development

[www.mozaik.org.tr](http://www.mozaik.org.tr)

*Olçay Belli: [o.belli@mozaik.org.tr](mailto:o.belli@mozaik.org.tr)*



### Stiftelsen Kursverksamheten Vid U-A Universitet

[www.folkuniversitetet.se/In-English/](http://www.folkuniversitetet.se/In-English/)

*Ali Rashidi: [ali.rashidi@folkuniversitetet.se](mailto:ali.rashidi@folkuniversitetet.se)*



[support-refugees.eu](http://support-refugees.eu)



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