

From migrants to workers

Regional and local practices on integration of labour migrants and refugees in rural areas in the Nordic countries

Edited by Lisbeth Greve Harbo, Timothy Heleniak and Åsa Ström Hildestrand

NORDREGIO WORKING PAPER 2017:5



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Nordregio Working Paper 2017:5

ISBN: 978-91-87295-51-5

ISSN: 1403-2511

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Stockholm, Sweden, 2017

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Preface

This publication reports on the outcomes of a project addressing regional and local practices on integration of labour migrants and refugees in rural areas, commissioned by the Nordic Working Group on Demography and Welfare under the Nordic Council of Ministers' Committee of Senior Officials for Regional Policy, and carried out by Nordregio.

Addressing the broad topic of demographic changes has been the main task for the Nordic Working Group on Demography and Welfare during its running period from 2013-2016 with an aim of producing knowledge and exchanging experiences regarding the challenges and opportunities induced by the current demographic and labour-market related changes in Nordic regions and municipalities. The work produced under the auspice of the working group has highlighted innovative national, regional and local solutions to handle demographic challenges and opportunities. Through the Nordic Demography Programme 2013-2015, innovative Nordic collaboration projects on the topic have been funded. The working group also launched www.nordmap.se – an online web-mapping tool on demography and other indicators.

The impact of demographic change varies significantly between regions and municipalities with a relatively high proportion of young people in the urban areas and older people in peripheral and rural areas; a territorial pattern across the Nordic countries, which will persist and may even be reinforced in the decades

to come. This will have an impact on welfare systems and thus pose a challenge to service provision as well as impact the local labour market. Therefore, the role that labour migrants, refugees and other newcomers play for the regional and local labour markets and communities is highly relevant in light of these current depopulation trends.

The case studies on immigration and integration reported in this publication is to be taken as a first explorative inquiry into the varied local immigration trends and practices regarding integration carried out in Nordic regions and municipalities. The case studies and desk-top research were carried out during June-November 2016 and considering the volatility and current political attention to this policy field, described measures and interventions may change rapidly just as the national policies that impact the local and regional practices may do.

In relation to the topic of this collection of regional and local practices on integration of labour migrants and refugees in rural areas, the Nordic Council of Ministers have also launched the New Nordic Integration programme 2016-2018, see <http://www.nordicwelfare.org/integrationnorden>.

For more information on the Nordic Working Group on Demography and Welfare, please refer to: <http://www.nordregio.se/wgdemography>

Introduction

By Timothy Heleniak

In recent decades, the Nordic countries have been net recipients of international migrants, gaining far more people from immigration than the number of people who emigrated. Since 1990, net immigration has accounted for two-thirds of total population increase in the Nordic region. The increase in immigration has been especially large since 2000 driven in part by several expansions of the European Union. At the same time, some of the Nordic countries, namely Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, have been the destination of large numbers of asylum seekers and refugees. The Nordic countries have long been at the forefront of providing safe haven to those in need of international protection. In 2015, the number of refugees and asylum seekers in Europe and the Nordic countries increased substantially. In 2015, Sweden received the second most asylum seekers of any EU country, after Germany, and by far the most in relation to its population. In 2015, Sweden received 163,000 asylum applicants, which was equivalent to 1.7 percent of its population. In that year, Denmark received 21,225 asylum applicants (0.4 percent of the total population), Norway received 31,145 (0.6 percent), and Finland 32,476 (0.6 percent).

While there has been increased immigration into the Nordic countries, there has been population decline and rapid population aging in the remote rural regions, outside of the large urban centres. As noted in the State of the Nordic Region 2016 report (Nordregio 2016), over the past twenty years, more than 97 percent of the population growth in the Nordic region has been in the 30 largest functional urban areas. As part of the work programme for 2013 to 2016, the Nordic Working Group on Demography and Welfare commissioned a study titled *From Migrants to Workers: Immigrants' role in local labour markets in the Nordic region* (see also Nordregio Policy Brief 2016:5). The aim of the project is to explore the role and functions that immigrants play in maintaining a well-functioning labour market and potentially also in the development of the local and regional labour markets. The project focuses on sparsely populated areas. It consists of two parts: a quantitative analysis of total and the composition of migration into Nordic countries and regions, and case

studies in selected Nordic regions of the actual process of integration. The studies examined the possibility for taking advantage of the large immigration into the Nordic countries to compensate for the population decline in rural and remote regions. This working paper presents findings from the case studies of integration conducted in rural regions in the five Nordic countries and the Faroe Islands.

The Nordic countries generally score quite high on international rankings of integration policies. According to the most recent rankings of 38 countries in the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), Sweden was ranked number 1, Finland and Norway were tied at number 4, Denmark was number 13, and Iceland was ranked 23rd. While the Nordic countries have policies in place for the integration of immigrants, especially people who arrive under humanitarian grounds, integration outcomes are not always that good. According to the first OECD comparison of integration across all countries, unemployment rates for the foreign-born compared to native-born in the Nordic countries were among the lowest (OECD/EU 2015). However, integration is a multi-dimensional concept and labour market integration is just one aspect of overall integration of new migrants. The large number of refugees and asylum seekers into the Nordic countries in the past few years has pushed immigration and integration into the headlines of public policy debates. The Nordic countries have simultaneously responded with policies aimed at controlling migration and policies designed to assist with the integration process.

In addition to policy analyses of immigration and integration, there is also a growing academic literature examining these issues in the Nordic countries. For example, see the latest issue of the Nordic Economic Policy Review (NEPR), on labour market integration of refugees and immigrants and educational attainment of refugee children in the Nordic countries (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2017). This working paper contributes to that body of knowledge by examining the processes of integration at the local level in the Nordic region. The purpose of the case studies was to try to understand the actual mechanisms, best practices, and barriers to integration in selected regions. While many

of the recent newcomers to the Nordic region have come as humanitarian migrants, the focus of the case studies was on all types of migrants – labour, family, and humanitarian.

Methodology for case studies

Each case study consisted of two to four day visits of one or two persons, including one native speaker, in each Nordic country. Meetings and interviews were conducted with local and regional officials, national officials, businesses employing immigrants, other actors such as language schools, employment offices, union representatives, and in some cases, also immigrants themselves. These interviews were supplemented by reviews of documents on immigration and integration at national and local levels. The case studies were carried out between June and November 2016.

A number of research and policy questions were addressed in the local case studies, including the following:

- How are national integration policies implemented at the local level? Who is responsible for this implementation?
- Is increased immigration and integration part of a regional development strategy?
- What programs are available to new immigrants for language training, job placement, and housing? Are there differences depending on whether somebody arrives as a labour migrant, humanitarian, or student migrant?
- Is there sufficient suitable housing for new immigrants? Is this housing located close to work places?
- What role do private businesses play in the immigration and integration processes?
- What is the role of civil society in the immigration and integration processes?
- What lessons of best practices in integration can be transferred to other rural or remote Nordic regions confronting similar issues?

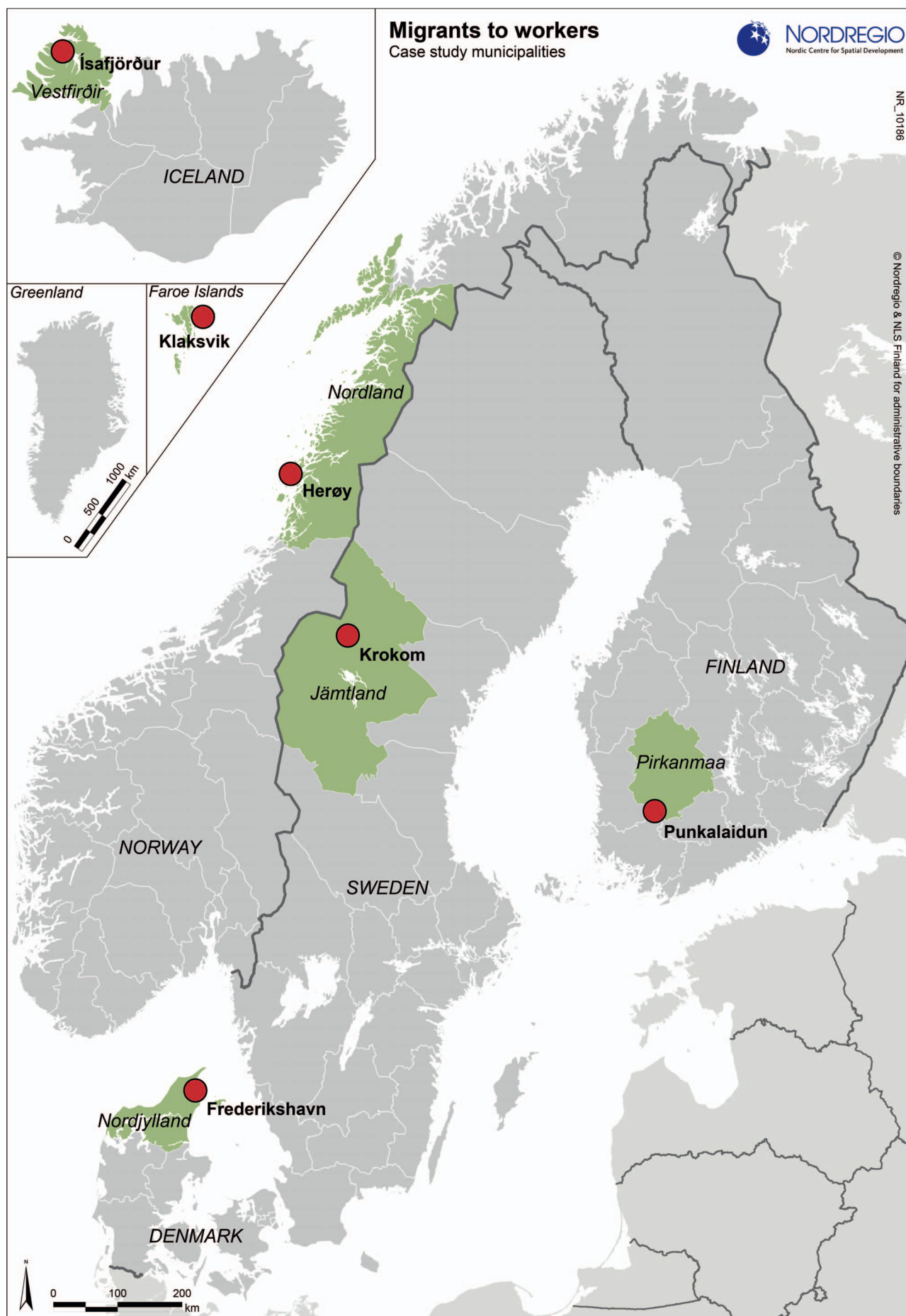
The focus of the study was on immigration and integration into the more remote and rural areas of the Nordic countries, not on the major urban areas where integration issues have been studied rather extensively. The location of the six case study regions is shown in Map 1. The regions were chosen because they were known to have declining and aging populations and were actively taking steps to mitigate their population decline through immigration and integration.

The Iceland case study was conducted in the

Ísafjörður municipality located in the West fjords. The municipality is located 445 kilometres from Reykjavík, the capital city of Iceland, about five-and-a-half-hour drive, when roads are clear. There are several daily flights which take about 45 minutes. The municipality consists of five settlements: Ísafjörður, Hnífsdalur, Þingeyri, Suðureyri and Flateyri. The total population of the municipality was about 3,500 in 2016, of which 2,600 lived in Ísafjörður. The economic structure in the municipality is based primarily on the fish industry. The fishing and fish processing industries and related sectors, such those which make equipment for the fishing industry, employ many foreign workers, primarily from Poland but also from Thailand and the Philippines. However, there are other sectors with rapid growth, including aquaculture and tourism. The Multicultural Centre, which provides information for those moving to Iceland and to those interested in moving to Iceland is located in Ísafjörður. There were no refugees or asylum seekers currently in the municipality but it does have experience from a group of refugees from former Yugoslavia that came in the 1990s.

In the Faroe Islands, the case study focused partly on the Faroe Islands level and partly, on Klaksvík municipality, a municipality located in the Eastern part of the Faroe Islands. Klaksvík is the 2nd largest town in the Faroe Islands after Torshavn and currently the municipality has almost 5000 inhabitants. The main sectors in the Faroe Islands are, in addition to the tertiary sector, fishing and aquaculture, fish processing, and construction, and these sectors also characterises Klaksvík. While not great in absolute number, in recent years, the proportion of the Faroese population born abroad has increased, leading to increased political interest in how to best address immigration and integration in the Faroese Islands. Along this vein, Klaksvík municipality recently became the first Faroese authority to formulate an actual integration policy; an initiative that may now be lifted to the Faroese level.

The Norway case study took place in Nordland county in northern Norway, in the larger city of Bodø and the smaller municipality of Herøy. The county consists of 44 municipalities and the county administration is in the main city of Bodø, which has approximately 50,000 inhabitants. There are approximately 240,000 inhabitants living in the entire county. From north to south Nordland county is 800 km and is the second largest county in Norway. Among Norwegian counties, Nordland is one of the largest exporters of raw materials, industrial goods and fish products. There are many foreign workers from Poland and elsewhere working in the fishing industry. In Herøy, the local administration is working with a holistic approach, supporting the integration of



Map 1: Location of the six case study areas

refugees and migrant workers. One important resource in Herøy is a local volunteer organisation that supports the facilitation of language cafés with the aim of building social networks of newly arrived migrants and people already living in the community.

In Sweden, the case study region was Jämtland which is a sparsely populated region located in east-central Sweden along the border to Norway. The population of the county is 127,400, of which 44,000 reside in Östersund, the administrative centre. The other settlements have less than 5,000 inhabitants. The share of persons working in the primary sector (forestry, fishery and agriculture) is slightly higher than in the rest of the country, but the largest sectors are education and health, with almost every third woman working in the health care sector. In Sweden, Jämtland is famous mainly for the ski resort Åre, and for its abundant natural resources. The population of the region was about the same in 2015 as in 1915 and the region has recently developed a program to actively entice people to move to and stay in the region. The population increased in general from 2015 to 2016.

In Finland, the case study area was the Pirkanmaa region and the small municipality of Punkalaidun, which has a population of 3,065 and is located in south-west Pirkanmaa. Apart from the regional capital of Tampere, many municipalities in Pirkanmaa are reliant on immigration to curb the urbanisation trend and ageing population. The main employers in Punkalaidun are the municipality itself and a coffin factory utilizing local wood resources, and the local agricultural sector. There is a refugee and asylum reception and resettlement centre in Punkalaidun, which brings refugees to the region. It has opened and closed several times over recent decades in response to external crises. It reopened in the fall of 2015 and at its peak housed 365 asylum seekers. The local administration has implemented two projects to support integration and employment of immigrants in the village to encourage them to settle and stay long-term.

In Denmark, the case study was the municipality of Frederikshavn in northern Denmark. Frederikshavn

municipality was merged of the previous Frederikshavn, Skagen and Sæby municipalities in the 2007 structural reform, and these three towns still constitute Frederikshavn municipality's main urban centres where population and jobs are concentrated. In addition to service and public sector jobs, the important sectors in Frederikshavn municipality are the fishing industry; the maritime industries; and building and construction, where especially the current expansion of the ports in Skagen and in Frederikshavn create jobs. Local companies have employed a significant number of EU labour migrants during the latest decade and while the individual EU labour migrants initially have worked in the municipality for shorter periods of time or have commuted between work and their home countries, an increasing number of these are now settling more permanently in the municipality, often with their families. Thus, the municipal council have decided to work actively to support this more long-term settlement of labour migrants already working in the municipality; partly as a mean to mitigate the decreasing and ageing population trend of the municipality and partly, to support the local companies in maintaining the necessary labour and skills.

Reading guide

Most case study chapters address first the national policies towards immigration and integration, for the reader to be able to place each case study in its legal and political context, followed by brief overviews of the region in terms of e.g. geographical context, population size and change, economic structure, and regional development strategy. The main portion of each case study chapter focuses on the role of immigration and integration in a regional development perspective and how integration, in particular the establishment on the labour market, is more concretely carried out within the region, at the local level.

The final chapter of this report distils lessons learned, focusing on local and regional integration processes and practices.

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Iceland: Ísafjörður municipality

By Hjördis Rut Sigurjonsdottir

Immigrants in Iceland

Immigrants in Iceland are 8,9% of the total population according to statistic from 2015 and the number of immigrants had risen to just over 29000 (Statistic Iceland, 2015). Iceland has fluctuated between being a country of net immigration and emigration since 1960. From 1997 until the country was hit by the financial crisis in 2008, there was a huge influx of people with over 20 thousand people immigrating. The situation reversed in the following years with a net depletion of nearly six thousand people. With these fluctuations in net migration, Iceland has had to rely mainly on natural increase, which remains the primary component of population increase (Nordregio 2016).

The majority of the foreign national residents in Iceland have Polish citizenship; 37,5 % in the beginning of 2015. Next are Lithuanians (5,1%) and Philippines (5,0 %). 66,2% of all immigrants live in the greater capital area. However, the highest proportion of immigrants is in the West fjords (Hagstofan 2015).

Iceland has only recently got increased flow of refugees and even though the numbers are not high in the big context, it is considerable in relation to the nations small population. The number of asylum-seekers has remained low compared to its Nordic neighbours but has however gradually risen each year. The applications were 35 in 2009; 51 in 2010; 76 in 2011; 116 in 2012; 172 in 2013; 176 in 2014. In 2015 record number of 354 applications was reached (UNHCR, 2016). The numbers continued to rise with 1132 applying for asylum in 2016, more than three times more application than the year before. The vast majority of applicants are from Macedonia (468) and from Albania (231) with around 60% of all applications. Increase in application from Macedonia and Albania do not explain alone the total increase, since applications from citizens of other countries were twice as many in 2016 as they were in 2015 (Directorate of Immigration, 19. January, 2017).

Official policies on immigration and integration

The Icelandic government first made a special integration policy in 2007, where the focus is on democracy, human rights, social responsibility, and individual freedom. The policy aims to ensure that all inhabitants of Iceland enjoy equal opportunities and take active part in the society. It is suggested that in time of globalization it is important to ensure human rights regardless of gender, religion, opinions, national origin, race, ethnicity, financial status, descent or social status. In addition, special emphasis is placed on the importance of the Icelandic language for historical and cultural reasons, as well as for full participation in the society (Ministry of Welfare, 2007). The policy has not been renewed since it was made; instead two action plans have been made.

An extensive action plan on immigration was made in the parliament in 2008 but has only partly been realized due to the financial crises the same year. In a report, from the Minister of Welfare, on status and development of immigration in 2016 is discussed how parts of the action plan have been accomplished like better information sharing while costly education courses have been neglected. A new action plan (2016-2019) has been made with fewer items listed but with actions that are considered both urgent and realistic. Refugee's affairs that were not in the first plan have been added since refugees are increasing in number (Ministry of Welfare, 2016). The new action plan is a parliamentary resolution that was approved 20th of September 2016. The resolution consists of five sections about the society, the family education, labour market and refugees where each section has several subsections. In each subsection, it is specified who is responsible for the matter (Parliamentary resolution no. 1285/2015-2016).

Some critical voices say that they would have liked to have the new action plan completed earlier and call for a proper policy regarding these issues. A policy that in their opinion should have been realised before the action plan, which they claimed to be underfunded, with too little human power and resources tied to it.

The Icelandic Association of Local Authorities in Iceland has a special immigration policy, from 2009, where the main aim is to ensure immigrants' rights. Making sure that interest of immigrants and their children are integrated in all policy making, administration and the service provided by the municipalities. The policy is meant to make sure that immigrants know their rights and obligations as residents as well having easy access to the municipalities' services. Public services should appear to immigrants as a whole, regardless whether the state or local authorities are responsible for it. The aim is that immigrants gain an equal position to other residents as soon as possible, be recognized as well as being active members of the community they live in (The Icelandic Association of Local Authorities, 2009).

While the Icelandic Association of Local Authorities was working on the immigration policy the status of immigration affairs was explored within the 74 municipalities in the country. It was observed that twelve municipalities had worked on development projects, four had formulated a reception process for immigrants and five had some kind of an information material for immigrants. When the Icelandic National Audit office worked on a report on immigration and foreign citizens in Iceland, published in 2016 the Icelandic Association of Local Authorities did not have any information if there had been any progress of immigrants' affairs within the municipalities since the policy became effective. The Multicultural Centre could on the other hand inform that ten municipalities had made special immigration/integration policy and eleven were drafting such policy. The Icelandic National Audit office urges both the Ministry of Welfare, the head of integration in the country and the Association of Local Authorities to promote all municipalities to make such policy to ensure immigrants the same rights as other residents (The Icelandic National Audit Office, March, 2016).

One of the first municipalities to set a policy regarding immigrants' issues was Borgarbyggð, in 2007. The municipality is located in the Western part of Iceland about one hour drive from the capital area. The policy was reviewed and renewed in 2015, and is now used as a model for others to come, including Ísafjörður Municipality, according to the Multicultural Centre. The policy aims to give immigrants the opportunity to be independent and active members of the society. It states that every member of the community has equal access to life and culture where the intention is to offer the same service to everyone, regardless of background. To achieve this goal, objectives are set out regarding prejudice, service, access to information, school activities,

leisure activities and immigrants culture and knowledge. All the items have several bullet points on what needs to be done to achieve the objectives.

Despite written policies and some good intentions on paper, there are matters that have been criticised and pointed out that a reform is needed. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) issued three recommendations for the Icelandic government, after assessment in 2011. The first one was to give the Muslim community permission to build and allocate land for mosques for religious practices (land was assigned for Mosque in Reykjavik in 2013). Secondly authorities were encouraged finishing a governmental bill, prohibiting discrimination and to counteract racism. The third one suggested that provision about extra penalty for would be added to the criminal law for crimes triggered by racism (Ministry of Welfare, 2016).

In a report from the National Audit Office in 2016 the Ministry of Welfare is encouraged to equalize the status of refugees, regardless whether they are quota refugees or if they managed to arrive to Iceland on their own. Authorities are also encouraged to help immigrants to actively participate in the society by strengthening language teaching and interpretation service. It is also suggested to observe reasons for immigrants to dropout of schools and to promote immigrants to participate on the labour market (Ministry of Welfare, 2016). According to information from the Ministry of Welfare it was decided not to have one special office dedicated to immigrants' issues. Instead, the idea is to have the service for immigrants mainstreamed at the municipality level.

Definition and understanding of integration

In a report about immigrants' integration to Icelandic society, from 2005 the concepts assimilation and integration are defined. The report is from the Ministry of Social Affairs (now Ministry of Welfare) and gives an idea how the concepts are understood and defined by Icelandic authorities (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2005). Assimilation (*samlögun*) is when immigrants and other ethnic minorities leave their original culture, country and language behind and adopt instead the new countries culture and language. This may manifest in different ways; redefining nationality or by learning the new language without maintaining the original one. The goal is to gain cultural skills in the new society and blot away the original cultural characteristics. Integration (*samþætting/aðlögun*) is when minorities make an effort to dedicate to the dominant culture in the new country, but emphasize at the same time to maintain their own culture and language. The individuals have

to gain skills in two cultural worlds, which can be difficult (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2005).

No special strategy or policy has been used to distribute immigrants to the country side, to make of declining or aging population. When receiving quota refugees the main emphasis has been on finding receiving municipality that is able to provide necessary services, housing and employment. Other immigrants and refugees chose their residency by their own will. Shortage of housing, especially in the capital area, has recently resulted in a pilot project, sprung from the minister of welfare, aiming to match municipalities and asylum seekers that have gotten refugee status. The project aims to find municipalities interested to receive refugees and have both job opportunities and available housing to offer.

Responsible government agencies

Immigration, integration and refugee resettlement is not the responsibility of one single agency. Issues of foreigners and immigrants are divided into two categories, both in legal terms and in the administration, despite of substantial overlap. The Icelandic National Audit office considers shortcomings arise from this division and recommended that it would be addressed when the law on foreigners would get a comprehensive revision (The National Audit Office, March 2016). This proposal seems not have been taken into consideration, when the new laws on foreigners, that took effect in January 2017, are viewed. The distinction still seems to exist.

Issues of foreigners are covered by the Ministry of the Interior and its institutions. Most important is the Directorate of Immigration and the police that handle affairs according to the laws of foreigners. Immigrants are not covered in these laws since they are the responsibility of The Ministry of Welfare, Multicultural Centre and the Immigration council. Asylum seekers are on the responsibility of the Ministry of the interior until they get refugee status. After receiving the status the responsibility transfers to the Ministry of Welfare which also covers the affairs of quota refugees. However, it is the responsibility of municipalities to provide services.

The immigration council consist of six members, two are representatives from the Ministry of Welfare, one from the Ministry of the Interior and one from the Ministry of Education, one from the Icelandic Association of local Authorities and one from Reykjavik municipality. In addition, the Multicultural centre has one observer on the council with the right to submit motions. The council's role is to advise the Minister of

Welfare on policy making and monitor its implementation; to promote coordination and consultation between the ministries, local authorities and within the administration; to promote open discussion on immigration, suggest a focus for the immigration development fund as well as decide on who will get funding; submit annual report about the councils work to the minister along with occasional projects (Ministry of Welfare, 2016).

Information on total amount of funding for integration is not available. Founding is for example provided to the Directory of labour, the Multicultural Centre, municipalities that can reimburse the state for provided service and some for Icelandic language teaching. One special found is for integration development, allocating 10 million ISK every year (around 670.000 SEK). The amount has been the same since the Fund was founded in 2008 and many believe that it would need to be tipped.

Changes due to increasing immigration

The laws on foreigners from 2002 have recently been overviewed and a new law on foreigners were passed in the Icelandic parliament in June 2016, after an extensive review. In an exposition with the bill is occasion and necessity of the new laws is related to the fact that more and more foreign citizens wants to settle in Iceland. A development that is in line with increased migration in the world. The neighbouring states have had to cope with a huge increase in application for international protection and Iceland is no exception in that trend. The laws were changed among other things to simplify the application and handling process, speed up the procedure and clarify various uncertainties to make the legislation better equipped to deal with the increased number of applicants (Ministry of the Interior, 3. June, 2016).

According to information from the Ministry of the Interior the main focus when making the new law was Iceland competitiveness, the humanitarian aspects and for the country to be up to date with the EU laws. The aim was to take different views into account like needs of the labour market and the companies, needs that do not always go hand in hand. Emphasis was put on making the application process faster and more sufficient without losing quality. The new law still distinguishes between EEA citizens and others but emphasises on appeal to specialists and their families.

The Icelandic Red Cross offers refugees and other immigrants to participate in an open house twice a

week at their headquarters in Reykjavik. The purpose is to support and to help them to strengthen their networking and opportunities to increase their participation in Icelandic society. Help and assistance is provided to find housing, employment, make CV's, find inexpensive furniture, find learning opportunities and possibility of study support (Rauði krossinn, n.d.). The shortage of housing in Iceland, especially in Reykjavik has impacted this help provided by the Red Cross. Since housing is so difficult to find it has taken over the time intended for more comprehensive help. The recent inflow of tourist to Iceland has put a great strain on the housing market, since many choose to rent their apartments to tourist rather than having a long-term lease.

The Ministry of Welfare has been working on policy making regarding housing where the focus is on equalizing people's status on the housing market. Great importance is placed on intensifying the rental market and the position of tenants. Immigrants' needs and included in that work since rather high proportion of immigrants are tenants. The housing problem has however not been solved.

The labour market

A special work permit is not required for citizens within the EEA. Non-EEA citizens must on the other hand have an issued work permit before entering the country. First the permit is temporary and is granted to an immigrant but tied to a specific employer, which has to send in the application. The Icelandic labour market has been the main attraction for foreign citizens and for citizens from countries outside EEA, work is usually precondition to get residence permit. Those coming from EEA countries are divided to, students, self-employed, service providers, pensioners but most, or about 90% (in 2007) are employees.

The Directory of Labour gets referrals from the municipalities' social services to help people in their service to find jobs. Most of the referrals regard refugees, and the numbers started to rise in the end of 2015 in accordance with the increased flow of refugees to the country. From November 2015 to September 2016, total of 70 persons used this service, which 45 got employed. Some got a job at companies that volunteered to provide refugees jobs as a respondent to an advertisement from the Directory of Labour. To increase the changes for the refugees to get employment, there are other resources such as Icelandic language courses and course to get licence to work on industrial machinery, both paid for by the Directorate of Labour. The Directorate along with the municipality's social service pays for extended drivers licence and another resource is an oc-

cupational employment, where the wages is partly paid by the municipality.

Workers recruitment in shortage occupations

According to article 62 in the new law of foreigners, a residence permit can be granted in the case of lack of employees in the country. This applies if certain conditions are met and then the permit is not granted for longer than one year (unless it is for clear and defined project that is ongoing for longer time period) and never for longer period than the validity of the working permit indicates. Person, who has got residence permit on these bases, cannot get it again unless he or she has stayed abroad continuously for two years from the expiring date (unless the stay in Iceland is less than eight months of every twelve months). Residence permit under this provision cannot be the basis for indefinite residence permit (Laws on Foreigners 80/2016).

The role of education for immigrants

In the new law on foreigners, that took effect in January 2017 (Laws on Foreigners 80/2016), is a new clause directed to foreign students that complete an academic degree in Iceland. In such cases, the student has an opportunity to look for an employment based on her/his expertise, for maximum six months. The permit may be provided for shorter period according to his or her financial independence (Laws on Foreigners 80/2016).

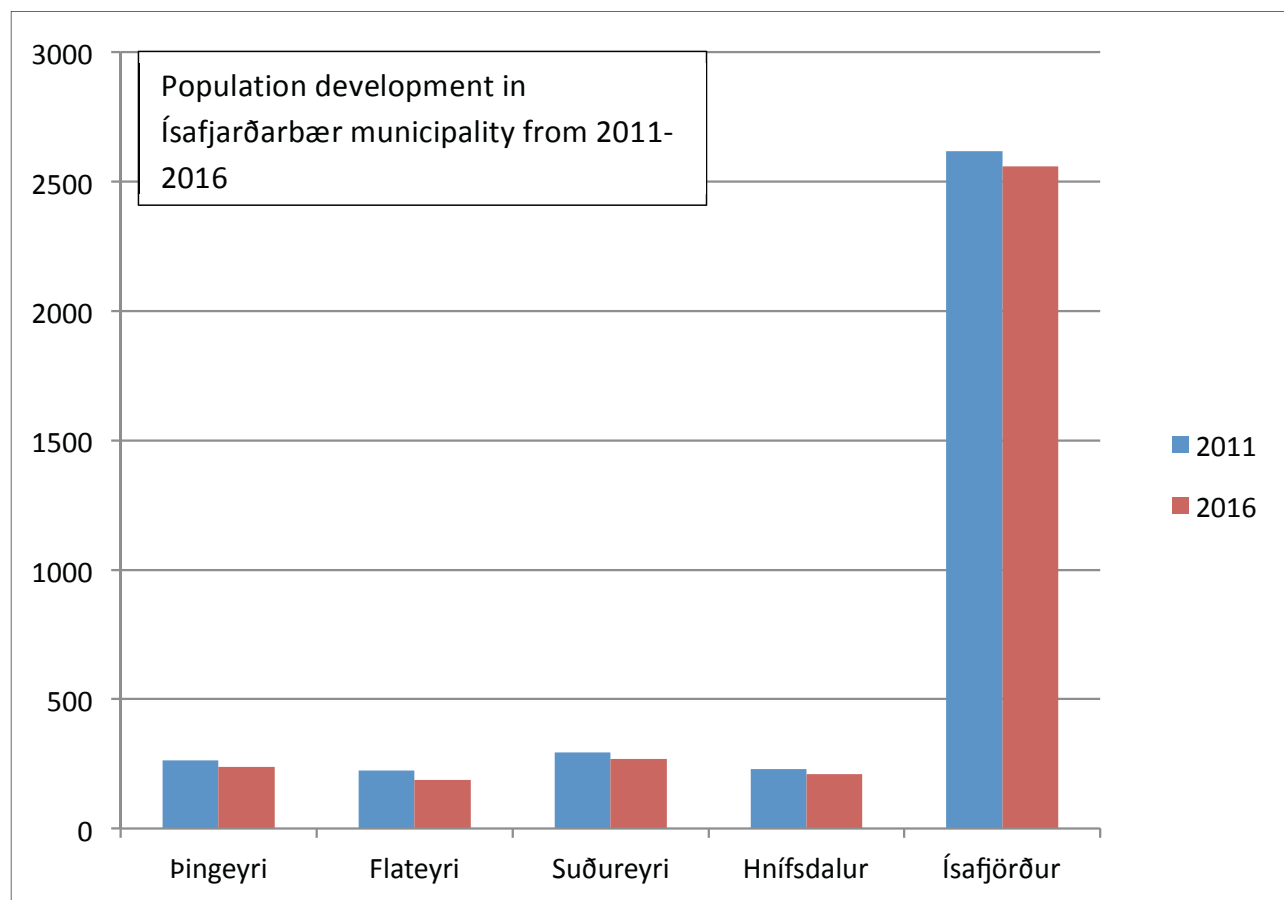
Challenges can be involved in getting foreign education, skills and experience validated and recognized in Iceland. Research from 2011, conducted by InterCultural Iceland, shows that 49% of participants (in a sample of 100 persons) have jobs according to their education obtained in their country of origin. Their access to jobs, according to their education, was less in Iceland than in their countries of origin. However, the results showed that large proportion of those who did not hold a job according to their education had a job that is considered specialized and requires education. Only 34% of the respondents had however tried to get their education validated in Iceland and most were satisfied with the process they had to go through. Majority of the respondents (66%) had on the other hand not tried to get their education validated. Some felt they did not need the validation, since so far it had been sufficient to show their foreign diploma to the employer. Others did not bother to give it a try nor had tried to get a job according to their education, unbelieving their education would be recognized. The underlying reason was disbelief due to negative attitudes towards immigrants. In the conclusion, further investigation on immigrants' access to employment, according to their education is recommended (InterCultural Ísland, 2011).

During the case study, examples were observed where it was difficult to get foreign education and skills evaluated in Iceland. The general consensus is, that this especially applies to the health care sector. One examples of a psychiatric nurse educated in England that could not get a job as a nurse was brought up during this study. Another example is from a participant in this study that explained how she gave up getting her education as a physical therapist evaluated in Iceland. She hoped to be able to add to her education to get it approved since it is a three-year programme in Poland but four years in Iceland. After few years of trying it turned out starting from the beginning was her only possibility. The third example is from one of our respondents, a lawyer educated in Iceland, explaining how it was problematic for him to find a job after graduation where common reason given was lack of Danish skills. He did not study Danish in first and secondary schools like people brought up in Iceland. He is suspicious that something else was behind this requirement since the Danish skills for most natives are very limited, in addition to him having another European language that could be seen as valuable.

Many believe skills of immigrants are being wasted when not utilized. The Red Cross employees are worried about this reality, pushing them to organize a workshop on the matter, in the effort to start the discussion. Considered needed, is an assessment on the value inherent in getting immigrants that already are educated.

Immigrants' prosperity within Icelandic collages is not good. Only small proportion of those who enter the schools managed to graduate according to an investigation done by the Multicultural Centre. Graduating after four years is the estimated time to finish the collage and very few students with foreign citizenships seems to manage to graduate compared with the number of enrolled. Concerns where observed during the case studies, regarding this reality both at the Multicultural Centre and the Red Cross. Even though it does not have a comparison with students with Icelandic citizenship it shows that relatively few of those who enrol manage to graduate (Multicultural Centre, 2016).

Figure 1. Population development in all the settlements within Ísafjarðarbær municipality over a five-year period.



Source: Statistics Iceland.

Ísafjörður municipality

The case study was conducted in Ísafjörður municipality, which consists of Ísafjörður, Hnífsdalur, Þingeyri, Suðureyri and Flateyri. Ísafjörður is the largest settlement in the municipality and in the whole West fjords region with 2.559 inhabitants in 2016. Ísafjörður is the largest settlement in the West fjord region and is a 445 kilometer distance from Reykjavík, the capital city of Iceland, about five and a half hour drive, when roads are clear. The economic base of the municipality is the fish industry. However, there are other sectors in fairly rapid growth, both aquaculture and tourism. The main barrier to faster growth is unreliability in transportation, wherein it can occur that the airport is closed for up to a week at time due to weather conditions. Only one driving route is open during winter time and it occurs that it is closed at the same time as the airport. There are high hopes for a new route that will open when a new tunnel will be taken to use. There is also a hope that the airport will be moved to a place where wind is blowing from the east is not as effective.

Negative population development has been in all settlements in Ísafjörður municipality as can be seen in figure 1. It shows the decline in the five settlements in the municipality, between 2011 and 2016.

The population has been declining at the same time as numbers of immigrants has been increasing as figure 2 shows. In 2015, the proportion of immigrants in West fjords region was little above 15 percent. Refugees

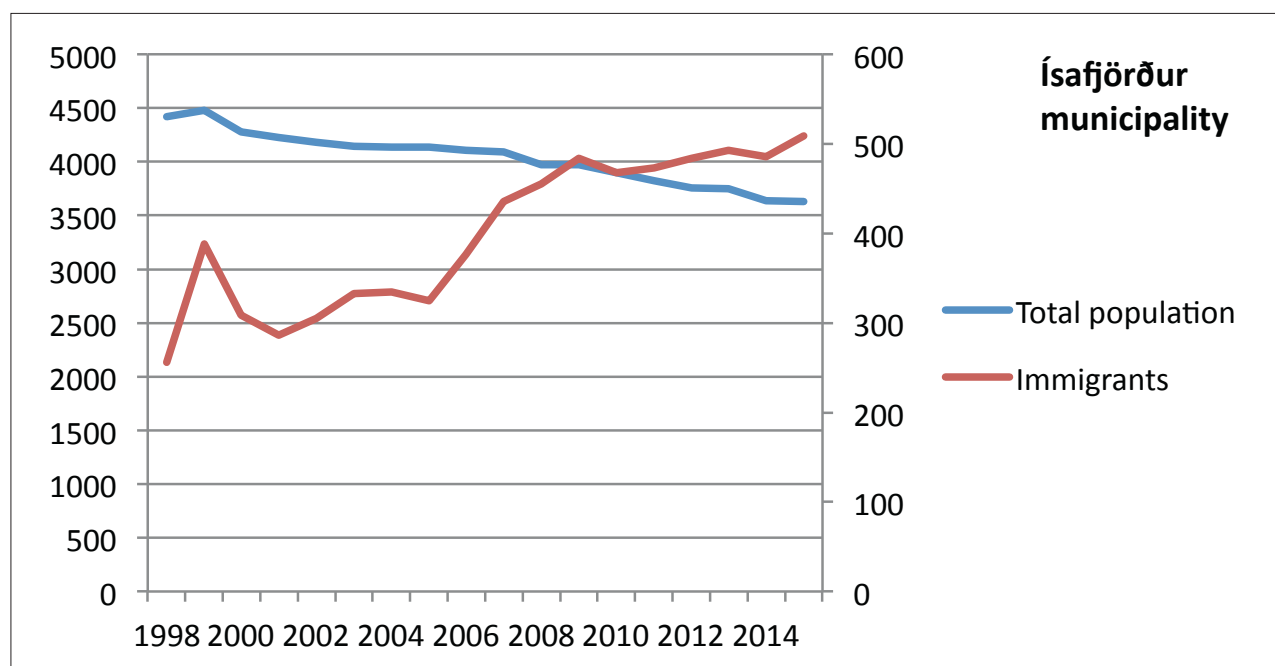
did not start to arrive to Iceland to any marked degree until recently or in the second half of 2015. The recent flow of refugees has not reached the West fjords so there are no refugees or asylum seekers in the municipality of Ísafjörður. The only figures to be found on immigrants in the municipality are based on citizenship but not background. Due to a rather small population it can be stated that most immigrants have arrived due to economic reasons and some due to marriage.

Role of immigration and integration in regional development strategy

According to the mayor, Gísli Halldór Halldórsson, the municipality aims to get a least one percent population increase. Signs indicate that jobs in the municipality will increase considerably due to tourism and in aquaculture in coming years. If those prospects materialize a population increase could go well above one percent and the mayor believes the municipality could gain up to 2000 new residents in the next decade. The chances are that a big proportion of the increase will be immigrants since the Icelandic workforce cannot provide as many workers and tradesmen as needed. The mayor believes that it will be challenge to keep up with so much increase and even though the plan is not ready, it is being developed since it is important to keep a good infrastructure. However, the inability to conduct housing in the area could be a barrier for population growth.

The municipality has not done anything to attract immigrants specifically but are hoping to stop the

Figure 2. Population development and immigrant population in Ísafjörður municipality.



Source: Statistics Iceland.

population decline and that more people will see the municipality as an attractive place to live, for everyone. Nothing specific has been done in this effort but the mayor is happy with a positive image that two annual festivals bring for the region. The music festival; Aldrei fór ég suður and a mud football competition. Those festivals bring attention to the area as well as promoting it as an interesting place to live in and to visit. He mentions that the rough weather and the dark wintertime used to be something that locals often tried to minimize to others, now that has changed. Instead the weather conditions, global location and closeness to nature are put forward as something exotic and exciting, in addition to the fact that the weather can also be very pleasant.

Private companies in Ísafjörður municipality have their own way to find immigrant employees who are essential for their operation. Íslandssaga, the fish processing company in Suðureyri has considerable experience on finding new employees and the most effective way has proved to be word of mouth through the network of existing employees. At one point the manager made an attempt to find new workers in Poland by himself but has come to the conclusion that the best way is through the existing network. Due to a shortage of welders in the company 3X Technology, eight Polish workers work with welding since very few are to be found in Iceland with the right education or experience needed for the company's production. Managers from 3X rented a metal production company in Poland for a day and held a competition to find employees with the right skills and experience; many years later three out of six from the first group are still working for the company. The company would like to hire more welders in shortage occupations, especially during spring and summer time but it is prevented by the housing shortage in Ísafjörður.

There are no integration programs for new immigrants in Ísafjörður municipality and the need has not been considered urgent. This may be partly due to the fact, when migrating to Ísafjörður most immigrants come on their own, usually after finding a job. Icelandic language teaching, carried out by the Educational Centre, is subsidized (75%) by the labor union for people on the labour market but apart from that the integration is in the hands of the immigrants and their own network. The Multicultural Centre, that services the whole country, is located in Ísafjörður. The Centre is not meant to be a special service for the region; rather its role is to be administrative body on national level, according to a description from the Ministry of Welfare. The location seems though to have some benefits for the region and immigrants do turn to the Centre

for assistance.

The regional directory of labour assists unemployed immigrants to find jobs like other residents in the area, with courses to improve their skills or to gain certificate. Unemployment is very little in the region now, with 26 unemployed in the beginning of September 2016, there of 9 immigrants. The main reason for unemployment is that it is difficult to match skills and physical ability with available jobs. The director says that many immigrants' intentions to stay only for the short term in Iceland stand in the way of learning the language and to get their education recognized. She has noted that many feel they know enough to get by but she feels that this limitation makes them more vulnerable than other residents.

The Polish community in the municipality

Polish people are by far the biggest immigration population in Ísafjörður municipality; 217 persons in 2015. Everyone participating in the case study recognized a division in the community where a big part of the Polish community both keeps a distance but could also inadvertently have been kept in distance. Many believe the first mentioned is the main reason and multiple reasons are named. Lack of language skills is the main hindrance where the Poles have their needs fulfilled with in their own language. When migrating many do not intend to stay long term and are lacking a motive for learning a difficult language. However, many ends up staying despite of the initial plan and find it difficult to break out of a vicious circle. Many of the Polish immigrants get their needs fulfilled in the parallel community, where they have friends, family and co-worker, all speaking Polish in addition to Polish media obtained by satellite dishes and the internet.

The segregation is as well evident in the elementary school, where 20% of the students are immigrants or have immigrant back ground. A new teacher in the school is focusing on the immigrant kids, finding ways to identify the situation and to help those standing outside and those who need special attention. She finds too many Polish students isolated in the school reflecting the society outside of the school. It also reflects in their level of Icelandic, those who have native friends clearly have a higher level of Icelandic language. Interviewed educators argue that prejudices are present in the community, especially against the Polish people, even though it is partly hidden under the surface and not everyone will agree on it. The prejudices are not limited to Ísafjörður municipality though it is clear that the mixing of the existing communities in the municipality is very little, something that both groups are responsible for. The communications are often very lim-

ited even though people might greet each other on the streets, but it does not get much further, keeping the segregation in place. It is hard to claim the immigrants to learn and speak good Icelandic, and blame them for the division, if they do not get an opportunity to have real interactions with others than their compatriots.

All the educators that participated in the case study all agreed that a comprehensive policy is needed on how to welcome immigrants and help with their integration. As things stands now is no coordination or co-operation between the schools and the municipality on how to welcome or integrate immigrants. Much more can be done to cater to immigrant students or students with immigrant background. The importance to start integration from early age already in kindergarten was noted and then through their education path. Successful experience from another rural town was mentioned as an example where the schools had played an important role in mixing people with different backgrounds and to get immigrants to participate. Immigrants with kids are likelier to settle and there if they are not showing parental involvement it is because of something else than lack of interest. Rather it is the language and insecurity and the focus should be put on mixing people and avoid othering. In the modern life where there is so little time there is opportunity to reach too many through the schools because people with kids have to be involved in the schools in one way or another. Their involvement also can help with the mother tongue and the importance of having good skill in one language.

Helga's Björt Möller is teacher at the elementary school and her purview is to give extra Icelandic courses for children that do not have sufficient knowledge in Icelandic. Some of those kids do not get support from home to spend more time on the Icelandic, since the plan is not to stay in Iceland. At the same time those kids may not have sufficient knowledge in their mother tongue, when it comes to written language, ending up not having good and comprehensive skills in any language. Students in the elementary school with another mother tongue than Icelandic are not obligated to learn Danish in school like the natives. Their native language counts as a third language but it varies if teaching can be provided in those languages. In Ísafjörður municipality, Polish and the other Nordic languages are the languages available in the elementary school instead of Danish. The Polish teaching goes through computer learning and is only an option the last two years, while the Danish teaching lasts the four last years. In addition to this a companionship called Roots (Rætur) has recently started to offer Polish teaching on Saturdays. The secondary school in Ísafjörður is obligated to offer mother tongue teaching in the school. It is the state

policy but the state only pays for part of the teaching.

Integration policy is being developed for the municipality and is planned to ready early next year. However, as is the case on the national level, no integration program will be included. Meaning that all service provided for immigrants is a mainstreamed service within the social service system. The only integration program to be found is a one year program for quota refugees, an experience that all entities in Ísafjörður talk about as a successful. Ísafjörður received the first group of quota refugees in the 90's from former Yugoslavia giving the opportunity to experience a special program. Since the recent flow of refugees has not reached the region immigrants in the region are mostly economic migrants, who come on their own or through their social network and do not need the help to the same extent. Companionship called Rætur ("Roots") contributes to the integration with Polish teaching on weekends and occasional events but there has been little renewal in that fellowship the last years. It is obvious that the integration of immigrants in the municipality could be better. During the case study, many expressed concern for second class people being made, where immigrants and even second generation of immigrants do not have the same opportunities as the natives.

Lessons learned

When the quota refugees arrived in 1996 the interaction and mixing with the existing community is remembered to have worked much better. Every family within the program had support families that they could turn to and that were devoted to contribute to new residents' well-being. The experience shows that the civil society can play an important role in immigrants' integration but when no one has the responsibility to arrange it, and then these responsibilities seems to fall through the cracks. It can also be difficult to reach out with help or guidance to people that feel fully capable to get around without assistance or interference. The private sector, especially employers of immigrants have a different kind of opportunity to help immigrants to gain a better foothold in the region, and some attempts in that direction have been done, without being profound or consistent.

Challenges in the integration process

The biggest challenge appears to get the immigrants and the native to mix better, as well as getting immigrants to change their stance towards the language resulting from plans to stay for a short time. When in reality, time passes without immigrants stepping properly into the Icelandic society they risk missing out, and there is a risk that their descendants will end up in

a weak position. The non-immigrants can also learn to understand what the society as whole can gain with successful integration. Learn to know the long term negative effects if nothing is done. It also includes learning the benefits immigrants bring to the society,

since important business in the region would not be operable without them. Not having a holistic policy and a plan is a challenge that has to be faced and has the potential to leave everyone in stronger position.

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Representatives for the following were part of the Icelandic field work

Directorate of Labour in the Westfjords Region

Westfjords Labour Union

Westfjords Further Education Centre

The Multicultural and Information Centre

Ísafjörður Municipality

Ísafjörður Grade School

Ísafjörður Secondary School

Íslandssaga, fish processing

Skaginn 3X, produces fish processing equipment

Ministry of Welfare

Ministry of the Interior

The Icelandic Red Cross

Statistic Iceland

The Faroe Islands: Klaksvik Municipality

By Lisbeth Greve Harbo

The case study from the Faroe Islands in relation to integration efforts is an example of how the whole policy field of immigration and integration can be initiated in a region where little formalised policy attention to this theme has been given before.

Immigration policies and authorities

Citizens of a Nordic country are free to live, work and study in the Faroe Islands. Neither a visa, residence permit nor work permit is required. Despite the Faroe Islands' status as part of the Danish realm, the Faroe Islands are not member of the EU, wherefore granting of residence permits and work visa for national from EU countries is subject to application and fulfilment of certain criteria similar to citizens from outside of EU.

Due to the Faroe Island's status as part of the Danish realm, the application and granting of residence permits are currently formally and practically handled by the Danish authorities. Work permits are handled by the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration while family reunification issues are handled by the Danish Immigration Service. The Faroese authorities have the option to move the field of immigration fully to Faroese Authorities but currently the above-mentioned Danish agencies handles applications, if necessary in cooperation with the Faroese Immigration Office (located in Torshavn; see more below) and potentially the Faroese Government.

The overall regulations that apply to foreign nationals who wish to obtain a residence and/or work permit for the Faroe Islands are stipulated in the Aliens Act of 2001 (in Danish: Anordning nr. 182 fra 22. marts 2001 ikrafttræden for Færøerne af udlændingeloven) but to ease the entry for certain professional groups, a number of special agreements have been introduced.

One is the "Agreement regarding residence and work permits for Athletes and Doctors" which - as the

title indicates - regards semi-professional athletes and coaches who can take up part-time work in addition to their sports club appointment, and physicians offered a position at Landssjúkrahúsið, Klaksvíkar Sjúkrahús or Suðuroyar Sjúkrahús and who have a Danish authorisation. This arrangement allows the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration to issue physicians a residence and work permit in the Faroe Islands without approval by the Faroese Government, provided requirements for the terms of employment, including salary and work conditions, are met.

Applications from employees in the oil industry; at this stage those engaged in off-shore oil exploration can also be processed according to a fast track procedure, while other professional groups are not required to hold a work permit, as long as the duration of their stay in the Faroe Islands does not exceed 3 months. This group includes researchers and lectures; artists; fitters, consultants and instructors that are hired to install, inspect or repair equipment; and athletes and coaches coming to the Faroe Islands to compete or practice.

As a result of the current low unemployment rate in the Faroe Islands, an additional scheme regarding EU citizens has also been introduced in 2014. Residence and work permit for EU citizens can be granted when the unemployment rate is below 3.5 percent in general but within construction industry, residence and work permits can be granted to individuals seeking employment as ordinary skilled-labour in a specific trade if the unemployment rate is lower than 6 percent. Certain criteria must be met; among them that the EU citizen is employed according to the Faroese collective bargaining agreement for at least 30 hours per week.

The employer and the applicant need to submit a joint application but Faroese employers can also apply for pre-approval to hire EU citizens under this scheme. If the employer is pre-approved, the EU citizen may start working as soon as a joint notification has been submitted by the applicant and the employer (www.newtodenmark.dk).

Immigration actors at Faroese and local level

In addition to entry into the Faroe Islands as a divided responsibility between the Danish and Faroese ministries, the Faroe Islands have established an Immigration Office that acts as an intermediary between the Danish and Faroese authorities and increasingly also functions as a national level entry point both for information for newcomers to the Faroe Islands as well as other initiatives related to immigration and integration in the Faroe Islands.

The municipalities are responsible for the everyday functioning of the individual immigrant, which in addition to the general social rights and needs also include offering language training to non-Faroese. As a foreign immigrant to the Faroe Islands, the individual has the right to follow a course in Faroese language and culture but this is very limited in duration (app. 20 hours) before the migrant has to pay for courses by him/herself. Furthermore, while the municipal level is the responsible administration for these language courses, they are not offered in every municipality making travel to one of the major towns necessary for foreigners residing in smaller municipalities.

The larger municipalities (Torshavn, Klaksvik and Runavik) as well as the Red Cross organise events, such as food festivals and knitting cafes that are to increase interaction between the Faroese and the new residents. Also, sports clubs, especially those hiring foreign athletes, contribute to integration of newcomers in the local communities.

Faroe Islands and Klaksvik Municipality

The Faroe Islands is a self-governing country within the Danish Realm and is home to a population of approximately 49,000 people; of which about 2/5 (app. 20,000) live in the capital of Torshavn. Klaksvik is the 2nd largest town on the Faroe Islands and the municipality is home to nearly 5,000 people.

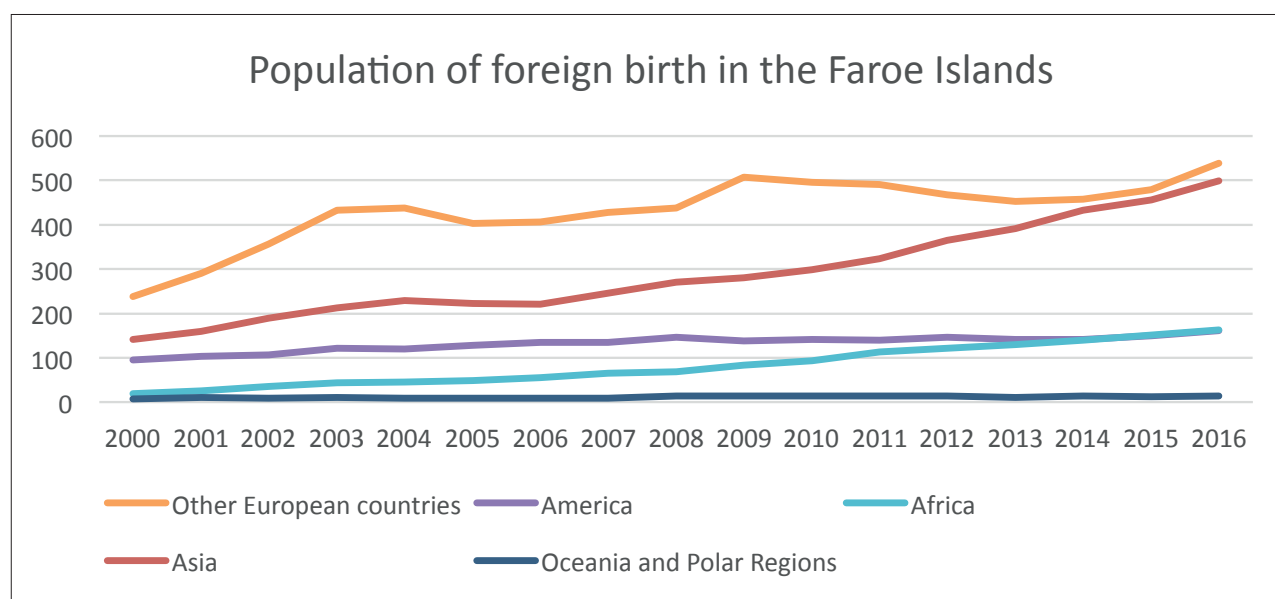
The Faroe Islands consists of 18 islands but most of the large islands are today connected by tunnels, providing quite good connectivity across the country, just as distances are short due to the general small scale of the island nation.

In addition to the tertiary sector, the major economic sectors are fishing and aquaculture, fish processing, and construction.

Population with foreign background

Immigration to the Faroe Islands is not a new phenomenon; as a fishery nation mobility has also historically been part of society, but in recent years, the proportion of the population born abroad has increased, see figure 3; not least among the people born in either other European countries than the Nordic, and Asian and African born. While a share of these may be children born to Faroese parents while previously living abroad, those born in non-Nordic countries is rising (up from 1% in 2000 to 3% in 2016), while the Faroese population born in other Nordic countries (except Denmark) is stable (app. 1%) – pointing to an increasing diversity of the residing population.

Figure 3. Residents in the Faroe Islands born elsewhere than the Nordic countries 2000-2016



Data source: Statistics Faroe Islands

While the vast majority of the total population in the Faroe Islands holds Danish citizenship – more than 97% - it is quite impressive to see that in a small population such as the Faroese of app. 49,000 people, no less than 89 countries of citizenship are represented in 2016 (www.hagstova.fo). Of the close to 1,400 foreign citizenships, Icelandic account for the majority but are closely followed by Philippine, Thai and Norwegian. However, as can be seen from figure 4, taken as a group, EU countries other than the Nordic countries also account for a significant share.

Since the Faroe Islands are not a member of the EU, the increase in EU residents are to be found in changes to the possibility to apply for a work permit in the Faroe Islands; a change that is closely connected to the very low unemployment rate in the Faroe Islands at present., see above on the current national legal framework.

Role of immigration and integration in regional development

The recently introduced special scheme for EU labour immigration was a clear response to demand for more labour to the Faroese labour market, particularly due to demands in the construction industry but also the fishing industry experiences demand for more labour. The initial aim for in-migrating EU labourers was 200 people; a number that has been surpassed.

While the foreign population is not significant neither in proportions of the population nor in absolute numbers, the increase in the diversity of the Faroese population has prompted the policy field of integration to emerge in the Faroese political discourse during the

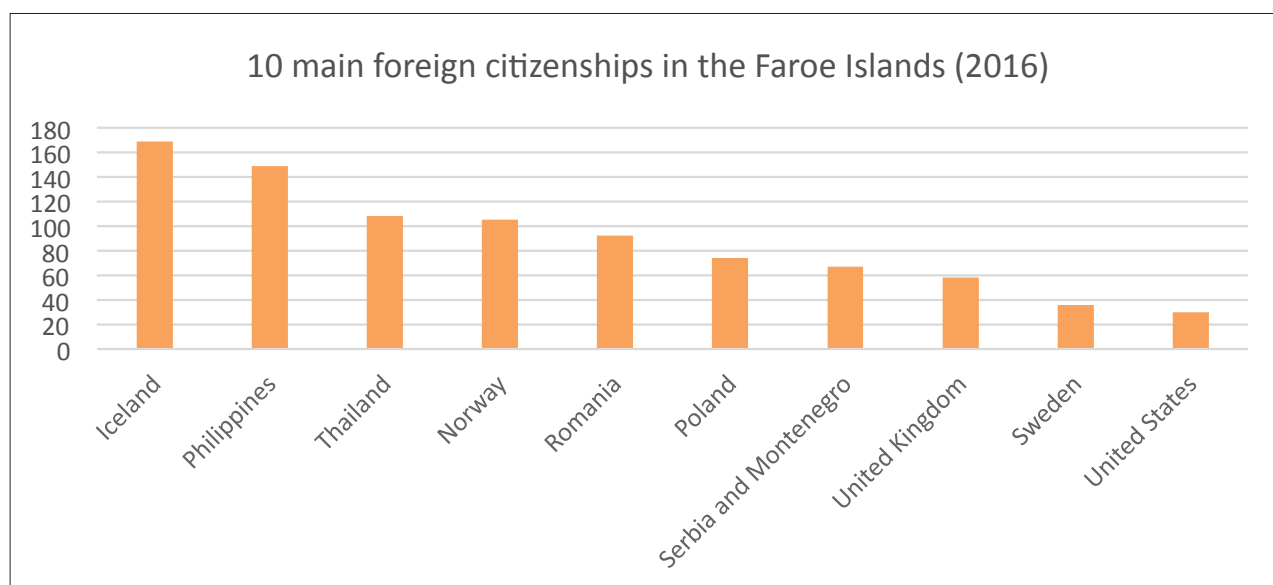
past decade. This can be seen both as a recognition of the increased diversity in the Faroese society and to some extent also the changed motivation for foreigners to settle in the Faroe Islands: from being perceived mainly as a question of family reunification of foreign partners and family to Faroese residents to also include labour migrants with no previous ties to the Faroe Islands. Also at local level, the initiated work for formulating an integration policy is a response to the recognition of the relatively high number – and increasingly so - of non-Nordic people residing in the Faroe Islands.

The initial formal efforts to address the topic of integration and immigration on the Faroe Islands are the 2008 establishment of the Immigration Office in the Faroe Islands - an agency that in addition to acting as an intermediary between the Danish authorities and the Faroese ministries now also serves as the Faroese entry point for immigration and integration issues - and the 2010 appointment of a working group on integration policy by the Faroese Ministry of the Interior and their report published in 2011 (Ministry of the Interior, 2011).

While the report from the 2010 working group had several recommendations for an actual Faroese integration policy, Klaksvik municipality became the first Faroese authority to formulate such a policy. It was the outcome of a project process running during 2014/2015, supported by the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and foreseen as a first step also for a national integration policy.

Based on research of the circumstances, needs, and

Figure 4. The 10 main groups of people with foreign citizenship residing in the Faroe Islands in 2016



Data source: Statistics Faroe Islands

requests of the immigrants to Klaksvík Municipality, the policy holds recommendations for concrete programs to be implemented as part of this policy. It addresses particularly the topics of language learning, information and communication, community involvement and networking, and empowerment of the immigrants. To assist the implementation of the integration policy, an integration committee, consisting of representatives from the immigrant community, has been set up, and the mayor meets with this committee to gain feedback and hear of any challenges and concerns on a quarterly basis. The aim of the committee is to provide the immigrants with a formal forum for communication on a regular basis on integration-related issues.

A next step in the Faroese integration work has been the employment - in late 2015 - of a Faroese-wide integration officer at the Immigration Office; a permanent position that is tasked with continuing the work on formalising and improving the integration efforts across the Faroe Islands. The first hands-on outcome of this is the publishing of a collected volume on the relevant information for immigrants in English, and the next major task is addressing the quantity, quality as well as accessibility to language training in Faroese for immi-

grants. Other plans include cataloguing local language capacities, e.g. foreigners who know enough Faroese to be able to help newcomers with practical matters, and to more generally make the capacity and contributions of the non-Faroese more visible in the local communities.

While efforts such as providing information in English may seem minor in comparison to the more extensive integration programmes and multi-level integration practices found in the larger Nordic countries, they are significant in that the Faroe Islanders have taken a robust entry to their work on integration and immigration by setting up needed formal structures; researching what are the most immanent needs of the current immigrants; coordinating the (need for) information; and pointing to issues to prioritise on the road ahead.

Furthermore, it is an interesting example of how the local level can take the initiative – whether as a result of municipal needs and own initiative or an outcome of a strategic decision to setup a smaller-scale ‘test bed’ on project basis - and the lessons learned here can then be transferred to national level for further implementation.

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Representatives for the following were part of the Faroese field work

Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure and Labour, Faroe Islands

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Faroe Islands

Immigration Office, Faroe Islands

Klaksvik Municipality

In brief: Immigration in Greenland

By Lisbeth Greve Harbo

Just like the Faroe Islands, Greenland is part of the Danish realm but is not a member of the EU wherefore immigration from all nationals outside the Nordic countries is a matter for application and granting of work and residence permits.

Similar to the Faroe Islands, applications are currently handled by the Danish authorities. Applications for family reunifications to Greenland are processed by the Danish Immigration Service, and the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration is responsible for work permits as well applications regarding students, au pairs and interns.

Provided that certain conditions are met, family reunification can be granted to spouses, registered partners and cohabiting partners; children; parents over the age of 60, as well as other family members and close acquaintances of a Greenlandic resident. If granted a residence permit, it is initially temporary but after three years, it is possible to apply for a permanent residence permit. People holding a residence permit on the ground of family reunification usually have the right to work in Greenland.

Granting of work permits are under specific circumstances possible through special regulations in the “Act on Large Scale Projects”, through which foreign nationals who are employed by a large-scale project company can be granted residence and work permits in the construction phase. Construction activities do not include canteen services, cleaning, local transport and similar work.

To ease the entry for certain employees to Greenland, some groups are exempt from the requirement of a work permit; provided that their stay is not exceeding three consecutive months. This regards researchers invited to teach and lecture in Greenland; professional athletes; artists; representatives of foreign companies and organisations on business trips in Greenland; individuals employed in the household of foreign nationals visiting Greenland in up to three months; as well

as fitters, consultants, and instructors hired to install, inspect or repair machines, equipment, computer programmes and similar (building, construction and craft work is not covered by this exemption). If the person in question is a non-Nordic citizen, he/she must obtain a short-term visa, just as these groups of employees must obtain a residence and work permit if the stay exceeds three months (www.newindenmark.dk). The Faroe Islands are not currently receiving refugees and asylum seekers.

Profile of immigrants in Greenland

There are very few international immigrants in Greenland compared to the rest of the Nordic countries. Of those born outside of Greenland, the Danish-born make up app. 90%. However, due to the Greenlanders (as well as the Faroe Islanders) having Danish citizenship, distinction between natives from Greenland and the Faroe Islands is not imminently possible, and thus those with Danish citizenship make up 98% of the population (Source: Statistics Greenland; 2017 figures).

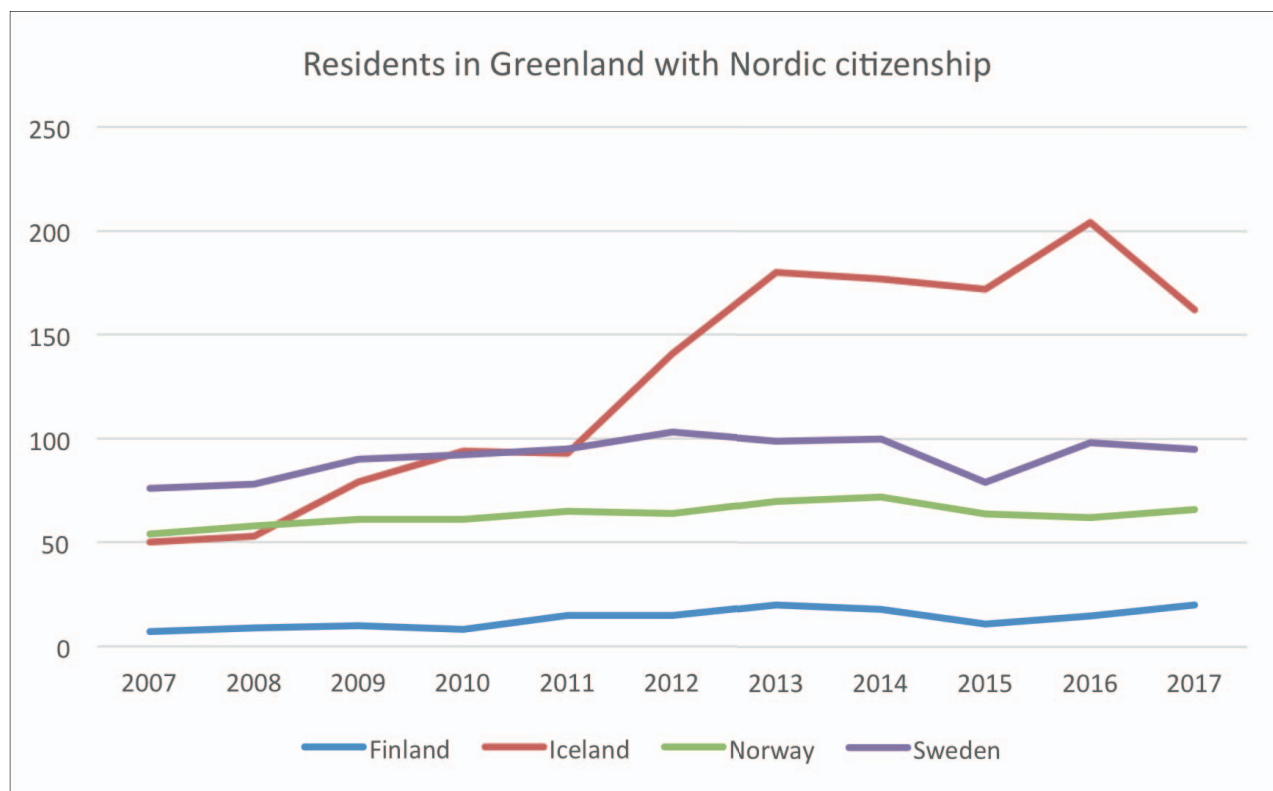
Besides the flow between Greenland and Denmark, the second largest group of Nordic nationals in Greenland are from Iceland (162 individuals in 2017), followed by Swedes (95 pers.), Norwegians (66 pers.), and Finns (20 pers.). Except for the Finns, men make up the majority of these Nordic citizens currently residing in Greenland.

Apart from the Icelanders, these groups have been quite constant during the past decade, see figure 5.

Compared to the Nordic immigration, the European and international flows are almost equal in size with a slight increase in the international flows during the latest decade, see figure 6.

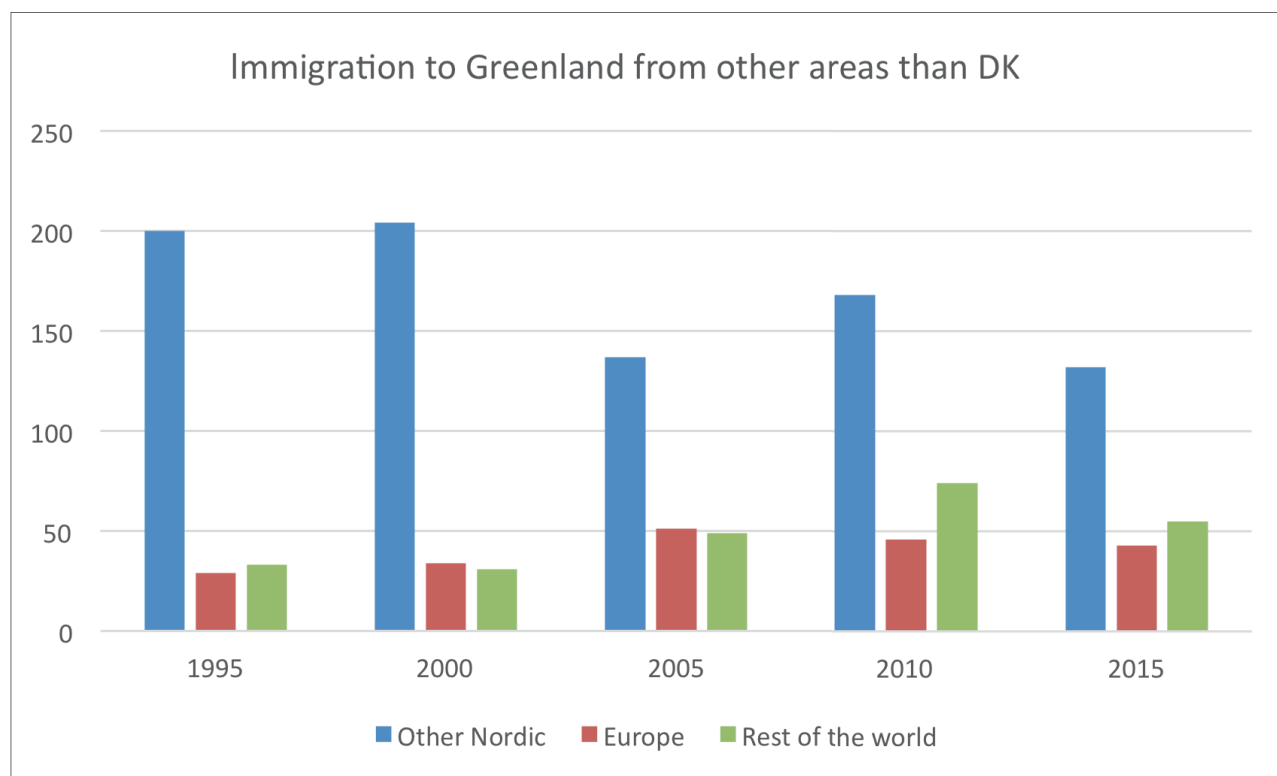
Approximately 675 non-Nordic citizens are residing in Greenland (2017 figures). Of these, Thai (161) and Philippine (204) citizens together make up more than half, while Germans (47), Poles (41) and Americans (36) are other principal groups.

Figure 5. Nordic residents in Greenland 2007-2017



Data source: Statistics Greenland

Figure 6. Immigration to Greenland from areas other than Denmark 1995-2015



Data source: Statistics Greenland

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Norway: Nordland county

By Leneisja Jungsberg

National policy overview

In Norway, a main objective of the immigration policy is to ensure that everyone become part of and get a sense of belonging to the Norwegian society. Participation in working life and Norwegian language skills are prioritized as part of the integration process (Regeringskanseliet 2013). The group of migrants is highly diverse and in numbers the EEA labour migrants are many times more than those coming as refugees because of humanitarian reasons.

For many regions in Norway migrants comprise an important resource for the labour market. It is particularly within the fishing industry, construction work and the health care sector there is a higher number of migrant workers.

Labour migrants usually always have work when arriving in Norway and they rarely receive support in terms of language training or to find housing. Previous studies state that there is a lack of language and socio-cultural training to EEA labour immigrants (Regeringskanseliet 2013:15–16).

When refugees arrive in Norway they begin their life with a two-year support programme consisting of 600 hours language training, societal and cultural introduction as well as internships to practice Norwegian language and experience a Norwegian working setting. Refugees are located by the national administration around the country and once refugees settle in their assigned municipality they are eligible for the introductory programme and its monetary benefits.

A recent study (Aure, Førde, and Magnussen 2015) indicates that migrants placed in rural areas are highly affected by the economic regional situation and job opportunities but also the local attitudes and practices when it comes to the migrants' interest to stay longer in a rural district. There is the aspect of economic integrations as well as social integration. For many migrants' it is easier to become economically integrated whereas it takes much longer before they have built a social network which include Norwegians in the local area.

An important aspect is also the opportunity to buy a house. Many migrants were highly motivated to buy their own house but felt restrained by the banks re-

quirement of start-up capital and didn't know about opportunities from e.g. Husbanken. When buying a house it is also an indicator of long-term perspective of staying in the municipality (Søholdt et al. 2012a:5–6).

The national administration supply the municipalities with support based on the type of immigrant arriving locally. For refugees the national government supply funding for the introduction programme, housing, and job consultation support. For the family reunification, migrant support is allocated in terms of language training (it is individual decided and doesn't include all family reunification migrants). For labour migrants there isn't any public support but rather an additional national income due to increased workforce and local population paying taxes (Søholdt et al. 2012b:9).

Seen from a national perspective the labour migrants are receiving the least amount of funding and contribute the most to the Norwegian economy. By having some ensuring a better inclusion strategy many of these could settle on a long-term basis to mitigate demographic challenges in certain regions.

Recent changes to integration policy

Several changes are underway in the Norwegian parliament and some of the changes discussed are about the possibility for migrants to obtain a second education all though they might have one from their home country. Some migrants experience their educational certificate rejected in the system because the requirements of e.g. an engineer or an electrician technician need to fulfil some different requirements in Norway than in Afghanistan. When having an education, but getting the certificate rejected it can cause some challenges being accepted for a new education in Norway since students are eligible to take only one education at the public educational institutions without paying tuition fees.

Another topic which is discussed as an improvement is to introduce common obligatory mentor programmes for all migrants in Norway. This could help to reduce the current gap of social network between migrants and Norwegians (interview Distriktssenteret 2016). Research also illustrate that those migrants with

more social network has an easier time to find job.

The government suggests that the regions (Fylkeskommuner) in Norway will get more responsibility for coordinating the integration process (Regeringen 2016). Furthermore, work is ongoing trying to ease the process for migrants getting their educational certificate validated.

Integration actors at national and regional levels

Ministry of Justice and Public Security is responsible for coordinating the integration policy and the ministry also has an executive responsibility for parts of the integration policy such as the Introduction act, the nationality act, and the settlement of refugees in municipalities including support schemes set up for this purpose (other authorities are responsible for integration within their sectors).

The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI) has an important role in the process to implement and develop the government's integration policy. The directorate is responsible for the implementation of settlements in the municipalities as well as coordinates the national policy towards municipalities on integration issues.

- IMDI helps local authorities/municipalities to develop general and inclusive plans on the process of integration
- IMDI is a driving force in relation to other state actors and local authorities to ensure equitable services

Municipalities are responsible for the practical implementation of integration policies in local communities. The settlement of refugees is regulated through a cooperation agreement between the national administration and the Norwegian association of local and regional authorities.

Based on a prognosis carried out by the national committee for settlements it is estimated how many refugees it is likely that will arrive in Norway together with an estimate of how many Norway can receive. The number of refugees expected is shared with the municipalities and upon this each municipality estimate how many they can settle locally. The final step is for IMDI to announce the total number and request the municipalities to receive the number of refugees based on previous calculations (IMDI 2016). It is a priority that the refugees are going to all of the country. This is also an important part of the district policy to avoid depopula-

tion in the rural and northern areas of Norway.

Integration process and programs

As part of the introduction programme for refugees their competences and language skills are registered in NIR (Norsk Innvandreregister – 'Norwegian Immigration Register') and this is the register the NAV-office get such information. This information can be supplemented in the NAV register through consultations and ad-hoc updates. When needed a regional mapping once in a while take place at the regional career centres.

The integration process aims to support migrants coming with a high level of expertise to use the education and skills they already have. First step is to get the educational certificate validated in NOKUT, the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education, an independent expert body under the Ministry of Education and Research. Second step is to begin searching for job together with Norwegian language training. Being able to speak Norwegian opens the job market for higher educated migrants arriving to Norway. This is also why it is a priority for the government to strengthen the language training for immigrants.

Previous studies mention that the introductory programme could be more work oriented in particular, for immigrant women with comprehensive care responsibilities and little education. A barrier is in some cases also lack of interest and assistance on the local side to help adapt immigrants' achieved qualifications to the regional labour market (Regeringskanseliet 2013:15–16)

When the refugees arrive to the municipality, the NGOs together with immigrant organizations and cultural and religious organisations are key actors in communities and play an important role in the integration work.

Residence and housing process for immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers

Refugees are provided municipal or privately rented apartments or houses. Only in few cases they find housing themselves.

Labour migrants sometimes find housing with help from the employer or they find it by themselves by searching at the local municipal housing unit. In some cases, they also get support from other fellow labour migrants from the same country at their workspace. Some municipalities with a big need of foreign labour are quite active in their planning of housing to consider the need of newly arrived migrants but most municipalities are not very active. It is usually the municipalities with a comprehensive fishing industry which are

active whereas the agricultural municipalities overall have much fewer labour migrants.

Risk of a segregated labour market

Statistics illustrate that a majority of the jobs occupied by migrants in Norway are unskilled labour work. This makes it worth considering a risk for labour market segregation due to the low representation of migrants in work requiring higher education.

When comparing to native Norwegians there is a higher unemployment rate among foreign born population in Norway. But compared to the other Nordic countries Norway has together with Iceland the lowest unemployment among the foreign born population (Regeringskanseliet 2013:87). This is because most of the migrants arriving are labour migrants which already have a job upon arrival.

Studies illustrate that apart from migrant workers from Western countries all other immigrant groups have lower salary than the majority of the population, poorer working conditions, more hiring, more seasonal employment, temporary contracts, fewer permanent positions, more part time, and more work without skills requirements (Tronstad, Søholdt, and Bjørnsen 2014:15–17).

Demographic and economic trends for Nordland county

Nordland county is situated in Northern Norway. The county consists of 44 municipalities and the county administration is in the main city of Bodø, which has approximately 50,000 inhabitants. There are vast differences between the municipalities and in the extent of their demographic challenges.

There are approximately 240,000 inhabitants living in Nordland county. The biggest city is Bodø which is considered the regional centre with around 50,000 inhabitants. From North to South Nordland county is 800 km and is thereby measured by area the second largest county in Norway. There are one university, two university colleges and three research institutions.

Among Norwegian counties, Nordland is one of the largest exporters of raw materials, industrial goods and fish products. 65 percent of the export from Northern Norway come from Nordland, every tenth farmed salmon in the world is from Nordland and 70 percent of the Norwegian fishing fleets total catch is fished in Nordland. In Helgeland, the most southern part of Nordland county is the second largest industrial cluster in Norway 2016 (Nordland County 2016).

The population in Nordland County is population wise on the same level as in the 1970s in actual numbers. Because the overall population number has increased for Norway the share living in Nordland is reduced, see figure 7. This influences economy, representation to the national parliament in Norway, and the finances allocated to Nordland to support municipalities to develop the local economy and communities.

If Nordland had experienced the same development as the rest of Norway in terms of population growth it would mean that 325,400 inhabitants lived in Norway which is 83,718 more inhabitants than what live in Nordland today.

Immigration as part of the regional development strategy

Nordland County are working actively attract migrants to come to work and settle in the county. In 2013 the in-migration project («Tilflytting og rekruttering fra utlandet») were established. It is running for 4 years until 2017 and is financed through the ordinary budgets from education, labour and welfare. The project intends to attract new citizens to the county to mitigate the long terms effect of outmigration in Nordland county. In 2011 Nordland experienced for the first time a small population growth due to immigration and today the labour market in Nordland is dependent on workers coming from other countries.

The in-migration project is a 4-year project and it runs until 2017 and the project is implemented by the Nordland county council in co-operation with the Norwegian Labour and Welfare service (NAV), the confederation of Norwegian enterprises (NHO), the

Figure 7: Comparison of population growth between Nordland County and Norway

	1970	2000	2010	2015	Prognosis 2030
Norway	3 866 468	4 478 497	4 858 199	5 165 802	5 948 156
Nordland	243 179	239 109	236 271	241 682	261 879
Nordland's share of Norway's population	6.3%	5.3%	4.9%	4.7%	4.4%

Source: Midterm report for the in-migration project, Nordland County 2015

Norwegian Association of Local and regional authorities (KS), Centre for competence development, and representatives from the University of Nordland and the Nordland county sport association.

Focus for the project is qualification for work together with settlement and participation in societal life. Refugees comprise a rather small share of the immigrant group all though the number of refugees in Nordland county is slightly higher than in other areas in Norway.

Work migrants and spouse migrants account for a larger share of the immigrants. They don't have the same rights as the refugees to receive free language training and support to find housing for the family. Still, many of these immigrants bring competences which are needed in the business sector in Nordland.

One aim of the in-migration project is to give Nordland County 10,000 new habitants in the period from 2013-2017. The municipality is the most important actor in this process but NAV, the university, and adult vocational training is also important institutions to engage.

Currently, many companies make use of temporary recruitment of workers through an agency. It is in particular the health sector which is making use of this system all though the people recruited costs the double and only stay a short term which mean the communities doesn't benefit from it. As part of the in-migration project and to lower the number of temporary recruit-

ed workers Nordland County has a pilot project with the purpose to recruit health personnel from Spain.

The Spanish health care system is in many ways similar to the Norwegian and to avoid expensive short term personnel recruitment through an agency the hospitals were encouraged to recruit doctors and nurses from Spain. It has been challenging for the employer to prepare all material needed and the preparation in terms of managing the immigration rules for foreign workers, cultural differences and scepticism for the new and foreign ways.

Beside the focus on attracting workers the in-migration project also support a holistic inclusion of the migrants already arrived in Nordland County. This includes supporting civil society organisations working with integration in the municipalities. It has become clear that everything happening outside work is of high importance for people wanting to reside on a long-term basis. By being included in the local community through engagement in e.g. the sports association gives a sense of belonging in a different way than having a regular work.

Nordland county sport association have a funding programme where local sport associations can apply for financial support to make sports activities aimed at integrating newly arrived migrants. An introduction to sport associations and leisure time activities in Norway is also part of the introductory programme for refugees.

Figure 8: Number of immigrants listed by country of origin

Country of origin	2005	2010	2013	2015
Poland	186	765	1400	1883
Lithuania	48	280	1001	1323
Somalia	494	605	1175	1280
Sweden	743	974	1071	1141
Eritrea	8	294	764	1086
Thailand	358	628	824	928
Germany	349	663	800	839
Russia	682	787	818	796
Philippines	235	371	522	605
Afghanistan	319	431	585	601
Romania	44	118	280	494
Iraq	552	536	508	479
Latvia	24	74	307	414
Denmark	326	329	345	402

Source: Midterm report for the in-migration project, Nordland County 2015

In general, the attention from the general public, influenced by the media, has been on the refugees arriving in Nordland County all though they consist of approximately 20 pct. of the total number of migrants. Most of the migrants arriving in Nordland County are EEA labour migrants from Poland and Lithuania and the number of people has increased dramatically for both countries, see figure 8. In 2005 186 people came from Poland whereas in 2015 it was 1883 people coming from Poland to Nordland county. The third most common group in 2015 was people from Somalia.

The in-migration project is a systemic project engaging municipalities and civil society organisations actors in the work to reach the goals about attracting migrants to all parts of society. Approximately 30 different public and private authorities have been supported financially locally to carry out work that supported the inclusion of migrants into society.

It has been challenging to engage the small and medium enterprises to participate actively in the project because they can't be away from the business to discuss experiences of recruitment and cultural practices at the work spaces.

Because of a recent amalgamation of the colleges and universities in Nordland it has also been difficult for Nordland University to carry out activities as support to the in-migration project. The university has a career centre where they give support to students about job opportunities after their education.

In 2015 in Norway labour migrants comprised 43 pct., family reunification migrants comprised 33 pct. and refugees 14 pct. and education 10 pct. Figure 9 illustrates the reasons for migrants to settle between 1990 and 2012. Due to a larger flow of refugees in 2016 the statistics are likely to be subject to quite some change.

Implementation of integration in Nordland county and Herøy municipality

The implementation processes at the regional and municipal level depends on the type of migrants.

The EEA labour migrants mainly come because they already have a job or are searching for one. They get to know about the jobs from the social network and it isn't a requisite for them to learn Norwegian to carry out the job even though they end up settle on a more permanent basis with the family coming. Many are on the edge of the labour market taking jobs with poor working conditions characterised by seasonal employment and short term contracts. Previous studies describe EEA migrants as those migrants which would need to take care of themselves (Friberg, Elgvin, and Djuve 2013:8–9).

More awareness is being created in terms of working for inclusion for this group of migrants and there is a regional focus of ensuring language training to EEA labour migrants as well as family reunification migrants. When it comes to make use of the migrants' educational competences it is also quite clear that the language is a key for opening the job market for other than un-skilled jobs.

One example of this is Lidia who came to Norway for the first time 2 years ago. She has a Bachelor degree and worked in the capital Bucharest in Romania as a social worker but could hardly survive from the salary she received for her full-time employment. Lidia got offered a 2-months job in the summertime at a fishing factory in Northern Norway through a contact from her social network and she came alone to take the job.

After the two months' contract, she got another two months' contract and this continued in 1½ year. In the community where she lived she saw an advertisement for language training and she decided to learn to speak Norwegian. The training where organised by the volunteer organisation in Herøy municipality and

Figure 9: Reasons for migrants to settle between 1990 and 2012 in five different regions (Nordland, Rogaland, Finnmark, Møre Romsdal, Troms) and Norway.

	Work	Family	Refugee	Education
Norway	48.9	30.1	9.8	10.5
Nordland County	36%	31%	23%	8%
Rogaland County	53.4	33.9	6.1	6.2
Finnmark County	52.4	25.4	16.2	5.2
Møre og Romsdal County	55.6	29.5	9.5	4.9
Troms County	34.5	22.3	27.3	15.0

Source: Midterm report for the in-migration project, Nordland County 2015

the language teacher were encouraging Lidia to get her bachelor degree validated in Norway and do a big effort with the language training.

When Lidia passed the A2 language test and she got her Bachelor diploma validated she gave it to her manager. The manager decided to promote her from being a cleaner in the factory and to give her a new and longer contract as a secretary in the office working with administrative tasks.

Before Lidia came to Herøy municipality she was working for a period of six months in another community in Northern Norway. During this work period, she didn't find any offers for language training and thus ended up leaving the community.

Now Lidia would like to stay in Herøy and she also got her boyfriend from Romania to come and work at the fish factory. He is educated as an electrician and currently they are waiting for reply whether his certificate will be validated by NOKUT or if he needs some supplementary courses before he can use his education in Norway.

Immigrants settling on a long-term basis

To make it attractive for people to settle on a long-term basis Herøy municipality has developed 'housing building school' which is supposed to lead self-builders through the process of planning and applying for financial support for materials etc. There are many details which are important to know about for people building their own houses and this initiative is aiming at supporting migrants and other people doing this (Nordland Fylkesskommun 2015).

A high priority is to learn Norwegian as fast as possible and some refugees already reach a high level of Norwegian language skill within the first year. But this is also dependent on the abilities and educational level of the migrant arriving locally. As part of the programme the competences of the refugees are mapped and they are placed into three tracks:

1. those with 0-6 years of school
2. those finished up until 9th grade
3. those finished high school or a higher education

In Bodø municipality the migration coordinator assesses most of the refugees to be part of the first group. This means that this group most likely will apply for unskilled labour when they finish the introduction programme. But since most unskilled labour jobs already are taken by the EEA migrants this cause some challenges to get this group included into the labour market.

One of the biggest employers is the fishing indus-

try and the HR representative at a fish fillet factory in Bodø explained that if you hire one person from Poland or Lithuania you have 10 knocking on your door. This entail that they usually never advertise any of their unskilled positions.

After the two-year introduction programme the refugees search job through the labour and welfare center (NAV). When it is unclear what type of job which is relevant a job test (jobbsmak) which is a shorter period of work or training at one place is suggested (interview NAV). In addition to support the migrants into jobs locally there is also ongoing work of inclusion into leisure activities and participation in e.g. volunteer work.

In Herøy municipality they have a volunteer organisation working with providing language training and other social activities to migrants in the municipality. It is financed 60 pct. of the national government and 40 pct. locally. The leader of the volunteer organisation has a broad outreach to many of the newly arrived migrants in the municipality and work towards creating social cohesion between the Norwegians and the migrants living in the same municipality through different activities such as language café, cultural evenings etc.

One initiative locally is also setting up a mentor programme with a focus on women. Here Norwegian and migrant women are partnered up to support each other in small and big things in life and to enhance the social network of people in the same village. A lesson learned in Nordland county is that if the migrants doesn't come much in contact with Norwegian society they will not become integrated even though they have a job. And this will make it more likely that the migrants after a few years will move towards the capital regions where there are larger concentrations of people from their own country.

The libraries are excellent meeting places with an untapped potential for integration activities. There are already many relevant international magazines and books and with more activities focusing on social events it could lead to network building between migrants and native Norwegians. Distriktssenteret in Norway made, "Inkluderingsnavet Berg folkebibliotek", a short movie illustrating how the library can be a good place to meet and organise activities in the community.

The high number of refugees coming to Norway during the last 2 years can be an asset to many of the rural communities in Norway if they are well integrated and decide to settle on a long-term basis. Regional and local planners are aware of the importance of these to mitigate declining or aging population and renew the workforce in the municipalities and together with the

in-migration project Nordland county take many initiatives to engage and support municipalities and civil

society organisation in pursuing a holistic approach to integration in the local area.

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Representatives for the following were part of the Norwegian field work

Nordland County
Nord University
Bodø municipality
Herøy municipality
Nordland idrettskrets
NAV Nordland
Local seafood processing company
Labour migrant
Family reunification migrant
Refugee participating in 2-year introduction programme

Sweden: Jämtland county

By Sandra Oliveira e Costa

Background on Jämtland county

Jämtland county is a sparsely populated area with as much as 50% forest. It covers 12% of the total surface of Sweden, but only 1.5% of the population. 9% of the area is protected environment. There are two airports, one in Sveg, one in Östersund and two major high ways, one going north-south through the region and the other going east-west.

The population number in Jämtland has been decreasing since the 1950s', while the population in Sweden in general has increased with more than 2.8 million (approximately 7 million in 1950, and 9,8 million in 2015). At the same time, Jämtland has the second lowest share of foreign born population, only 8.6% compared to the average on 17% in Swedish counties (Statistics Sweden 2016). Thus, one way for the region to steer the population development in a new direction and get more inhabitants in working age is through receiving a greater share of the international migration influx that has been coming to Sweden the past years. This is a demographic logic that is reflected in regional and municipal strategies in the county. The national

policies on establishment at the labour market is clearly mirrored in regional projects and strategies.

Jämtland had in June 2016 a population of almost 128,000 inhabitants, which is almost the size of population as 100 years ago. In a period when Sweden's population rose from 6 to almost 10 million, Jämtland's grew from 124,000 (1915) to 144,000 in the middle of the century and then decreased again, coming back to 127,000 (2015) (Regionfakta 2016a). The change of the population in terms of numbers is unevenly distributed between the towns and municipalities in the county. between 1990 and 2015, the population in Krokom, Åre and Östersund increased with approximately three, seven and five per cent respectively, while in Berg, Härjedalen, Bräcke, Ragunda and Strömsund the population decreased with between 18 – 26 percent, see figure 10.

However, from 2015 to 2016, the population growth was positive for all municipalities except Härjedalen, stretching from 0.4 percent in Krokom, to 3,8 percent in Åre, resulting in a regional average on 1 percent population increase (Regionfakta 2017).

Figure 10: Population changes in Jämtland municipalities compared to regional and national level 1990 and 2015 in numbers and percent.

Change in population during 25 years, 1990-2015				
Municipality/ Region/Sweden	Numbers		Change 1990-2015	
	1990	2015	Number	Percent
Berg	8,660	7,032	-1,628	-19
Bräcke	8,739	6,455	-2,284	-26
Härjedalen	12,491	10,262	-2,229	18
Krokom	14,373	14,785	412	3
Ragunda	7,078	5,387	-1,691	-24
Strömsund	16,093	11,712	-4,381	-27
Åre	9,975	10,677	702	7
Östersund	58,317	61,066	2,749	5
Jämtland county	135,726	127,376	-8,350	-6
Sweden	8 590 630	9 851 017	1 260 387	15

Source: County administrative board (2016). Data originally from Statistics Sweden.

Foreign born population

Jämtland has a comparatively small share of foreign born inhabitants. In 2015 more immigrants than usual were coming to Jämtland due to the inflow of people seeking asylum at that time. The majority of the 1559 immigrants had Syrian (24%), Eritrean (23%) or Swedish (11%) citizenship. The fourth and fifth largest groups were from Afghanistan (7%) and Somalia (4%) (www.regionfakta.com).

Earlier, there were efforts to attract inhabitants from other EU-countries to settle in the region, but nowadays this strategy gets less focus due to the migration based on asylum. Jämtland has experience in receiving relatively many quota refugees, stretching between approximately 150-300 yearly during 2011-2014. Since late 2012 though, the county is building up the institutional capacity and infrastructure to receive asylum seekers and persons who have been issued asylum or right to protection. One of the strategies to make this possible has been through establishing the presence of Migrationsverket, who wasn't institutionally represented in Jämtland until the fall of 2012. The opening of the office in Jämtland was made after negotiations with representatives from the region who saw a chance for Jämtland to increase its population growth by receiving asylum seekers and newly arrived persons (Meeting in Östersund 21 June 2016).

The number of newly arrived persons that the county administration has an agreement with the Migration Agency to receive has increased, called assigned accommodation (ABO), see figure 11. There is also an in-

crease in the number of newly arrived that themselves chose Jämtland as their region to reside in (EBO), as well as the number of persons that comes for the reason of family connection. Residing in Jämtland during the asylum process is a possible reason to choose to reside in Jämtland once you have a residence permit.

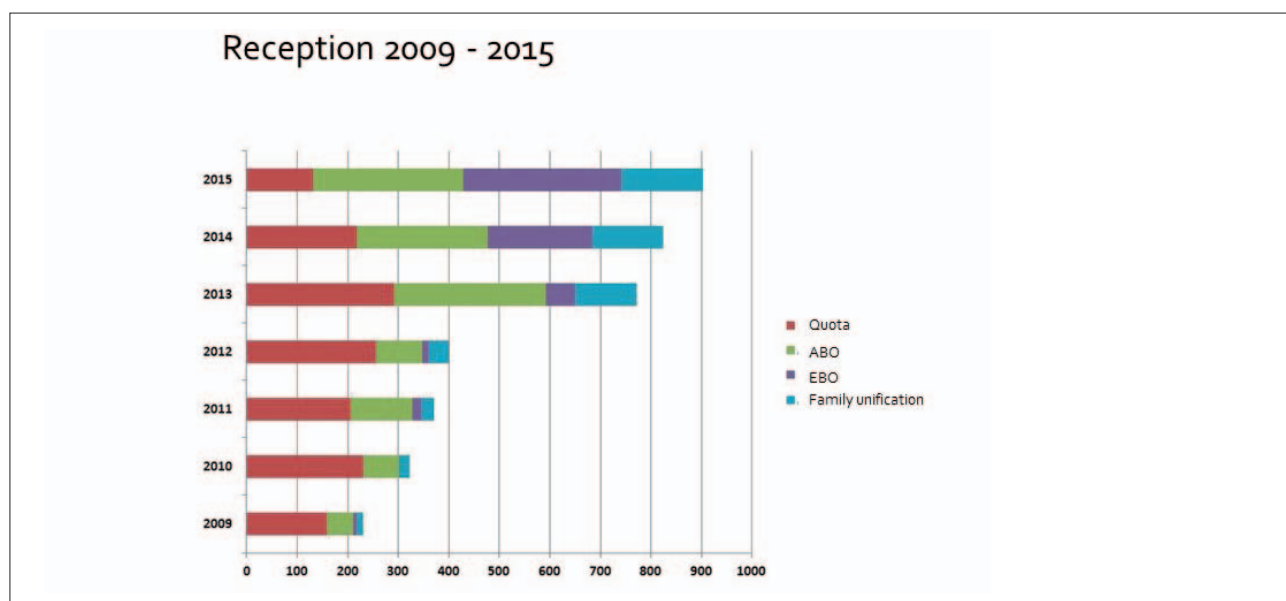
The share of foreign born living in the region has increased in the past ten years, even though it is still quite much lower than the average. However, in December 2016, the share of foreign born in the region had risen to 9.5 percent, almost one percent more than the previous year (Statistics Sweden 2017).

Labour market structure

Compared with the national average, Jämtland has a slightly higher share of employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing. Otherwise there are no major differences to national average – especially for women numbers are very similar to national average.

The ten most common professions are, with biggest sector first, in health care such as assistant nurse and home nursing (hemsjukvård); teacher in compulsory school (grundskolelärare); secretary; teacher in preschool; support person in special housing units (boendestödare); salesperson in trade (dagligvaror och fackhandel); truck drivers; individual social assistant (personlig assistent) (Arbetsförmedlingen 2016d). The nine largest employers in Jämtland are public: seven of the municipalities (all except Ragunda), Jämtland Landsting (health care) and the public social security authority (Försäkringskassan). Nearly 3,700 persons

Figure 11: The figure shows the increase in past years of persons coming to Jämtland through assigned accommodation (ABO), by autonomous settlement (EBO) and through family unification.



Source: County Administration of Jämtland 2016

commute to other regions, a large share, as many as 1 100 to Stockholm. Almost 10% commute to Östersund from other parts of the region.

Jämtland has a challenge to meet the need to recruit new employees due to the high number of persons that will retire the coming years. The most common jobs among the population aged 60-64 are in health-care, drivers (fordonsförare), carpenter (byggnadshantverkare), salespersons (försäljare i detaljhandel), teachers in primary school (grundskolelärare), managers (drifts- och verksamhetschefer, estate agents (mäklare), engineers, teachers and pedagogues in pre-school as well as construction workers (Sweden's Public Employment Agency 2016d).

Shortage of labour and unemployment among foreign born

The demand for labour is high and employers in both private and public sector report that they experience problems in finding labour and recruiting the right competence. Sweden's Public Employment Agency makes the prognosis that both unemployment and the lack of labour will increase in parallel to each other. The labour shortage in the private sector has slightly increased since 2015, 23 % of the employers say they experience a shortage of labour when recruiting. This is seen as a greater challenge to growth than the infrastructure of transport and communication. A trend noticed in Jämtland is that one-man companies such as carpenters or hairdressers are retiring, which might create a lack of these services at the country side (Sweden's Public Employment Agency 2016d).

The greatest challenge though, is in the public sector where as many as 78 % of the employers report that they experience difficulties when recruiting (Sweden's Public Employment Agency 2016d). As was stated above, working in the health care sector and as teachers are about the most common jobs among the population that will retire the next coming years, and the shortage within these sectors is clear.

The share of unemployed persons out of the total in Jämtlands' municipalities stretched between 5 and 9 percent in 2015 (Regionfakta 2016b). Jämtland has a high share of unemployed foreign born persons in comparison with national average. It is also clear that within the group "unemployed" the share of foreign born is increasing.

Estimations from Ekonomifakta, tell that in 2016, approximately 0.1% of the active labour force (totala antal sysselsatta) were labour migrants, i.e. with residence permits based on work permit (Ekonomifakta 2016). The share of persons that lead the development of a company and is foreign born, is lower than the

national average (Region Jämtland Härjedalen and County administrative board Jämtland 2016).

A variety of methods to increase settlement and integration

Immigration and integration in regional development strategy

The regional development strategy for Jämtland 2030 has four prioritized areas of activities: Increased level of education; Increased participation in working life; Cultural competence and social coherence; and Improved infrastructure. The strategy Regional strategy for increased population and improved integration 2015-2020 (Regional strategi för ökad inflyttning och förbättrad integration 2015-2020) is focusing on how to work on these four prioritized areas with a special focus on integration Region Jämtland Härjedalen (2015)

The regional strategy for increased population and improved integration does not touch much upon immigration, but has a great focus on integration. The foreword states that people settle in Jämtland for various reasons and that everyone, independent of having a residence permit or not, being native or foreign born shall integrate with each other (Region Jämtland Härjedalen 2015). In 2013, the Swedish Migration Agency issued 1 200 residence permits in the region of Jämtland (Region Jämtland Härjedalen 2015). The region made a prognosis for receiving 400 persons in 2017 who were issued asylum. It was decided in 2016 though, that 237 persons will be placed in Jämtland, due to the new national law on distribution of "county numbers".¹

The fact that a person is issued a residence permit by the Swedish Migration agency in Jämtland, does not mean that he or she stays there, the person can also leave to settle somewhere else after upholding a residence permit. The regional strategy thus aims to

"improve integration and in this way decrease the number of persons that leave [Jämtland], increase the number of persons that settle and in the long run increase the population numbers in the whole region" (Region Jämtland Härjedalen 2015:2).

The strategy expresses that the region wants to attract new settlers, but it is primarily focused on higher participation at the labour market.

¹ The government decides on the number of newly arrived that are directed to each county, (in Swedish "länsstal"). The county administrative board then decides on the number for each municipality. The numbers are decided one year in advance so that the municipalities will be able to prepare for the reception (Swedish Government 2016b).

Means to attract people and new workers in general

One important matter in the strategy is the regional infrastructure concerning housing, public transport and broad band. The accessibility to these matters affects the motivation for people to settle - the attractiveness of the region (Region Jämtland Härjedalen 2015).

Another important matter is connected to knowledge and competence. This part of the strategy aims to broadly increase the level of education among the population. This includes putting attention on the language training in school to improve children's possibilities to go on to further education and increase digital competence among the population. The strategy also says that when documentation is missing from earlier education validation need to be done in an early stage.

One of the activities that is used as a means to get people to settle in Jämtland is guided tours to show the advantages of the region (Region Jämtland Härjedalen 2015). In the past years the region has performed EU-projects with the purpose to attract people from Central Europe to move to Jämtland, but when Jämtland started to get a larger share of the persons seeking asylum, there was less needs to do this (Interview county administrative board 2016 09 06).

Matching at the labour market is an important factor to make people stay in or move to the region. The regional strategy for integration states that persons with competences that are demanded in the region should have smooth ways to get in contact with the "working life".

Interventions against discrimination

In the regional strategy for increased population and improved integration, discrimination and the change of attitudes is a cross cutting theme. As a part of the prioritized area of increased education, it is expressed that the educational organisations need to work actively with matters of values and attitudes to decrease discrimination. Better competence among both employers and employees shall diminish discrimination on terms of gender and ethnicity. This perspective will contribute to increase the participation at the labour market.

The fourth prioritized area in the strategy is about cultural competence and social cohesion. In this part, the accessibility to information for people with a low knowledge of the Swedish language is enhanced since it is seen as an important way to get possibility for inclusion in society. Concerning the needs for changing attitudes in the population, racism must be combatted and the understanding of the advantages of migration and diversity need to be broader. Once again, the role of the civil society is put light on, they create meaningful places to meet.

Settlement issues

Since 1 March 2016, a new law regulates that all Swedish municipalities have a duty to receive newly arrived refugees. The purpose is to get a more even distribution of newly arrived in the country than during past years. The government decides on the number of newly arrived that are issued to each county, the county administrative board then distributes the numbers to the municipalities (Swedish Government 2016b). This municipal placement (kommunplacering) of newly arrived takes place after a person has received asylum. Before that, when a person is in the asylum process, the person stays at a dwelling for asylum seekers. The housing arrangements during the different stages in a persons' process can be either private or publicly run, and it is always optional to arrange housing on own account as well.

There are challenges due to the geographical location of refugee camps in Jämtland. Sparsely populated villages cannot always offer all kinds of education and courses that are needed. People need to go to the more central towns such as Östersund, but since public transportation is sparse and the distances are great, this put a challenge to some of the activities within the establishment programme. Ragunda municipality has received 260 refugees from Eritrea, Somalia, Colombia, Burma and Congo since 2007. Out of these, 40% have left the region to settle somewhere else.

Skills monitoring and education validation for asylum seekers and refugees

A regional agreement has been set up in Jämtland concerning the roles and responsibilities of the receiving and establishment of newly arrived. Region Jämtland Härjedalen, Sweden's Public Employment Agency, the Swedish social insurance system, the county administrative board Jämtland and the Swedish Migration Agency are part of the agreement. According to this agreement, the Swedish Migration Agency shall map out the competences during the asylum period (Regional överenskommelse 2016). This procedure can still be improved and further collaboration with the Swedish Public Employment Agency is important to make the mapping as useful as possible. The fact of being a sparsely populated area put a challenge to fill up vocational training courses since the basis in terms of number of students to the courses may be low in smaller towns and villages. In Åre, however, they have managed to put up vocational courses in shortage jobs such as in the health care sector, in child care and culinary.

Project "Settlement, establishment and competence in Jämtland and Ådalen"

This project was reported in January 2015 and started in May 2013. It was funded by Public Employment Agency and included the region of Jämtland and Ådalen. The overall goals for the project was to

- improve the manner in which the competence among newly arrived persons is utilized
- improve the possibilities for newly arrived persons to settle and get established in sparsely populated areas
- mitigate the effects of the aging population

The purpose has also been to shorten the waiting time for housing and to more effectively use the time when a person is waiting for residence permit and housing, in order to facilitate the individual establishment. Each municipality have, during the project period, had an establishment coordinator whose function has been financed by the Public Employment Agency, but located at the municipality. This person is responsible for deepening the cooperation between the municipality and the Public Employment Agency.

As a part of the project, a mapping of the process from the decision of a residence permit, to the finalization of a persons' establishment programme. The mapping was done together with various authorities and municipal departments in Jämtland. As a result, the different authorities came to have a greater understanding of their differing roles and obstacles and uncertainties in the process were documented. The mapping laid the ground for a fruitful cooperation and the method could positively be spread to other regions, according to the Public Employment Agency.

One identified challenge was that in sparsely populated areas, it is difficult to start up courses for competence development, since there might be few students in every course and poor communications make it difficult for people to travel to the courses. Another obstacle to start courses outside the centralities, is the procurement law. Efforts made within the project managed anyhow to start special courses in professions for which there is shortage of labour: service and cleaning with focus on hotel and tourism in Åre municipality; afforestation in Berg municipality and healthcare in Härjedalen municipality.

One of the goals has also been to make the public sector receive interns. In the role of the establishment coordinators is the task to network with employers and

mediate contacts between the newly arrived persons and employers. It is also within this persons' commission to work for mitigation of the aging population which will be specially noted in the public sector. Some of the establishment coordinators report that it has been difficult to arrange internships in the public sectors' organisations. The interest for receiving newly arrived persons in the different departments of the municipalities has varied notably. However, they have succeeded to arrange various internship positions both in public and private sector.

One factor of success for making newly arrived person stay in the region, has been to actively search for those who are motivated to stay and offer them housing. Giving information to newly arrived persons in their own languages is one step on the way to motivate them to stay – this was stated by interviewing 24 newly arrived persons about what factors affect their decision on where to settle. The interviews also told that these persons would more probably accept the settlement offer from the municipality if it is located close to where they have spent the time waiting for asylum. The "principle of close distance" was thus applied, meaning that motivated municipalities made efforts to arrange housing for persons close to where they were residing during the asylum period. This is one of the success factors that have led to increased number of persons who agreed on the assigned housing that was made by the municipalities – thus, affecting positively one of the project goals. In this way, the share of persons that accept an offer for dwelling has increased from 44% in 2012 to 70% in 2013 and 71% in 2014 (Sweden's Employment Agency 2015).

Another challenge is that the trend is that waiting times for residence permit and housing are getting even longer and this put more pressure on the municipalities to find ways to attract the newly arrived person to stay since they may start looking for other places and solve housing on their own. This will make it even more important to map competences early and actively try to motivate the person to stay in the region (Meeting in Östersund 22 June 2016).

Projekt "Integration Jämtland Härjedalen"

Integration Jämtland Härjedalen is funded by the European Social Funds and runs October 2015 – December 2017. The project is directed towards newly arrived aged 25-64 that have been directed to the municipalities (kommunplacerade) and stand outside the labour market. The project will put extra attention to women and people with functional disabilities. The project management is taken on by the Region who coordinates a platform for exchange between Jämtland Här-

² "Bosättning, etablering och kompetensförsörjning i Jämtland och Ådalen"

jedalen's eight municipalities and the Public Employment Agency. The outcomes aimed for is to diminish unemployment, increase social inclusion and to take advantage of diversity and utilize the competences among newly arrived people in order to contribute to regional development. Also to more effectively use the time when a person is in the establishment program and contribute to that more newly arrived get in touch with civil society (Region Jämtland Härjedalen 2016b).

The fact that newly arrived persons have few contacts to the local labour market, is one of the reasons to have this focus, and one person was recruited to manage the project in 2015. In Östersund politicians have decided to arrange 100 apprenticeships in the public sector. Most municipalities have someone coordinating and arranging apprenticeships, in Ragunda this person visited 27 employers and managed to arrange eight apprenticeships for the target group only in April 2016. In Strömsund municipality there is a goal the different municipal administrative departments should have a place for an intern. Strömstad as well as other municipalities in the region, have held mentor courses for those taking on apprentices.

The ESF-project should have a special focus on getting women in to labour market activities, though in April 2016, it was stated that women are underrepresented as participants in the different activities. In April 2016, the ESF-projects' activities had reached 125 persons, among 44 women. Municipal meeting platforms for knowledge exchange are among the outcomes of this project. These platforms, used by the municipalities, the county and the Public Employment Agency, are much appreciated by civil servants who use it to share examples of how they have solved different issues such as how to arrange mentor courses or reach out with important information. This function as a way to make use of each other's experiences (Region Jämtland Härjedalen 2016; Meeting in Östersund 22 June 2016).

Job matching at the local level, and the commitment of employers/businesses

In a prognosis for 2016-2017 the Public Employment Agency foresees that the challenge with matching in Jämtland will continue to grow, this since the number of unemployed rise in parallel with the shortage of labour – at the same time as many of the inscribed do not have the education that is needed for vacant jobs. This dynamic creates a gap in the matching. The prognosis from the Public Employment Agency is that the number of inscribed persons will be 5000 in 2017 which is 8% of the labour force. Primarily, it is the inflow of subscribers that are foreign born that makes the increase (Sweden's Public Employment Agency 2016d). This put

challenges to the economic growth in the region.

In the regional agreement is included an action plan for improvements on the integration in the region. The Public Employment Agency is responsible to develop validation systems in shortage job sectors and also to at an early stage identify persons with competencies that correspond to the needs of labour in the region. Cooperation between different authorities is important to map out the competencies among newly arrived. As an example on how the region works with this, the health interview that is offered to newly arrived persons, are since recently also supposed to include surveys on potential competences in the health care sector, as a way to identify these kind of competences at an early stage (Meeting in Östersund 21 June 2016).

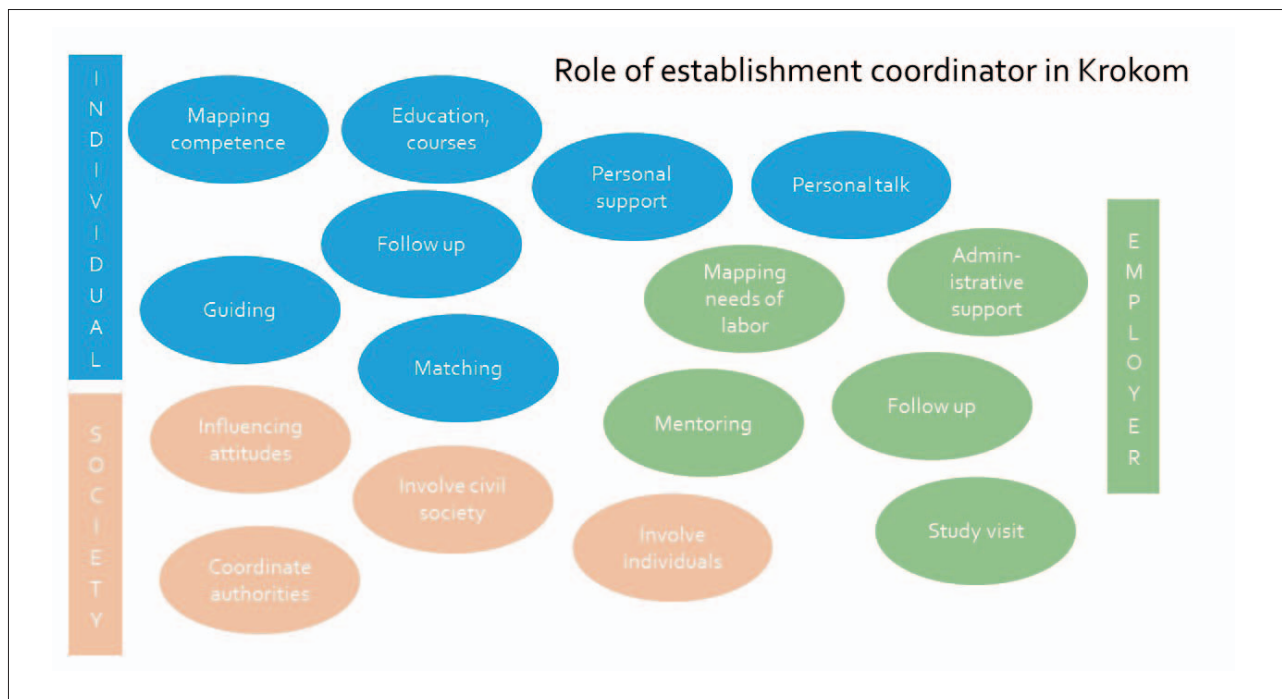
The commitment of the employers is important, not least to change sometimes negative attitudes towards receiving apprentices. Spreading knowledge and changing attitudes is part of the regions' strategy towards integration and increase of the population and it is seen as positive that native employees come in contact with newly-arrived inhabitants at their jobs. Though lack of time and hesitancy for what it would mean to take on apprentices are common obstacles to take on interns sometimes. Two ways of changing these attitudes have shown successful. In the health care sector some of the regular employees were reluctant since they felt interns were diverting time from the ordinary work force when they needed to be introduced to the work by a colleague. Attitudes changed when the health sector started to organize courses for mentors and also to substitute the regular staff when they were away on mentorship tasks. Nowadays the attitude is more positive and both interns and the mentor training courses are requested.

Another successful way has been when senior officials take on trainees, this has been tried out in Åre and Krokom municipalities. Both chair of political boards and various directors at the municipality have had apprentices and this sends the signal that if persons at high positions do have time for apprentices, then many more should be able to (Meeting in Östersund 21 June 2016, Meeting in Östersund 22 June 2016).

The role and importance of a local integration coordination person

The eight municipalities in Jämtland are structured differently. They all work with integration, housing, school, day care, language training and job matching for newly arrived, though the titles of the civil servants working with the issues vary, as well as the names of

Figure 12: Illustration of the establishment coordinator's tasks in Krokrom



Source: Krokrom municipality – translated into English by Nordregio

the different units. Some of the municipalities have an establishment coordinator that works specifically with connecting newly arrived to jobs and internships. The coordinator in Krokrom map competencies and interests among the newly arrived and map needs among local employers and motivate them to take apprentices. The coordinator also support the employers with paperwork and to understand what kind of financial support they can get from the Public Employment Agency for taking on interns.

The work of the establishment coordinator can be highly dependent on the efforts made by him or her personally. This person has a broad network within the municipality to create contacts, locate job opportunities and lobby among companies for taking on interns. Information about the needs of companies and employers is changing rapidly (Meeting in Krokrom 20160621).

One success factor for creating apprentice positions is to make good matches between the intern and the employer – when both are happy with the apprentice period, this is probably the best ways to show the positive sides and inspire others to do the same. Here, the role of the local coordinator is important, since this person has a key role in making the connections. See figure 12 and explanation of tasks that the establishment coordinator is responsible for together with colleagues. The figure is a translated version of Krokrom municipality's structure for how the establishment coordinator work with integration at the labour market

in Krokrom, which was inspired to them by Åre municipality.

Interventions and activities directed to the individual
Mapping competence: First, the coordinator at the Public Employment Agency has an overviews mapping talk with the individual. Then the coordinator at Krokrom has a second, deeper mapping talk with the individual. Here not only the person's professional background is mapped out, but also his or hers personal interests and aims. For example, having worked with service at a bank before doesn't mean one necessarily has to work on a bank again, but maybe something corresponding to the function one had there, though it might be in a different sector.

Personal support: The aim is to support the individual to see what he or she would like to work with in Sweden and find out what is his or her interest. This is mostly needed for persons who might not have worked before.

Education: An alternative to internship. The coordinator helps to find the right person to guide in choosing education.

Follow up: A follow-up of the internship. Was it a good match? Does the person want to change work place?

Guiding: Guide the individual in the Swedish system and labour market. It can be difficult to know what to work with in Sweden even though this might have been obvious in the country that is now left behind.

Personal talk: Understanding the interest of the person. What would the person like to develop?

Interventions and activities directed to employers

Mapping needs of labor: The coordinator contacts companies to see if they are in need of interns or could take on an intern who is interested in their business.

Administrative support: Public Employment Agency has a lot of subsidies to employ persons that are included in the establishment programme. Many companies, particularly the smaller ones, find this complicated and time consuming to deal with. The coordinator offers support with the administration.

Study visit: Making study visit at the employer and company to see what kind of work is taking place there. It is also an important part before starting up an internship.

Supervision: The ongoing shift in generation at the public administration in the municipalities puts pressure on the organisations and many say they don't have time to take on interns. The establishment coordinator offers support in what it means to be a good supervisor and mentor for an intern.

Interventions and activities directed to society:

Influencing attitudes: The coordinator function has a task to influence peoples' attitudes towards taking on interns and employ newly arrived immigrants. This is a way to break down existing barriers and counter discrimination.

Coordinate authorities: Relevant public authorities gather on a monthly basis to coordinate their activities.

Civil society: There is also work directed to civil society and the public in order to engage positive initiatives into the integration.

Involve individuals: Getting the municipalities' inhabitants to engage in networks where they meet newly arrived persons to get a social interaction on individual basis.

The role of civil society in the establishment process

The role of civil society in the establishment of newly arrived in Jämtland, is enhanced both on municipal websites, and in interviews and meetings with regional and municipal civil servants from different authorities. The civil society creates a welcoming atmosphere as well as help with day-to-day issues for the new inhabitants and asylum seekers, and do provide social networks that sometimes lead to jobs. Also worth to mention – if the civil society and natives would not have engaged in the newcomers lives, then who would they actually be “integrated with”? For example, Härjedalen municipality signals on its website that social network is one of the most important ways to get a job today, and thus motivates its' inhabitants to become a friend with a newly arrived through the municipality's mediation. Some municipalities in Jämtland have coordinators that keep the contact with and support the civil society.

During Nordregio's visit in Jämtland, the Swedish Migration Agency and other public organisations were explicit about the importance of the civil society for integration. In a report, the Public Employment Agency mention that they experience difficulties with the formalisation of the activities, but keep stating the importance of activities and engagement from this sector in society (Sweden's public employment agency 2015). The civil society organises plenty of activities, which creates a welcoming atmosphere and newly arrived persons get to know people from the region. From Nordregio's visit in Näliden in Jämtland where we met with local inhabitants who engage a lot in the civil society, it was obvious that the situation with people arriving to the small, sparsely populated areas, brings about a positive contribution when it comes to social life. People find reasons to meet, organize, engage and get to know new activities and people.

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Representatives for the following were part of the Swedish field work

Meeting in Östersund 21 June 2016

County Administrative Board Jämtland Härjedalen
Region Jämtland Härjedalen
Sweden's Public Employment Agency
Migrationsverket
Growth analysis

Meeting in Krokom 21 June 2016

County Administrative Board Jämtland Härjedalen
Sweden's Public Employment Agency
Growth analysis
Krokoms housing company
Sweden's Public Employment Agency/Krokom municipality
Krokom municipality

Meeting in Östersund 22 June 2016

County Administrative Board Jämtland Härjedalen
Sweden's Public Employment Agency
Growth analysis
Region Jämtland Härjedalen
Folkuniversitetet

Finland: Pirkanmaa region and Punkalaidun municipality

By Nelli Mikkola and Alberto Huerta Morales

Immigration and integration policies in Finland

The Finnish system defines integration as an “interactive development involving immigrants and society at large, the aim of which is to provide immigrants with the knowledge and skills required in society and working life and to provide them with support, so that they can maintain their culture and language...” as well as a multi-sectorial promotion and support by authorities and other stakeholders in order to achieve this goal. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2016)

There is no single national policy in regards to immigration and integration in Finland. Several policies that cover different aspects such as labour, culture, healthcare, nationality and residence permits as well as non-discrimination are part of an interlinked policy framework.

Recent changes to integration policy

Statistics Finland's data from 2016 indicates that the number of births in Finland was smaller than that of deaths for the first time during 1900–2016, except for the years 1918 and 1940. The number of births has now decreased for the sixth year in succession. Since there was no natural population increase, the population grew only as a result of international net migration. (Statistics Finland, 2017)

Finland's preliminary population figure, Finland's population was 5,502,640 at the end of January 2017. Finland's population increased by 47 persons during January 2017. The reason for the increase was migration gain from abroad, since immigration exceeded emigration by 1 201. The number of births was 1 154 lower than that of deaths. According to the preliminary statistics for January 2017, 2,484 persons immigrated to Finland from abroad and 1,283 persons emigrated from Finland. The number of immigrants was 283 higher and the number of emigrants 232 less than in the corresponding period of the previous year. In all, 646 of the immigrants and 921 of the emigrants were Finnish citizens. (Statistics Finland, 2017)

In comparison to Sweden, for instance, the Finnish immigration tradition is relatively young and has seen rapid changes during the past years. During 2015 and 2016, the immigration from abroad to Finland reached its highest point since the Finnish independence in 1917. In 2015, the number of refugees rose from the annual average of 1 500–6 000 refugees to 32 000, and the number of asylum centres increased from 28 centres to 212.

This situation has led to the adjustment of Finnish immigration and integration practices. On one hand, this has led to the creation of acts that promote integration, but on the other hand, it has made immigration (e.g. granting of asylums or family re-unifications) more difficult.

There is a common understanding among the state actors that foreign labour force is needed in Finland and especially so in future, and the national policies and strategies do consider foreign immigration as a solution to the ageing population and population loss in rural regions.

However, promoting foreign employment amidst the current economic downturn and political landscape, featured with high national unemployment rate, has proven challenging. Processes related to immigration and integration are rather political at all governance levels. Implementing revised strategies and measures aiming at enhanced integration of immigrants to the Finnish culture and labour market (especially in the light of the recent refugee crisis) has proven challenging, and proposals for an improved framework have not been able to pass at the high political level. Moreover, the municipalities may decide independently whether they want to accommodate immigrants, i.e. no municipal quotas can be enforced by the state.

Considering the economic situation Finland paired with the challenges posed by the refugee crisis, scarce resource remains as an impeding factor for revisiting the Finnish integration practices adequately.

EU funding has provided supplementary solutions, and €10m from European Social Funds has been directed to immigration projects in across Finland. How-

ever, the project money causes challenges in terms of project sustainability and continuation.

Simultaneously, some key components of the Finnish economy, including IT sector and Russian trade, have been struggling in the wake of global crisis and economic restructuring. Within these ramifications, it has been argued that the Finnish economy is not diversified enough to facilitate immigrants the same way as for instance the Swedish economy does. Also, a clear competence mismatch has been identified between the competences of immigrants and Finnish shortage occupations. Typical shortage occupations in Finland are for instance doctors, nurses, dentists and teachers, which all require validation of competencies and often additional training – and also a fluent knowledge of the Finnish language. According to the current integration model, newly-arrived immigrants can receive one year of free training in Finnish. However, one year is seldom enough for learning Finnish – and without an advanced knowledge of Finnish it is challenging to apply for instance for additional training or diplomas.

With the above-mentioned in mind, it has been concluded that the National Integration Programme's targets for 2012-2015 were not very well met. A new Integration Programme for 2016-2019 was approved by the Finnish government in September 2016. The Programme aims to better reflect the recent challenges and underscores more efficient integration processes, equity and ways for the Finnish society to better benefit from the competencies possessed by the immigrants. The Programme also strives to smoothen and speed up the transfer to the Finnish working life or education by enhancing the cooperation between different Finnish actors working with immigration and integration. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2016)

The Integration Programme 2016-2019 sets out four target areas:

1. To strengthen the Finnish innovation capacity by coupling the strengths of the migrants' culture with the Finnish innovation system — The aim is to utilise the skills of highly-educated immigrants and foreign graduates from the Finnish universities and to promote their role in the Finnish labour market, in growth companies and in Finnish internationalisation.
2. To improve the integration processes in a cross-administrative manner — This point targets the creation of good conditions for integration from the early stage onwards. The aim is to provide skills for further education and employment, improve the position of immigrants in the labour market, ensure sufficient support systems for immigrant

families, and to support immigrants' participation in leisure activities.

3. To increase cooperation between the state and municipalities for the reception of persons under international protection — The aim is that the placement of quota refugees and asylum seekers who have received residence permits into the municipalities will take place within two months from the reception of the residence permit and that the integration process will begin immediately.
4. To encourage open debate on immigration policy and not to approve any level of racism — The objective is that immigration will be discussed openly and with dignity. In order to facilitate the dialogue between authorities and immigrants, official forums will be created.

Integration at the national and regional levels in Finland

Government agencies responsible for integration at the national and regional levels

Several government agencies are engaged in the creation and implementation of the integration policies. The Ministry of Interior formulates the overall policy but the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is the one responsible for implementing measures for integration.

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture deal with education and cultural issues, such as sports and religion, of immigrants at different levels. Board of Education is responsible for education issues of migrants and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications. The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for promoting the health and well-being of migrants.

In practice, the integration guidelines set by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment are applied through the regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, and the regional employment offices (TE office). The regional Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment play an important role as they conduct the negotiations with the municipalities regarding the reception and allocation of immigrants to the municipal level.

Municipalities provide the basic services and decide, independently, quotas of refugees and asylum seekers. The municipality is in charge for providing all the basic services to the newcomers, including housing. The state reimburses these costs to the municipality.

The Finnish Immigration Service provides the "quota refugees" with initial orientation. The regional

Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment and the municipalities are responsible for integration in their own region.

The reception centres are responsible for providing asylum seekers with initial orientation.

Role of the private sector and civil society in integration process

Several national and local NGO's are assisting in the integration process. Their expertise is also valuable when adjusting national policies and practices for integration. Employers do not have any official responsibilities in terms of integration but can facilitate practicalities, such as obtaining housing or covering costs for additional language learning.

Integration process in Finland

Integration process in Finland is divided in early stage services, initial assessment, integration plan and integration training. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2016)

The early stage is based on providing general information to the immigrant about, the Finnish society and working life, rights and obligations and integration services.

The purpose of the initial assessment is to assess the services required to support the person's integration. The initial assessment collects information on education, work experience and language skills, amongst others. The initial assessment is conducted at an Employment and Economic Development Office or a Social Office. The assessment can also be conducted in another location, such as an educational institute. The location depends on each municipality. The initial assessment is performed to everyone who: a) is registered as a job applicant at an Employment and Economic Development Office, or b) receives income support, or c) upon request.

After the initial assessment, if it is determined that the applicant needs support for integration, an integration plan is prepared. The plan details measures that will aid in the integration. The integration plan can include Finnish language studies, other education or practical training, for example. The integration plan must be created no later than three years after the reception of the first residence permit or registration to reside in the country. Normally, the maximum duration for an integration plan is three years. In some special cases, the plan can be extended to five years. While the integration process takes place, it is possible to receive economic assistance to live on while a valid integration plan is defined. Once the integration plan is in force, the person can obtain labour market subsidy

from the Finnish social security institution Kela or income support from the municipality.

When the integration plan is complete the person can receive integration training. Integration training usually includes Finnish or Swedish studies as well as introductions to Finnish society, culture and working life.

After the initial assessment, three different "study paths" may be taken to suit the person's profile: basic, slowly progressive and rapidly progressive path. Any special needs with regards of illness, illiteracy or other difficulties should be considered at this stage. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2016)

Integration practices for specialised and non-specialised labour markets differ. Specialised labour is usually promoted by the government but pursued particularly by companies. The specialised worker obtains a special working visa, requiring a university degree and a salary matching the level of specialisation. Non-specialised workers require a work permit issued by the TE Office, in accordance with a potential employer. Some activities, like harvesting of berries, fruits or vegetables do not require a visa. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2016)

Immigrant Barometer evaluates the Finnish integration process

The Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has launched an Immigrant Barometer as a tool to gauge the views of the immigrants regarding their integration and to evaluate the existing Finnish integration processes. The latest Barometer is from 2012 and the respondent group covered immigrants from Russia, Estonia, Thailand, China, Iraq, Somalia and Turkey. The respondents ranked job as the most important component for successful integration. Other important factors listed were language skills (knowledge of Finnish or Swedish, safety, health care and suitable apartment as well as schooling and education opportunities for the offspring.

The most used public services among the respondents were sports and library services as well as the services provided by Kela, the Finnish provider of social security benefits.

According to the responses, the immigrants' needs were best met in terms of day care and child health care, youth leisure activities, and library, sports and culture services. Still, more than half of the respondents felt that they have received relatively little, little or no information regarding the available integration service for immigrants. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2012)

Regional case study: Pirkanmaa

Pirkanmaa Region (also known as Tampere Region according to the regional capital city of Tampere) has a total area of 14,469.39 km² and is made up of 22 municipalities, of which 11 have city status. Pirkanmaa hosts a population of approx. 506 000, out of which around 216 000 live in the regional capital of Tampere, which is the third largest city in Finland. In terms of population, Pirkanmaa is the second largest county in Finland after the capital region of Helsinki-Uusimaa.

Pirkanmaa is one of the few regions in Finland that continues to grow in population. In 2015, Pirkanmaa had the second largest population growth in absolute number in Finland, 931 persons. Relative population growth was third largest in Pirkanmaa, 1.8 per mil (Åland and Uusimaa respectively holding the first and second place.).

However, apart from the regional capital of Tampere, many municipalities in Pirkanmaa are reliant on in-migration as a means to curb the urbanisation trend and ageing population.

In early 2016, the regional unemployment rate was 15,9 % (national average being 14,00%), equalling up to 38 769 persons. The percentage had increase 1,7 % since January 2015.

In 2013, the regional GDP was €17,4 billion (8,6 % of the national GDP). GDP per capita was € 34 881, (93,6 % of the Finnish average). The GDP in Pirkanmaa was the second highest on in the regional comparison and the fifth highest in terms of GDP per capita.

The regional economy is relying on services and the regional capital of Tampere hosts a nationally significant ICT agglomeration. Trade is also an important component of the economy. The contribution of industry to the value-added and employment in Pirkanmaa is higher than national average. Pirkanmaa is also a traditional industry region and central province for manufacturing industries. The share of agricultural activities is relatively low.

Immigration in Pirkanmaa

In late 2015, the population of Pirkanmaa was 506 114 residents out of which 21 485 (4,2%) spoke a foreign language as their mother tongue (6,5% of all the persons speaking a foreign language as mother tongue). The immigration in Pirkanmaa is centred in the regional capital of Tampere and surrounding municipalities (Nokia, Ylöjärvi, Pirkkala, Kangasala, Lempäälä) as well as the municipalities of Valkeakoski and Sastamala in southwest Pirkanmaa. Looking only at the city of Tampere, out of the 225 118 residents of the city, 15 266 (6,8%) were speaking foreign language as a mother

tongue.³

The immigration to Pirkanmaa is based both on study and working opportunities as well as family reasons. Pirkanmaa hosts four higher education institutions, University of Tampere, Tampere University of Technology, Tampere University of Applied Sciences and the Valkeala Campus of Häme University of Applied Sciences, which all welcome international students

The Pirkanmaa region also has experience in humanitarian immigration. For instance, Tampere, Lempäälä, Pirkkala and Punkalaidun receive quota refugees, and asylum centres are run across the region.

The key actors facilitating immigration and integration in the Pirkanmaa region are many: The Pirkanmaa Regional Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment; TE-services (regional employment office); Tredea. Tampere Region Economic Development Agency (owned by Tampere and seven surrounding municipalities: Kangasala, Lempäälä, Nokia, Orivesi, Pirkkala, Vesilahti and Ylöjärvi); Immigrant Info Service organised by the city of Tampere, and third sector actors and NGOs.

The integration of immigrants in the Pirkanmaa region is assisted through several channels. The city of Tampere operates an information service for immigrants (Maahanmuuttajainfo Mainio) which is an open service providing advice and guidance in 16 different languages. Tampere has also established Talent Tampere –network which seeks to promote the matching of local employers and international experts and to streamline and simplify and coordinate the existing services for matchmaking. The network is operated by Tredea (Tampere Region Economic Development Agency), which runs four main programmes, aimed at increasing the attractiveness of the Tampere region in the eyes of investors, skilled workers, innovators, and tourists. Tredea is focusing especially on the fields of mechanical engineering and automation, ICT and life sciences.

In addition, many regional third sector actors provide activities for reciprocal integration and cultural encounters, including the Finnish Red Cross, the Finnish Refugee Council, national Mannerheim League for Child Welfare and the regional congregations.

As an example of recent regional efforts in the field of integration, the TE-services (regional employment agency) have launched a new recruitment service called “Jobs for Immigrants” in Pirkanmaa area. The

³ As a part of the immigrants have received Finnish citizenship, the number of foreign language-speakers better depicts the number of immigrants compared to the number of foreign citizenships.

aim of the service is to bring employers and immigrant job seekers together. Jobs for Immigrants -specialists help immigrants to search for positions in their area of expertise and can also help applicants to find work try-outs. The targeted customer group is 'a group of motivated, talented immigrants, who have been registered as job seekers in TE-services'. For employers Jobs for Immigrants provides customized recruitment service.

KOP Project for International Talents, which operated 2012-2015 under Tredea, gathered up the information and services needed to fully utilise the international labour force in the region. The project developed a regional service network and guidance mechanisms to promote the internationalization of the labour force and to facilitate the smooth transfer to Finnish working life and culture. KOP Project was funded by European Social Fund (ESF) and Tampere Adult Education Centre acted as the implementing partner of the project.

Also, a set of different tools are in place to assist the process of integrating immigrants better to the regional labour market. These include the Occupational barometer of Pirkanmaa, providing information about regional employment outlook by occupations, including shortage occupations.

ForeAmmatti is an online service that aims to shorten the time spent in search of work. The service provides knowledge of open vacancies per profession, occupational skills required, competition levels etc.

The Regional Strategy of Pirkanmaa 2014-2017 mentions the preparedness for immigration and integration as a component especially under regional smart specialisation and renewal of the business structures, focusing on global competitiveness and international attractiveness. On sub-regional level, each municipality or a union of municipalities have, according to the national regulations, drafted a specific programme for the integration of immigrants which outlines the local needs and aims regarding foreign immigration and integration in a more detailed manner. The characteristics of local immigration policies do vary across the region; for the city of Tampere, immigration appears first and foremost to be related to attracting highly-skilled labour and foreign expertise to strengthen the regional knowledge base and competitiveness, whereas the more rural municipalities in the region are approaching immigration and integration from the viewpoint of combating the ageing population and outmigration by the local youth. Also, the labour market provisions for immigrants look different in these regions, often focusing on occupations within agriculture, industries and caretaking.

Local case study: Supporting integration and employment among immigrants in Punkalaidun

Punkalaidun, a small, rural municipality in Southwest Finland with just 3 000 inhabitants has been working with humanitarian migration for over two decades. A more recent focus of the municipal actors has been the integration of immigrants into the local society and labour market of Punkalaidun.

Since the early 2010's, the municipality of Punkalaidun has assumed a more strategic approach towards integration, emphasising the role of foreign refugees and immigrants for the development and well-being of this rural town and its economy. Through targeted efforts and strategies, the number of immigrants residing and working in Punkalaidun has increased from 24 immigrants to over 100. Simultaneously, the vitality of the local society and economy has improved, according to the villagers. Through their integration efforts, the municipal actors have expressed both their solidarity with refugees and counteracted the trend of ageing and out-migrating local population.

Tackling negative trends in rural development through integration

The municipal work around immigration and integration in Punkalaidun runs on two parallel tracks. On one front, the municipality is actively counteracting its demographic challenges and the 'dying countryside' phenomenon by welcoming quote refugees from international refugee camps. In Finland, the allocation of refugees across the country is based on the willingness of each individual municipality to welcome and integrate refugees – the state cannot impose any numbers on the municipalities.

On the other front, the municipality has facilitated an asylum centre since 1992 by renting out a municipally owned building complex to the Red Cross. The refugee centre has accommodated thousands of asylum seekers over the years in different periods. In 2008, the centre was re-opened as a facility for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, and following the increased refugee flows, the centre now hosts around 200 asylum seekers, both adults and minors. The centre in itself provides employment opportunities in the rural setting and the locals are keen to demonstrate the positive impact that the centre brings to the local economy.

Providing assistance to refugees and investing in the integration of immigrants is today an important part of the municipal strategies in Punkalaidun – and has remained so insignificant of the political situation in

the municipal council and leadership. Punkalaidun has seen both a former mayor with professional background in UN tasks and humanitarian aid work as well the immigration-critical True Finns as the major party in the municipality. This consensus among the resident and decision-makers regarding the positive impacts of immigration is undoubtedly an important precondition for the positive integration outcomes locally.

Good integration is a joint effort and a shared responsibility

Helping the refugees and immigrants to start a new life in Punkalaidun has been a joint effort by the local community, involving the public sector, companies and NGOs. Besides solidarity, there are additional good reasons for these efforts also from the local development perspective: local agricultural businesses and SMEs require seasonal labour, and the local population in Punkalaidun is at the same time decreasing as well as ageing. In January 2017, the unemployment rate in Punkalaidun was 10,3% which is the second lowest rate in the surrounding region of Pirkanmaa, where the average rate is 14,6%. The Finnish national average is around 13%. It is also worth to note that unlike many packed urban cities, Punkalaidun is able to offer suitable housing and a smooth access to public services for the asylum seekers and immigrants.

Since 2011, Punkalaidun has implemented two projects to support integration and employment among immigrants in the village. The projects are so-called LEADER projects, LEADER being a local development method under EU's Rural Development Programme. The integration projects have been assisted and supported by the Local Action Group (LAG), which is the main channel for the implementation of the LEADER approach locally. Under the European Network for Rural Development, the LAG for Punkalaidun and surrounding region has encouraged experiments in rural development and brought in knowledge and networks from elsewhere in rural Europe.

The LEADER projects in Punkalaidun have been running as non-profit development projects. Besides the funding from EU's rural and regional development funds as well as national funds, private funding was needed to cover the financing of the plan by 15-20%, which indicates the commitment by the local actors to the integration of immigrants in Punkalaidun.

Integration coordinator makes the change possible

The first integration project in Punkalaidun kicked off by hiring an immigration coordinator in 2011 to tackle the many practical challenges related to integration,

stretching from paper work to helping the newcomers getting acquainted with Finnish society and customs. Importantly, the projects have promoted employment opportunities for immigrants on farms, in small businesses and in the third sector. Therefore, another crucial task of the coordinator is to build bridges between the newcomers and Punkalaidun residents and employers and to match the immigrants and their skills with relevant jobs.

The work of the integration coordinator is very hands-on, meaning that the coordinator liaises and mediates between the immigrants and local citizens, public services (like childcare, schools and health care) and employers, such as local farmers. A good understanding of the local labour market and its seasonal labour needs as well as personal contacts with the local businesses and individuals has been an important asset for the local integration coordinator.

Already in the selection of quota refugees from refugee camps abroad, the Punkalaidun coordinator puts an emphasis on the matching of the migrants' competence and background with the local labour market and the rural setting of Punkalaidun. The Punkalaidun approach underlines that this early matching contributes to effective integration of immigrants, which further creates better future possibilities for the immigrants to stay permanently in the community and for the local society to benefit from their skills. Competences related to manufacturing, health care, agriculture and machinery are welcomed in Punkalaidun, which hosts one of the largest coffin factories in Finland, as well as many farms and some tourism and services.

In order to speed up the integration process and to prepare immigrants and asylum seekers for life and work in Finland, the country is putting emphasis on Finnish language training and mapping the newcomers' competences during the very early stage of asylum seeking and integration processes. In accordance with these guidelines, the municipality of Punkalaidun has organised education for pre-school- and school-aged children, while the Western Finland Sastamala College and the Education Centre in Satakunta nearby Punkalaidun provide educational services for adult asylum seekers and immigrants.

The social aspect of integration has been an important part of Punkalaidun's approach. New comers have been able to experience some Finnish traits from skiing to barn dances while the local Finns have learned about foreign cultures and for instance their cuisines. Voluntary work has played an important part in this regard, and volunteers have organised different joint events, football coaching as well as provided homework support for immigrant children.

At the same time, the sustainability of the current integration approach in Punkalaidun remains as a pressing issue, as the outcomes of the integration efforts seem to heavily depend on the personality and individual efforts of the integration coordinator as well as short-term project budgets.

However, the results so far are promising and indicate an ongoing municipal investment in integration: since 2011, the coordinator has been able to find a job or school place for 80 refugees selected from foreign refugee camps.

The 'Punkalaidun model' raises international interest

The refugees and immigrants have had a positive impact on the local economy of Punkalaidun. The Finnish state pays for most of the service needs and living subsistence for refugees, and through the integration efforts many immigrants have found a job in the municipality. Consequently, the newcomers and immigrants have brought a new financial input into Punkalaidun's economy, increasing the sales of local shops, cafes and restaurants.

Prior to the municipal integration projects, many refugees placed in Punkalaidun and its asylum centre moved away from the rural area towards larger cities after gaining the asylum. Today, many more stay in the municipality which has employment opportunities and services to provide.

The 'Punkalaidun approach' has also received awards for integration, most recently the ETNO award from the Finnish Ministry of Justice for the advancement of good ethnic relations in Finland.

Today, Punkalaidun's integration projects are widely recognised across Finland, as other regions and municipalities are in search of good integration practices amidst the record-high refugee volumes to Finland. The example of Punkalaidun has also been sought after at the European level, where the need for examples and transferrable models has increased. At the same time the relation between rural development and integration of immigrants has become more and more salient regional development issue both nationally and internationally. Exchanging good practices more actively through interregional and transnational collaboration is one of the future ambitions of the local LAG.

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Representatives for the following were part of the Finnish field work

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland
Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Pirkanmaa Region

Punkalaidun municipality

Joutsenten Reitti Development Association (Local action group of Huittinen, Hämeenkyrö, Punkalaidun and Sastamala municipalities for rural development)

The municipal board of Punkalaidun

Punkalaidun Centre for the asylum seekers (operated by Red Cross)

A local wood processing company

Denmark: Frederikshavn Municipality

By Lisbeth Greve Harbo

The case of Frederikshavn municipality shows how efforts to attract new citizens can be targeted also towards foreign citizens and is also an example of how a holistic approach to integration is necessary for the efforts to be successful. Besides a general desire to strengthen the population development, the current practice of working actively to help EU labourers already working in the municipality to settle with their families is also about ensuring the necessary workforce with the skills and qualifications that the local companies demand.

National policy on labour migration

As Denmark is a member of the EU, the freedom of movement for workers applies to EU citizens (Danish State Administration, 2009), and while there is no common national Danish policy to promote the attraction and retention of EU labour migrants, the employment framework is in line with EU regulations, e.g. by EURES, the European Employment Service, being part of the public employment services in Denmark.

Among national policies for the attraction of foreign labour, there are different fast track schemes for high-skilled people with specific qualifications (engineers, scientists, doctors and similar) (www.newindenmark.dk). The public employment service “Work in Denmark” is also targeting highly qualified, international candidates.

Immigration actors at local level

Free movement of EU workers encompasses the right of residence and equal treatment with national workers and thus the EU labour migrants entering Denmark are entitled to register in the Danish social system. For the main social rights and benefits, the municipalities are the main actors in this respect with the potential need for the individual to also seek membership of and services from e.g. local housing organisations and trade unions.

Adult foreigners living in Denmark are entitled to Danish language tuition. Depending on the reason for their stay in Denmark, there are 2 types: Foreigners

coming to work (also au-pairs, students, and accompanying spouses) are offered “Arbejdsmarkedsrettet dansk-undervisning” (ADU – ‘labour market-oriented Danish tuition’). This comprises 250 hours of tuition (5 courses of 50 hours) and if all 5 courses are completed within 1½ year, it is possible to continue with “DU” (see more below) for another 3 years.

Labour migrants that have completed ADU and refugees and person that have family reunification are entitled to “Ordinær danskuddannelse” (DU – ‘ordinary Danish education’) comprising of 3 courses (DU1, DU2 and DU3 – offered to people with different skills levels (illiterates; little schooling, higher education level) which should be completed within 5 years (3 years for those coming from ADU).

Danish tuition is handled by a variety of actors: municipal language centres, private language schools, public educational institutions, and private providers where the course is offered as part of employment. If the migrant meets the requirements, the tuition is free.

When having earned the right to enter into Danish unemployment schemes, e.g. through the trade unions, residing labour migrants can make use of the same options for retraining, internships etc. as other unemployed living in Denmark.

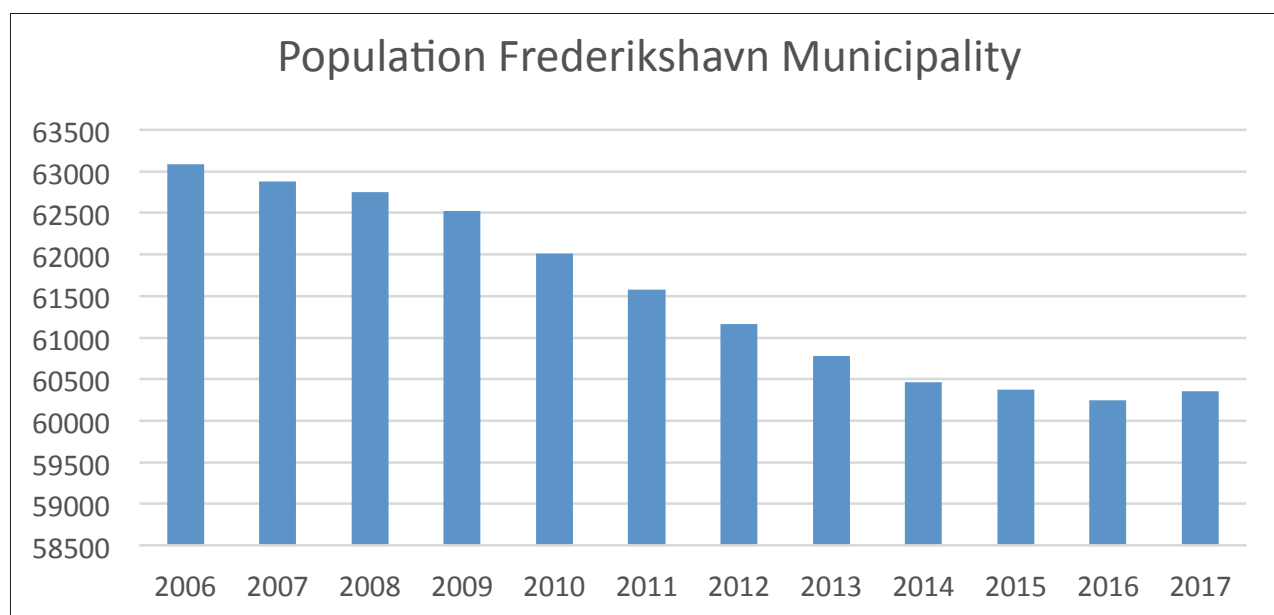
Frederikshavn Municipality

Frederikshavn municipality is Denmark’s northernmost municipality and located in the North Denmark Region. It was merged of the previous Frederikshavn, Skagen and Sæby municipalities in the 2007 structural reform and these three towns still constitute the municipality’s main urban centres where population and jobs are concentrated.

Skagen and Frederikshavn host important ports in both a Danish and international context: Port of Skagen as an important fishing port and Port of Frederikshavn, a commercial port and one of Denmark’s busiest ferry ports.

In addition to service and public sector jobs, the important sectors in Frederikshavn Municipality are the fishing industry; the maritime industries; and building and construction – where especially the current expansions of both the harbours in Skagen as well as Frederikshavn create jobs.

Figure 13: Population development in Frederikshavn Municipality 2006-2017



Data source: Statistics Denmark

Population development

Frederikshavn Municipality has been characterized by declining population over the past 10 years - but with a possible recovery in the first quarter of 2017, see figure 13 below.

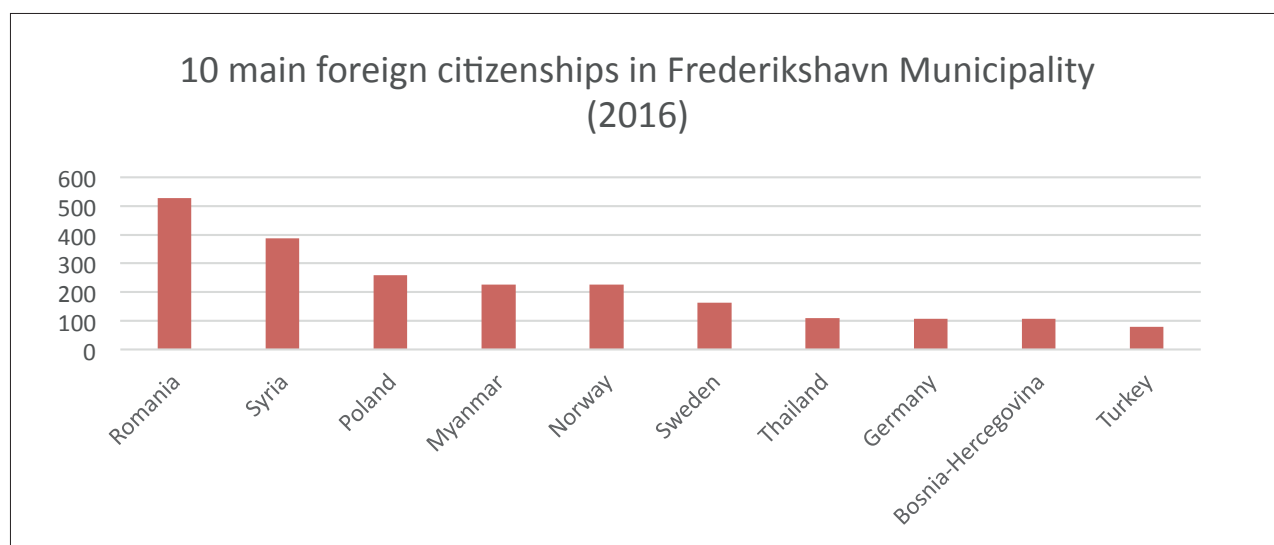
The proportion of the population without Danish citizenship is app. 6% here in 2017 which is up from 3% in 2010. The 10 main foreign citizens living in Frederikshavn can be seen in figure 14.

The groups of Polish and Romanian citizens residing in Frederikshavn Municipality have been increasing during the last decade (see figure 15 below). This

was enabled by the 2004 and 2007 enlargements of the European Union. It is also a response to the local companies generally doing well and needing more labour than what can be filled by the current declining population of the municipality. Thus, this labour gap is often met by foreign nationals, mainly European citizens (see figure 16 further below).

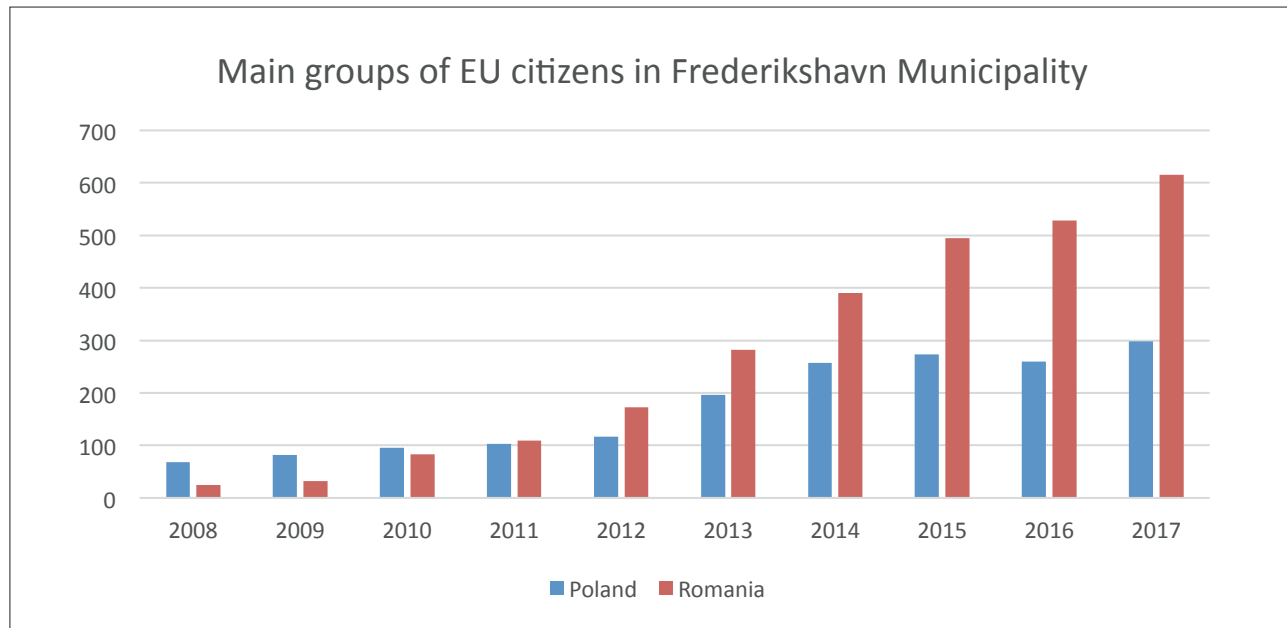
A closer analysis of the full-time employed EU labour migrants shows that while a number of them resides in Denmark, some continue to commute between work in Frederikshavn and their place of residence – and both these groups are on the rise, see figure 17.

Figure 14: Population development in Frederikshavn Municipality 2006-2017



Data source: Statistics Denmark

Figure 15: Number of people with Polish and Romanian citizenship residing in Frederikshavn Municipality 2008-2017



Data source: Statistics Denmark

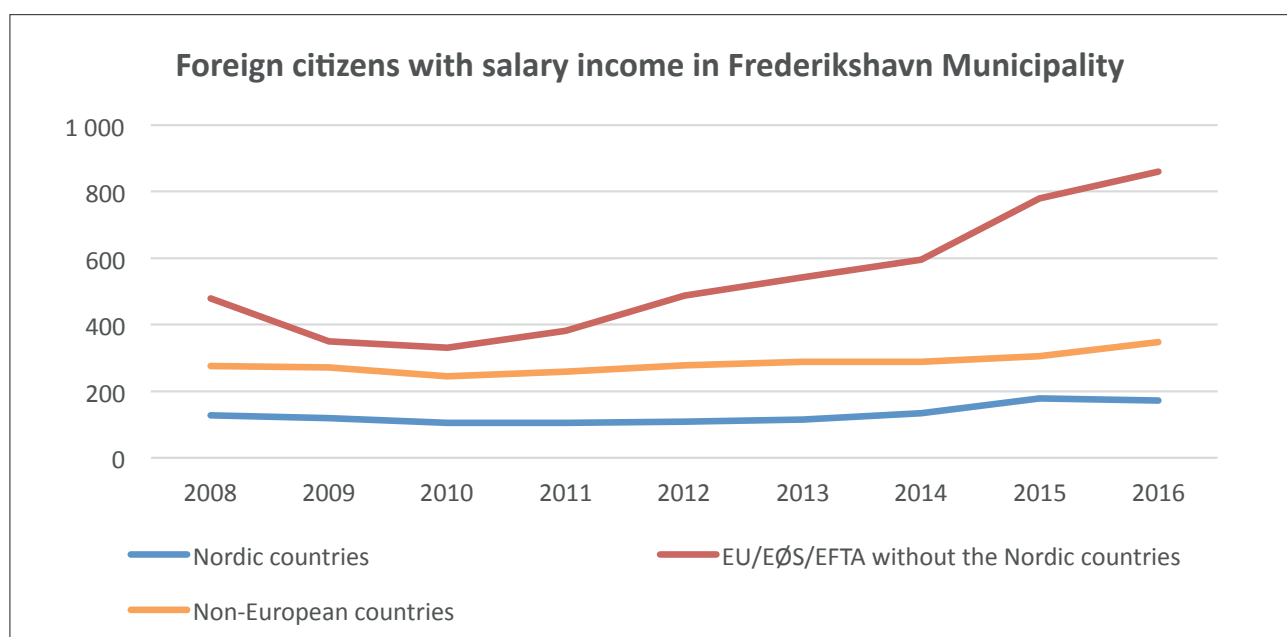
Role of immigration and integration in regional development

In recognition of the labour migrants' importance to the local labour market as well as a response to the local communities experiencing declining population, including fewer children in day-care centres, schools, and local associations, the Municipal Council in Frederikshavn has announced that it will actively encourage the labour migrants to settle in the municipality;

preferably with their families. The overall objective is to attract new citizens to Frederikshavn Municipality in order to mitigate depopulation, thereby ensuring tax revenues and public and private services in the municipality; while at the same time retaining labour with the desired skills for the local enterprises, which in turn retains companies and jobs in the municipality.

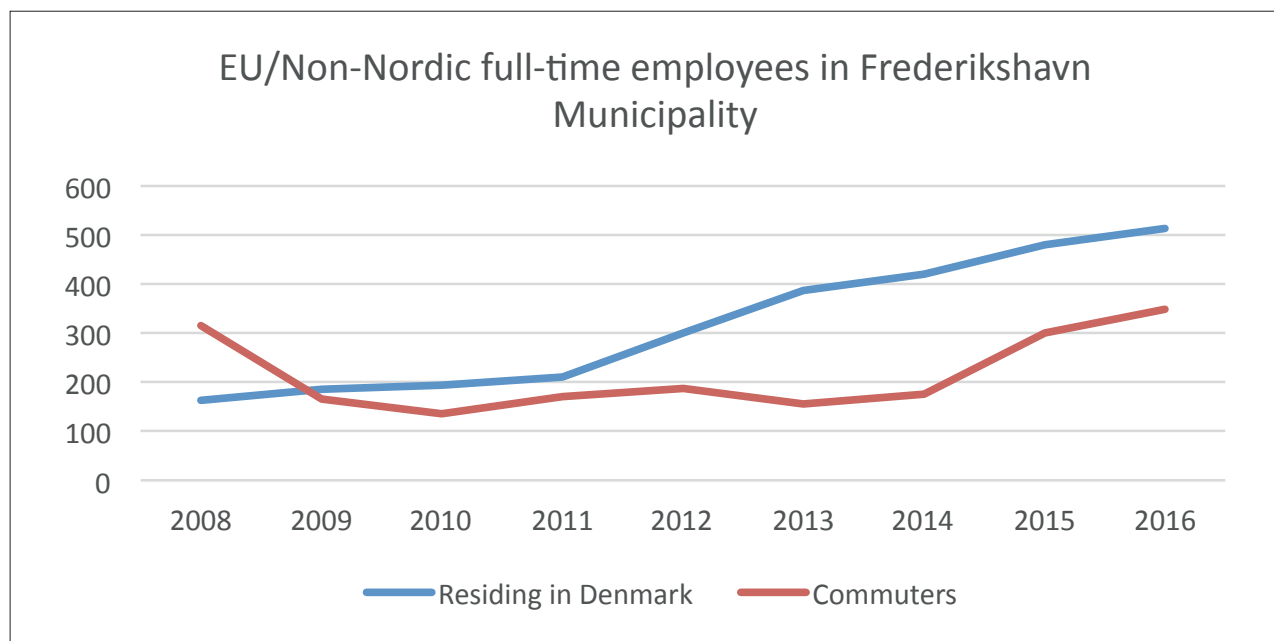
One of the first concrete steps in the implementation of this vision has been the appointment of a set-

Figure 16: Foreign citizens with salary income in Frederikshavn Municipality 2008-2016



Data source: Jobindsats

Figure 17: Residence status of fulltime employees from EU countries (minus the Nordic countries) in Frederikshavn Municipality 2008-2016



Data source: Jobindsats

tlement consultant in October 2015, who assists labour migrants already employed in companies in the municipality and who are intending to settle with their families in the municipality.

Due to the explorative nature of this position in Frederikshavn Municipality, the content of the position is developed ‘in the making’, but her mandate is to work with migrants already working in the municipality and assist them in bringing their families to Frederikshavn. The work is carried out in close collaboration with the local companies whose task is to appoint the migrant workers that the companies would be very unhappy to lose, so-called ‘prioritised employees’ – often people with specific skills or qualifications.

Besides providing information on practical issues such as finding accommodation, registering in the public system, and setting up with day-care, school etc., the settlement consultant also strongly focuses on matching the trailing spouses with available jobs in the municipality. This holistic approach is prioritized since it is anticipated that if the whole family is to settle in the municipality for the long term, it is important that both parents find jobs and that integration of the whole family is initiated.

More than jobs, housing and school for the children

Appointment of settlement consultants is quite common in Danish municipalities that actively work to attract new residents, but often these efforts are targeting

Danes from other parts of Denmark moving to one of the municipalities in question. When efforts are directed towards foreign families, the needed effort for successful integration is widened and especially language acquisition and language tuition are key areas that need to be addressed.

Proficiency in the Danish language helps to maintain foreign citizens, since knowing the language is the necessary bridge to be integrated into the local communities while the migrant worker’s opportunities in the labour market are also improved. Therefore, the settlement consultant actively encourages the EU migrants to participate in language tuition and works in collaboration with local language schools and the local companies to improve the already available language tuition, primarily by improving accessibility to the language courses. This involves engaging more of the labour migrants to participate so more courses can be offered in smaller locations; changing the location of courses offered from the main city of Frederikshavn to e.g. Skagen where a high number of the labour migrants work; but also collaborating with the companies in offering language tuition at the work places and potentially also during working hours. The reasons for the companies to get involved in this aspect of integration of the labour migrants is two-fold: being able to communicate in Danish increases the general integration in Denmark for the individual, thereby increasing their desire to remain in the municipality and thus reducing the turn-around of employees in the local companies.

A better command of Danish also increases productivity by reducing miscommunication and similar.

The holistic approach to increasing settlement and integration of the labour migrants in the local community and labour market goes beyond the work of the settlement consultant and her collaboration with the public sector and the local companies. “Erhvervshus Nord”, a local business development organization, has established a network of companies with many foreign employees where they can share knowledge about administrative issues, coordinating participants for language training and similar. Erhvervshus Nord also supports the settlement consultant in her work and are available to questions within their area of expertise, for example guiding foreign entrepreneurs on Danish regulations etc.

Another pivotal element of the successful long-term integration of the newcomers is that the new families

feel part of the local community. In this, the civil society plays an important part; something the actors involved in the Frederikshavn Municipality settlement effort also recognize and actively make efforts to support. The sports club is already very active in attracting newcomers to their activities and the task for the municipal actors is then to support their efforts, e.g. by assisting with information and setting up meeting places and other frameworks that makes it easier for the sports club people to come in contact with new migrants. Another new initiative in Frederikshavn Municipality is a language café which is to act both as an informal meeting place between migrants in the municipality but ideally also the wider population as well as provide a forum for improving Danish skills of course.

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Representatives for the following were part of the Danish field work

Frederikshavn Municipality

3F (Danish union), Frederikshavn

Erhvervshus Nord (Local business organization)

Anonymous fishing factory, Skagen

International House Aalborg, Region of North Denmark

Key findings from the case studies

By Åsa Ström Hildestrand

The case studies presented here provide considerable insight into the process of integration of international migrants in rural areas of the Nordics and this final chapter summarizes key findings from across the case studies. These are based on observations and discussions in the six case regions within the Nordic countries. They are not meant to represent systematic findings across all regions, but should be considered as inspiration for professionals designing policy and measures for integration and inclusion of migrants.

What we learned – the overall picture:

- Immigration and subsequent successful integration can be vital to rural towns and regions facing population decline, ageing population and labour shortages
- Many peripheral regions now experience a net influx of international migrants following a long period of internal out-migration
- Integration and long-term inclusion of immigrants is a regional growth potential; not only a social welfare issue
- Successful integration requires clear and consistent political leadership: a vision of diversity and structured collaboration between relevant actors, including employers and civil society
- A positive attitude towards immigration makes integration a lot easier
- Immigrants need a home and a job, but also a social network to feel at home and thereby a desire to stay – especially in rural areas
- Civil society organizations such as the Red Cross play an important role for integration in all Nordic countries: providing social activities, language practice, mentorships and social networks – which can also lead to jobs
- Local languages are difficult but necessary to learn for long-term social inclusion: easy access to training is essential
- Employing a local integration coordinator is an effective way to improve integration and job matching

- Integration measures need to be tailored to include the whole family, and cater to individual needs of men and women, children and unaccompanied minors.
- Local employers are key to successful integration on the labour market and are often very pro-active
- Early competence mapping helps to improve job matching
- Regions can do more: Co-ordinate actors, map labour market needs raise (EU) funds for development projects, knowledge exchange and facilitate capacity building

Key findings – measure by measure

Leadership and coordination among various actors in the integration process

A message from all case study regions is that successful integration requires solid leadership and coordination among responsible actors: local settlement and migration agencies, labour placement offices, language schools, vocational training providers, regular schools, civil society, businesses and other employers, etc. During interviews in several case regions, the importance of viewing integration as a two-way process was also mentioned. Leaders need to encourage a positive attitude towards immigration among natives and employers, show the benefits and lead by example.

In Jämtland, the team met with various actors simultaneously to discuss integration and it was obvious that the region had a well-developed plan for integration based on good coordination practices and fora. In Nordland, the regional programme to attract newcomers serves as a framework for the local level to enable smoother integration. In Finland, the local integration strategy of Punkalaidun municipality signals the intention to grow through immigration and helps to ensure resource provision to newcomers so they feel welcome and included in the community.

Integration of the entire family

An issue that arose in several case study regions was the need to integrate all members of the family, not just

the parent who might be working or children enrolled in school. This was especially important as a means to induce people to integrate and remain in rural areas. In many cases, children learned local languages faster than their parents as they were exposed to it all day. In Ísafjörður and Klaksvík, the potential for using schools to integrate the entire families was noted. In Frederikshavn, the strategy was to provide jobs also for spouses of labour migrants, to increase their willingness to stay.

Language learning

The challenge of learning the Nordic languages for new arrivals came up in all case studies. While English is widely spoken, learning the local Nordic language is still a key factor for long-term integration and social inclusion in the community, as well as for career advancement. Refugees are usually enrolled in one to two years' introduction programs where the bulk of the time is devoted to language learning, but that is often not enough to master a Nordic language.

Newcomers also need time to practice the language – hence combining studies and job training is a way forward, and to engage civil society in providing language cafes and other activities. Access to language courses while waiting for asylum is another measure taken in e.g. Finland and Norway to speed up the learning process.

Many labour migrants from the EU do not invest time in learning Nordic languages because they initially view their stay as temporary. Only later, if they choose to stay for the long-term, do they realize that they need to master the local language in order to get a better job or citizenship. Language training at work was provided e.g. in Frederikshavn to increase participation among working migrants. This was also considered essential for social inclusion of the labour migrants into the local communities.

In more rural areas, two issues related to language learning were encountered. The first was that often there were only language teachers for the introductory levels, and along the same vein, that there was a lack of qualified teachers who could teach more specialized terminology needed for certain professions. Secondly, that accessibility to language courses is challenged by distances and poor transportation options. Solutions could be to provide e-learning tools or transport students from one community to another within the region to enhance class sizes. Again, classes should be combined with practice at a work place or elsewhere.

Housing

Another issue that arose in most case studies was the issue of housing – or rather lack of housing for new ar-

rivals. Each of the Nordic countries has their own unique housing systems and issues, which pose dilemmas for migrants, especially in urban regions but also in some remote and rural areas. E.g. in the Ísafjörður case, the local administration and businesses said that they could expand only if more housing were available. In general, it was clear that employers took responsibility for housing arrangements for labour migrants.

How asylum seekers and refugees are distributed varies between the countries. An issue that was mentioned was the mismatch between the locations of housing and employment. In rural areas where there has been population decline, there is often available housing, but these are not always the locations where jobs are available. At the same time, access to the housing market is key to make newcomers stay in rural or remote regions. E.g. Jämtland has made targeted efforts to increase access to housing close to asylum centres so refugees can move in as soon as they get their permits to stay.

Some steps have been taken to improve the situation: Increase access to rental apartments; support home owning (e.g. through low-cost housing loans from Husbanken in Norway); and make it easier for home owners to rent out parts of their property.

Mapping competencies and finding a job

The mapping, and validation, of previous experience and training was another issue that came up repeatedly in the case studies. Especially given the increasing diversity of people coming into the Nordic region, home country skills do not transfer easily or simply do not match the requirements of local employers. Language is often tricky but other kinds of knowledge also needs to be adjusted or complemented to fit the labour market needs. In Norway refugees sometimes end up competing with labour migrants over low skilled jobs.

Several measures have been taken in the case study regions, starting with early mapping of skills and competences, preferably already at the asylum centres for the asylum seekers. Online tools have been developed for competence mapping, validation and job matching, and several „fast tracks“ for refugees with e.g. health care education have been established to get them licenced to work in the Nordics. All the cases showed the benefits of an integration coordinator to match newcomers with local employers, and engage with employers on a regular basis.

In Jämtland, special emphasis was put on encouraging apprenticeships with all kinds of employers – at all levels of operation. It is clear also from the Pirkanmaa case, that local employers play a major role in integration and that on-the-job practice is a good way of learn-

ing to work in the new country, to validate previous experiences, and to learn the language. Hence taking measures to enable local employers to accept trainees or offer combined work-and-training programs is a way forward. It also enables businesses to evaluate immigrant workers before hiring them full-time.

Local integration coordinator

In Punkalaidun, Herøy, Frederikshavn, and Krokum (Jämtland), Nordregio met with a local integration coordinator (see also section about jobs above), whose importance cannot be overstated. This was a person responsible for making linkages between new arrivals and the local community and labour market – and for helping with all sorts of practical and administrative issues. In some cases, they dealt primarily with refugees and asylum seekers and in other cases, they worked with all categories of migrants, including spouses of labour migrants.

In the Faroe Islands, for instance, the immigration coordinator was also engaged in improving structural barriers, such as language training for immigrants and for making their contributions to society more visible through festivals, etc.

All in all, these welcoming and well-connected coordinators are invaluable as they substitute for the lack of professional and social networks of the newcomers, especially humanitarian migrants – and open the doors to local networks, jobs, housing and friends. In several cases, though, long-term funding for the position was not yet in place. A challenge in need of a solution.

Civil society – the network provider for social inclusion and jobs

While actors from local governments played an important role in the integration process it became clear that without committed civil society organisations such as the Red Cross, Refugee Councils, local congregations and sports clubs, inclusion of newcomers simply would not happen. Also in rural or remote regions, newcomers need to feel included and needed in order to stay.

Here civil society provides oil in the machinery by proactively involving newcomers in all sorts of activities, networks, mentorship programmes, language cafés, etc. When newcomers meet the locals and get involved in the local networks their chances of finding jobs also increase, according to a recent Norwegian study (Søholt, NIBR 2016). Public support to civil society organisations and their integration efforts is often key to continue valuable work.

The role of regions in the integration process

In some Nordic countries, notably Sweden, Finland and Norway, the regions play an important role in facilitating, coordinating and enhancing the municipal efforts in integration. Besides serving as the voice of the municipalities and directing national and EU funding for integration activities, the regional level is also in a key position to coordinate and promote collaboration between the municipalities, companies, educational institutions, authorities and other organizations.

The regions also have an important role in communicating existing good practices and encourage all municipalities to learn and follow suit. The recent refugee crises have highlighted the need for an increased and enhanced collaboration across different tiers of government.

In Finland, regions are also helping in branding the municipalities as good places to stay by providing info about employment opportunities, services, leisure possibilities etc. In Nordland, the in-migration project has proven important to test new initiatives to attract migrants to settle on a long-term basis. Other important aspects have been the reference group of migrants connected to the project, and regional funding available for enhanced cooperation between public institutions and civil society organisations.

Where the regions play a less prominent role in the administrative structure, other agencies or administrations could play similar coordinating roles; e.g. the large Danish municipalities and administrations at the Faroese and national Icelandic level.

ISSN: 1403-2511
ISBN: 978-91-87295-51-5

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