



From Refugees to Workers

Mapping Labour-Market Integration Support Measures
for Asylum Seekers and Refugees in EU Member States

Volume II: Literature Review and Country Case Studies



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This study has been produced by the **Migration Policy Centre** (MPC) at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the European University Institute in Florence (EUI). The MPC produces advanced policy-oriented research on global migration, asylum and mobility to serve migration governance needs at European and global levels, from developing, implementing and monitoring migration-related policies to assessing their impact on the wider economy and society. <http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/>

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Abbreviations

AMIF – Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
AMS – Arbeitsmarktservice (Public Employment Service), Austria
ANCI – Association of Italian Municipalities, Italy
APSR – Association d'Accueil aux médecins et Personnels de Santé Réfugiés en France, AuslBG – Ausländerbeschäftigungsgesetz (Alien Employment Act), Austria
BA – Federal Office for Employment (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit*), Germany
BAMF – Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*), Germany
BMASK – Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz (Federal Ministry for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection), Austria
BMEIA – Bundeministerium für Europa, Integration und Ausländische Angelegenheiten (Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs), Austria
BMI – Bundeministerium für Inneres (Federal Ministry of Interior), Austria
BMS – Bedarfsorientierte Mindestsicherung (Needs based guaranteed minimum income), Austria
CAP – Clinical Apprenticeship Scheme, UK
CAS – Center for Temporary Assistance, Italy
CDA – Center for Assistance, Italy
CESEDA – Code of the Entry and Stay of Foreigners and Asylum Law (*Code de l'entrée et du séjour des étrangers et du droit d'asile*), France
CNDA – National Court for Right of Asylum (*Cour nationale du droit d'asile*), France
COA – Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (*Centraal Orgaan opvang Asielzoekers*), the Netherlands
CPH – Temporary reception centres for refugees (*Centres Provisoires d'Hebergements*), France
CPIA – Provincial Adult Education Centre, Italy
CPSA – Centro di Primo Soccorso ed Accoglienza, Center of First Assistance and Reception, Italy
DGEF – General Directorate for Aliens (*Direction Générale Etrangers en France*), Ministry of Interior, France
DIRECCTE – Regional Direction for companies, competition, consumption, work and employment (*Directions régionales des entreprises, de la concurrence, de la consommation, du travail et de l'emploi*), France
DWP – Department of Work and Pensions, UK
EEA – European Economic Area
EP–NUFFIC – The organisation for internationalisation in education (*Europees Platform – Netherlands universities foundation for international corporation*), the Netherlands
ESA – Employment Support Allowance, UK
ESOL – English as a Second or Other Language, UK
EU – European Union
FIJ – Freiwilliges Integrationsjahr (Voluntary Integration Year), Austria
FNFSAs – National Fund for the policies in favour of asylum seekers, Italy
FPÖ – Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (Austrian Freedom Party), Austria
GPP – Gateway Protection Programme, UK
HP – Humanitarian Protection, UK
IFTS – Institutes for technical superior education, Italy
IMF – International Monetary Fund
IND – Immigration and Naturalisation Service (*Immigratie en Naturalisatie Dienst*), the Netherlands
IOM – International Organisation for Migration
IQ – Integration by Qualification (*Integration durch Qualifizierung*), France
IvAF – Integration of Asylum–Seekers and Refugees (*Integration von Asylbewerbern und Flüchtlingen*), France
JSA – Job Seekers' Allowance, UK
LFS – Labour Force Survey
MEDEF – *Mouvement des Entreprises de France*, main employers' organization, France
MRS – Mandate Refugee Scheme, UK

NAP – Nationaler Aktionsplan (National Action Plan), Austria
NGO – Non–Governmental Organisation
OeBB – Österreichische Bundesbahnen (Austrian Railway Company), Austria
OFII – French Office for Immigration and Integration (*Office Français de l'Immigration et de l'Intégration*), France
OFPRA – French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (*Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides*), France
ÖGB – Österreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund (Austrian Trade Union Federation)
ÖIF – Österreichischer Integrationsfonds (Austrian Integration Fund), Austria
ÖVP – Österreichische Volkspartei (Austrian People's Party) Austria
PerF – Perspectives for Refugees (*Perspektiven für Flüchtlinge*), France
Pole Emploi is the national public establishment for access to employment
PON – National Plan for Employment, Italy
PON – Regional Plan for Employment, Italy
REFMISMES – Labour-market integration Support Measures for Refugees and Asylum seekers
REWE – Revisionsverband der Westkaufgenossenschaften (German retail chain),
RIES – Refugee Integration and Employment Service, UK
RIS – Refugee Integration Service, UK
RIT – Refugees into Teaching, UK
RITeS – Refugees into Teaching in Scotland, UK
RS – Refugee Status, UK
RSA – unemployment benefit (*revenu de solidarité active*), France
SBB – Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (*Samenwerkingsorgaan Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven*), the Netherlands
SCQF – Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, UK
SES – Specialist Employability Support, UK
SGB – Sozialgesetzbuch (*Social Security Code*), France
SOEP – Socio–Economic Panel (*Sozioökonomisches Panel*), France
SPRAR – Protection System for Asylum Seekers, Italy
SUNRISE – Strategic Upgrade of National Refugee Integration Services, UK
SZW – Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (*Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid*), the Netherlands
TOV – Language and Orientation for Refugees (*Taal en Orientatie voor Vluchtelingen*), the Netherlands
UAF – The Foundation for Refugee Students (*Stichting voor Vluchteling–Studenten*), the Netherlands
UK NARIC – United Kingdom National Recognition Information Centre, UK
UKB – United Kingdom Borders Agency, UK
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Austria
UWV – Employee Insurance Agency (*Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen*), the Netherlands
VNG – Association of Dutch Municipalities (*Vereniging Nederlandse Gemeenten*), the Netherlands
VNO–NCW – Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (*Verbond nederlandse Ondernemingen–Nederlands Christelijk Werkgeversverbond*), the Netherlands
VPRS – Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme, UK
VWN – Dutch Council for Refugees (*VluchtelingenWerk Nederland*), the Netherlands
WIFO – Österreichisches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (Austrian Institute of Economic Research), Austria
WKO – Wirtschaftskammer Österreich (Austrian Chamber of Commerce), Aust

1 The labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers as a special category of migrants: evidence and literature review

Sona Kalantaryan

Migrant integration has gained the attention of European policy makers due to the recent sharp increase in the number of migrants arriving in the EU. This is reflected in numerous reports and publications produced by international organizations in the last few years. Important examples are “Indicators of Immigrant Integration: A Pilot Study” (EUROSTAT, 2011) and “Settling In. OECD Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2012” (OECD, 2012b). The first is a methodological report within the framework of the Zaragoza pilot study on common integration indicators in four policy areas (employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship). The pilot study aims at identifying the extent to which the existing harmonized data sources can provide adequate data on migrant populations, as well as identifying whether the indicators cannot reliably be produced due to data limitations (EUROSTAT, 2011). The second report highlights how immigrants and their children are integrating into OECD societies, judging their progress against key indicators. It addresses three main questions: (i) to what extent does the average performance of immigrants differ from that of the native-born?; (ii) can these differences be explained by structural effects (different distributions by age, educational level, etc.)?; and (iii) how has integration evolved over the past decade? (OECD, 2012b).

In addition, there is a series of publications by the OECD with a special focus on the labour-market integration of migrants in several European countries published under the “Jobs for Immigrants” series (OECD, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012a, 2014a). “The Labor Market Integration of New Arrivals in Europe” research project jointly undertaken by MPI and ILO resulted in several publications including six country case studies: the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The project explored the labour-market progression of recent immigrants in the countries and analysed policies related to integration and workforce development, with a focus on public employment services and language and vocational training. The project also evaluated the effectiveness of integration and workforce development policies in helping immigrant workers overcome existing barriers and moving up into middle-skilled positions (MPI-ILO, 2014). Though refugees and asylum seekers are not the primary focus of this project, the resulting publications contain valuable information regarding the integration of humanitarian migrants.

Another important source of information regarding migrant integration is the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) project. Starting in 2004, it calculates 167 policy indicators which allow for the evaluation and comparison of public policies targeting the integration of migrants in 37 countries (including the EU member states) in eight key areas. Though frequently criticised, the MIPEX is an important reference point for policy-makers, NGOs, researchers, and European and international institutions. The project “identifies and measures integration outcomes, integration policies, and other contextual factors that can impact policy effectiveness; describes the real and potential beneficiaries of policies; and collects and analyses high-quality evaluations of integration policy effects”².

1.1 Acknowledging diversity as the first step to account for it

The studies discussed above have approached the topic from a comparative perspective exploiting cross-country standardized datasets. This allows for valuable insights into migrant integration in destination countries through a set of indicators including but not limited to the labour-market performance of migrants. However, the above mentioned studies consider migrants in general without focusing on the entry channel and, hence, they ignore an important layer of integration complexity. Instead, there is strong empirical evidence that the entrance channel defines the integration path of migrants in European countries; the

² For more information see: <http://www.mipex.eu/what-is-mipex>.

employment rate of refugees is significantly lower than other migrant categories (OECD, 2015). Immigrants entering through different channels have, of course, different reasons for migration and hence have different attitudes towards labour-market participation and positions on the labour market, at least initially. Whereas labour migrants start working almost immediately after arrival, family and humanitarian immigrants, for whom employment is not the main reason for moving to a new country, need more time to become part of the host country labour market (OECD 2014b).

Several reports produced by international organizations are important sources of information regarding the practices related to integration of refugees such as ECRE and Caritas Europe (2007), IOM (2013), UNHCR (2013a,b,c). UNHCR (2013c) provides an extensive literature review and synthesises the current knowledge regarding labour-market integration of resettled refugees in different countries. The study identifies existing challenges, promising practices and factors facilitating the labour-market integration in the host country. The meta-analysis presented suggests that while, in the short term, resettled refugees perform worse in the labour market compared to other immigrants and natives, in the longer term, they close the gap. OECD (2016) is the first of the “Making Integration Work” series which summarizes the OECD countries’ experiences in the integration of humanitarian migrants. Through examples of good practice the study highlights ways in which policy makers can remove the chief barriers to and facilitate the integration of humanitarian migrants.

Several recent publications by the European Migration Network also provide valuable information regarding labour-market access and the integration of asylum seekers in the EU Member States through a series of *ad-hoc* queries. EMN (2015a) presents detailed up-to-date information regarding the access of asylum seekers to the labour market (in terms of conditions, restrictions on employment or self-employment, existence of specific programs for skilled workers) and the application of the Asylum Reception Condition Directive³ by national authorities. EMN (2015b) presents the list of authorities (ministries, NGOs, etc.) and the scope of measures planned or undertaken through which EU Member States are going to ensure the preparedness of asylum seekers to enter the national labour markets. Another EMN (forthcoming) study attempts to identify existing policies and good practices in the field. It is conducted with the purpose of informing a wide audience (the Commission and the European Asylum Support Office, practitioners, decision-makers at EU and national levels, researchers and the general public) regarding the application of labour-market integration measures for beneficiaries of international/humanitarian protection. It also looks at the existence of specific activities carried out to integrate asylum seekers into the labour market, as well as evidence of the effectiveness of such activities.

The European Parliament (2013) addresses different aspects of the integration of resettled refugees in Europe and aims at singling out existing good practices and challenges, as well as putting forward proposals to improve national resettlement programmes. It analyses the existing policy framework and practices in different fields including, but not limited to, the labour market and it does so both at the national and the European level. Drawing on examples from various Member States, existing guidelines and global recommendations, the report provides a range of policy recommendations to develop a better resettlement policy in Europe.

Later, the European Parliament (2015) provides a closer look at the rules and practices of eight EU Member States related to the legal framework governing the rights of refugees and asylum seekers to work and access social welfare. The study underlines the crucial role of early access to the labour market in overall integration and assesses the economic impact of migration in terms of the potential contribution of several factors: the current flows (filling gaps and addressing imbalances of domestic labour markets, fiscal contributions, innovation potential); and short-term costs related to reception (especially for those Member States

³ Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of The Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast). <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013L0033&from=EN>. Last accessed January 13, 2016.

who are either exposed to intense flows or only recently started receiving refugees)⁴. Also, according to IMF (2016) rapid labour-market integration is key to reducing the net fiscal cost associated with the current inflow of asylum seekers. The sooner refugees gain employment, the more they will help the public finances by paying income tax and social-security contributions.

The analysis provided in the European Parliaments (2015) suggests that while EU legislation seeks to guarantee similar reception conditions across Member States, the existing differences, due to variations in living standards, still lead to “asylum shopping” putting a significant burden on some states. Though all of the countries included in the study comply with the nine-month waiting period (to access the labour market) set by the Asylum Reception Condition Directive, the main difficulties go beyond the legal framework. They include such problems as: the low awareness among employers that refugees are allowed to work; lack of language skills and the absence of mechanisms enabling recognition of qualifications and establishing equivalence of certificates obtained abroad. This lack of recognition for qualifications means that many refugees and asylum seekers have their potential untapped. Moreover, most Member States are characterised by high unemployment, especially for those searching for their first job, which hardly facilitates the absorption of refugees and asylum seekers by domestic labour markets.

1.2 Academic literature on the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers

Academic research is another important source of information that needs to be considered here. Though the majority of academic studies focus on measuring the labour-market integration of migrants in general, there is a limited but extremely important part of the literature that considers refugees as a separate group. It evolves in two interconnected branches of research: studies measuring labour-market integration; and studies on measures targeting labour-market integration of (resettled) refugees (and asylum seekers).

In order to judge the performance of refugees and asylum seekers in the labour market, a set of relevant tools and indicators should be established. Several approaches have been designed to assess the integration of migrants and refugees in the labour market of host countries. For instance, Ager and Strang (2008) have developed a framework for examining and measuring the access and achievement of migrants and refugees with employment criteria, but also in relation to education, health and housing sectors, rights and citizenship, community and social connections, and associated structural and cultural barriers. The integration framework proposed has been adapted and used by policy makers in several countries. Also, the already discussed UNHCR (2013c) study defines a set of integration indicators/measures including:

- Labour-market participation and employment rates
- Earnings
- Poverty
- Occupational status
- Employment commensurate with experience and qualifications
- Diversity of occupations and non-separated labour-markets
- Job retention
- Job advancement and occupational mobility
- Employment contracts and/or benefits
- Employment satisfaction

⁴ This fact was underlined in the earlier study conducted by European Parliament as well. The early access of asylum seekers to the labour-market coupled with appropriate career guidance is considered to be a key for refugee integration in the labour market (European Parliament, 2013).

1.3 Evidence on the relatively poor performance of migrants in general and refugees

The relative scarcity of research on the labour-market integration of refugees is partially explained by the lack of information on the visa categories under which immigrants are admitted to reside in the host country in the main sources of information such as EU-LFS or SILC datasets. Existing information is scattered through different country specific studies, outdated, fragmented, frequently not comparable and nationally not representative. Still, the evidence provided in the relevant literature points to existing differences in the labour-market outcomes of refugees with respect to other groups of migrants. Refugees are frequently characterized by their disadvantageous position both compared to natives and to other groups of migrants, at least in the short term. For instance, Cangiano (2012) using the information from EU-LFS 2008 demonstrates that the migrants who arrive as asylum seekers have the highest unemployment rate for men and the highest inactivity rate among women when compared to other migrants groups. However, OECD-EU (2014) drawing on the same dataset, has shown that, over time, the employment rate of persons entering for international protection increases significantly. Moreover, OECD (2014b) demonstrates that in the European OECD countries, once relevant individual characteristics are controlled for, humanitarian immigrant men and women from lower-income countries have employment rates that are, respectively, 11 and 18 percentage points higher than their peers who have come as labour migrants. Also, long-settled immigrants are more likely to participate in the labour market and are less prone to unemployment with respect to more recent cohorts; this difference is particularly striking with refugees. The results are similar in the settlement countries. The risk of over-qualification also seems to fall among employed immigrants born in a lower-income country at a rate of one percentage point per year (OECD 2014b).

The recently published 2014 wave of EU-LFS contains an *ad-hoc* module on migration which provides information regarding the entry channel of migrants and therefore allows for a comparison of the labour-market performance of migrants entering through international protection or asylum systems with other groups. The dataset contains a rich set of information and has the potential to boost academic research in the near future. Table 1.1 reports the employment rates of migrants by reason of entry. It demonstrates that migrants entering through international protection and asylum have, on average, employment rates lower than migrants in general and similar to those entering the member states through family unification.

Table 1.1 Employment rate of first generation of immigrants by reason for migration

Country/Reason	Total	Family reasons	Education reasons	Work, job found before migrating	Work, no job found before migrating	International protection or asylum
Belgium	53.9	46.3	55.6	86.8	67.1	47.1
Spain	52.3	40.8	60.8	64.8	63.2	40.6
France	58.0	52.4	69.8	73.1	72.7	58.4
Croatia	52.0	50.3	67.8	51.0	53.1	52.9
Italy	59.1	42.5	60.9	78.8	74.5	61.3
Austria	64.9	63.4	55.2	81.6	66.4	60.2
Portugal	66.8	66.7	71.2	79.7	69.4	53.0
Slovenia	60.6	54.9	56.1	72.6	60.5	74.1
Finland	63.6	62.5	73.7	85.9	80.2	43.4
Sweden	65.4	64.2	78.9	88.5	64.4	58.2
UK	69.3	58.8	65.9	92.8	85.9	51.8
Norway	69.1	65.1	68.2	86.0	74.6	56.4
Switzerland	76.5	69.0	74.3	89.9	82.1	78.1

Note: The table includes only countries for which information regarding the performance of those entering for international protection or asylum is available.

Source: Eurostat EU LFS 2014: Ifso_14l1empr.

These findings are confirmed by country-specific studies. Akgüç (2013) using information from *Trajectoires et Origins* (Enquête sur la diversité des populations de France) studies the labour-market performance (in terms of labour-force participation, employment and wages) of four groups of immigrants based on their visa categories at entry (family migrants, work migrants, refugees, and students) in France. The results of the study suggest that work migrants are more likely to participate in the labour force than family migrants and refugees. However, the gap disappears after controlling for observable characteristics (except for women). In terms of wages, migrants who came to France as workers or as students earn significantly more than family migrants and refugees, but, over a longer period, wage differences between these groups converge. Resettled Iraqis in France point to difficulties related to employment processes as well as the recognition of their qualifications and work experience (Goyet et al., 2009). The poor performance of refugees in France is also confirmed by information coming from the *Parcours et Profils de Migrants* (PPM) survey (conducted in 2006) according to which the employment rate among refugees is 34 per cent while 48 per cent are looking for a job. Similar evidence is found by other country studies for Sweden (Knocke, 2000; Bevelander and Lundh, 2007; Bevelander et al., 2009, Bevelander, 2011; Bevelander and Pendakur, 2012; Lundborg, 2013), Germany (Constant and Zimmerman, 2005), Norway (Aalandslid 2008) and Denmark (Damm, 2009, 2012; Matthiessen, 2009). Cebulla, Daniel and Zurawan (2011), analysing the information from the Survey of New Refugees in the UK, found that the employment rate after eight months is 34 per cent, rising to 49 per cent after 21 months, which is, in both cases, way below the national one (80 per cent). Also, those employed reported that they were overqualified for their job. Unfortunately, the study does not provide information on other migrant categories that could be used as a threshold. According to the National Institute of Continuing Education report (NIACE, 2009) refugees are six times more likely to be unemployed than non-refugees. Despite having an education level similar to UK natives, their unemployment rate was significantly above the national average (Somerville and Wintour 2004).

1.4 Common factors of success and failure

Though the literature on the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in the labour market is still limited, the existing studies allow singling out the main obstacles preventing integration and conditions and policies that, on the other hand, facilitate it. The evidence comes mainly from studies evaluating the experience of integrating resettled refugees in the USA and Canada as well as research on the labour-market integration of previous waves of refugees in Northern European countries. Studies on the labour-market integration of migrants in general provide important insights relevant for refugees as well. Some common factors of success/failure identified in the literature can be summarised in the following main points.

1.4.1 Obstacles to labour-market integration

According to OECD (2015), the relatively poor performance of refugees in the labour market can be only partially attributed to the lack of qualification or skills. Usually, refugees are less highly educated than the general population of host countries and in most cases also less than migrant workers. However, enabling refugees to become language-proficient, to get their educational and professional credentials recognised and to complement their skills with additional training is critical for their successful integration and, hence, in allowing for the positive economic impact of refugee flows in destination countries. One of the possible factors preventing the successful integration of migrants is discrimination. Experiments undertaken in several European countries demonstrated that anonymising job applications has a positive effect on the chances of migrants to be asked for an interview, which suggests possible discrimination in the labour market (Krause, Rinne and Zimmermann, 2012). According to IMF (2016) “welfare traps” created by the interaction of social benefits and the tax system can be another negative factor especially for low-skilled migrants. A detailed analysis of the situation of asylum seekers and refugees in three European countries (Ireland, Germany and the UK) presented in RISE (2013) provides important insights regarding the barriers/obstacles to labour-market integration identified in each country.

The barriers identified are:

- Language (including literacy), especially vocational (major priority)
- Lack of work experience in host country
- Lack of host country references
- Lack of appropriate training or unrecognized educational and professional qualifications
- Lack of access to networks which would strengthen employment prospects and knowledge of recruitment methods
- Lack of knowledge/awareness of fitting current experience to roles applied for
- Lack of understanding of the host country employment culture and job application procedures
- Cross-cultural misunderstandings cause suspicion and hostility
- Lack of awareness of cultural nuances and etiquette of host country
- Racism and negative stereotyping
- Uncertainty (caused by a lack of life and work perspectives)
- Boredom and frustration leading to the loss of self-esteem (caused by the lack of meaningful occupation, especially work)

1.4.2 Evidence on factors facilitating the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers

Employment is more important than vocational education: The evidence proves that the faster refugees get in contact with the labour market, the faster is their integration. For instance, Lemaître (2007) points out that successful integration is associated with early contact with the labour market as Swedish work experience is rewarded by employers in Sweden. Also, the benefits of early employment experience on later employment are much stronger than those of vocational education courses in Sweden. Subsidised employments programmes have proven to raise refugee employment (Farrell et al., 2011). Programmes undertaken in collaboration with the private sector and those targeting women were more successful.

Host-country language knowledge is key for successful integration: The growing literature on the relationship between migrants' language skills and their achievement in the labour market shows that knowledge of the host-country language contributes to higher attainments in the labour market (Chiswick and Miller 2007, 2009). The relevant studies focus on the USA, Canada and Australia. In Europe, the UK has a rich literature on the topic (Zimmermann 2005). Therelevant studies demonstrate that fluency in English leads to a 20 to 30 per cent higher probability of employment (Dustmann and Fabbri 2003; Shields and Wheatley Price 2001; 2002). In Germany, male immigrants with good writing skills receive a wage premium of 7.3 per cent (Dustmann, 1994). Also in Spain, fluency in Spanish is associated with a significantly higher probability of being employed with a permanent contract and career transition (Miyar Busto et al., 2012).

The integration programmes for migrants, introduced in Germany in 2005, contained language training along with a civic course, in addition to access to a system of social counselling for the first three years of residence in Germany (Carrera 2006). Schuller *et al.* (2011) assessing the effectiveness and sustainability of migrant integration programmes in Germany found that the improvement in the command of German was positively correlated with the probability of being in full- or part-time employment a year after the completion of the course. Given the crucial importance of language command, all nine destination countries considered in this study provide humanitarian migrants with publically (co-) financed language programs and, with the exception of Italy, special language training for the poorly educated (OECD, 2016).

Language instruction is important if it does not delay labour-market entry and if it corresponds to occupational needs: Many reports underline the importance of the adoption of language programmes integrated with workplace experience (see, Lemaître, 2007; Carrera, 2006; Åslund and Johansson, 2011, Andersson Joonas and Nekby, 2012). According to OECD (2016), on-the-job language training enables refugees whose foreign credentials are not equivalent to domestic qualifications to acquire the missing skills that will help them achieve full equivalence and, eventually, allow them to practice their occupation in the host

country. These types of programs are quite promising as they offer real-life language practice, help to build soft skills such as relationships, increase confidence, and promote employment over welfare usage (UNHCR, 2013c). For instance, language-training programmes in Finland provide that part of each workday is spent in language classes. In Norway, there are similar 'language apprenticeships' that are frequently part of individualised employment plans. Refugees spend two days in the workplace to learn work-related vocabulary and to gain Norwegian labour-market experience.

The Calgary Catholic Immigration Society organizes soft skills and language-integrated training programmes in Calgary, Canada (UNHCR, 2013c). Resettled refugees together with other immigrant categories are assisted and given work experience placements for 6-12 weeks. All parties involved notice improvements in both the language and job readiness skills of participants. The USA Office of Refugee Resettlement organises webinars on 'Using Intensive Vocationally-Focused English as a Second Language training to Fast-Track Workforce Development Skills for Refugees'. Out of 190 students enrolled in the programme, 92 per cent completed, and 81 per cent increased one or more English levels per semester. Also 98 per cent of participants rated their programme satisfaction three or above on a 1-5 scale. Though there is no such training in Iceland, the report conducted by the Ministry of Social Affairs (2007) states the possibility of linking vocational training and language course teaching during the first year to increase employment chances.

Language courses integrated into work training is not a new idea, but it is a growing one. Although highly effective, the application of on-the-job training is limited due to the fact that it is costly and requires cooperation from employers (OECD, 2016). Also, despite the promising features of vocationally-focused language training with integrated work experience, their effectiveness compared to simple language courses is not known or studied (at least to the best of our knowledge).

Skills assessment is the first step for successful integration: According to Aldashev *et al.* (2010), among four types of training that migrant welfare recipients might be assigned to under the "integration contract" in Germany, only Aptitude Tests (assessment of the skills, capability and labour-market opportunities for specific occupations) and Skill Provision (practical training in specific working techniques) had positive effects on employment⁵.

Recognition of qualifications is beneficial but not always: Employers tend not to trust foreign qualifications or, indeed, foreign work experience. The recognition of qualifications equivalent to local ones appears to be beneficial (Lemaître, 2007). However, this is not always the case. Correa-Velez *et al.* (2013) estimates that the recognition of overseas skills and qualifications decreased the chances of finding employment for male refugees living in South-East Queensland (Australia). The results can be explained by the fact that the recognition of qualification *per se* does not overcome other obstacles (for example, lack of understanding of host country employment culture and job application procedures and inadequate language skills). Another plausible explanation is that refugees with recognised formal qualification might look for a job that suits their qualifications: this, of course, would postpone their employment.

Customized approach (gender/age/education/family status) is key for labour-market integration: Hagelund (2005) discussed the individual approach characterizing labour-market integration policies in Norway. The assessment of qualifications and needs, and an individual employment plan are the key elements of employment support for resettled refugees in the country. The refugee "develops an individual career plan consisting of an aim – normally a type of job – and various schemes deemed relevant to achieve this" (Hagelund, 2005). The study shows that after the introduction of a compulsory two-year introductory programme, refugees started relying on the social system less and became more independent. The evaluation of the 'Life CV' programme in the UK also demonstrated that an individually-tailored approach helps refugees "to consider new ways of knowing themselves and presenting themselves to potential employers" (Schultheiss *et al.*, 2011).

⁵ The other two types of training which addressed the long-term unemployed and aimed at improving the applicant's presentation and job search abilities demonstrated no effect.

The ALLIES project in Canada is a mentorship program for skilled immigrants⁶. It engages employers to encourage mentors from their workplaces to participate in the programme offering, in this way, occupation-specific mentorship matches between mentors and immigrant mentees. Twelve months after the program had begun, there has been a significant drop in unemployment and an increase in earnings for the 292 participants who responded to the survey (Accenture, 2013).

Special Introduction (SIN) is a Swedish pilot integration program which targets immigrants and refugees who are ready to enter the labour market. According to Åslund and Johansson (2011), the programmes increased the transitions from unemployment to work experience schemes and improved future employment probabilities for those who entered these schemes. The study is based on very detailed individual data and allows to distinguish the effects through several channels. Another Swedish programme, introduced in 2006, in addition to all standard ALMPs available for migrants in Sweden, provided newly arrived immigrants with intensive (extra) coaching by public employment services which helped them select the appropriate ALMPs. The program had positive but small effects on employment rates.

Gender-sensitive measures have proven successful: Refugee women might be self-excluded from cultural orientation, language training, employment training, and employment due to childcare needs and cultural expectations (Riller, 2009). The Stepping Stones project for refugee in Australia was specifically tailored to mothers and women who have many obligations. For this purpose, the micro-enterprise training materials from the ILO and UNDP were used to create guidelines adapted to the Australian context and aimed at helping the potential beneficiaries (65 per cent from resettled refugee backgrounds) to access the resources necessary to start a small business. In addition, a female mentor from a business partnership was assigned to advice refugee woman through the different stages of the start-up. From the first interim evaluation, 17 of 39 participants (43.5 per cent) had started their own small business, and five were continuing to develop their businesses (Bodsworth, 2013).

Fiscal mechanisms are effective, though not for everybody: The results of quasi-natural experiments assessing the effect of lowering income transfers to refugees point to several interesting facts. First, the lower income transfer has a positive effect on the job-finding rate after two years in the host country. Second, income transfers during the early phases of the integration process positively affect the exit rate from the labour force. Finally, the experiment has shown that the weakest refugees in the labour market are almost immune to such policy changes (Rosholm and Vejin, 2007). Another set of results comes from a San Diego study where refugees were assigned to Wilson-Fish or the Refugee Social Services programme. Hohm *et al.* (1999) reporting results of that experiment, state that those assigned to the first program, received significantly lower amounts of cash but had a significantly higher placement in jobs and found a job faster than the refugees in the other group. However, the evaluation design was made after data collection, therefore the possibility of bias cannot be altogether eliminated in these studies.

Subsidised employment schemes are (more) effective if the employer is a private entity: Thomsen and Walter (2010) examine the impact of the most frequently used welfare-to-work programmes in Germany (Temporary Extra Jobs). Participants receive welfare benefits and are paid a one or two euro hourly wage while being temporarily employed in public sector. They find that the scheme has a negative effect on the employment of immigrants. Instead, start-up subsidies to secure the initial phase of self-employment for externally approved business plans were proven to have a significant positive effect on employment, income, and occupational satisfaction, especially for disadvantaged groups in the German labour market. (Caliendo and Kunn, 2010; Wolff and Nivorozhkin 2012).

In Norway, work-practice programmes, labour-market training and wage-subsidy programmes are the common ALMPs for non-western immigrants. According to Kvinge and Djuve (2006) wage subsidized employment programs had the largest impact in terms of improving the employment rates of participants.

⁶ See more details here: <http://alliescanada.ca/resources/toolkits/>.

Among European countries, Denmark has one of the best-established integration frameworks and hence can potentially provide important insights regarding the effectiveness of labour-market integration measures. The three-year integration program for migrants offered by Danish municipalities consists of Danish language training for all and six types of active labour-market measures (ALMP) for immigrants receiving social security benefits. Though the programme demonstrates significant lock-in effects due to involvement in language courses (the probability of finding employment falls while being part of the programme), this effect diminishes over time. While ALMPs with direct involvement of the private sector (subsidized private sector employment and employment with wage subsidies in private sector firms) had a significant positive effect on employment probability, other components are either negative or have no effect (Clausen et al., 2009). For those receiving social assistance, ALMP participation had a positive effect. Heinesen *et al.*, (2013) found that ALMPs have a positive effect on the exit rate to regular employment for non-western immigrants receiving social assistance. The largest positive effect is observed for those benefitting from subsidized employment programs, something that leads to a reduction in the duration of social assistance by ten to fifteenth months, whereas for direct employment and other programmes the reduction was between two and four months. The availability of rich administrative data takes into account the non-random selection of participants in programmes with respect to both observable and unobservable factors.

Temporary agency employment programmes have a positive impact on the employment outcome of migrants in terms of a transition to regular employment in Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. The studies demonstrate that the impact of the programme is more prominent for immigrants and ethnic minorities than for natives. In Denmark it has a significant positive effect on the transition rate to regular employment for both natives and immigrants, but the effect is stronger for immigrants (Jahn and Roshol, 2012; De Graaf-Zijl et al., 2011; Andersson and Wadensjö, 2004).

To sum up and according to OECD (2016), the following good practices or 'lessons' are crucial in facilitating and accelerating the integration of recently-arrived humanitarian migrants:

- Provide activation and integration services as soon as possible for humanitarian migrants and asylum seekers with good prospects of being allowed to stay;
- Factor employment prospects into dispersal policies;
- Take into account the growing diversity of humanitarian migrants and develop tailor-made approaches;
- Develop support programs specific to unaccompanied minors who arrive past the age of compulsory schooling;
- Promote equal access to integration services to humanitarian migrants across the country;
- Facilitate labour-market access for asylum seekers with high prospects of being allowed to stay;
- Record and assess humanitarian migrants' foreign qualifications, work experience and skills;
- Identify mental and physical health issues early and provide adequate support;
- Build on civil society to integrate humanitarian migrants;
- Acknowledge that the integration of very poorly educated humanitarian migrants requires long-term training and support.

1.5 Remaining literature gaps

There are several studies that consider measures targeting the labour-market integration of refugees, but they frequently have crucial shortcomings:

- They are largely descriptive and lack a quantitative component.
- The vast majority of studies lacks a design that could enable evaluation, hence only a few explore the effectiveness of specific labour-market integration policies or programmes. The absence of controlled trials and quasi-experimental designs, in other words the absence of comparison groups, renders the causality of found effects questionable. This is an important shortcoming as the population/refugee sample subject to ALMPs are usually characterised by different selection and self-selection mechanisms, as well as severe attrition rates.

- There is an important theoretical gap related to programming. Only a few programmes explain the mechanism through which activities lead to better labour-market integration. So far, there has been no clear theoretical framework that has been able to propose the sequence of steps that a refugee should go through or an optimal combination of measures that should be implemented to achieve the desirable outcome.
- Usually, it is difficult to estimate the impact of a concrete measure as migrants are frequently part of more complex multi-component programmes. For instance, the Integration program for immigrants (open to refugees too), introduced in Finland in the late 1990s had a significant positive effect; it strongly increased the employment and earnings of immigrants and reduced their dependency on social benefits (Sarvimäki and Hämäläinen, 2010). However, the programme consisted of an individualized sequence of training and subsidized employment and sanctioned non-compliance with a reduction in welfare benefits. While the overall impact of the programme is estimated as being positive, it is hard to distinguish between the contributions of its various elements or to single out the best sequence.
- The existing studies are mainly based on resettled refugees in the USA, Canada, and Australia and due to the lack of theoretically grounded and empirically robust results, the existing findings can only be partially relevant for the recent flow of humanitarian migrants to Europe.

The above listed shortcomings also indicate the direction in which the related literature should develop. First, refugee-related data collection should be addressed in a more systematic, harmonised and structured manner in all EU Member States. This will allow for monitoring the situation. Moreover, the stock of information will boost academic research (including quantitative research) in the field, which in its turn will provide policy-makers with important insights. Second, the way labour-market integration measures are designed should take into account the need to evaluate their effectiveness afterwards e.g. through controlled trials and quasi-experimental design. This would allow for a better understanding of the impact and effectiveness of concrete measures. Finally, more efforts should be put into developing a theoretical framework that could explain the role of a concrete measure, the channel through which it affects labour-market integration of (resettled) refugees and asylum seekers, as well as the combination and sequence of measures leading to the best outcome for a given group of beneficiaries (considering skill level, gender, marital status and age).

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2 Case Study Austria

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The huge and recent influx of refugees to Austria has necessitated steps to facilitate their labour-market integration. This has become all the more important as a significant share of recent refugees are young and of working age. Thus, apart from the policies and practices pursued in the past and mainly dedicated to ‘migrants’, new measures tailored to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers had to be adopted.

The present country study is aimed at investigating these new measures and their effectiveness and is structured as follows. After providing (i) an overview on the number and characteristics of recent refugee flows, the legal framework for labour-market access, the policy approach by the authorities and a bibliographical review of national reports on the labour-market integration of refugees, the study focuses (ii) on the analysis of the main measures facilitating the labour-market integration of this target group. The final section (iii) provides initial assessments on good practice and perceptions on the implemented or projected measures by the main stakeholders.

2.1 Background

2.1.1 Profile of recent refugee flows

Ever since Austria regained its full independence after the conclusion of the Austrian State Treaty in 1955, refugees have fled to the country in search of protection. In times of regional and international crises, the inflow of asylum seekers spiked, reaching 169,941 new arrivals during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and 34,557 people in 1981 after the declaration of martial law in Socialist Poland. Since the end of the 1980s – with a short interruption in the mid-1990s – the average number of asylum applications has been surpassed the 17,000 mark each year, owing to the steady inflow of migrants from the dissolving Yugoslavia, war-torn Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as Russia, particularly because of the conflict in Chechnya (Statistics Austria, 2015) (Figure 2.1). The Syrian civil war and the rise of the jihadist group the ‘Islamic State’ led to the latest surge in first-time applications⁸ that amounted to 25,702 in 2014 and 90,000 in 2015.⁹ Other main sending countries, since the year 2002, have been Serbia, Afghanistan, Russia and Iraq (BMI, 2015). At the end of 2014, UNHCR estimated that 91,647 recognised refugees, people in refugee-like situations and asylum seekers with pending cases were residing in Austria. In the current global humanitarian turmoil, Austria is a protagonist not only as a receiver but also as a transit country. In 2015 the number of asylum seekers in Austria quadrupled compared to 2014 (UNHCR and BMI as of January 2016). The number of asylum seekers counted per inhabitants – 1 in 128 inhabitants – ranks Austria the third main receiving country among the EU-28, after Germany and Sweden.

⁸ Starting from 2014, the Federal Ministry of Interior reports the number of first-time asylum applications in addition to the total number of applications. The difference between these numbers is due to the fact that many asylum seekers file an additional application in or outside the country after their first has been rejected.

⁹ Source: Federal Ministry of Interior (Bundesministerium für Inneres, BMI) as of January 2016.

Figure 2.1 Asylum Applications (yearly)

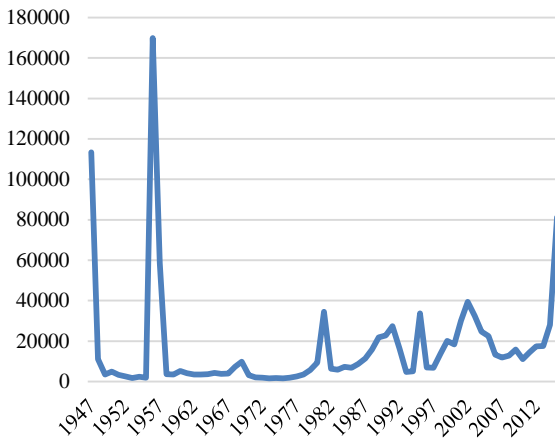
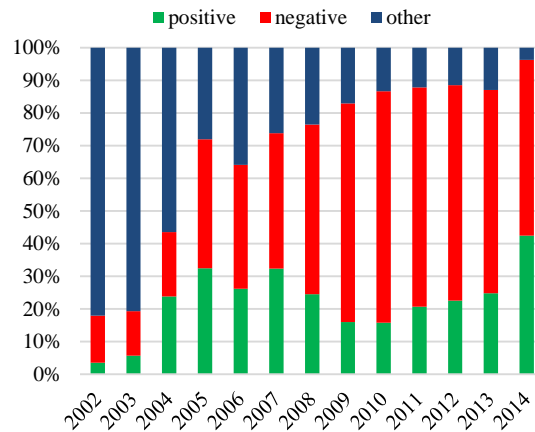


Figure 2.2 Legally Binding Decisions by Outcome



Source: Own calculations using Statistics Austria and BMI data, 2015.

Patterns and duration of refugee recognition

Compared to previous periods, the share of final positive decisions (43 per cent) on applications was unusually high in 2014, almost twice the 2002-2013 average (Figure 2.2). This was due, especially, to the high acceptance rate of refugees from Syria (88 per cent) and Afghanistan (53 per cent) (Source: BMI). A parliamentary inquiry revealed that the average duration of an asylum process in Austria was 5.3 months in September 2015 compared to 3.3 months in December 2014.¹⁰ The BMI does not generally publish these data, as well as the number of open cases, which is available for many other EU countries; this makes it hard to assess the efficiency of the Austrian asylum process. However, it can perhaps be assumed that the recent surge in asylum seekers will lead to a further delay for many applicants.

Profiles of past refugees/asylum seekers

Previous waves of refugees and asylum seekers in Austria have been numerous. The most recent data – obtained from the micro census¹¹ ad-hoc module conducted in 2014 with refugees and asylum seekers living in Austria – suggest that these previously originated from the former Yugoslavia¹² (42 per cent) and other third (non-EU) countries (41 per cent) and that the rest came from other EU countries.¹³ The refugees and asylum seekers' duration of stay in the country is on average about sixteen years, but in half of the cases more than twenty years. Those living in Austria for fewer than four years by 2014 accounted for merely 12 per cent, suggesting that the sample is composed mainly of 'old' rather than more recently arrived migrants. More than 67 per cent were male and on average younger than 27 when first migrating, confirming the predominantly young age of this group of migrants which tends to be even younger when compared to the overall level of migrants. As concerns educational level, 31 per cent had lower secondary education, 55 per cent had secondary education and 14 per cent had tertiary education. Compared to the rest of migrants this shows a slightly higher share in primary education and a much lower share in tertiary education. Also, a further deterioration in educational level compared to the 2008 micro-census data can be observed. Bock-Schappelwein and Huber (2015) also identified substantial differences in the level of qualification between

¹⁰ https://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/AB/AB_06484/imfname_492200.pdf.

¹¹ The information about the profile of past refugees and asylum seekers has been obtained from the micro census conducted in 2014, the special ad-hoc module 'Labour market situation of people with or without an immigrant background', having as a target group persons aged 15 to 64 years in private households. A similar survey is conducted also in other countries of the European Union.

¹² Slovenians and Croatians are not included.

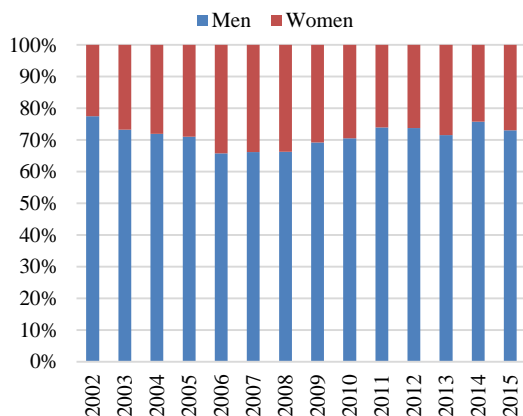
¹³ The data provided by Statistics Austria are not disaggregated by country of origin. Therefore, it is not possible to provide information about individual origin countries. The group of 'Other EU countries' in this context most likely includes old refugees from Croatia or Slovenia.

those who arrived before 1994 and those who arrived thereafter. Refugees and asylum seekers show a significantly higher share of people with a qualification lower than or equivalent to the Austrian compulsory school level. Labour-market participation tends to be lower compared to other groups of migrants. This phenomenon is more pronounced among women. The employment rates is at 60.4 per cent for asylum seekers compared to 64.9 per cent for all migrants, with employment rates tending to be relatively higher among males compared to females, respectively 65.7 per cent vs 52.1 per cent. Previous surveys also found that refugees and asylum seekers and particularly women work in occupations that require skills below their qualification level. Over-qualification is particularly wide-spread among this group of migrants as compared to overall migrants.

The profile of recent asylum seekers

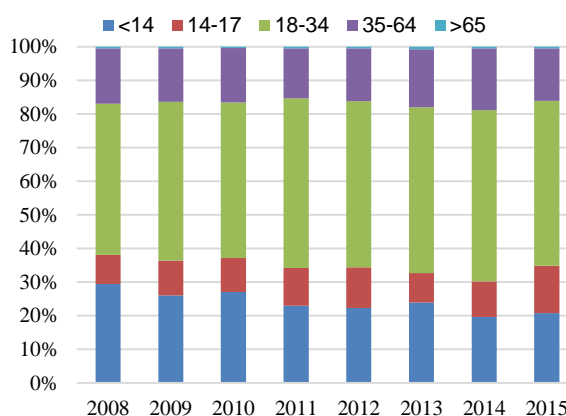
Unsurprisingly, the influx of asylum seekers in 2015 consisted predominantly of Afghans (29 per cent), Syrians (289 per cent), and Iraqis (15 per cent), who together accounted for more than 70 per cent of total asylum applications. In terms of gender distribution, almost three-quarters of all applicants were male, which is more than average for 2002-2014, but not the highest value (BMI, 2015). At the end of October 2015, around one-third of asylum seekers were younger than eighteen and a half of them were in the age group between 18 and 34 at the time of their application. This might be seen as promising, given that it is easier to integrate younger people into the workforce (Eurostat, 2015). However, these numbers are close to the average of the last four years (Figures 2.3-2.4).

Figure 2.3 Asylum Applications by Gender 2002-2015



Source: Own calculations using BMI data, 2015.

Figure 2.4 Age Structure of Asylum Applicants



Source: Eurostat. Data for 2015 refer to the first ten months.

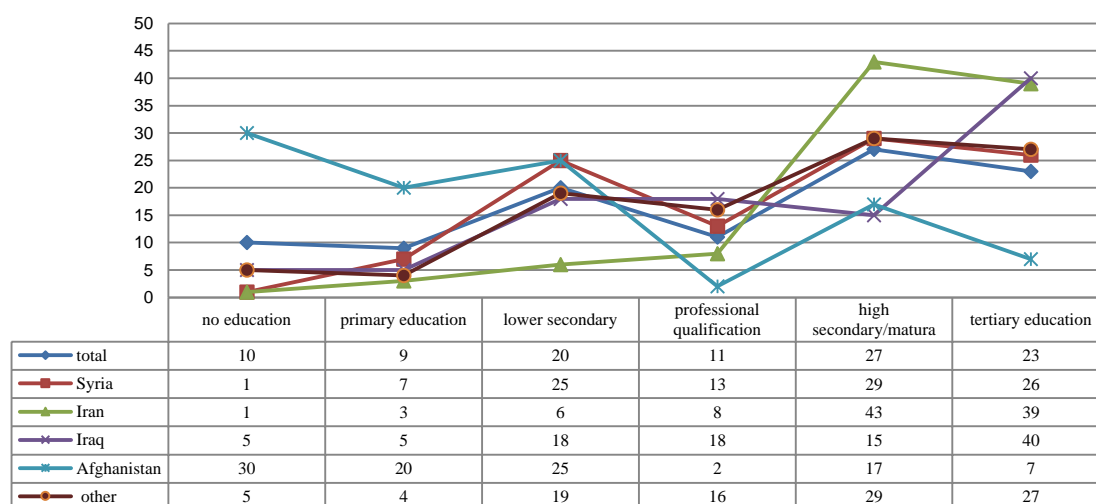
Level of qualification and patterns of employment

As Austrian social insurance data do not indicate whether a registered employee is a refugee, it is impossible to calculate an unemployment rate for refugees. However, available data on registered unemployed refugees and persons under subsidiary protection from the Public Employment Service (AMS) indicate a clear upward trend over the past five years. In December 2015, 21,154 recognised refugees were registered as unemployed. A share of 31 per cent of them were Syrian, 22 per cent Afghan and 15 per cent Russian. As expected, the share of Syrians was significantly higher than the yearly averages of 2013 and 2014, while the share of Afghans remained at a relatively stable value.

Box 2.1 'Competence Check' by the Public Employment Service Austria

The latest insights come from a survey by the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) – the so-called 'competence check' – conducted between August and December 2015 among 898 unemployed recognised refugees and persons under subsidiary protection. The qualification of the participants was obtained in qualitative interviews in their mother tongue, in which the refugees' statements were checked for inconsistencies. The results are very heterogeneous for the different countries of origin: Syrian, Iraqi and Iranian refugees were remarkably well-educated, as 55 per cent of Syrians/Iraqis and as many as 82 per cent of Iranians had a level of qualification equivalent to or higher than the Austrian *matura*. Only 32 per cent of Syrians, 23 per cent of Iraqis and 9 per cent of Iranians had a school education equivalent to or lower than compulsory school level and almost none were without school education. Afghans were altogether different: 30 per cent of those in the sample had never attended a school, and 45 per cent had an education equal to or lower than compulsory school level (see Figure 2.5 below for more details.) Women were generally better educated than men, but did not have as much work experience as their male counterparts. As the average refugee in the sample had entered Austria in 2011, the results should not be interpreted as representative of the qualification level of recent refugee inflows; the small sample size, especially for Iraq and some African countries, and the high share of women, do not reflect the real composition of recent refugees.

Figure 2.5 Educational Level of Registered Unemployed, AMS Competence Check, 2015, in %



Source: Own calculations using AMS-Competence Check data

2.1.2 Legal framework for access to the labour market

Recognised refugees and persons with subsidiary protection status enjoy full access to the labour market. They are entitled to the services and support of the Public Employment Service and are treated on an equal basis with domestic clients. By contrast, the employment of asylum seekers is subject to the Alien Employment Act (AuslBG). Accordingly the only way for asylum seekers to access the labour market is seasonal work after a waiting period of three months, starting from the submission date of the asylum application, provided that no final decision in the asylum procedure has been taken prior to that date. Access is restricted by a special decree of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour (2004) – the so-called Bartenstein Decree (*Bartenstein-Erlass*) – to selected occupations with quota-regulated work permits: namely, tourism, agriculture and forestry. These seasonal jobs are limited by a yearly quota for each federal province and jobs can only be given for a maximum period of six months. In order to take up employment, the local Public Employment Service (*Arbeitsmarktservice* – AMS) has to issue a work permit. Applications have to be submitted to the AMS by the employer. The possibility of obtaining access to the labour market is restricted by a labour market test (*Ersatzkraftverfahren*), which requires proof that the respective vacancy cannot be filled by an Austrian or EU/EEA citizen or another integrated third-country national (long-time resident, family member etc.).

The experience with the seasonal employment of asylum seekers shows that in practice only a small number had access to seasonal jobs within the quota system during 2006-2014 (Bock-Schappelwein and Huber, 2015). Over this period only 2,840 persons were granted quota permits as harvesters in agriculture and forestry and in summer/winter tourism. The average duration of this kind of employment contract was four months. In terms of gender, the majority (80 per cent) of permits were granted to males with an average age of 35 years. Up to 2011 most seasonal workers under this regime came from Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo, followed by Turkey and China. As of 2012, migrants from Afghanistan ranked second and in 2013 and 2014 most of the permits were granted to people from Afghanistan, followed by Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Turkey, China and Bangladesh. Overall this shows a strong concentration of quota permits on persons from the former Yugoslavia and Turkey: i.e. nationalities different from those of the recent asylum flows. The explanation for this is probably that the existing ethnic migrant networks make the labour-market access easier for asylum seekers from these countries and/or employers tend to employ experienced migrant workforce rather than recruiting asylum seekers. Another discouraging constraint on seasonal work is to be seen in the Basic Care Act (*Grundversorgungsgesetz*). This Act stipulates that should asylum seekers work federal provinces require asylum seekers to contribute to the costs of reception, and in practice only an allowance of €110 is left to the asylum seeker in most provinces.

Since July 2012 asylum seekers may, if they are younger than 25, take up an apprenticeship in shortage occupations; these are listed by the regional AMS branches and may, therefore, differ by regions. As a precondition, the applicants must have been admitted to the asylum procedure three months before and must have passed a labour-market test (*Ersatzkraftverfahren*), see above.

The access of young asylum seekers to an apprenticeship in shortage occupations has so far been little used. As of January 2016 there existed about 120 such apprenticeships, with most beneficiaries being young men from Afghanistan. In practice, apprenticeships are mainly provided by larger companies such as the retail chain REWE, OeBB (Austrian Railway Company), T-Mobile and PORR (a construction company). REWE also provides in-house training programmes tailored to the needs of young refugees. In order to facilitate their integration into the labour market, some of these companies cooperate with private non-profit organisation Lobby16, which prepares young refugees, during several months of training, for the apprenticeship by providing courses in German, English and mathematics and also by organising practice days.

Asylum seekers may also become self-employed. Access to self-employment is granted for three months after the submission of the asylum application; asylum seekers have to apply for a trade licence, which is, however, very restrictive in its handling. Only recently the Austrian Institute of Economic Research called for the liberalisation of access restrictions on refugees, at least in regions with a lack of local shops.¹⁴

Asylum seekers may take up work in charitable and non-profit institutions as well as community services. Charitable work includes work in the reception facilities for asylum seekers, such as cleaning, cooking, transport or maintenance; community services on behalf of the federal government, the provinces and municipalities comprise e.g. landscaping, maintenance of parks and sport fields or administrative support. Asylum seekers may earn €110 per month, which will not be deducted from their welfare benefits.

Asylum seekers are not registered with the Public Employment Service (AMS) as unemployed persons and, therefore, are not entitled to receiving support measures provided by the AMS such as educational training. Thus, it falls upon the asylum seekers to find a job offer for seasonal work on their own.

In 2015 the Public Employment Service provided support to 21,195 recognised refugees and 6,170 persons were placed in employment.

¹⁴ *Der Standard*, 15 January 2016, p. 11.

2.1.3 Policy approach

Integration became a key issue in the debates on migration policy in Austria in the early 1990s and has been part of the political agenda since then (UNHCR, 2013). In 2009, the Austrian Government elaborated a National Action Plan (NAP) on Integration, which focuses not only on migrants but also on the integration of refugees and those with subsidiary protection which constitutes, 'due to their need for protection and vulnerability, a particular challenge'.¹⁵

Refugees' labour-market integration has, in particular, been an increasingly important subject of discussion over recent years. While recognised refugees receive the same treatment on the labour market as nationals, asylum seekers' access to the labour market has been subject to protracted and controversial debates. The Austrian authorities still believe that the current legislation allows even earlier access to the labour market than stipulated by EU regulation¹⁶ and argue that, even in the case of full access to the labour market, labour-market tests would be maintained and thus put a limit on labour-market entrance. Politicians are opposed to the removal of restrictions due to the high and growing unemployment rate (6 per cent by LFS and 10.6 per cent by national definition in December 2015), which is forecast to keep rising till 2018. NGOs¹⁷, by contrast, call for an opening of the labour market to asylum seekers, six months after the submission date of the asylum application, because restrictions would contribute to rising poverty, social exclusion and skills degradation. Austrian social partners have been following the same political line: in a joint position paper (2001)¹⁸ they declared that asylum seekers would have the opportunity to obtain a temporary work permit for a maximum of twelve months – a demand which is still on the agenda. On the other hand, their call for facilitating apprenticeships for young asylum seekers has only been partly implemented.

In a recent position paper the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB)¹⁹ is again calling for easier labour-market access for asylum seekers with clear, fair and transparent regulations; this is regarded as a useful measure against illegal employment along with wage dumping. However, due to the weak economic performance and the tight labour-market situation, labour-market tests as a prerequisite for employment are considered a possible strategy by the trade unions. Successful labour-market integration should be facilitated by faster recognition of previously acquired qualifications, language courses and, for young persons, compulsory schooling, according to the ÖGB.

Also on the employers' side there is considerable interest in a rapid labour-market integration of asylum seekers. Only recently the president of the Austrian Industrialists' Association called for faster asylum procedures. People identified as asylum seekers should immediately undergo qualification measures, irrespective of whether or not they have already been granted asylum. With regard to qualifications, German language courses should have priority and further qualification measures should start with the asylum seeker's present level of qualification. Also, young people who have completed compulsory education should be trained. Labour-market access should be granted six months after the submission date of the asylum application. He also emphasised the importance of mobility, not only within Austria, but also within Europe.

There is, also, an ongoing debate about legislation changes on the needs-based minimum income (BMS); a new regulation is expected to come into force in summer this year (see Box 2.2). The government of Upper Austria (a coalition of the People's Party ÖVP and the Freedom Party FPÖ) is planning a reduction in the

¹⁵ <http://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/integration/national-action-plan/>.

¹⁶ Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection. 'States shall ensure that applicants have access to the labour market no later than 9 months from the date when the application for international protection was lodged if a first instance decision by the competent authority has not been taken and the delay cannot be attributed to the applicant'.

¹⁷ 'Forderungen: Volkshilfe Sozialbarometer Asyl & Migration', Volkshilfe Press Conference, 19 June 2015; http://docsfiles.com/pdf_faktensammlung_asyl_und_migration.html and http://www.asyl.at/fakten_2/betr_2015_04.htm.

¹⁸ http://www.sopol.at/get_file.php?id=976.

¹⁹ http://www.oegb.at/cms/S06/S06_0.a/1342560108888/home/oegb-position-zur-aktuellen-fluechtlingskrise.

BMS for those under subsidiary protection and persons granted asylum for a limited period, who should receive a similar amount as asylum seekers (basic care). The limit for multi-person households should be set at €1,500. During the first year recipients should receive more non-cash benefits. Should they refuse job offers, the BMS should be reduced by 25 per cent during the first year; the same regulation should be applied if BMS recipients refuse to participate in German language courses and in value trainings. Similar suggestions were also made by the People's Party at the federal level. The Vienna government is strictly against the €1,500 upper limit for reasons of unconstitutionality. The AMS on the other hand would prefer to create additional income opportunities for those receiving the BMS. There are also discussions underway that the responsibility for the BMS should be transferred to the federal level.

Box 2.2 Needs-based Guaranteed Minimum Income

Recognised refugees and persons under subsidiary protection are entitled to receive the needs-based guaranteed minimum income (*bedarfsorientierte Mindestsicherung*, BMS) from the day of recognition. Those who cannot support themselves, who are not entitled to any other benefits and who are ready to take up work qualify. The legal basis is an agreement concluded between the Federation and the federal states – anchored in the Federal Constitution of Austria, Art. 15a – stipulating the cornerstones of the needs-based minimum benefit system and implemented by federal legislation and the legislation of the provinces. In 2016 a single person receives a fixed amount of money, €838, twelve times a year; for couples the amount is €1,257. These amounts may vary slightly among the individual provinces.

2.1.4 Bibliographical review

Evidence on the labour-market performance of refugees

Existing research on the labour-market integration of third-country migrants does not mostly distinguish between migrant workers and refugees or asylum seekers. First, the lack of refugee-specific data makes it very hard to conduct high-quality quantitative research in this area. Second, for Austria, at least, the social insurance institution does not register whether those with migration background are migrant workers, refugees or asylum seekers – a serious obstacle to studies dealing with employment and labour-market measures targeted at refugees and asylum seekers. Owing to this lack of administrative data, the most comprehensive study about the labour-market integration of refugees in Austria carried out by Bock-Schappelwein and Huber (2015) is based on micro census data from 2008. Comparing the labour-market performance of refugees and labour migrants, the authors find that the two groups were similar with respect to labour-force participation, though refugees showed a slightly higher unemployment rate. Female refugees, however, performed significantly worse than female labour migrants and male refugees.

Problems of refugees on the labour market

In a regression analysis, Bock-Schappelwein and Huber (2015) find that when controlling for other relevant variables, e.g. education, the risk of unemployment for refugees and asylum seekers was higher as compared to labour migrants.

After differentiating between men and women, they discovered that the negative employment effect of being a refugee is statistically insignificant for men, but highly significant for women. Evidence from the 2008 micro census suggests that a possible source of discrimination in the labour market could be that the refugees' qualifications are not recognised in Austria, and that 24 per cent of all refugees worked in jobs requiring lower qualifications than what they actually had. 42 per cent of refugees stated that their jobs did not match their qualifications, a higher number than in any other migrant group (Bock-Schappelwein and Huber, 2015: 43).

Qualitative research on the subject provides some insight into the practical issues refugees are facing during their entry into the labour market: the problem of obtaining missing documents (e.g. education certificates) from the home country is one of the major complications reported by refugees (Scheiber, 2007). The recognition of foreign certificates generally involves substantial costs, which refugees often cannot afford (Riesenfelder *et al.*, 2011). However, the lack of qualifications, such as, for instance, a limited command of German, can pose difficulties in the labour market (Wolf-Maier and Kreuzhuber, 2009). Last but certainly not least, refugees have to interrupt their studies and employment for a long time until they are legally recognised in Austria, which leads to deskilling (Huber, 2010).

Consequences of labour-market liberalisation for Asylum seekers

Bock-Schappelwein and Huber (2015) conducted a simulation of various scenarios from the restrictive to the generous liberalisation of labour-market access of refugees based on the limited available data on the characteristics of asylum seekers in Austria. The results show that the surge in the labour supply would lead only to a modest reduction of the wages of native workers, between 0.04 per cent and 0.08 per cent and an around 0.04 per cent lower entry of natives into the labour market. More significant would be the short-term rise in unemployment from 0.1 per cent to as much as 0.23 per cent in case of a complete liberalisation for asylum seekers after three months. This effect would even out a bit over time, but still lead to a significantly higher medium-term unemployment rate. Faster decisions in the asylum process were identified as one way to contain the adverse effects of liberalisation for native workers, as negative decisions release pressure on the labour market.

Current asylum seekers tend to prefer countries with low unemployment rates, including Austria (IMF, 2016). Accordingly, recommendations to Austria include, the abolition of the labour-market test (*Ersatzkraftverfahren*) and the implementation of active labour-market policies such as training or apprenticeship contracts. The former would contribute to the removal of certain barriers to employment, while the latter would facilitate and accelerate integration into the labour market for refugees and asylum seekers.

As with other EU countries, the public response to the massive recent inflow of asylum seekers has been mixed. There has been no clear-cut governmental position, signalling divided opinions in dealing with recent migration issues. Civil society organisations, NGOs and volunteers have lent extensive support to asylum seekers to facilitate their initial phase in the host country. As for citizens, after unemployment immigration is their second main concern and the immigration of people from outside of the EU evokes negative feelings. Austrians tend to be in favour of a common European policy on migration. They are mostly in favour of additional measures to combat the illegal immigration of people from outside the EU, but they are divided as concerns the suggestion that immigration might yield major benefits to the country.

2.2 Inventory of REFMISMES

2.2.1 REFMISMES adopted in 2015

In September 2015 the Austrian government announced additional funding (€145 million) for the integration of asylum seekers and refugees. A budget of €75 million has been allocated for the newly created Pot for integration and €70 million were dedicated for active labour-market policy measures. Two months later, in November 2015, the Minister of Foreign Affairs presented A Plan for the Integration of Persons entitled to Asylum or Subsidiary Protection in Austria (50 Action Points) which was elaborated in cooperation with the Expert Council for Integration. Government measures include the integration of asylum seekers. Regarding the labour-market integration of recognised refugees and persons with subsidiary protection status, there is some overlap between the two documents. Overall, the focus on labour-market activities will mean: better and faster recognition of education and qualifications acquired in the sending countries; the continuation of

competence checks that started in Vienna in 2015; self-employment of recognised refugees; integration support/qualification support for recognised refugees; intensification of already existing labour-market programmes; as well as a voluntary integration year for persons granted refugee status.

The funds provided for integration measures will be used, among other things, for: German courses; establishing mobile teams to support integration in schools; youth coaching and cultural orientation; but also for apprenticeships for asylum seekers.

Out of the approximately €70 million earmarked for active labour-market policies in 2016, the Public Employment Service (AMS) will use: slightly more than one third for German courses; 23 per cent for education and training; 18 per cent for competence checks; 14 per cent for employment subsidies (e.g. support for taking up employment); and 11 per cent for consulting and support (e.g. recognition of qualifications).

There are numerous ongoing projects related to the labour-market integration of refugees, partly financed through the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) (see Annex 1). Many of these are provided by NGOs such as Caritas, Diakonie and Volkshilfe and concentrate on the provision of German courses, coaching, counselling or labour-market access support. Apart from these well-known organisations there are also numerous smaller providers, as well as civil society initiatives and donation-funded activities offering integration programmes for refugees and, in rare cases, for asylum seekers.²⁰ In the following we shall refer to selected measures presented by the government in more detail and to related perceptions by stakeholders (indicated in bold print).

German Courses

German courses – offered for recognised refugees and persons under subsidiary protection – are the most important AMS measure both in terms of planned participants and funds involved. As for asylum seekers, the responsible authorities (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Austrian Integration Fund, Länder), which will also, it must be remembered, bear the costs, still have to be determined. But language courses should be started as soon as possible after entering Austria. Recognised refugees and persons under subsidiary protection fall under the responsibility of the Public Employment Service (AMS) and it is planned that about 22,400 persons will participate in these courses.

- Key to labour-market integration, available funds will very likely not be sufficient for this year

Competence Checks by the Public Employment Service (AMS)

Competence checks of migrants will be extended nationwide, but will probably be less intense than in the pilot project carried out by the Vienna branch of the Public Employment Service (AMS) in 2015. Competence checks should become standardised across the country. In 2016 about 13,500 persons will, it is envisaged, participate in competence checks.

- A very useful measure, providing comprehensive information about the target groups with a focus on women

Better and faster recognition of education and skills acquired in the home countries

In order to accelerate labour–market entry, the recognition of qualifications plays a central role in addition to the command of German. The government is currently working on a draft law for the recognition of qualifications so that they can be put to use as soon as possible.

¹⁹ For example the Styrian branch of Caritas organised donation-funded German language courses for asylum seekers who started or have completed studies in their home countries, in order to facilitate their access to university in Austria.

- Apart from German courses this is an important contribution for faster entrance into the labour market

Voluntary Integration Year

Starting in 2016, there is the possibility of a voluntary integration year (freiwilliges Integrationsjahr – FIJ), comparable to the voluntary social year, for persons who have been granted refugee status or subsidiary protection status, who have been in this status for not longer than two years and who are beneficiaries of the needs-based minimum income. The FIJ is similar to job training and may last between six and twelve months; apart from a non-profit activity (gemeinnützige Tätigkeit) in a recognised organisation, it also envisages training and integration measures. Recognised organisers are those employing civilian servants or offering jobs for the voluntary social year. This measure will start, at the earliest, in April 2016.

- Good instance of on job training and transition to work, but relatively low number of participants

Nationwide Apprenticeship Placement

The Chamber of Commerce, the Ministry of Science, Research and Economy, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection and the Public Employment Service started a pilot project in Vienna to offer young recognised refugees an apprenticeship in occupations and regions suffering from a lack of apprentices. In preparation, the competencies and interests of the young were tested (in German, Arabic, English, French and later on also in Farsi) in order to grant an optimal matching with the vacant apprenticeship posts. Those enrolled will be prepared for the apprenticeship accordingly and will be supported during their apprenticeship by a coach/fixed contact person with regard to professional and private questions. The apprenticeship coach also prepares the involved company for the apprenticeship with the young refugees. In its initial phase, this pilot project will comprise about 100 young recognised refugees, with a focus on unaccompanied minors. Currently there are 5,335 young refugees registered at the Public Employment Service, two thirds of whom are in Vienna. Later on the project could be extended to young asylum seekers as well.

- May help to reduce the current mismatch on the apprenticeship market, uncertainty as to whether the potential candidates are willing to move within the country

Self-employment of recognised refugees

Start-up programmes are another employment option for recognised refugees. Given the required qualifications/skills, which will be tested during the competence checks, refugees may make use of a start-up consultancy provided by consultancy companies which cooperate with the Public Employment Service. There is, also, the possibility of acquiring the skills needed, the costs of which will be borne by the AMS. Under certain conditions, financial protection is granted during participation in the programme. In order to finance the necessary investments and working capital, persons granted asylum are also entitled to participate in the microcredit programme as a supplementary form of support. Pilot projects are currently being prepared in Vienna.

- Many legal obstacles and little knowledge about business culture. Currently there are only individual cases, but this might be interesting for a longer-term perspective

Mentoring for migrants

As with existing mentoring programmes – by the Austrian Chamber of Commerce (Wirtschaftskammer Österreichs, WKO), the Austrian Integration Fund (Österreichischer Integrationsfonds, ÖIF) and the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS) – recognised refugees who are not yet able to provide evidence of formal qualifications but who demonstrate huge integration efforts (for instance by acquiring very good German-language skills within a short time, doing volunteer work etc.) should be given the opportunity to benefit from intensive support by mentors from the business sector. Though refugees were already able to participate in

the programme in the past, this year's focus is on recognised refugees from Syria with qualifications. Out of the nineteen refugees participating in the current round in Lower Austria and Vienna, thirteen are from Syria. The migrant mentoring programme started in 2008.

- Very effective due to individual support, but relatively small in numbers

Courses in Austrian values and culture

Compulsory one-day training courses in Austrian values and culture for recently recognised refugees and persons under subsidiary protection entitled to receiving needs-based minimum income and AMS support. In case of non-participation, the minimum income will be cut accordingly.

2.3 Conclusions and recommendations

The labour-market integration of refugees has recently become an increasingly important topic. This is very much reflected in the funding made available for the integration of recognised refugees and persons under subsidiary protection. The amount spent by the Public Employment Service (AMS) on labour-market integration measures for this target group increased from €43 million in 2014 to some €70 million in 2016. Asylum seekers are excluded from this funding, but those with a high probability of admission (e.g. from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq) will be likely entitled to receive support for language courses, in particular from other sources (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Austrian Integration Fund, provinces).

The lack of refugee-related data is the main obstacle to evaluating past and recent measures aimed at the labour-market integration of refugees (UNHCR, 2013). Therefore, the perceptions of the actors (ministries, AMS, NGOs, employers' organisations, experts) were considered for an assessment.

Overall, stakeholders believe that German language skills are of utmost importance for further qualification, which is reflected in all programmes announced by the government, in stakeholders' position papers, surveys among companies and in expert statements. But there is also a sense that it is necessary to continue with qualifications and other measures immediately after language training, otherwise the newly acquired skills would be lost. Also, a fast recognition of previously acquired qualifications is seen as an important element in labour-market integration. In addition, it was mentioned that integration projects need realistic objectives that the cooperation between service providers should be improved and the support of civil-society activities maintained. The Public Employment Service (AMS), responsible for the labour-market policy of the federal state, emphasises that recognised refugees and persons under subsidiary protection should not be driven into the (anyway crowded) low-skilled labour market just because of their poor German language skills; rather, efforts should be made to taken their earlier professional careers and educational attainment and their actual competencies into account.

Competence checks by the Public Employment Service are viewed as relevant as they allow for the categorisation of refugees' qualifications and thus provide information where to continue with further training/qualification measures. A nationwide extension of competence checks is, as announced, preferable.

The voluntary integration year is considered by experts as a good example for the transition to work as young refugees can gain an insight into labour–market functioning.

Stakeholders and also the IMF (2006) call for more effective labour-market access for asylum seekers in Austria by removing the current restrictions, granting access to all economic sectors and shortening the time limits on entering the labour market. Employers suggest permitting labour-market entry six months after the submission of the asylum application; for persons with a high probability of recognition it could even be cut to three months.

Experts suggest elaborating an international information strategy; this way, potential asylum seekers will be informed in their home countries about reception conditions in the receiving countries. Also, an EU-level platform would be helpful for exchanging information on labour-market integration measures in individual Member States.

Finally, successful labour-market integration will depend, very greatly, on the willingness of enterprises to employ refugees. A recent survey among Austrian companies gives space for cautious optimism on this count (Box 2.3).

Box 2.3 Company Survey on the employment of refugees and asylum seekers

According to the latest Ernst & Young survey (Mittelstandsbarometer Österreich) carried out among 900 companies in December 2015, the majority of Austria's large and medium-sized enterprises would be ready to employ refugees, even if those do not have recognised refugee status. About 75 per cent of the respondents would, in principle, be ready to employ refugees; in industrial enterprises (those with a turnover of more than €100 million) this share is some 85 per cent. In smaller companies the approval rate is lower. The major obstacles to employing refugees, as mentioned by most of the surveyed companies, are related to: a lack of German-language skills; the unclear legal situation during the asylum procedure; high administrative costs; a lack of qualifications/skills; and the risk of deportation. In order to find skilled personnel, companies suggest that refugees should undergo a 'talent check'. Despite their willingness to employ refugees, about 30 per cent of all companies surveyed believe that the increased inflow of refugees will have a negative impact on the Austrian economy.

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2.5 List of contacted institutions and experts

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3 Case Study Denmark

Rebecca Wolffberg

3.1 Background

3.1.1 Profile of recent refugee flows

Since 2005 there has been a steady increase in asylum seekers arriving in Denmark, with a single decrease in 2011, and a notable rise from 2014. Between 2005-2008 the number remained below 3,000, and 2009-2011 they were well or just below 6,000. 2012 is the first year where the number exceeded 6,000, and in 2014 the number spiked dramatically reaching almost 15,000. While Syrian asylum seekers currently make up the largest share of those coming to Denmark, the pattern of asylum seekers has changed over the last six months, so that Syrian asylum seekers currently make up about a third of arrivals, whereas Afghan asylum seekers have increased substantially, from 57 in August 2015 to 691 in December 2015 (Kasper Kildegaard Sørensen and Sanni Jensen: 2016).

In terms of gender, the general trend across nationalities is that there is a significant majority of male applicants, particularly 15-39, peaking at 25-29 years old. The only age group in which females match males is from 0-9 years. This is also the case for Syrian asylum seekers specifically, with the peak among males, however, being between 25-34 years old. There is a slight tendency for there to be a lower ratio of female asylum seekers from Syria vs. male applicants, though the age dispersion remains fairly similar (Udlændingestyrelsen: 2015).

An overview of the data of recent arrivals of asylum seekers, and the rate of applications recognition is presented in table 3.1.

As for the characteristics of those refugees, data for the first half of 2015 indicate that, in terms of level of qualifications from country of origins: 40 per cent have no schooling or very low level of schooling; or they are illiterate in the Latin alphabet. 50 per cent have just some schooling. 10 per cent have middle-or long term school and an educational background, this is also true of Syrian refugees; (Udlændinge-, Integrations- og Boligudministeriet: September 2015). In terms of levels and patterns of current employment in 2014, among 25-64 years old refugees who have been part of the refugee integration program, 29 per cent were employed after three years in Denmark. The number was 52 per cent among people who had come to Denmark for family reunification.

The projection for 2016 is that Denmark will be admitting 17,000 refugees who will be relocated to a municipality in 2016, and to this must be added family reunifications (KL:2016).

Table 3.1 Snapshot of Dynamics and Composition of Refugee Flows

Category		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 ^{21, 22, 23}
Asylum seekers total numbers. ^{24, 25}	Total:	5115	3806	6184	7557	14792	21,225
	Unaccompanied minors:	432	282	355	354	818	1700
	Percentage of recognitions of applications from <i>all</i> nationalities:	38%	33%	46%	55%	74%	
	Permits to stay granted (including all asylum seekers)	2124	2249	2583	3.889	6104	10,856
Country of origin of asylum seekers – largest groups (over 80% of total of asylum seekers)	Afghanistan:	1512	906	577	426	313	1614
	Unaccompanied minors:	313	169	114	62	61	591
	Percentage of recognitions:	41%	26%	26%	42%	37%	
	Permits to stay granted	573	536	294	361	167	
	Eritrea:	27	20	57	98	2285	1703
	Unaccompanied minors:	5	0	2	10	188	166
	Percentage of recognitions:	61%	47%	70%	86%	96%	
	Permits to stay granted	16	39	23	79	220	
	Russia:	358	300	525	982	522	175
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	Percentage of recognitions:	65%	45%	55%	47%	27%	
	Permits to stay granted	121	121	149	258	122	
	Somalia:	114	113	919	965	683	234
	Unaccompanied minors:	11	8	44	49	57	34
	Percentage of recognitions:	32%	22%	93%	58%	54%	
	Permits to stay granted	35	18	337	448	397	
	Syria:	832	429	822	1710	7087	7779
	Unaccompanied minors:	17	4	14	45	248	504
	Percentage of recognitions:	58%	64%	89%	96%	97%	
	Permits to stay granted	409	460	753	7382	4126	
	Stateless:	117	123	200	425	1362	1447
	Unaccompanied minors:	10	11	5	13	76	95
	Percentage of recognitions:	13%	53%	51%	76%	89%	
Permits to stay granted	12	237	249	413	571		

3.2 Legal Framework and policy approach ²⁶

3.2.1 Asylum Seekers

Asylum seekers over eighteen can seek a permit to work (defined as any ordinary work, full time or part time, paid or unpaid, without public subsidy) until their case is determined (approved or rejected stay) provided the following conditions, among others, are met: six months must have passed from the time of application for asylum; the Danish Immigration Service must decide for the asylum seekers case to be tried in Denmark; the Danish Immigration Service must approve the labour conditions; asylum seekers must, as part of the contract, assist the Danish Immigration Service in the treatment of their case; the work also has to match the normal conditions of the Danish labour market and conditions for other employees. No “self-employment” is allowed, and certain requirements exist regarding criminal records and the treatment of the asylum case (www.nyidanmark.dk: January 25, 2016).

²⁰ Total number of asylum seekers Jan. – Nov. 2015. By the end of 2015, the total number was above 21,000.

²¹ Unaccompanied minors in 2015 from Jan. – Nov. 30th.

²² For 2015, permits to stay granted Jan. – Sept..

²³ Udlændingestyrelsen:2015.

²⁴ Only registered asylum seekers, not applications based on other rules (e.g. humanitarian stays).

²⁶ For most of the legal framework, exemptions can be made on the grounds of specific conditions regarding the asylum seeker/refugee.

If employed, the asylum seeker only has to take part in the activation activities (which include certain REFMISMES), in so far as they do not interfere with his or her work. Asylum seekers, whose case will be determined in Denmark, can, in addition, seek unpaid internships, or unpaid humanitarian/voluntary work (www.nyidanmark.dk: 25 January, 2016). Additionally, an asylum seeker who is offered a job on the so-called “positive list”²⁷ can seek permanent residence on this basis, and asylum seekers who are offered a highly-paid job can apply for permanent residence following “Beløbsordningen”²⁸, or “the amount scheme”. As regards asylum seekers under eighteen, the Danish Immigration Service makes a case-by-case evaluation as to whether they are allowed to work. Provided the aforementioned conditions are also fulfilled, this is determined by, among other things, the age and maturity of the asylum seeker, and whether the Danish Immigration Service finds it in the best interests of the minor that he or she should work.

In the period between the introduction of the previous law in 2012 and 17 January 2016, 73 jobs were approved by the authorities, 52 of which were for asylum seekers whose case was still being decided by the authorities, and 21 approvals of cases in which the asylum seekers had had their application for asylum rejected (Danish Parliament: 17 January 2016).

Newly-arrived asylum seekers must participate in a course in the asylum centre, in which, among other things, they receive language training and are informed about the Danish labour market and the educational system. Asylum seekers who are eighteen or older must participate in education aimed at maintaining and expanding the general and professional qualifications of the asylum seeker (seventeen year olds can choose to participate). Should it be determined that the asylum seeker will have his/her case handled in Denmark then the applicant will receive courses, among other things language courses (i.e. Danish, English or mother tongue). Applicants whose cases will be determined in Denmark can, in addition, seek unpaid internships (external activation), or unpaid humanitarian/voluntary work. When asylum seekers are granted asylum, they will receive intensive Danish language courses until they are transferred to the municipality they will be housed in. In addition, an asylum seeker, who is part of a youth education program, can participate in paid or unpaid internships.

3.2.2 Refugees

A recent significant change in conditions for refugees was introduced by the current government’s new law regarding conditions for asylum seekers and refugees. Adopted in the fall of 2015 and expanded in the so-called “Asylum Package” adopted on 26 January 2016, the amount of benefits, the refugees receive monthly from the government, was substantially decreased. The stated goal of the government with this change was to encourage the refugees’ efforts to seek employment (or not to seek to come to Denmark in the first place) (Kasper Kaasgaard: 2015).

The overall political responsibility for refugee integration currently lies with the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing. After an initial three year “period of integration”, responsibility for employment is passed to the Ministry of Employment. Legal responsibility for activities, including refugees in the labour market, lies with the municipalities. As soon as asylum seekers are granted asylum, they are transferred to the municipality in which they will be housed (the integration law). Municipalities are responsible for refugee integration, including refugee participation in education or employment. Several organizations, such as the Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council, cooperate with the municipalities to organize activities aimed at assisting refugees’ entrance into society and the labour market. Additionally, private companies and organizations, working as intermediaries between the municipality and employers, are part of the efforts to integrate refugees into the Danish labour force.

²⁷ Positive list: Jobs in which the Danish labour market lacks workers, and which, therefore, gives asylum seekers working in these jobs easier access to permanent residence.

²⁸ Beløbsordningen: Highly paid jobs which grant easier access to permanent residence as the immigrant/asylum seeker would be able to support themselves.

The municipality must offer refugees, eighteen and older, an "integration program", consisting of activities aimed at facilitating integration, including Danish language courses and other activities to help refugees obtain employment ("employment oriented activities"). Participation in this program is mandatory for refugees²⁹ and the program is adjusted to meet the specific needs of each individual refugee. The precise nature of the program is determined in an "integration contract" signed by the refugee and the municipality, which also includes several REFISMES elements. The integration contract determines to what extent the refugee should be offered Danish language courses and employment oriented activities. The integration contract is based, among other things, on an evaluation of the refugee's situation and needs, with the purpose of getting the refugee into active employment as quickly as possible. This includes an evaluation of the refugee's skills, preconditions and the needs of the labour market. If employment is not realistic, then the integration contract is specified to ensure that the refugee's chances of joining the labour-market later on are improved. The contract also lists which sanctions should be invoked if the refugee breaches the contract. If the refugee and the municipality cannot agree on the content of the contract, it is the prerogative of the municipality to decide what will appear in the document. The integration program is to begin no later than one month after the municipality takes over the responsibility for the refugee from the asylum centre. The integration program lasts up to three years, though the Danish language courses can last up to five years. The integration contract is subject to updates and renegotiation if the situation of the refugee changes or the conditions of the refugee turns out to require it. The authorities will, until the goals of the contract are fulfilled, follow up on the contract, every three months or less, to see if the contract is being respected by the refugee and the authorities, and whether the contract should be adapted.

Refugees between the ages of 18-25 must propose one or more relevant education programs, which they believe they could undertake, provided certain conditions are met including, among other things, that the refugees do not have a professional education and that they can undertake education under normal conditions. Enrolling in this kind of a program will provide the refugee with a regular income in the form of a government study subsidy, just as Danish citizens receive study subsidies. Unaccompanied minors can also be offered an integration program.

3.3 Bibliographical review ³⁰

Though the data regarding recent developments for refugees and asylum seekers is scarce, some reports have been produced which analyse the labour-market integration of refugees and make certain recommendations regarding initiatives. Additionally, certain databases providing statistics and comparative data on the subject have been set up. Among these are the following:

- "Forklarende analyse af ikke-vestlige indvandreres arbejdsmarkedstilknytning" ("Explanatory analysis of non-Western immigrants' integration into the labor market"), by KORA, the Danish Institute for Local and Regional Government Research, brought out in December 2012. The report finds, among other things, that Danish language qualifications make a difference for immigrants with little labor-market experience, just as higher education levels have a positive impact on employment levels.
- "Effekter af beskæftigelses- og uddannelsesrettede indsatser for ikke-vestlige ledige indvandrere. En oversigt over danske og internationale kvantitative studier" ("Effects of employment- and education-oriented efforts for non-Western unemployed immigrants. An overview of Danish and international quantitative studies"), of KORA, December 2013. In the report, results of Danish and international studies on integration efforts for non-Western unemployed immigrants are analyzed and compared:

²⁹ Unless specific exceptions apply.

³⁰ The division of responsibility for the tasks related to integration of refugees changed, in connection with the recent change in the Danish government in 2015. This, along with several plans to change conditions for the refugees by the government through new legislation, made the provision of information and expertise by the authorities more difficult, as the civil servants are only now getting familiar with new areas of responsibility.

the basis for this are nineteen studies from OECD countries, seven of which are Danish, all of which were published since 1994. Based primarily on data from Denmark, the report finds that there are strong indications that subsidized employment in the private sector has a significant positive effect on employment. Conversely, the effect of similar initiatives on public-sector jobs has a lower effect in employment terms. The report further finds that, in both Danish and international studies, the effect of guidance and upgrading immigrant qualifications is inconclusive. In terms, instead, of language training and “activation” of newly-arrived immigrants in the labour-market, the data is still too limited to provide much insight. A Swedish experiment, however, suggests that well-coordinated language training and “activation” activities and intensified guidance combined would seem to have a positive effect.

- “Benchmarking af kommunernes integrationsindsats på beskæftigelsesområdet” (“Benchmarking of the municipalities’ integration efforts in the area of employment”), by KORA of April 2014, a report which seeks to create a benchmarking system to evaluate the effect of different REFISMES for employment across the municipalities. The report defines successful integration in the area of employment as unemployed non-Western immigrants entering employment or education within three years, and takes into account, among other things, country of origins, employment rate in the municipalities, and education from the country of origin. The analysis includes the years up to 2011, and finds that there are significant differences between the municipalities. Generally, it is found that education from the country of origins has a positive effect on chances of employment, and high local levels of unemployment is found to pose a challenge to the likelihood of achieving employment. It is also suggested that more time spent in Denmark yields more possibilities of establishing networks, while the financial crisis is considered to have had a negative impact on employment chances. However, the report does not take into consideration the substantial increases of refugees in recent years.
- The Ministry of Employment published the report “Alle skal bidrage – flygtninge og indvandrere hurtigere i beskæftigelse” (“Everyone must contribute – employing refugees and immigrants more quickly”), March 2015, addressing how the government intends to increase the integration of refugees and immigrants in the labour-market, among other things by making better use of the qualifications possessed by refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants arriving in Denmark. The report emphasizes the importance (and obligation of refugees taking advantage of) employment oriented activities such as internships, subsidized employment and other kinds of organized inclusion in the workforce. The report also emphasizes the importance of determining refugees’ qualifications and including these in the process of relevant employment options, and the importance of helping municipalities be more effective in integrating refugees.
- In December 2015 the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing published, among other things, a statistical overview: “Tal på udlændingeområdet pr. 30.11.2015” (“Figures on the area of immigration”) and, in November of the same year, a report: “Integration: status og udvikling 2015” (“Integration: Status and Development 2015”). In the report, key figures are presented regarding immigrants and the children of immigrants in Denmark in four key areas –population numbers (including ages and origins), current educations undertaken, highest education obtained and employment. Among other things, the report shows that employment levels dropped between 2009 and 2011, with the biggest drop (around 6 per cent) occurring among men of non-Western origins. The drop was smaller among women. The employment rate had remained fairly stable from 2011-2014, though women have seen a slight decrease. Compared to Danish citizens, the report also finds that the employment gap of immigrants and children of immigrants with non-Western origins aged 25-64 has increased slightly, from 24.2 per cent in 2009 to the current 27.3 per cent. The Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing furthermore has set up a website, the National Integration Barometer, www.integrationsbarometer.dk, based on statistical data from the Government, intended to provide statistics on migrant integration in general and across variables such as employment and education, as well as enabling comparisons on developments in the areas with the goals set by the government.

- The Danish Immigration Service, the Red Cross, Local Government Denmark³¹ and the Ministry for Integration and Housing made the website: www.dengodemodtagelse.dk, (“The good reception”), which is intended to guide the actors involved in the integration of refugees and asylum seekers, including those in the labour-market, and to encourage best practices among municipalities on experiences with different REFMISMES across the country.
- The Danish Agency for Labour Market and Recruitment has a website for statistics about the labor market, including statistics about asylum seekers, refugees and the employment efforts: www.jobindsats.dk. The data is pooled from various sources such as the municipal and government bodies, as well as from the Danish Statistical Agency

3.4 Inventory of REFMISMES³²

The various REFMISMES – counselling about needs and the possibilities of refugee to enable successful entry into the labour market, training, education and general upgrading of qualifications, active participation in internships and subsidized salary employment – are organized and carried out by different levels of authorities and different non-governmental actors.

3.4.1 Government level

The goal of the government is to have all refugees of working age either active in education or in employment as quickly as possible. As the government pays subsidies to unemployed refugees, it is financially important for the government to activate refugees. Several of the REFMISMES are initiatives that are also used for unemployed Danish citizens, where a significant effort is made to get unemployed citizens to work. Many are commonly referred to as “activation” initiatives. In September 2015, the new government organized a conference with representatives from the private sector, voluntary organizations, educational institutions and others to discuss how to improve refugee integration into Danish society including the labour-market, with an emphasis, among other things, on how to make sure that more employers in the private sector hire refugees, either in short-term integration programs or regular employment (Statsministeriet:2015). Furthermore, in 2015, the new government introduced benefit cuts for refugees with the dual purpose of deterring immigration and encouraging refugees to find employment quickly (Beskæftigelsesministeriet: July 1, 2015).

Recognition of (non-)regulated fields of employment and education

The government is also responsible for the REFMISMES “recognition of skills and qualifications” in terms of evaluating and recognizing refugees’ qualifications and diplomas. The Danish Agency for Higher Education, a government body under the Ministry of Education, evaluates immigrants’ education, including refugees, often from applications by the immigrants themselves, but municipalities and employers can also ask for such evaluations. For certain regulated employment, other government agencies are responsible. There is also an online database, in which it is possible to search for particular foreign education types and match them to the Danish system, and the agency can also provide other forms of information and guidance in this regard.

The average time of evaluation for regular evaluations – not only for refugees – was, in 2014, 32 days. As the government finds that the earlier a skills evaluation is made the more effectively it can be included in integration efforts, the agency has sought to spread awareness among municipalities and other actors, such as job centres, language schools etc. about the potential for having migrants’ diplomas evaluated for a Danish context. As regards regulated fields of employment the processing takes less than three months in nine out of ten cases (Uddannelses- og Forskningsministeriet:2015). The increased influx of Syrian refugees has

³¹ The interest group and member authority of Danish municipalities.

³² All these rules are general, and are subject to exceptions when specific cases call for it.

led to an increase in the number of applications for evaluations of both regulated and non-regulated employment and education. Though the proportion of these cases that regard Syrian refugees remain is limited, the number has risen substantially. Indeed, in September 2015, the agency published a document on its website with an overview and explanation of the Syrian educational system, to facilitate other actors' own evaluations (Styrelsen for Videregående Uddannelser: September 2015).

3.4.2 Municipality level

Responsibility for the coordination of the implementation of REFMISMES lies with the municipalities. The municipalities, in cooperation with certain organizations, public-sector employers and local businesses, can offer activities from all the REFMISMES categories. However, as will be elaborated below, in practice, several factors make it difficult to activate refugees in employment projects. The municipalities have some discretion in terms of how they run the integration programs and which specific offers they will make to refugees, but it should contain both language courses and employment-oriented activities (in addition to other integration facilitating measures), unless it is deemed to be unlikely to have a positive effect.

When part of an integration program, the municipality shall make sure that the refugees are offered REFMISMES to help introduce and integrate them into the Danish labour-market (The Integration Law). This can take the form of: 1) guidance and training to strengthen their qualifications, including employment specific qualifications; 2) internships in companies; or 3) short-term subsidized salaried employment. These subsidized options will typically be less well paid than they would be if they were obtained under "normal circumstances", i.e. with the employer paying the salary without government subsidies. It is also possible for the municipality to cover expenses "that are deemed reasonable" in connection with the integration program if the refugee or the refugee's spouse cannot pay the expense: for example, transport, tools and specific clothes for a specific job or work place adaption, expensive education materials, and certain education requirements that need payment, if this is necessary for the refugee to obtain or maintain the employment.

In as much as this is possible, the offers should be made within fields where there is a need for employment and they should be based on the wishes and preconditions of the refugee, with the goal that the refugee may as quickly as possible get lasting employment and can provide for him/herself (fully or partially). The municipality can, however, refrain from offering these options if it decides that the offers would not have the desired positive effect on the employment options of the immigrant. The refugee can also be helped to integrate into society through voluntary work, which can help create a network with a view to future employment (www.dengodemodtagelse.dk).

Refugees can also participate in start-up activities. In a recent report by Local Government Denmark (KL: 2016) the municipality of Vejle, for instance, describes how they, since 2005, have had an "ethnic entrepreneurial consultant", who has specialized in counseling non-Danish entrepreneurs about how to establish their own business. The language centres or the municipality can refer refugees who show an interest in starting their own businesses to the consultants who will help the refugee (or other immigrants) to develop a business plan. This might potentially involve an internship. There will also be an attempt to spread out different kinds of business geographically so that not too many of the same type compete in the same area. The report notes that many refugees were self-employed in their country of origin, and wish to continue to be in Denmark (KL:2016).

3.4.3 Private companies

In terms of REFMISMES, private companies can help integrate refugees by taking them on in internships or through temporary periods of subsidized salaried employment. As the government subsidizes the salary of the refugee, it is financially profitable for the company to hire the refugee, and for the refugee it provides the chance for them to improve their qualifications. As regards refugee qualifications, private companies can also be active in terms of the clarification of qualifications of refugees, e.g. through internships.

A company can also make a partnership agreement about a recruitment process in the form of an internship, temporary subsidized employment, and in this context the company can initiate guidance, training for the upgrading of refugee qualifications and mentor processes. A mentor process can also be sponsored by the municipality, for instance in cooperation with intermediary organizations as described below.

An example of a successful REFISMES that targets employment, notably in the private sector, is the concept of “Branchepakker”, usually translated as “industry packages”. The initiative is spreading through a growing number of municipalities and is recommended by Local Government Denmark. The measure builds on a five module structure: 1) an introductory course where the refugee is introduced to the different industries included in the program and chooses their field of interest; 2) a short-term internship in businesses within the selected industry to test whether it is a good match; 3) the first longer stay of the refugee in the business in which basic competences are developed, including vocational, linguistic and personal competences; 4) the second business stay in which more general competences within the industry, are supplemented with courses specific to the labour-market area; 5) the third business stay in which the learned competences are sustained, and the refugee is placed strategically in the geographical area and specific part of the industry in which there are a higher number of job openings (KL:2016, LG Insight:2015).

Refugees can also have internships and undertake government subsidized employment in the public sector.

3.4.4 Non-governmental organizations

To bring about the connection between the authorities responsible for the integration of the refugees – the housing municipality – and the employers, non-governmental organizations can take become facilitators. Municipalities can, for instance, refer refugees to these organizations, which may have partnerships with companies or which may be able to recruit actors in the labour market who would be interested in either mentoring or having a refugee work for them in an internship or subsidized employment. Alternatively, they can help provide the necessary courses for refugees to manoeuvre in the Danish labour market. The New Dane Associated, mentioned in annex 1, for instance, has the goal of first, establishing the connection between refugees and employers or mentors, in order to: a) increase the refugees’ network and knowledge and understanding of the Danish labour market; b) increase their specific competences through training or temporary employment, and in the longer run, though not as a primary success criteria; c) increase the likelihood of the refugee achieving permanent employment. The association Restart, for instance, has a specific program directed at women, offering special classes for women on how to adapt to work places with male colleagues or with a different work culture than they are used to.

3.4.5 Voluntary organizations

Voluntary organizations can play several roles. They can, among other things, provide counselling, mentorship, guidance and language training. For instance, Red Cross and the Danish Refugees Council have created the “Let’s Network” program, for young refugees under 25, in which local volunteers can, among other things, offer language training, help with homework and mentor programs.

3.5 Conclusions - Potential obstacles, success factors and good practices

3.5.1 Obstacles

Integrating asylum seekers into the labour market has been a challenge for all parties involved. From May 2013 to November 2014 only 39 permits for employment were approved by the Danish Immigration Service. Several factors can make it difficult to integrate asylum seekers into the labour market. It has been noted that, for the employer, it can be an obstacle that takes several weeks, to have the application for a work permit approved by the Danish Immigration Service and that the salary has to be paid in cash after subtracting

taxes. The Red Cross has, for instance, recommended that the flexibility of the case processing be improved, and also that the information given to the asylum seekers about options for seeking employment be upgraded (TV2, March 5 2015).

As regards the integration of refugees (and “non-Western” immigrants in general) into the labour market, significant problems have emerged. A majority remain in the three-year “integration program” for the full three-years, yet have no employment at the end of the period. Only around three out of ten refugees provide for themselves at the end of the three-year period. Challenges can be pointed out as regards different aspects of the process including, among others, the following:

It can sometimes be a challenge to ensure that participants show up to the language courses (Agenda: January 25, 2015). Activating women can be difficult, and so initiatives have been launched to increase female labour-market participation. According to a report from KORA (Andersen: 2012), the employment frequency of female immigrants (not only of refugees) from non-Western countries is particularly low, especially for women from Somalia, Afghanistan, Turkey and Iraq. The report states that among “female refugees and non-Western women” make up the largest group of unemployed in “match groups 4 and 5” (severely restricted or completely lacking abilities to enter into the workforce) in many municipalities and 60-70 per cent of the women in this group are not interested in seeking employment. This group also lacks relevant employment competences. The report recommends particular efforts to activate this group of women.

As regards the governmental organization of the distribution and activation of the refugees, a discrepancy has been identified in the municipalities’ success rate in terms of refugee integration. It has been suggested that a significant factor here is that refugee housing does not take sufficiently into consideration what skills the refugees possess, and to what extent these skills match the need of the companies etc. in the area where they are billeted (Karsten Østergaard Nielsen, June 5, 2015).

While internships and short-term subsidized employment can be considered to be successful REFISMES, they do not necessarily lead to permanent employment. Some municipalities have been better at ensuring that the placement of refugees in e.g. internships will lead to employment at the end of the internship phase than others (Jyllandsposten, February 13, 2016). Some municipalities have been less successful in following up on, and pushing for a more effective implementation of the integration program: so that refugees do not remain in the process for the full three years, but are more quickly put into some form of work, be it normal employment or government sponsored jobs (internship or salary-subsidized employment) (Emil Ryttergaard, September 10, 2015). Increasing the efforts to facilitate refugees’ contact with employers and make use of the offers which the state provides have been suggested as an area where credible improvements can be made (Jyllandsposten, February 13, 2016).

In terms of bureaucratic barriers, the ability to operate the online “unemployment system” has been pointed to as an unnecessary obstacle for refugees in search of work. A requirement to enter into the labour market, for Danish citizens as well as immigrants, is that they use the online system, which can be highly challenging for non-natives (Søren Peder Sørensen, February 8, 2016). The removal of bureaucratic barriers such as this at municipal level has been championed as a way to improve integration by, among others, the Confederation of Danish Employers, by Local Government Denmark and by politicians.

In order to take advantage of state-funded offers for labour-market activation (e.g. internships, periods of salary-subsidized employment), a refugee must be declared ready to work. A significant problem that is being discussed now is that only 3 per cent of refugees are declared “ready to work” by the municipalities, and that a significant portion of refugees are declared unable to work for inaccurate reasons. For instance, in 2015, 97 per cent of those receiving benefits while in the integration program were declared “ready for activities” (courses, Danish lessons, other integration measures), while only 3 per cent were declared “ready for work”. In January 2016, the Prime Minister pointed out that there should be a greater effort made at including refugees who have not yet learned to speak Danish, into employment that does not require native-speaking

abilities. He noted that often the language requirements are too high before refugees are declared “ready to enter the work force” and make use of the activation option.

The government made the question of refugee integration in the labour market a central feature of the three-part negotiations (employers, workers, and the state) that began in February 2016. Along with aforementioned potential areas of initiatives, changes to the financial support for refugees and municipalities is part of this effort. The decrease in subsidies that refugees receive from the government as of September 2015, which is often not enough for refugees to pay rent and support themselves, puts more pressure on refugees to find work. Additionally, the financial burden has been increased for municipalities that do not manage to quickly activate refugees (among other subsidy-recipients) in the labour market, making it financially more imperative for municipalities to find employment for the refugees within the first year of their arrival in the municipality.

3.5.2 Success factors and good practices

Although the data of the effects of the various REFISMES is still quite limited, and the actors involved in the integration process are hesitant to give numbers and conclusions about the effectiveness of their efforts, some conclusions as to what aides and what impedes integration appear to be emerging.

The following points are among the most significant for integration:

- 1) Learning Danish has a significant effect on the chances of getting employment (Arendt and Pozzoli:2013). Furthermore, it is a general feature for successful integration in Denmark. As such, and since networking is an essential aspect of finding employment in Denmark, speaking Danish is an essential competence in order to be able to network and to easily adapt to the Danish labour market without being problematic for the employer. This might be somewhat less essential if you speak English, though, naturally, this would depend on the kind of work.
- 2) A deliberate distribution of refugees with regard to housing municipalities which, to the extent possible, takes into account where in the country (geographically) the chances are greatest of matching the skills and employment interests of refugees with the needs of the labour market.
- 3) Subsidized short-term employment in the private sector seems to be the most effective REFISMES. There is strong evidence that short-term subsidized employment in the private sector has a significant positive effect on future employment, even if the person searches for fewer jobs while in employment. Reversely, similar programs in the public sector have a limited impact, as the effect after the end of the program is smaller, and people are likely to search for fewer jobs while in the public sector (Arendt and Pozzoli:2013).
- 4) A proactive approach by the responsible authorities (typically the municipalities) in terms of outreach and facilitating contact between refugees and the employers. Municipalities appear to have a positive effect when following closely up on the integration of individual refugee, ensuring that the REFISMES are followed up. This, for instance, implies that an internship or a subsidized employment are established with a view to leading to regular employment afterwards, or, if this is not possible at the outset of temporary employment, then it is important that, once the short term employment ends, efforts to follow up will be made so that the newly-acquired skills can be part of the search for regular employment. Among non-western immigrants, the greatest effect is found when REFISMES are combined, so that subsidized employment follows other efforts, such as language training (Jyllandsposten, February 13, 2016). Among these cases the most successful outcome is detected when subsidized employment in the private sector comes after a regular education (Arendt and Pozzoli:2013).
- 5) Activities directed towards actual inclusion in the labour market should take place as quickly as possible, since the more time people spend without being integrated, for instance only following courses in Danish

and courses oriented towards more “general” societal integration, the harder it will be for refugees to be get active employment. Some municipalities have been criticized for being too slow at integrating the refugees in actual work.

In order to boost the process of labour-market integration, the website “The good reception” has been made, in cooperation between the Danish Immigration Service, the Red Cross, Local Government Denmark and the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing, which gives examples of successful cases of the use of REFISMES, and suggests how the local authorities might best approach the issue.

There are programs focused on integrating women, more broadly targeted here than just the labour market, but the major sub-group to be targeted are the young, in efforts to promote their enrolment in education or their inclusion in the labour market.

In terms of mutual learning across Member States, several Danish REFISMES are specific to the Danish labour market. For instance, the concept that refugees and asylum seekers can receive benefits or subsidized salaries from the government when taking on internships or salaried subsidized employment follows the same basic rules as are used with unemployed Danish citizens. The concept allows for a more flexible approach from the employers’ side, and for the unemployed as well, so they can seek to establish their network and improve qualifications without the pressure of having to find work that pays for their immediate living costs. Furthermore, part of the new law L87 states that, in order to achieve permanent residence, the refugee must have had 2.5 years of employment, in which education does not count. The government’s argument is that this is done in order to encourage refugees seeking employment so that they can provide for themselves. Others argue that this encourages refugees to seek unskilled work, rather than an education to improve their chances of skilled labour (Danish Parliament, answer 60 to Committee).

Important lessons that could be shared in other countries might include the matching of refugees geographically to the areas of the host country, which has greater need for their specific skills/profile. Also, it seems that a strong coordinating role from central authorities, ensuring that there is continuity and guidance, and that the REFISMES will be followed up, makes a positive difference for the refugees in getting a foot in the door of the labour market.

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Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing

Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration (part of the Ministry of Immigration, Integration and Housing)

Ministry of Employment

Danish Immigration Service

Municipality of Copenhagen

Danish Refugee Council

Danish Red Cross

"Restart" organization (REFMISMES 5)

"Association New Dane" (REFMISMES 4 and 6)

"LG Insight" organization (REFMISMES 4)

4 Case Study France

Giulia Scalettaris

4.1 Background

4.1.1 Profile of recent refugee flows

After a peak of around 52,000 asylum applications in 2003, asylum requests fell reaching just 24,000 in 2007, only then to increase gradually again, reaching some 50,000 in 2013. In 2014, while other neighbouring countries like Germany and Italy registered a sharp increase in new asylum applications, France registered a slight decrease (around 45,000, i.e. -2 per cent compared to 2013) (OFPRA 2015). This trend is related, on the one hand, to the drop in asylum seekers from the former Yugoslavia and the former USSR countries that were recently declared safe countries of origin. On the other hand, it shows that France is not among the preferred destinations for some of the main national groups that have sought asylum in Europe in recent years like Syrians, Afghans, Iraqis and Eritreans. These prefer to head to Central and Northern Europe and are well represented in Calais' informal settlements, from where they try to cross into the United Kingdom.

After receiving important waves of refugees from Indochina and Southern Asia, in the 1990s France started receiving increasing numbers of asylum seekers from Africa (including from former colonies like Mali, Guinea, Chad and Algeria) as well as from Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Turkey. The origin of asylum seekers has continued diversifying in recent years: in 2014 the ten main national groups represented only 48 per cent of the total asylum applications (OFPRA 2015). In the period 2011/2014 the main countries of origin were the Democratic Republic of Congo (first nationality in 2013 and 2014), Russia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Albania and Kosovo (EMN 2014). In the past two years, the number of asylum seekers from Syria, Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan has increased significantly.

Since 2008 France has accepted some 100 refugees per year through resettlement. These are mainly families with children from Afghanistan (24 per cent), Somalia (18 per cent), DRC (16 per cent), Ethiopia (13 per cent) and Eritrea (9 per cent) (OFII 2015). In addition, since 2013 *ad hoc* humanitarian resettlement programs have targeted vulnerable Syrians (some 500 individuals selected in 2014), as well as Christians and Yazidis from Iraq (OFPRA 2015).

In the period 2011-2014, women represented some 36 per cent of applications and the average age was between 32 and 33 (EMN 2014). The number of unaccompanied children is particularly low compared to other EU countries: in 2014, only 273 unaccompanied children applied for asylum, out of some 8,000 to 10,000 present in the country (FTDA 2015). This is due to the fact that children are channelled into the system for the protection of children, rather than into the asylum system. Asylum seekers and refugees are highly concentrated geographically: in 2014, almost half of them were staying either in the Île-de-France (41 per cent) or in the Rhône-Alpes (8 per cent) regions (OFPRA 2015).

Since 1987, recognition rates have ranged between 15 per cent and 30 per cent (OFPRA 2015). In 2014, the recognition rate for new applications was around 21 per cent (OFPRA 2015). An average, then, of some 10,000 individuals are granted either refugee or subsidiary protection status every year. In 2014 according to the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (OFPRA), there were some 190,000 refugees³³ in France. In 2013 and 2014 the average length of the asylum procedure was around nine months (OFPRA 2015).

³³ Refugee status entitles the holder to a ten-year residence permit, while subsidiary protection status entails to a renewable one-year residence permit. As holders of refugee and subsidiary protection status have similar treatment in integration matters, in this report the term "refugees" will refer to both categories.

Preliminary data released by OFPRA (OFPRA 2016) show that in 2015, France registered an increase in asylum applications (+24 per cent), with some 70,000 new requests being presented. While significant, this rise remains less sharp than those registered in other European countries like Germany and Sweden. The countries of origin also changed in the last year, with Syrians being for the first time the second largest group (+64.2 per cent compared to 2014) after Sudan (+184 per cent)³⁴, followed by Kosovo, Haiti, RDC, Bangladesh, China, Albania and Iraq. In the very last months, Afghan applications are also increasing, almost surpassing Syrian applications in early 2016. The global recognition rate increased, reaching some 26 per cent, due mainly to the fact that almost all Syrians were granted protection. Syrian applications are also prioritized. For the year 2015 (January to September), the highest recognition rates were recorded for Iraqis (99 per cent) and Syrians (96 per cent), the lowest for applicants from Haiti (6 per cent), Bangladesh (9 per cent), Kosovo (11 per cent), Albania (12 per cent) and RDC (18 per cent) (AIDA 2015). France committed to take some 25,000 asylum seekers in the framework of the relocation program from hotspots decided in July by the European Council. For the moment only small numbers – mainly Syrians - have arrived through this channel.

People in need of protection in transit, as well as failed asylum seekers that remain on French territory are invisible to statistics. Several thousand people are estimated as staying in the “jungles” in Calais in early 2016. The comparison between rejection rates and the number of actual returns, as well as the shortage of alternative ways of regularization mean that a sizable population of failed asylum seekers lives irregularly on French territory.

4.1.2 Legal framework for access to the labour market

A reform of the asylum law was approved in July 2015. Concerning access to the labour market, no major changes were made, except bringing down, from twelve to nine months, the period before which asylum seekers can apply for a work permit.

Asylum seekers

In principle, asylum seekers are not entitled to work during the examination of their application in France. Access to the labour market is allowed only if OFPRA has not ruled on the asylum application within nine months after the registration of the application and only if this delay cannot be attributed to the applicant (Article L.744-11 of CESEDA). In this case, the asylum seeker is subject to the laws applicable to third-country national workers for the issuance of a temporary work permit. This is also the case where an appeal is brought before the National Court for Right to Asylum (CNDA), without any waiting period, and where the asylum seeker has obtained the renewal of his or her temporary residence permit.

The work permit has to be applied for at the Regional Direction for Companies, Competition, Consumption, Work and Employment (DIRECCTE), a Ministry of Labour institution. The work permit has the same validity as the asylum seeker’s temporary residence permit, which is renewable every three months. A work authorization only allows a salaried activity: self-employment is not possible under the law. In accordance with Article R341-4 of the Labour Code, to grant or deny a work permit the administration can undertake a ‘labour-market test’ taking into account the employment situation in the professional sector and geographical area concerned. According to the principle of “enforceability of the employment situation”, work authorization is issued to an asylum seeker only if there is no French or European citizen and no foreign national already holding a work authorization who can be employed. The denial of a work permit must be motivated with statistical data.

There are no official data on the applications for a work permit requested by and granted to asylum seekers. Interviews indicate that in practice, very few asylum seekers apply for a work permit. This is due first of all to the heavy requirements, including an offer of employment (*promesse d'embauche*). It is hard for an asylum seeker to find an employer willing to recruit him, when his/her residence permit is only valid for three months

³³ The sharp increase in the applications presented by Sudanese nationals is partly due to OFPRA’s mission in Calais (OFPRA 2015).

and states that the holder is not authorized to work. The fact that the duration of the work permit cannot exceed the duration of the residence permit entails additional administrative hurdles. It should also be noted that about two thirds of asylum seekers are accommodated outside the reception system and most of them do not have access to counselling and legal/administrative support to prepare an application file.

Interviews also indicate that the vast majority of work permit requests are denied based on the unemployment rates recorded in the requested sector. The head of DIRECCTE Paris reported that most of the time, the work permit is denied because of the employment situation, as nearly all asylum seekers wish to work in low skilled occupations with high rates of unemployment. She reported that, in 2015, her office granted only one work permit to an asylum seeker from Iraq, who was willing to work as translator for a French company that was opening a branch office in Iraq.

Article 744-11 of CESEDA provides that asylum seekers who have had access to the labour market can benefit from professional training. However for the moment no vocational training schemes have been launched.

Refugees

Except for some civic rights like the right to vote and mobility, refugees enjoy the same rights than as citizens. Refugees have free access to the labour market and to the services offered by *Pole Emploi*. As soon as they are granted protection, they are automatically entitled to unemployment benefit (*revenu de solidarité active*, RSA) even if they have not previously worked in France. Article L751-1 of CESEDA provides that after obtaining refugee status, refugees benefit from personalised support so as to facilitate their access to employment and accommodation. The way this article is implemented can be seen in REFISMES 1 to 5 described below.

However, several professions are limited to French nationals, such as civil servants, public-accountants, solicitors, lawyers, court bailiffs, veterinary surgeons and tobacco dealers. Moreover, a number of occupations – including medical professions, travel agents, and funeral directors – are regulated (*reglementées*), that is their practice is conditional on authorization from a professional association (*ordre professionnel*) and to a diploma obtained in France. If a refugee wants to practice one of these professions, he/she has either to re-take the diploma in France or to pass a test.

In the case of medical professions, for instance, there is no equivalence for diplomas obtained outside the EU. To practice in this sector one has either to obtain a French diploma or to apply for an authorisation to practice released by the Ministry of Health. In order to obtain this authorization one has to pass an exam on knowledge and one on practice. French knowledge required to pass the test is B2 or higher. The most difficult situation is faced by nurses: in their case no authorization can be released and it is necessary, to practice, to take a course in specialized training centres, which lasts three and a half years. The admission exam to the training is very competitive, it entails an admissibility test and two admission tests. The exemption of certain courses depends on the opinion of the school director. The time needed to both prepare the admission test and do the training is around five years.

Based on the interviews and on the studies examined, further legal and administrative obstacles to the integration of refugees into the job market include:

- **Recognition of professional titles and qualifications:** often refugees cannot provide documentation of their qualifications, as they may have lost the certificates or left them in the country of origin. Moreover, in France there is no principle of juridical equivalence between diplomas obtained abroad and those delivered by the Ministry of Education. The Enic-Naric, the body responsible for validating foreign titles, can only certify the validity of the documents and attest the duration of studies abroad.
- **Refugees younger than 25** are not entitled to receive either unemployment benefit nor *Pole Emploi's* allowance for asylum seekers. If unemployed, they have no revenues.
- **The length of the administrative procedure to obtain the refugee card** that authorizes work: once the asylum authorities have taken a positive decision, before issuing the refugee card, OFPRA has to release a civil status certificate, which can take more than one year. During this time, refugees continue to be given temporary permits of stay valid for three months. The lack of a resident

card attesting a durable presence on French territory may be an obstacle to finding an employer and in some cases even to benefitting from the *Pole Emploi's* services.³⁵ In this regard, holders of subsidiary protection status may face challenges not experienced by refugees due to the relatively short length of their residence permit (one year).

4.1.3 Policy approach

So far the French authorities have not prioritised the integration of asylum seekers and refugees. Unfortunately it was not possible to interview state officials for this study. However, the interviews and a review of a number of recent reports (Ministry of Interior 2013, Tuot 2012, Karoutchi 2014) confirm that the French authorities have dealt with the refugee issue in a short-term fashion and with a clear focus on the asylum procedure and on the reception of asylum seekers (the latter being characterized by constant emergency due to the chronic shortage of accommodation places). Integration has not been a priority. The logic of political renewal, budgetary reforms, as well as the wish for France not to become an attractive destination within the EU are further factors that may explain this attitude.

The attitude of the French authorities toward asylum seekers has been consistently that this population should not be targeted with integration measures. Until the asylum authorities take a decision on their right to stay in France, their presence is considered to be temporary. This approach seems primarily aimed at discouraging people to apply for asylum, save, of course, if they are in need of protection. Budgetary considerations are also important, namely the reluctance to invest in a population whose future stay on the national territory is uncertain. The concentration of asylum seekers in sometimes isolated accommodation centres, the limitations on access to the labour market and the lack of language and vocational training schemes reflect this stance. At the same time, in 2013, OFPRA committed itself to speeding up the asylum procedure, so as to shorten the period of limbo. When the right of asylum seekers to work was debated at the General Assembly in 2015, all parties (except the Socialist and the Green parties) were in favour of keeping the existing limitations.³⁶

Asylum seekers from Syria and Iraq, on *ad hoc* resettlement programs, or those relocated from hot spots situated at the EU's external borders, are perceived differently. As they have been already screened once, it is assumed that most of them will be granted protection. For this population, integration can start immediately.

As far as refugees are concerned, the French authorities adopt a mainstream approach. Once an individual obtains international protection, he enters the regime of common law (*droit commun*). This means that he/she is treated equally to any other French citizen and can avail him/herself of all mechanisms of social protection. Thus, there is no need for specific measures targeting refugees besides REFMISMES 1 to 5. Other possible integration measures are left to the initiative of local authorities. This can create tensions between central and local authorities, as well as between local authorities, due, *inter alia*, to the uneven geographical distribution of refugees.

International organizations and civil society associations have been advocating for more attention to be paid to the integration of refugees and, in some cases, of asylum seekers. However, until recently most of these bodies have largely focused their activities on reception issues and on the asylum procedure. NGOs that provide legal assistance (Cimade and Gisti) note that they systematically encourage asylum seekers to apply for a work permit; at the same time, they generally do not engage in litigation on work permit refusals, because given the resources available, other initiatives (mainly related to the asylum procedure) have the priority.

The Jesuit Refugee Service is currently carrying out an advocacy campaign on the professional integration of refugees and asylum seekers. This NGO is preparing an appeal in front of Conseil d'Etat contesting Article 744-11 of CESEDA (on asylum seekers' right to work). The NGOs argues that the conditions and requirements provided by Article 744-11 prevent effective access to the job market, thereby contravening Article 15

³⁴ See for instance France Terre D'Asile, Forum réfugiés 2015.

³⁵ Interview with Jesuit Refugee Service, 2 February 2016. See also http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/14/dossiers/reforme_asile.asp.

of the EU Directive 2013/33/UE. The NGO argues that asylum seekers are discriminated because all foreign nationals can apply for a work permit as soon as they arrive in France (whereas asylum seekers can do it only after nine months from the start of the asylum procedure).

Regarding refugees, most civil society organizations think that due to the specific vulnerabilities of the refugee population and due to the obstacles to integration that they face, their inclusion in the common law (*droit commun*) is not sufficient in itself. They advocate for specific measures to be adopted, including professional interpreting, social and cultural mediation, and more language training (see for instance FTDA 2006, HCR 2013, Service Jesuite pour les Réfugiés 2015).

Recently, the European “refugee crisis” has triggered **renewed interest** in the refugee issue on the part of the State, local authorities, civil society organizations and a plethora of other actors ranging from universities to private companies. So far, the heightened willingness to support the integration of refugees has materialized in the launch of internal discussions about future initiatives (EMN 2014, see below); in the launch of local projects run by local authorities (villes of Paris, Nantes, Lille); and in the mushrooming of several local projects, mostly run by volunteers. This heightened attention still focuses mainly on reception, but can sometime concern integration, including professional integration.

4.2 Evidence on the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers

Data on the employment situation of asylum seeker and refugees in France are scant. Reports issues by OFPRA and by the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) do not include information on the socio-professional profiles of asylum seekers and refugees are registered as “clients of foreign origin” in the national files on the unemployed. Thus most of the relevant studies on the job market concern “foreigners” and not isolated refugees. Most studies (INSEE 2009, OCDE 2015, CAS&DSED 2012, DSED 2010, INED&INSEE 2008) show that against a current unemployment rate of 10.6 per cent,³⁷ foreign nationals perform less well than French citizens on the labour market, they are more exposed to unemployment (also when equally qualified) and to relative poverty. They tend to have more precarious jobs and are concentrated in sectors like the hotel trade, restaurant industry, temporary work through employment agencies, security, cleaning and construction.

The only statistical data available on refugees come from two studies that include refugees in their sample³⁸. First, the study “Migrants’ Trajectories and Profiles” that interviewed some 6,000 signatories of the integration contract³⁹ - of which some 10 per cent were refugees (DARES 2011). Second, the Direction Generale des étrangers en France of the Ministry of Interior launched, in 2010, a study to measure the integration of new arrivals; among other foreign holders of a long-term residence permit, the sample included some 600 refugees who entered France in 2009 (Ministry of Interior 2010). These studies show that refugees tend to be less well educated than other foreign nationals (mainly due to education on offer in the countries of origin).⁴⁰ In terms of labour-market performance, compared to other foreign refugees (along with beneficiaries of family reunification) are more likely to be unemployed and are more often employed in low skilled occupations (such as construction, cleaning, personal care). According to the study “Migrants’ Trajectories and Profiles”, only 34 per cent of refugees were employed in 2006 (DARES 2011). At the same time, these studies also highlight that over the medium term this gap tends to close.

³⁶ See INSEE data at: <http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/info-rapide.asp?id=14>.

³⁷ As asylum seekers are not entitled to work, none of the studies mentioned below refers to asylum seekers.

³⁸ Since 2007, upon their arrival in France, migrants from outside the EU, including refugees, must sign a Reception and Integration Contract at the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII).

³⁹ Data extrapolated from the INED&INSEE study show that compared to the rest of foreign nationals from third countries, refugees are less qualified and less at ease with French (INDE&INSEE 2008, DSED 2015).

There are a few studies on refugee employment made by researchers and associations. The main ones are: Tcholakova 2012, HCR 2013 and FTDA 2006. Time constraints prevented a thorough literature review. However, a number of major themes running through these studies were identified, which were widely confirmed by interviews: 1) there is a lack of studies on the professional integration of refugees in France; 2) refugees are highly motivated to enter the job market; 3) due to the obstacles refugees face in accessing housing and employment, the change of legal status, once they obtain protection, does not entail a change of social status; 4) refugees are mostly employed in low-skilled, precarious, hard (physically or in terms of working hours) and sometimes dangerous occupations; and 5) most employed refugees face professional downgrading, with associated psychological costs.

The main non-legal obstacles to employment identified by studies and by and large confirmed by interviews are the following (for the legal obstacles see section 4.1.2):

- **Language:** very often knowledge of French is essential in finding a job outside ethnic enclaves. Also, effective access to services provided by *Pole Emploi* (the national public agency for access to employment) is possible only if the refugee has a certain level of French.⁴¹ For non-francophone refugees, and especially for certain nationalities like Sri Lankans, the lack of language skills is a major obstacle to employment. It is a widespread opinion that the language training provided by the French authorities is insufficient. Some interviewees mentioned that several refugees only started learning French when they find a job;
- **Social isolation:** several studies stress that refugees tend to be more socially isolated than other foreign nationals, the lack of networks making labour-market access more difficult. Researchers that work on one single ethnic community highlight that ethnic networks are usually key to finding a job;
- **Unfamiliarity with the system of recruitment and job searching** in France is a further major practical obstacle; as well as
- **Discrimination and growing xenophobia** (see recent high votes of the right-wing Front National at the last regional elections);
- **The relationship between housing and employment:** many observers stress that the difficulties in finding housing and employment add to one another, triggering a vicious cycle of exclusion: without stable revenue it is difficult to find an accommodation, and *vice versa* it is difficult to search and find a job without having proper accommodation. In addition, the housing and employment situation tend to be inverted throughout the country: in the Ile-de-France Region the housing situation is catastrophic but it is easier to find a job, whereas often the areas where the housing situation is easier have fewer employment opportunities.

Interviews and reports indicate that despite the impediments they face in labour-market access, asylum seekers and refugees are willing to start working as soon as possible. Often the need to find a job is related not only to the necessity of ensuring a livelihood (consider that the asylum seeker allowance ranges between €200 and €300 and unemployment benefit between €500 and €550), but several asylum seekers have also incurred debts in reaching Europe, as well as family obligations (this is the case for instance for many Tamil).

So, in practice many asylum seekers work on the informal market. In other cases, asylum seekers prefer not to engage in undeclared work because they fear compromising their legal situation. Either way, once they have applied for asylum, many refugees remain, for a long period, outside the formal market and in a situation of segregation (in some cases destitution).

⁴⁰ All services are provided in French. Reportedly in some cases *Pole Emploi* might refuse enrolment because of a lack of language skills (FTDA, Forum Réfugiés 2015).

Regarding refugees, several who manage to find an occupation do it through ethnic networks and often work on the informal market, in sectors like construction, restaurant industries, and personal care.⁴² Once an individual has found employment on the informal sector, the motivation and the time that one can devote to enter the formal labour-market will decrease.

Finally, concerning the “invisibles” (people in need of protection in transit and failed asylum seekers) most of those who are employed work on the black market. They are exposed to the same risks and disadvantages as refugees and asylum seekers (absence of social protection, access to rights, no minimum salary), but compared to them, in cases of controls they also risk being sanctioned for their irregular status (placed in detention centres, deported, Dublin transfer, etc.).

4.3 REFISMES Inventory

France does not implement any measure for asylum seekers labour–market integration. Some asylum seekers accommodated in reception centres (around a third of the asylum seeking population) might benefit from *ad hoc* activities organized by associations that run the centres. These mainly concern individual support and language courses provided by volunteers.

This review identified four types of REFISMES addressed to refugees: 1) those provided by the OFII (REFISME 1 to 4), targeting refugees as part of the wider population of foreign newcomers; 2) personalised support provided within *Centres Provisoires d’Hebergement* (temporary accommodation centres for refugees) (REFISME 5); 3) a plethora of programmes run by associations locally, sometimes in partnership with local authorities (REFISME 6 to 13); 4) a plethora of initiatives run by other private actors, most of them recent and localized (for instance REFISMES 14). In addition, 5) new initiatives are being discussed today. Concerning groups 3), 4) and 5), time was too short to identify all relevant projects. Therefore, the following inventory includes only the main projects run by French associations and other initiatives that came up in the interviews and through literature reviews.

Personalised counselling is the most widespread form of support offered to refugees. According to most interviewees, a number of good practices and effective initiatives can be identified (like Accelair program = REFISMES 6). However, considering both the limited numbers of refugees targeted and reached by these measures, as well as the scope of the barriers to employment, this set of initiatives remains insufficient. They cannot hope to tackle the above-mentioned obstacles that refugees face in integrating the job market decisively.

Interestingly, some interviewees mentioned that they are aware of a need for workers in some professional sectors and even of a more specific demand for non-French professionals (for example foreign doctors in areas of strong ethnic concentration). MEDEF made the example of roofers. Yet they highlight how a number of legal, administrative, macro-economic obstacles pertaining to the asylum system and to the labour market prevent the direct access of asylum seekers and refugees to these posts.

4.3.1 Support measures by the OFII to all new migrants, including refugees

Since 2007, migrants from outside the EU, including refugees, must, upon their arrival in France, sign a Reception and Integration Contract at the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII). In 2013 and 2014, refugees and family members represented around 10 per cent of the 110,000 signatories of the contract (EMN 2014, OFII 2015). The services organised by the OFII as part of the contract include:

REFISMES 1: an **assessment of professional skills** for signatories who are not employed at the moment of the signature, aimed at favouring their professional insertion on the labour market. The assessment is carried out before the signature of the contract, as soon as the person has sufficient proficiency in French. It

⁴¹ See Brun 2004 the work of Alain Morice.

lasts around three hours. It aims at enabling newly-arrived migrants to capitalise on their experience, qualifications, professional skills and know-how when looking for a job. Signatories can ask for information on diploma recognition and on the labour market situation (recruiting sectors, etc.) and they receive orientation on how to organise their job search and on vocational training opportunities. A written record is given at the end of the meeting. The holder can present it to *Pole Emploi* officers or to potential employers.

REFMISMES 2: language trainings for signatories whose language skills are considered weak by the OFII officer during the initial interview. Courses are free and can last up to 400 hours (average length in 2012: 280 hours) over six months. At the end of the courses a certificate can be issued, either for the First-Level Diploma in French as a Foreign Language (DILF) or, in some cases, the Diploma of French as a Foreign Language (DELF).

REFMISMES 3: an information session on life in France aims at providing practical information, including administrative procedures and access to rights. A module is dedicated to job market access. The session can last anything from one to six hours.

In the period 2010-2014, between 100,000 and 110,000 contracts were signed each year. The beneficiaries of the skills assessment decreased from 60,000 in 2010 to 37,000 in 2014, and language training was recommended and provided to some 23,000 individuals per year (OFII 2015). Language training involved people from more than 140 countries, with Algeria, Turkey, Morocco, Sri Lanka, Russia, Syria and Bangladesh being the main countries of origin.

At the beginning of 2013, the Interior Ministry asked the General Inspectorate for Administration and for Social Affairs to carry out an assessment of OFII integration policies. The assessment mission report concluded that the services provided as part of the reception and integration contract are too standardised, and lack sufficient evaluation of new migrants' individual needs. The mission noted that whilst the reception policy had correctly identified that language learning and access to employment are the key focuses for integration, the services offered had not proved their effectiveness and had not lifted the barriers to successful integration. It was noted, *inter alia*, that the skills assessment seemed fairly poorly adapted to migrant specific needs, and few of them understood its immediate interest for them (EMN 2014).

Several interviewees highlighted how, for the refugee population, these measures for newly arrived foreigners actually arrive late – often two or more years after their arrival in France. It was also stressed that while language courses are relevant and useful, they do not cover migrant needs (see also Karoutchi 2014 and Tuot 2012). Training is basic, and according to some interviewees, all those who have a basic level are exonerated from the training: several associations invite their clients to simulate no knowledge, so as to be entitled to the maximum number of training hours.

Regarding the skills assessment, interviews indicate that its usefulness is limited. OFII officers give advice but no direct support. Signatories often, as the data quoted above show, do not avail themselves of this opportunity. If they have occasional jobs or work on the informal market, they find it difficult to find free time during working hours. Some of them perceive the meeting as a further administrative requirement that is part of a mandatory administrative procedure rather than an opportunity. One interviewee stated that along with holders of a permanent contract, holders of a temporary contract do not have to take the skill assessment. Camille Goudreau, who did a PhD thesis on the OFII, argues that OFII integration policy and practice participates in the process of ethnic stratification and job market segmentation, as OFII officials orient signatories toward low skilled and precarious jobs, in socially devaluated sectors like building, restoration, personal care (Goudreau 2015).

REFMISMES 4: OFII partnership agreements. According to the *Annual Policy Report 2013 on asylum and migration* (EMN 2014) and to the website of the Ministry of Interior, since 2009 the OFII and the DGEF signed a number of agreements with different actors on the labour market. 1) One with *Pole Emploi*, the national public establishment for access to employment (2010-2013) to facilitate the orientation of job-seekers who have signed a contract of integration, and to reduce the time that this population invest to find work. Other partnerships include: 2) professional sectors facing recruitment difficulties (such as cleaning/domestic

work, temporary work and transport/logistics) aimed at facilitating access to these sectors by providing information to job seekers; 3) large economic networks and companies (such as Coca-Cola) with a view to setting up access programs to employment forums, "job dating", coaching and sponsorships, job-seeker preparation by managers or company directors; 4) main start-up support and micro-credit networks, in order to favour the entrepreneurship of foreign newcomers.

These partnerships were not mentioned in the other reports examined, nor in interviews. Several interviewees mentioned that *Pole Emploi* has no specific initiatives either for refugees, or, indeed, for foreign nationals in general. One interviewee stressed that *Pole Emploi* can fund vocational training, but provides no help to clients in finding training schemes.

4.3.2 Personalised support provided in temporary reception centres

REFMISMES 5: Overall support at Temporary Reception Centres (*Centres Provisoires d'Hebergement, CPH*). After obtaining refugee or subsidiary protection status, some refugees and their families get access to temporary reception centres for refugees. Around 1,500 places are currently available, distributed across 30 centres. Some 20 associations run the centres with state funding. Refugees can remain up to six months in these facilities. Refugees that are not accommodated in CPH are excluded from these services. In principle, all accommodated refugees are systematically provided with overall individual support, including labour-market integration support. This support includes coaching in access to common law and in dealing with *Pole Emploi*. Additional and more specific services vary from centre to centre, depending on the programs and the funding available to the associations that run the centre.

In Massy, for instance, ⁴³ Cimade's team of social workers provide individual counselling to deal with administrative procedures, and to look for jobs and accommodation. Support for professional integration includes support in developing a professional project, in the search for job and vocational training, and in the search for funding for training. In addition, volunteers provide language training twice a week. Mathematics and computer courses are also available.

4.3.3 Programmes managed by local associations

REFMISMES 6: Accelair Programme run by Forum Réfugiés was launched in 2002 in the Rhone Department with EU funds. It still runs today, funded half by the State and half by the EU. It offers individual support for the search for accommodation, job and vocational training to newly recognized refugees (in the first year after recognition), regardless of their accommodation situation. In the professional field, the NGO's staff offers support for: the preparation of applications for unemployment allowance; a skill assessment; the development of a professional project; searching for a job; finding linguistic training; and maintaining a job. The project activities also target actors on the territory, offering mediation and translation services and raising awareness on refugees among local authorities and companies. Among the initiatives promoted by Forum Réfugiés in the past years: there is language training in the workplace for companies who have offered to hire refugees; and language training and driving licence tests.

According to the data provided by the NGO,⁴⁴ the project offers capillary coverage. In 2014, some 800 households (some 1,200 adults) of 55 nationalities received support, and two thirds of the beneficiaries of the Accelair project had access to training or to a job. The speed of access to the first training was 4.9 months and 8.7 months for a job. Today, the project supports some 90 per cent of the newly-recognized refugees in the Rhone department. Since its creation, it has allowed 2,150 households to access accommodation, more than 1,600 training places and 2,700 job contracts.

According to Forum Réfugiés, the key strengths of the project are three. First, the extended network of local actors that the association has built and strengthened since 2002. The project relies on a broad partnership

⁴² Source: Cimade's website at <http://www.lacimade.org/poles/centre-massy/rubriques/35-Les-missions-du-CPH>.

⁴³ Interview 22 January 2016; <http://www.forumrefugies.org/missions/missions-aupres-des-refugies/programme-d-integration-des-refugies-accelair>.

that gathers together institutional actors (*Pole Emploi*, OFII, prefecture, local public authorities, social housing landlords) private actors and actors specialized in assisting refugees (such as Entraide Pierre Valdo and Adoma). The project ensures not only visibility for refugees, but provides key opportunities for accommodation, job, as well as funding. Second, the Forum brings together support in the search for housing and support for the search of work, as a way to accelerate integration. The project targets, third, refugees regardless of their accommodation situation, thereby extending assistance to refugees living outside official accommodation centres. The main challenge that Forum Réfugiés faces is to keep the same quality of support in the face of an increase in newly-recognized refugees.

Since 2008 there have been several attempts to export this project to other Départements, but budgetary challenges have prevented its expansion so far. The project is expensive and requires an intense commitment on the part of local authorities.

REFMISMES 7: Centre d'accueil et de préparation à l'insertion (CAPI, Reception and first integration centre) run by France Terre d'Asile in the Ile-de-France Region. This centre catalyses three initiatives: 1) an open centre (permanence) that offers counselling to all refugees on how to access accommodation, work, training and social rights; 2) a temporary reception centre that offers overall support to accommodated refugees; 3) the project "Clefs de France" (Keys to France) that uses mobility to foster integration – refugees are invited to move from the Ile-de-France Region to areas where housing is easier and where there is less concentration of refugees. The challenge is that when housing is usually more accessible, there are fewer job opportunities. In addition, mobility entails high costs for the local authorities in the receiving areas. Since 2012, 1,045 households have been supported by the CAPI project.⁴⁵

REFMISMES 8: RELOREF project run by France Terre d'Asile (*Réseau pour l'emploi et le logement des réfugiés*, Network for refugee employment and housing). This project was launched in 2004 with the aim of creating partnerships with companies and networks of employers so as to create job opportunities for refugees. Discussions are currently ongoing with MEDEF, the main employers' organization (see below). This project also prepares tools for advocacy and personal support, such as guides and atelier kits that consolidate knowhow in employment support. See, for instance, FTDA 2006.

REFMISMES 9: The Association for the reception of refugee doctors and medical attendants (APRS, *Association d'accueil aux medecins et personnels de santé réfugiés en France*) was created in the 1970s, in the aftermath of the *coup d'Etat* in Chile, with the aim of assisting refugee health professionals. There was, particularly, interest given the difficulties that they face in practising in France without a French diploma. PRS is based in the Parisian Sainte Anne hospital and is run by medical practitioners. Today it has one employed administrative staff member and five volunteers. APRS offers personalised support in person, by phone or by mail, making giving an insider's knowledge of the professional sector. Counsellors provide information on laws and administrative procedures; help recipients to develop a viable professional project in France (for example, they often advise nurses who are not ready to invest several years in a French diploma to opt for a much shorter training course that entitles them to practice as nurse auxiliary); and they provide support with administrative procedures (preparing applications). Moreover, thanks to their contacts, counsellors can assist in finding training and internships opportunities.

According to the data provided by APRS, some 100 refugees and asylum seekers per year contact the association. They are mainly referred on by associations, the prefecture and accommodation centres. In 2015, recipients were mainly from Ile-de-France Region. Most contactees are doctors and nurses. In the past two years, Syrian nationals were highly represented (40 per cent in 2015). According to the APRS director, several individuals decided to renounce practice in the medical sector or accept downgrading, especially if they need to earn money quickly. The services provided are very useful in finding one's way in the country and are also an opportunity to receive support from fellow professionals. Yet PRS has difficulties in finding a stable source of funding: since state support has ended, APR relies on private donations and on its volunteers.

⁴⁴ <http://www.france-terre-asile.org/accueil/etablissement/projet-europeen-centre-d-accueil-et-de-preparation-a-l-integration-capi>.

REFMISMES 10: SINGA activities. This Paris-based association was created in 2011 and proposes a distinctive approach to socio-professional integration. It conceives refugees as actors (rather than beneficiaries) in need of tools (rather than assistance), and its primary aim is to integrate refugees within social networks. SINGA runs a wide range of small projects that target a small number of refugees, and French society as a whole. These projects include: team labour counselling and orientation for entrepreneur projects, including language training; support in administrative procedures and search for funding; networking between individuals and actors/initiatives (ex universities, private actors); the creation of cultural or sport events as occasions of encounter between refugees and the local population; and training on interculturalism. Today, some twenty salaried staff and more than 18,000 people have signed up to the social events.

REFMISMES 11: Counselling at CASP (Protestant centre for social action, *Centre d'action sociale protestant*). CASP has an Asylum Unit. Two staff members in Paris offer personalised support to some 200 refugees per year. These staff members provide assistance in finding a job or vocational training. They support refugees in dealing with *Pole Emploi*, in following administrative files such as applications for the recognition of diplomas, they organize language training and workshops. According to the 2014 association report, this action facilitated the employment access to 97 refugees (CASP 2015).

REFMISMES 12: Counselling at the Jesuit Refugee Service. The JRS runs a similar counselling activity in finding housing and employment in the Paris area. It targets some hundred refugees per year. These are mainly referred to the JRS by other associations. Among the support provided: help in preparing CV; looking for training opportunities; assistance in answering announcements on the internet; psychological support; and a circulation of CV in mailing list.

REFMISMES 13: “*Bail glissant*” (sliding lease) project run by ELIA association. This association operates in the Bouches du Rhône Departement. Since 2004 it has run a project that provides refugee families with counselling and support in finding accommodation and work. So far this project has provided integration assistance to several hundred refugees.

Other initiatives by local associations

Other local initiatives for which little information could be found include:

Association Passerelle in Roche sur Yon. The service AISPR (*Accompagnement à l'insertion sociale et professionnelle des réfugiés*) was created in July 2009. It provides counselling to refugees and made an agreement with the local section of *Pole Emploi* (FNARS 2014).

Chantier d'insertion les potagers de Marcoussis (Integration site Marcoussis's vegetable garden). Essonne Departement, Ile-De-France. This association supports vulnerable people in finding durable employment offering a temporary job contract in the production of biological vegetables in Marcoussis countryside. This temporary activity offers the possibility of integrating a professional setting with vocational training, and the acquisition of skills that are transferable in sectors facing recruiting difficulties, and receiving individual support for the development of a socio-professional project. In recent years some refugees have also benefitted of this project.⁴⁶

4.3.4 Initiatives by private actors and volunteers

A great number of local initiatives run by private actors or groups of volunteers are mushrooming at the moment. Several of them offer language training. For instance, an inter-university network of volunteers is developing in order to promote refugee's access to professional language training and studies.

Among the initiatives run by private actors:

⁴⁵ <http://lespotagersdemarcoussis.org/les-potagers-de-marcoussis/linsertion-professionnelle-2/>.

REFMISMES 14: Scholarships awarded by the *Entraide Universitaire française*. Every year the *Entraide Universitaire française* (French University Mutual Assistance) grants scholarships to more than 130 refugees in order to allow them to continue their studies in France. Scholarships target in particular refugees who are older than 28 and who are not eligible for other grants. Since 1945 some 15,000 scholarships have been awarded.⁴⁷

4.3.5 Initiatives under discussion

The **Jesuit Refugee Service** will soon launch the initiative “*comprendre pour apprendre*” (understand to learn). The NGO is currently creating the partnerships on which the project will rely. The main outcome will be a website that will centralize information on all existing initiatives aimed at favouring the integration of refugees. The website will allow both refugees and actors operating for their integration to access to and to exchange information.

MEDEF, the main French employers’ organization, is discussing initiatives aimed at favouring the professional integration of the refugees relocated from hot spots. In summer 2015, an internal working group was created that brings together interested companies, the Ministry of Interior and associations. The aim is to engage private companies in helping refugees to find employment (for example creating a network to provide training and counselling for refugees) and in supporting refugees’ entrepreneurship. Among the companies interested in participating in the initiative are big ones like Michelin, Total, Air Liquide and Sodexo, as well as smaller ones. Their motivations vary. Some need workers, others value visibility and diversity and have a sense of social responsibility. According to a MEDEF representative, the main issues at stake for employers are: the need to assess refugee skills and language skills and to assure themselves that refugees have driving licences, often needed outside Paris (Syrian driving licenses, for example, are not recognized in France).

4.4 Conclusions

The fifteen interviews and the studies examined for this review indicate that asylum seekers and refugees face numerous difficulties in accessing the French labour market, in spite of their desire to find employment as quickly as possible. This population has high unemployment rates. When they work, refugees are mostly employed in low-skilled, precarious and hard occupations, such as hotels, restaurants, temporary work, security, cleaning, construction and personal care. Ethnic networks offer a major way to find an occupation. Frequently asylum seekers and refugees work in the informal labour market, facing related vulnerabilities (no social protection, risk of exploitation, etc.). Many experience professional downgrading, which often entails psychological costs.

For asylum seekers it is almost impossible to enter the formal labour market. The French authorities have consistently maintained that this population should not be targeted with integration measures, so as not to create an incentive for people to apply for asylum who do not need protection. Asylum seekers can obtain a work permit nine months after having submitted their asylum application. In practice, however, the work permit is extremely difficult to obtain: the applicant must present a job offer and the French authorities can refuse the permit based on unemployment rates in the sector and in the region concerned.

Refugees, by contrast, enjoy in principle free access to the labour market. Refugee status ensures access to common law (*droit commun*) on equal footing with French citizens. However, some professions are reserved to French citizens and a number of other professions (for example in the law and medical sector) are “regulated”, which means that people who obtained their diploma outside the EU have either to pass a test or that they must obtain a new diploma in France. Overall, recognition of professional qualifications is difficult: there is no juridical equivalence to French diplomas. Additional obstacles that prevent the refugee access to the labour market are related to: insufficient language skills; social isolation; unfamiliarity with the recruitment system and job searching in France; discrimination; a vicious housing/employment circle; the length of the

⁴⁶ Source: HCR 2013.

administrative procedure before a refugee actually obtains the refugee card. The state of refugees younger than 25 is particularly sensitive, as they are not entitled to receive unemployment benefit.

No REFISMES that target asylum seekers have been identified, except scattered *ad hoc* initiatives that associations running reception centres might implement. Regarding refugees, the French authorities have tended to focus on the asylum procedure and on the reception of asylum seekers rather than on refugee integration. This review identified four main types of REFISMES, most of which consist of language training, personalised support and network development:

- 1) those provided by the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII), that target refugees as part of the wider population of foreign newcomers. This includes a professional skill assessment, language training and an information session that covers the labour market;
- 2) individual support provided within temporary accommodation centres for refugees (*Centres Provisoires d'Hebergement*) to get the refugees accommodated through associations that run the centre, with state funding.

These state-run projects are joined by:

- 3) a plethora of programmes run by associations at the local level, sometimes in partnership with local authorities. Among these, the Accelair project run by Forum Réfugiés in the Rhone Department stands out as one of the most effective initiatives;
- 4) a plethora of initiatives run by other private actors, most of which are recent and localized.

In addition,

- 5) new initiatives are being discussed and launched in this period by private actors, associations and civil society, as a result of the heightened interest in the refugee issue within the European Union since summer 2015.

Due to time constraints and to the methodology of this review, it was impossible to assess the impact of the various identified REFISMES. However, both the stakeholders interviewed and the studies examined highlight that the services offered by the French State through the OFII and in the *Centres Provisoires d'Hebergement* while relevant, appear insufficient. They do not reach the whole refugee population, to provide effective linguistic training and tools to access the labour market. A number of promising projects are run at the local level or within specific professional sectors. However, considering both the limited numbers of refugees targeted by these measures, as well as the barriers on employment, these initiatives are insufficient to tackle, in a decisive way, the obstacles that refugees face in integrating themselves into the job market. The following factors of failure and good practice can be identified:

Blocking blocks for labour-market integration

- the fact that asylum seekers are prevented from accessing the labour market delays the integration of future refugees. Considering the pre-application period, the asylum procedure and the OFPRA administrative procedures for releasing a refugee card, several years can pass from the moment a refugee arrives in France and the moment he/she obtains the authorization to work. Several years spent in a situation of segregation, destitution or employment in the informal labour market may trigger a vicious circle and hamper access to the formal labour market once protection is obtained;
- associations argue that given the specific vulnerabilities of refugees and the obstacles they face in integrating, access to common law (*droit commun*) is not enough and that refugees should benefit from specific measures aimed at supporting their integration, including job–market integration;
- several interviewees highlighted serious shortages in offering language training;
- the fragmentation and bottom-up nature of the initiatives favouring integration is not a weakness in itself, because local initiatives are more likely to fit the local context. The problem is that state funding is limited

and local authorities are not always committed to becoming involved in programmes that foster refugee integration. This hampers new initiatives, as well as the efforts aimed at consolidating, expanding and making viable initiatives that prove effective (see APRS, Accelair).

Stepping stones for labour-market integration

- the content of REFISMES – individual support, network development, language training – seems suitable and responds to actual needs;
- the Accelair and Roloref projects (REFISMES 6 and 8) show the importance and the added value of building extended partnerships. The network that Forum Réfugiés has been building over the past fifteen years in the Rhône Department, in particular, brings together institutional actors (Pole Emploi, OFII, prefecture, local public authorities, social housing landlords) private actors and actors specialized in assistance to refugees. This has proven to be a key factor in the success of the Accelair project;
- many observers highlighted the importance of linking housing and employment . This element is present in several projects implemented by associations;
- most refugees are not accommodated in reception centres, thus it is important to find ways to reach the population that lives outside centres;
- the specialized, individual support provided by medical professionals through AFPR appears particularly effective, not only for the expertise that underpins their counselling, but also because dealing with colleagues offers a form of psychological support;
- initiatives that target the French society, like SINGA's activities aimed at fighting fears, racism and discrimination through social events appear important in compounding REFISMES;

While the popularity of the right-wing Front National is increasing, new solidarity initiatives are mushrooming throughout the country, led by a wide range of actors (grassroots volunteers, private actors, local authorities). These actions constitute an incubator of new ideas and a commitment that deserves a closer look and capitalized on.

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4.6 List of Contacted Institutions and Experts

APSR, Ms F. Henry, Secrétaire générale

Cimade, Mr. A. Decourcelle, Asylum Unit Ile-de-France

DIRECCTE Paris, Ms Iturrioz

FNARS, Ms Delaplace

France Terre d'Asile, Mr. P. Henry, Director, and Ms F. Mlati, Integration Unit

Forum Réfugiés, Ms C. Monin

Gisti, Ms Maillary

Jesuit Refugee Service, Mr. Nicolas and Ms Riquelme, advocacy officers;

MEDEF, Mr. O. Gainon

SINGA, Mr. G. Capelle, co-founder

UNHCR, Ms Boreil, Protection Unit

Dr. C. Gourdeau, researcher, author of the PhD thesis "L'intégration des étrangers sous injonction. Genèse et mise en œuvre du contrat d'accueil et d'intégration"

Dr. G. Tattolo, researcher, expert on the integration of refugee households in France

Dr. A. Tcholakova, researcher, author of the PhD thesis "En quête de travail, enjeux de reconnaissance et remaniement identitaire : approche comparée France-Bulgarie de carrières professionnelles de réfugiés"

Dr. G. Mantovan, researcher, expert on Tamil in France

Attempts to meet with representatives of the OFII, of the Ministry of Interior, of *Pole Emploi* and of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) did not prove successful. Time constraints prevented the researcher from visiting a Temporary Reception Centre to know more about REFMISMES 5 and to seek interviews with trade unions and local authorities outside Paris.

5 Case Study Germany

Jutta Aumüller

5.1 Background

5.1.1 Profile of recent refugee flows

In 2015, Germany experienced a massive influx of asylum seekers unprecedented in German history. About 1.1 million persons were registered, while escaping from civil war and persecution, in search of a better life for themselves and for their children.

In the years before 2015 there had been, too, a steady rise in the number of asylum seekers: 28,018 persons applied for asylum in 2008, whereas 202,834 applied in 2014. Due to the overload of the administration units responsible, many thousands of asylum seekers who arrived in 2015, have not yet been able to formally apply for asylum. Then, as well as these new applicants, at the beginning of 2016 there are another 365,000 applicants from former years, whose cases have not yet been decided upon by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (*BAMF*).

In 2015, most asylum-applicants came from Syria, followed by applicants from Albania, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Serbia, Eritrea, Macedonia, Pakistan and a huge group of persons whose national origin is unsettled. In the same year, 49.8 per cent of all asylum-applicants were granted refugee status or subsidiary protection status, unprecedented numbers for recent German asylum history. Of the refugees who gained recognition and asylum most came from Syria (where 96.0 per cent were officially recognized as refugees), Eritrea (92.1 per cent), Iraq (88.6 per cent), and Iran (59.6 per cent).⁴⁸

On the other hand, there was a huge group of persons coming from the Western Balkan states: Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Macedonia. These migrants are mostly escaping from a disastrous economic situation in their home countries. Their chance of being recognized as refugees is practically zero. This is why, in Germany's most recent Asylum Procedure Acceleration Act of October 2015, all these countries – along with other Western Balkan states – were defined as “safe countries of origin”. Asylum-claimants coming from these countries will face an accelerated asylum procedure and are not entitled to any integration measures. Accordingly, they are excluded from any labour-market integration measures.

In addition, there are those asylum seekers whose application has been refused but who cannot be deported to their country of origin for various reasons. They usually get a short-term residence title which has to be renewed by the Foreigners Authority not later than three months afterwards and that does not entitle relevant migrants to most of the official integration measures. These so-called “tolerated refugees” form a substantial group which in the years 2008-2013 comprised a population of about 100,000 persons (Wendel 2014).

New refugee immigration to Germany is predominantly young and male. In 2015, 71.1 per cent of the asylum seekers were younger than 30 years. More than two thirds of applications were made by men.⁴⁹ There are no representative data on the qualification level which these persons have acquired in their countries of origin. Information gathered from asylum seekers gained by random sample and delivered voluntarily by the interviewees indicates that about 20 per cent have professional education; and that about 30 to 40 per cent of them have practical work experience (of at least one year duration) which can be adapted to the German

⁴⁷ Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, *Asylgeschäftsstatistik für den Monat Dezember 2015*, <http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Downloads/Infothek/Statistik/Asyl/201512-statistik-anlage-asyl-geschaeftsbericht.html?nn=1694460>.

⁴⁸ Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge, *Aktuelle Zahlen zu Asyl*, December 2015, http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Downloads/Infothek/Statistik/Asyl/statistik-anlage-teil-4-aktuelle-zahlen-zu-asyl.pdf?__blob=publicationFile.

labour market. The available data, however, suggest that the level of vocational qualification and the competences of the asylum seekers is significantly lower than what is needed in the German labour market.

5.1.2 Patterns and length of the refugee recognition process

Due to the massive influx of asylum seekers, it usually takes several months until asylum seekers can file an application for asylum. Starting from this date, it will take on average 5.3 months until applicants receive a decision from the BAMF. However, the average duration says little about the individual chance of getting early access to the labour market, as the actual duration of the asylum process depends on the country of origin and may vary significantly: anything from a few weeks to one year and more is possible.

5.1.3 Levels and patterns of employment

Currently there are no representative data available about the employment of refugees (comprising all legal categories). In German labour market statistics, refugees are not identified as a particular statistical group. Thus, we only have a fragmented insight into the labour-market performance of refugees after recognition. Sporadic information shows that the labour-market integration of refugees is more difficult than that of migrant labourers. A random study based on information from the German Socio-Economic Panel found that, a number of years ago: 8 per cent of refugees gained regular employment within the first year of stay in Germany; 50 per cent within 5 years; 60 per cent within 10 years; and 75 per cent within 15 years. It takes quite a long time for refugees to find employment, then. Furthermore, many of the migrants from countries affected by war and economic crisis are employed in sectors with lower skill requirements, such as the hotel and catering business and other services (Brücker et al. 2015, 9-10).

In addition, from earlier field-work we know that asylum seekers and refugees are often employed in the informal sector (Aumüller and Bretl 2008, 36, 66). However, it is not possible to give any reliable estimate about the extent of the informal employment of refugees in Germany. The current debate in the country focuses on the integration of asylum seekers and refugees into the regular labour market. It is, though, generally assumed that many asylum seekers are willing to take on any job that provides them with an income. A recent study has estimated that, in the medium term, up to 300,000 refugees may be employed in informal occupations.⁵⁰

5.1.4 Legal framework for labour-market access

The right to enter the labour market depends on the migrant's actual legal status (refugee, subsidiary protection status, asylum seeker, tolerated refugee). For many years, asylum seekers and tolerated refugees were widely banned from employment. This political strategy of excluding asylum seekers from the labour market has gradually been relaxed in the last years. Since 2014, the employment ban for asylum seekers has been reduced to three months after the formal application for asylum or registration after crossing the border into Germany. After this period asylum seekers are entitled to engage in gainful employment on condition that the workplace cannot be staffed with a preferential person, i.e. a national or an EU citizen (the so-called priority review). Also, tolerated persons have only inferior access to the labour market. The priority review is dispensed with as soon as asylum seekers and tolerated refugees have lived for fifteen months in Germany. Furthermore, for four years, asylum seekers need formal approval from the authorities that the employment relationship does not fall below the general wage level (*Arbeitsbedingungsprüfung*). Asylum seekers with a presumably high probability of recognition (i.e. coming from Eritrea, Iran, Iraq or Syria) are supported in getting early access to the labour market. Since October 2015, asylum seekers from these countries get immediate access to the so-called integration courses (600 hours language training plus 60 hours instruction in culture and political system) provided by the federal government: an important precondition for finding a job.

⁴⁹ <https://de.finance.yahoo.com/nachrichten/gute-konjunktur-dr%C3%A4ngt-schwarzarbeit-zur%C3%BCck-095502371.html>.

Persons who have been granted either refugee or subsidiary protection status obtain a residence permit (*Aufenthaltserlaubnis*) and thus are entitled to gainful employment without restriction. According to German Asylum Law, a residence permit may be cancelled within three years if the reason for asylum ceases to exist due to an improved situation in the country of origin. Although this regulation has been applied in only very few cases, it causes uncertainty about the long-term prospect of settlement in Germany for the migrants.

On 3 February 2016 the federal government announced that asylum seekers who start an apprenticeship will obtain a guaranteed residence permit limited to the duration of the apprenticeship, plus two additional years for gaining job experience. This makes planning easier for the company offering the apprenticeship compared to the situation before. As a result of a number of other legal improvements, asylum seekers are entitled to get an apprentice's pay according to the Social Security Code Book III (*Berufsausbildungsbeihilfe nach SGB III*). However, the situation for young asylum seekers from so-called secure countries of origin (mainly the Western Balkan states) has deteriorated and they are no longer allowed to take up an apprenticeship in Germany.

Although a number of restrictive regulations concerning labour-market access have been scaled back recently, in practice, asylum seekers and tolerated refugees still meet many bureaucratic obstacles. Local foreigners' registration departments often work very slowly when granting an employment permit. Employers who are willing to employ asylum seekers or refugees thus often feel insecure if a job applicant passes the priority review or if he or she may be expelled after three years with a residence permit. Thus many German employers declare, in principle, their willingness to employ asylum seekers and refugees; however, in practice they may be discouraged by time-consuming bureaucratic procedures.

5.1.5 Existing studies on the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers

There are no comprehensive studies which enable a compact and differentiated overview of the labour-market integration of asylum seekers, recognized refugees and tolerated refugees. The few existing case-studies only refer to small samples which are not representative of the refugee population in Germany. Furthermore, their findings have often become obsolete because the legal premises of labour integration have changed in the meantime. In 2008, Aumüller and Bretl showed, in a study that, formerly (tolerated) refugees either did not succeed in getting access to the labour market, or the access took many years and only occurred far below the applicants' skill level. Data from the SOEP migrant random sample (*Sozioökonomisches Panel*) indicate that the labour-market integration of refugees is worse than that of migrant workers (see above; Brücker *et al.* 2015). In January 2016, a short analysis was published by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), based on data of refugees from six different countries of origin who were granted asylum between 2008 and 2012 (Worbs and Bund 2016). According to this study, only 38.3 per cent of these recognized refugees had employment or a place at a university when interviewed in 2014. Refugee women came off especially badly: Only 11.5 per cent of them were employed, as compared to 49.8 per cent of the men (Worbs and Bund 2016, 6). All these in-depth studies suggest that the labour-market integration of asylum seekers is a long and difficult process.

5.2 Inventory of REFMISMES

Since 2015, there has been an intense debate on how to integrate effectively asylum seekers, who will likely be long-term residents, as well as refugees into the regular labour market. Different viewpoints have emerged:

- Employers and business associations point mainly to the demographic changes, i.e. population loss and the future needs of qualified labour. They argue very much in favour of qualifying asylum seekers and refugees in such a way that they become skilled personnel.
- Government policy will now integrate asylum seekers and refugees into the mainstream of the general support schemes for workers at large. The existing system of employment promotion is to be

modified and enlarged so that the special requirements of asylum seekers and refugees may be accounted for as well. A divide in employment promotion between refugees and other groups of the long-term unemployed is to be avoided in Germany.

- The official employment agencies (Employment Agencies [*Arbeitsagenturen*] and local *Jobcenter*) aim at preventing long-term unemployment among newly-arriving asylum seekers and refugees. Experience shows that the unemployed are harder to place in regular employment the longer unemployment lasts. Especially at the local level, persons in charge argue that, therefore, the unconventional measures should be applied that refugees will be quickly integrated into the job market: with language courses and modular vocational qualifications.
- As far as the refugees themselves are concerned, they are basically interested in quickly getting employment and income.

Although “mainstreaming” is the current focus of labour-market integration, in the following text the acronym REFISMES will be used as well. Please note, however, that REFISMES often includes measures which are provided for all groups of immigrants and German workers, too.

In terms of strategies and measures for promoting the employment of refugees, in the German federal system labour-market policies exist at the federal, regional (*Bundesländer* or Federal States) and local levels. Employment policy does not, in general, differentiate between nationals and foreign nationals with legal access to the labour market. The same instruments are provided for both. However, migrants have a much weaker position in the labour market. They are more often affected by unemployment and low-qualified jobs. This is why, in active labour-market policies, there are a number of additional measures available that specifically aim at compensating the employment disadvantages of immigrants.

5.2.1 Public sector

The federal government and the Ministry of Labour, in particular, focus on: providing access to general and vocational language courses; the recognition of formal qualifications acquired abroad; as well as including this target group in all regular labour-market policy measures. Therefore, all political and economic programmes that are relevant for labour-market integration are mainstreamed with regard to the needs of asylum seekers and refugees.

The specific instruments that are most important for the labour-market integration of refugees are the so-called ‘integration courses’. These comprise 600 hours of language tuition and 60 hours tuition on German culture and the German political system. Since October 2015, asylum seekers from Eritrea, Iran, Iraq and Somalia are also entitled to take part in these courses, even if they have not yet been granted refugee status. The federal government, given the changed situation, has doubled the budget for integration courses in 2016.

There are, also, the so-called vocational language courses focusing on command of German in the employment context (*ESF-BAMF-Kurse*). These courses include up to 730 teaching units. These courses, too, have been opened to asylum seekers with a high probability of being granted asylum.

Finally, the government is fostering the identification and recognition of job qualifications which asylum seekers and refugees have acquired in their home countries. The major challenge here is how to attest vocational competences which have been acquired in an informal or non-formal job practice. To tackle this question, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research has launched the project “Prototyping Transfer”, where specifically designed testing methods are applied to get to vocational competences which a refugee can utilise to find regular employment.

5.2.2 Federal Employment Office

The key institution for active labour-market policies in Germany is the Federal Employment Office (*Bundesagentur für Arbeit; BA*) with its ten regional directorates and 156 local *Arbeitsagenturen* (employment agencies) and 303 *Jobcenter*. All asylum seekers are entitled to job counselling by the employment agencies

as soon as they have applied for asylum. Tolerated refugees, too, are eligible for job counselling. Asylum seekers from Eritrea, Iran, Iraq and Syria are entitled to specific employment promotion measures, such as support in job applications, allowances for translation of job certifications or travel expenses etc.: this is so even if they have not yet been granted asylum. Refugees who have gained a residence permit may use the services of the *Jobcenters* in the same way as German nationals and EU citizens.

As well as the strategy to open up existing measures to a number of specifically determined national groups of asylum seekers, the Federal Employment Office has developed some projects which specifically focus on asylum seekers. In 2014-2015, the pilot project “Early Intervention” was implemented in nine German cities. In this project, asylum seekers were coached by the employment agency, they received special placement assistance, language courses, practical job training and an assessment of their skills and qualifications. Through this project, about 10 per cent of the participants (1,400 persons altogether) could be transferred into an apprenticeship or regular employment. The employment agencies’ staff were trained to work more successfully with the target group of asylum seekers and acquired new intercultural competences. An evaluation of the project assessed that the improvement in the agencies staff’s intercultural competences and knowledge concerning asylum laws was an important learning experience in its own right (Büschel *et al.* 2015). The insights and experiences gained by the pilot project have now been disseminated in some federal states and cities. For example, in North Rhine-Westphalia “Early Intervention” will continue on a regional basis as “Early Intervention NRW Plus”.

Another programme by the Federal Employment Office for refugee migrants is “Perspectives for Refugees” (*Perspektiven für Flüchtlinge; PerF*), which has been designed to facilitate early access into the labour-market for asylum seekers. Within twelve weeks, participants are involved in practical skills assessment, training in job applications and in job intermediation. These measures are assisted by vocational language tuition. The aim for 2016 is to include 6,500 asylum seekers in the PerF programme. A similar programme for a target group of young asylum seekers is currently in preparation, to put them on a fast track to apprenticeship or academic studies.

5.2.3 Special institutional arrangements for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

The two special institutions that aim at fostering the labour-market integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are the two network programmes “Integration by Qualification” (IQ) and “Integration of Asylum seekers and Refugees” (IvAF). Both programmes have existed for about 10 years now; they are currently supplemented with extra staff meet the special requirements of asylum seekers and refugees for labour-market integration. Both programmes aim primarily at an efficient networking of employment agencies, job centers, foreigners’ authorities, employers, and providers of job-training measures, educational institutions etc. at the local level to support asylum seekers and refugees in getting access to the labour market. IQ networks exist in the sixteen federal states; and there are 30 IvAF networks of some 200 individual projects where asylum seekers and tolerated refugees are supported by REFISMES of all kinds. Currently, the major focus of the activities is on intercultural and legal training for job intermediators in the employment agencies and *Jobcenter*.

5.2.4 REFISMES in the Federal States

By the end of 2015, most of the sixteen German federal states (*Bundesländer*) had launched their own programmes and measures to support the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees; or at least these were in preparation. There are different types of programmes and measures:

Language courses: Most of the states finance language courses for asylum seekers who are not entitled to participate in regular integration courses provided by the federal government. This is essentially a means to help migrant integration in society as well as in the labour market.

Measures for an early skills and needs assessment: In some federal states helpdesks have been established by which the skills and needs of newly-arriving asylum seekers are understood at a very early stage of residence. Sometimes these helpdesks are located in the regional asylum reception centres.

Job coaches for asylum seekers: Job coaches are to contact asylum seekers as soon as they arrive in the cities and communes. Their task is to inform asylum seekers about the system of employment promotion and to help them navigate their way through employment agencies, job centres and other regular institutions. Job coaching programmes have been launched in Bavaria, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland. In Rhineland-Palatinate job coaches shall, from 2016, be installed in all administrative districts.

Mediation of young asylum seekers into apprenticeship: Some federal states focus on the fact that a huge group of asylum seekers are at a very young age and would benefit from an apprenticeship. In Bavaria, special classes at vocational schools have been established all over the state. Having completed these classes, young asylum seekers are supposed to be ready to enter a formal apprenticeship.

Establishment of task forces in the government to steer the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees: By this measure, the state governments aim at “mainstreaming” labour-market integration, bringing together all departments and institutions responsible for the various aspects of implementation.

Legal information and the support of employers who are willing to employ asylum seekers and refugees: by web pages, guidelines etc.

Comprehensive programmes for the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees: Some federal states, e.g. Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, have launched comprehensive programmes with a number of support measures, using indicators of success and a concerted strategy for labour-market integration.

Establishment of service points for asylum seekers and refugees: This is the most innovative element in REFISMES. The various services dealing with employment support for asylum seekers and refugees – including legal services and refugee aid services – are bundled into a one-stop facility. The aim is to develop a schedule for labour-market integration adapted to each individual. Such service points have been established in Hamburg (*W.I.R. – “Work and Integration for Refugees”*). In a similar manner, so-called Integration Points are to be established in 30 cities in North Rhine-Westphalia in 2016.

In most of the federal states measures and programmes prioritize those asylum seekers who are expected to be granted asylum, i.e. those from countries of origin with a recognition quota of more than 50 per cent. Currently these are asylum seekers from Eritrea, Iran, Iraq and Syria.

5.2.5 REFISMES at the communal level

At the communal level, measures for employment promotion are usually initiated when persons have already been granted asylum. This is due to the fact that labour-market policy at the local level is essentially the task of the communal *Jobcenter*. In legal terms (Social Security Code Book SGB II), the jobcentres are commissioned to provide basic social care and labour-market integration of long-term unemployed persons. Refugees are also regarded as eligible under the provisions of SGB II. As yet, most of the newly-arrived asylum seekers are still at the stage of asylum procedure and have not yet been granted asylum. Therefore, at the communal level, there are only few REFISMES at present. This will certainly change during the next months and years. As mentioned earlier, job centre counselors receive more and more intercultural legal trainings to handle refugee needs.

By the end of 2015, a number of cities and administrative districts had already started to establish one-stop facilities for job-coaching asylum seekers and refugees. Furthermore, many communes use their own finances to offer additional language courses or to strengthen the competences of volunteers who support asylum seekers and refugees in day-to-day life.

5.2.6 Private sector

In German enterprises and business associations there is generally great openness towards the employment of asylum seekers and refugees. However, many employers are not aware of the fact that asylum seekers

usually have no command of German and that their skills and qualifications – if available at all – are not easily compatible with the requirements of workplaces in Germany. Furthermore, employers expect that refugees have regular residence before taking them into paid employment.

In a comprehensive Germany-wide study (Aumüller 2016), all Chambers of Crafts (53) and Chambers of Industry and Commerce (80) were asked about the REFISMES of their member firms. In general, the firms have a strong interest in getting qualified workers to fill current gaps in the workforce. The Chambers support this interest and the expectations involved in providing various support schemes for asylum seekers and refugees concerning their participation in the labour market. By the end of 2015, most of the Chambers of Crafts and most Chambers of Industry and Commerce had launched such measures. We estimate that at that point of time there were at least 150 schemes by the chambers and an increasing number of schemes launched by individual enterprises, even if this cannot be quantified exactly. All these schemes aim at:

- counselling enterprises who wish to train or to employ asylum seekers and refugees;
- enabling contacts between employers and refugees (e.g. job speed-dating, job fairs for refugees);
- help with the skills and needs assessment;
- practical job-trainings and internships for asylum seekers and refugees;
- joint projects with other labour-market institutions, participation in regional round tables for employment promotion etc.;
- individual coaching of asylum seekers and refugees who start an apprenticeship.
- In some cases, Chambers have launched their own vocational language courses.

In February 2016, the Federal Government, the Chambers of Crafts, and the Federal Employment Office jointly launched a qualification programme for refugees. Up until 2018, up to 10,000 young asylum seekers and refugees shall be trained so that they can start a formal apprenticeship. The programme is financed by the Federal government up to twenty million Euros.

Although many private firms show a real interest in employing asylum seekers and refugees, actual employment still seems to be rather low. Many companies offer internships or traineeships to give an insight into working life. Some companies offer a dual apprenticeship for young asylum seekers. For example, ThyssenKrupp will provide 150 apprenticeships and 230 internships until 2017. German Railways has started a qualification programme for 15 refugees with skills in electro-technical engineering to retrain them as electronic technicians for railway engineering. Siemens plans to create 100 internships for asylum seekers and refugees. In addition, a large number of small businesses provide work experience schemes for one or two persons from a refugee background.

5.2.7 Initiatives by civil society and by private actors

Labour-market integration is an arena of administrative action that has basically to be dealt with in a professional manner. However, additional initiatives by civil society and by private actors may play an important supportive role in employment promotion. Volunteers and mentors may help in delivering information about job realities in Germany or in arranging internships, practical job trainings and apprenticeships, and even regular jobs. Generally, volunteering activities in the context of asylum migration are booming in Germany, there is a wide range of private activities the quantity of which, however, cannot be easily assessed at the moment.

Various online portals are run by volunteers or NGOs for the job intermediation of asylum seekers: “worker.de”, “Everjobs”, “Work for Refugees” or “Erfolgspaten”. All these offer a matching service between asylum seekers who publish their job profile and employers who are willing to offer jobs to them. This voluntary engagement is a subsidiary offer to the administrative measures of labour-market integration.

5.2.8 General characteristics of REFISMES

Some outstanding features of labour-market integration support measures for asylum seekers and refugees which have been up and running since 2014 are the following:

Empowerment of labour-market institutions: Many measures aim at an empowerment of the labour-market institutions concerned – especially the Federal Employment Office, the local *Jobcenter*, and the employers' associations – to deal in a professional manner with the special requirements of asylum seekers and refugees. This is due to the fact that, for many years, asylum seekers and tolerated refugees were banned from legal work: there is, as a result, very little experience in this field. Typical empowerment measures are intercultural and legal trainings for the professional job counsellors.

Setting-up professional networks: At present, the institutions and labour-market integration actors are occupied with building up effective networking with regard to the target-group of asylum seekers and refugees. Existing measures for labour-market integration are assessed for their suitability for this special target group. Additionally, specialized measures are necessary to achieve migrants' regular employment. For example, the Federal Employment Office and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees now cooperate hard, in the field of the labour-market integration of asylum seekers. As a result of networking, new institutions arise, such as regional and one-stop local facilities for job-coaching asylum seekers and refugees.

Early intervention: The early involvement of asylum seekers in employment promotion during their asylum process is another new feature of German integration policy and labour-market policy. Before, such measures were, at best, limited to long-time tolerated refugees to enable them the chance of a legal residence.

Intermediation into qualified employment: One premise of current REFISMES is to assess the vocational competences of asylum seekers and refugees and to enable intermediation into a – preferably qualified – employment. The aim is to be supported with additional vocational education and training. The aim is not primarily to carry out quick intermediation in any job. The consideration behind this is to avoid competition between asylum newcomers and low-qualified Germans in precarious job conditions, competition which might generate hostility to migrants among Germans.

REFISMES mainstreaming: There is a clear strategy that labour-market integration support measures for asylum seekers and refugees are to be "mainstreamed" into more general support schemes for workers in general. Specific measures for asylum seekers and refugees are to be activated only in those cases where there is a specific gap in the existing regular support measures system. This refers mainly to vocational language courses, but also to more appropriate measures of skills assessment (which are still to be developed), to low-threshold skills development, as well as to appropriate measures for refugee women, for unqualified or disabled refugees.

Beneficiaries and financing: REFISMES beneficiaries are stakeholders in labour-market institutions, associations and employers, and the asylum seekers and refugees themselves. REFISMES actually means an empowerment of both of these groups. It is, therefore, difficult to assess the current financing of these measures. All institutions dealing with the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees have increased their budgets for 2016. However, a substantial part of this financing aims at expanding the administrative structures. For instance, in 2016, 2,800 new positions are to be created at the Federal Employment Office with regard to the tasks associated with refugee migrants. With regard to asylum seekers and refugees, an estimated figure of 10,000 persons, at most, benefitted from REFISMES in 2015: whereas only a small share of them have been transferred into an apprenticeship or formal employment. Thus, there is still an enormous need for REFISMES: taking into account the hundreds of thousands refugees that will have to be integrated into employment in the next years.

Restriction of measures to refugees with a high probability of being granted asylum: At present, most REFISMES are restricted to those asylum seekers who have a high statistical probability of being granted asylum or subsidiary protection status. Currently, these are refugees from Eritrea, Iran, Iraq and Syria. As in former years, there is a high risk involved in this strategy: A very high proportion of these refused asylum seekers could not, for various reasons, be returned to their countries of origin. There is a risk of creating another large group of long-term unemployed and non-integrated persons in Germany with secondary effects of poverty, mental disorders, delinquency etc.

5.3 Conclusions

Though active employment promotion is now considered for asylum seekers, there are still some substantial challenges on the way to the successful labour-market integration of hundreds of thousands of escaped persons. To mention some of the most urgent challenges:

- Formal vocational training is still an important precondition of entry into the German labour market. However, the current extremely high degree of formality, which also presumes proficiency in German seems far from appropriate for the German economy which is highly globalized and depends on the influx of foreign workers. What is needed – not only for refugees but for immigrants in general – is a more flexible skills assessment and possibilities for modular qualification. This would also meet the expectations of young refugees who want to get employed as quickly as possible. The challenge is to connect practical work with vocational qualifications.
- The prevalent strategy of “mainstreaming” refugee migrants into the general support schemes for the job-seeking proportion of the population, means that asylum seekers need information and guidance in the German vocational system. Knowledge about this has to be brought to refugees – and not the other way round. Active information strategies, which also use social media, are needed to include asylum seekers and refugees in the existing support schemes.
- Employers willing to employ refugees still face legal obstacles and bureaucratic delay that prevent them from educating or employing asylum seekers, tolerated refugees and even recognized refugees. The legal priority review the background for which is to protect German employers against foreign working competitors could be suspended in the current phase of a high demand for workers. Young asylum seekers who start an apprenticeship are to be granted a residence permit for at least five years to finish their apprenticeship and gain a minimum level of job experience for another two years.
- Women, unqualified persons and disabled refugees are special target groups who should not be forgotten in labour-market integration support measures. They will need specialized support schemes to effect labour-market entry.
- For many immigrants, self-employment is an important option in becoming independent from state subsidies and in improving social status. Up to now, the self-employment of refugees has hardly been considered. The dominant concept of “refugees as employees”, however, cannot, alone, solve the problems. Business start-ups for refugees should thus be supported as well. In our research we found one Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Hesse that planned to offer future counselling for start-ups and entrepreneurial coaching in Arabic (Aumüller 2016).
- Although it is not known how many asylum seekers and refugees are currently REFISMES beneficiaries, it is obvious that the number of new-arriving asylum seekers by far exceeds the possibilities of existing support schemes. Regarding this disproportion, concepts are needed to avoid the long-term unemployment of asylum seekers. One possibility could be job opportunities outside the private labour market which are combined with language tuition, skills development, job application training etc. Such measures would lead to better integration into German society than a long-lasting period of waiting for regular integration courses and formal vocational training. As there are few job opportunities for low-qualified employees, the possibilities of a social labour market should be explored – otherwise persons will move into the informal labour market.

The labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees should be handled as a flexible process which focuses on the individual requirements of the persons concerned. A long-lasting linear process – should be avoided: first step, language proficiency; second step, skills assessment; third step, getting vocational orientation; and so on.... Instead, the different elements of labour-market integration should be paralleled. Asylum seekers and refugees need individual coaching which also takes into account the needs of social integration – passing the legal asylum procedure, habitation, family unification, coping with trauma etc.

At the moment, knowledge about the long-term labour-market integration of refugees is scarce. As soon as persons are granted asylum, they “disappear” in official labour-market statistics which only differentiates between nationals and foreign nationals. Concerning asylum seekers, there is still very little experience about

good practices in labour-market integration, as it is only since 2014 that the first steps have been made towards the support of this group. Therefore, scientific results about good practice are scarce.

Concerning the model project “Early Intervention”, there are two evaluation reports indicating that the networking concept (the cooperation of different labour-market related institutions) has shown good results in creating differentiated and promising support measures for asylum seekers (Daumann *et al.* 2015; Büschel *et al.* 2015). Nevertheless, the actual quota of placements into real jobs did not reach 10 per cent. This shows that placing asylum seekers and refugees in regular employment is a time-consuming process, even if persons concerned have some qualifications from their countries of origin.

There are some innovative measures which seem to be promising for the future. According to our interview partners, the modular programme PerF (“Perspectives for Refugees”), implemented by the Federal Employment Office, may be a good starting point in a new practice of skills assessment. Furthermore, individual job coaching such as has been pioneered in some German states (see above), as well as the establishment of regional and local job service points for asylum seekers and refugees (see above), are new concepts in labour-market support which seem to fit the needs of this target group.

There are a number of contextual factors that may contribute to REFISMES success in Germany. The first concern the overall state of the labour market and of society. The situation of the labour market is currently characterized by low unemployment and a high demand for – mostly qualified – labour. With regard to society as a whole there is still a remarkable willingness to integrate newcomers and to incorporate them into the labour market. Employers are willing to hire refugees as workers. However, there is a certain mismatch concerning the employers’ expectations and the refugees and their qualifications. Whereas the former are interested in getting sufficiently qualified employees to fill vacancies, refugees seem to prefer a quick intermediation into any job which provides an income. Refugees still have to be convinced about the long-term advantages of job qualification, even if some years have to be invested. On the other hand, the German labour-market policies have to be better opened up towards the requirements of a globalized workforce, of which refugees are a part. This means more flexibility as concerns skills assessment, modular vocational training, on-the-job training, and new measures of combined language and job training.

To conclude, in a very short time, Germany has admitted enormously huge migrant group of which a substantial share will become, in the long term, part of the German population. However, there is still very little experience of how to integrate this group into the labour market. To steer this ongoing process it is of utmost importance to improve the existing database. Up to now it has not been possible to monitor the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees due to a lack of differentiated statistical data. This is why the Federal Employment Office plans to introduce a refugee indicator into the official labour-market statistics in 2016. This will be a very important step. Furthermore, the integration process should be accompanied by qualitative research in order that we may better analyze how the requirements of refugees differ from those of other migrant groups.

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5.5 List of Contacted Institutions and Experts

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Stefan Rechmann, Director, Jobcenter “Neue Wege”, District Bergstraße

Stefan Schiele, “Tür an Tür”, Augsburg

Barbara Schmidt, Federal Ministry for Work and Social Affairs, Berlin

Christian Sprenger, Federal Employment Office, Nuremberg

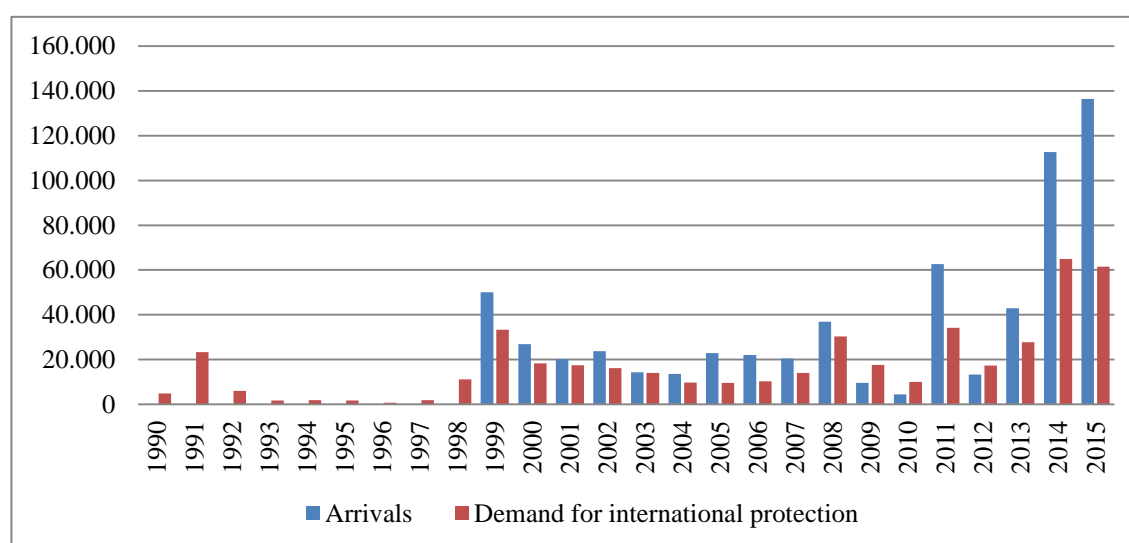
6 Case Study Italy

Alessandra Venturini

6.1 Background

Italy became an immigration country in 1990s. Little by little Italy was able to eliminate legalizations (7) as the main channels of entrance and by 2015 the total foreign population reached 5 million, 8 per cent of the total population. In 1990 the geographical reserve principal⁵¹ for the asylum seekers was eliminated (law 39), but the country did not perceive itself as a land for asylum seekers. In 1999 with crises in Albania and the former Yugoslavia there was a peak of asylum seekers which declined rapidly and in 2003 12,000 refugees were residing in Italy and 13,000 asylum seekers (see Figure 6.1).⁵²

Figure 6.1 Arrivals and Demand for International Protection 1990-2015



Source: Ministry of Interior Report, 2015

When, 2008-2011, the “Arab Spring” started in North African countries, Italian citizens discovered that not only irregular labour migrants, but also individuals in search of asylum were landing on its coasts. In one year the number of application for international protection tripled from 10,050 in 2010 to 34,115 in 2011 (see Figure 6.1) and an increasing difference between arrivals and demand for international protection started to characterize the phenomenon (see Fig. 6.1 and the difference between the two vertical lines). Italy’s position in the middle of the Mediterranean, made it the natural harbour for those desperate to cross into Europe⁵³.

In 2011 less than 50 per cent of the people who received support remained in the country, the rest left in search of a better future in Northern Europe, mainly Germany and Sweden, where they frequently had relatives who could help them. Very few arrivals wanted to remain in Italy, thus it was very difficult for local organizations to control them and to avoid their move north. Registration and finger printing (required by the Dublin convention) procedure were difficult to implement. These high inflows exerted a strong pressure on the national reception system and the country discovered that it was not prepared.

⁵⁰ Until the change in legislation Italy recognized only migrants coming from Eastern European countries as asylum seekers.

⁵¹ Dossier Statistico IMMIGRAZIONE, Rapporto UNAR 2014, edited by Centro Studi e Ricerche ODOS/Immigrazione Dossier Statistico.

⁵² Most arrivals crossed the Mediterranean and to avoid the continual loss of human lives in 2013 Italy implemented a program Mare Nostrum, run by the Coastal Navy, which tried to save lives. This program has, however, overloaded the Southern coastal areas by the need to provide first assistance services to unpredictable but often large number of potential refugees.

The priority of the Government was **first reception and assistance**. The first assistance was provided by the Centers for assistance to migrants (CDA/CPSA/CAS⁵⁴). In these centers migrants received emergency support, food, dress, medical assistance, linguistic support, which was frequently provided by non-governmental organization like, for instance, “Medices sans frontiers”, Save the children, Caritas, Italian Consortium for Solidarity, the Italian Council for Refugees, and Pastorale Migranti just to name the most important. But there were also many local voluntary associations. In these centers migrants were photo registered for identification purposes. Given the large number of people that arrived by boat or that were saved from drought these Centers were large and complex structure which hosted, temporarily, large numbers of people.

Later the Government turned to **second assistance**, which was mainly managed through the CARA (Centri di Accoglienza per Richiedenti Asilo), Centers for Assistance to Asylum Seekers. These centres hosted, generally, about 100 people with the notable exception of the Mineo CARA which hosted 2,000 people, like a small city and that was organized for the African emergency. In 2003 the SPRAR System for Protection of Asylum Seekers (Sistema di Protezione dei Richiedenti Asilo) was formalized, then, in 2013, it was expanded and became a pillar of the second phase of assistance to asylum seekers. Initially it was able to host 6,000 persons, it now manages some 22,000 and it will be expanded to be able to cater for 44,000⁵⁵. It is not managed by the Ministry of Interior through local prefects, as was the case with CARA and CAS. It was managed rather by the ANCI (Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani) Local Municipality Association. The success of this program is built on the previous experience of employing local municipalities, bodies which now become the most important actor in the second phase of assistance. The main characteristics of this program, which will be presented later in more detail, were three: small joint projects involving the Municipality and voluntary associations; reduced numbers of between ten and twenty foreign nationals; projects based out of small villages. Asylum seekers could be also hosted in the CIE (Centri di Identificazione ed Espulsione) Center for Identification and Expulsion, when their receive an expulsion certificate. Occasionally in the SPRAR and CARA centres foreigners who already had international protection documents are also temporarily hosted.

In 2015 Italy ended the program Mare Nostrum, which for one year has patrolled the Mediterranean to save migrant lives. It was replaced by the EU starting its programme Triton (Frontex Plus) with the participation of Member State Navies in patrolling the Mediterranean to save lives at sea. First assistance was still for Italy and Italy, Greece and other frontier countries insisted on cost-sharing to deal with refugee arrivals and for more formal resettlements inside the EU: all this was based on the principal of “intra EU solidarity”. This also meant a new organization of first and second assistance. First assistance was to be organized jointly with European functionaries through six forecast “Hotspots” (at the moment three are functioning). Here EU and Italian functionaries will assist and registers arrivals and, when needed, relocate them to another EU country. And then the SPRAR system for asylum seekers will be expanded to cope with as many as 44,000⁵⁶.

In the meantime Italians began to understand that their country was not only a transit area but that it was the third European country hosting refugees and that a broader approach should be taken. To implement the most appropriate program to integrate asylum seekers and refugees the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies drafted a multi-annual programming document, 2015-2020, on labour and integration policies.

⁵³ CDA Centro Di Accoglienza, Center for Assistance; CPSA Centro di Primo Soccorso ed Accoglienza, Center of first assistance and Reception; CAS Centro di Assistenza Temporanea Center for Temporary Assistance.

⁵⁴ Occasionally the SPRAR system can also host for a very short time foreigners who already have international protection because they belong to protected categories.

⁵⁵ For a more detailed analysis of the reception centres see Blangiardo, D’Orrico 2015, Caponio, Tarantino 2015, Pastore, Henry 2014, Tarantino *et al* 2015.

Table 6.1 Type and Coverage of Reception Centres, October 2015

Type	Number	Individuals covered	%
CAS Temporary structures	3,090	70,918	72
SPRAR Municipality centers	430 projects	21,814	21
CARA Government centers	13	7,290	7
CIE Center Identif. Expulsion	7	464	0.5
Total		99,096	100

Source: Ministry of Interior

6.2 Profile of recent asylum flows

Arrivals by boat

Arrivals by boat increased dramatically in 2014 (total of 170,000) with similar number in 2015, see Table 6.2. First assistance still attracts the energy and the attention of all the social structure engaged in humanitarian and charitable activities, but there has also been a speeding up of status recognition.

Table 6.2 Arrivals on the Italian Coasts

Year	Total	Sicily	Lampedusa
2011	62,692	57,181	50,483
2012	13,267	8,488	5,034
2013	42,925	37,886	4,739
2014	170,100	120,239	3,741
2015	153,842		19,019

Source: Ministry of Interior, 2016

Channel of entrance

The majority arrived by sea, and the Southern harbours and the island of Lampedusa have been at the center of flows. The main channel is through the Libyan harbours where migrants from Sub Saharan Africa and the Middle East have arrived. From 2013 to 2014 with the increase in instability in Libya the flow increased some four times (the majority males). Among the last inflows some 20 per cent arrived also by land through the Balkans.

National composition at arrival

In 2014, there were some 170,000 arrivals. These were dominated by Syrians (42,000) and Eritreans (34,000). In 2015 the total was 136,000 arrivals and here Eritreans dominated, followed by Nigerians and Somalians: Syrians at (7,448) were just the sixth community (see Table 6.3). This change in the composition suggests that the previous Syrian arrivals were just in transit, and that the decision of Germany to grant them asylum directed flows towards their preferred destination.

Table 6.3 Nationality Declared at Arrival

Country	2014		2015
Syria	42,323	Eritrea	39,162
Eritrea	34,329	Nigeria	22,237
Mali	9,908	Somalia	12,433
Nigeria	9,000	Sudan	8,932
Gambia	8,691	Gambia	8,454
Palestine	6,082	Syria	7,448
Somalia	5,756	Senegal	5,981
Senegal	4,933	Mali	5,826
Bangladesh	4,386	Bangladesh	5,040
Egypt	4,095	Morocco	4,647
Other	40,597	other	33,682
Total	170,100		153,842

Source: Ministry of Interior, web, 2016

Number of asylum seekers

As we explained in the introduction, not all arrivals became asylum seekers. Some of them went to other countries, others entered the undocumented foreign population. The registered number of asylum seekers in 2013 was 26,620 (total arrivals 43,040) and in 2014 64,886 (total arrivals 170,100) and, in 2015 86,000 (total arrivals 152,842). The national breakdown is always very interesting because it shows that Eritreans, who were the second community at arrival do not remain in the country. Italy is, instead, becoming a magnet for Sub-Saharan African asylum seekers (see Table 6.4).

Age and gender

The composition of asylum seekers in Italy is, on average, different from the one present in the other EU countries. The share of women and children was very small in 2014: 7.6 per cent women, and 6.8 per cent children. On average in Europe the two groups made up more than 50 per cent of the total stock: EU average 2014 29.7 per cent women and 25.5 per cent children. This is due to the prevailing culture in the country of origin but also because of the channel of arrival: i.e. mainly by boat from Libya which is a dangerous route.

Table 6.4 Asylum Seeker by Nationality

Country of Origin	2013	2014	% growth
Nigeria	3,519	10,138	188%
Mali	1,806	9,771	441%
Gambia	1,760	8,556	386%
Pakistan	3,232	7,191	122%
Senegal	1,021	4,678	358%
Bangladesh	464	4,582	888%
Afghanistan	2,056	3,180	55%
Ghana	577	2,178	277%
Ukraine	34	2,149	6,221%
Ivory Cost	259	1,511	483%
Guinea	171	935	447%
Somalia	2,774	812	-71%
Iraq	555	802	45%
Egypt	907	671	-26%
Syria	635	505	-20%
Tunisia	509	484	-5%
Eritrea	2,109	480	-77%
Guinea Bissau	117	415	255%
Turkey	495	413	-17%
Iran	396	394	-1%
Others	3,226	5,041	56%
Total	26,620	64,886	144%

Source: Ministry of Interior, 2015

Asylum recognition

In 2015, 71,000 cases were examined and contrary to previous experience 44 per cent obtained various forms of protection: 5 per cent refugee status, 16 per cent subsidiary protection, 21 per cent humanitarian protection. This was much less than before where in general more than, on average, 60 per cent were accepted, while 51 per cent were rejected and 4 per cent lost (see Table 6.5). The per centage reduction in permits granted is imputable to a reduction of refugees and a share of subsidiary protection which implies a changing type of flow. The high number of refusals and the subsequent appeals implemented increase the work load of the administration and expand the time needed to close the procedure and the cost for second assistance as migrants remain in reception centres.

Territorial distribution

While until 2013 the main regions providing support to asylum seekers were Sicily 42 per cent, Latium 15 per cent, Apulia 14 per cent and Calabria 12 per cent, little by little the Northern regions were introduced into the assistance process and in 2015 Lombardy and Sicily had the same share of asylum seekers 13 per cent, Lazio 9 per cent, Campania 8 per cent, Piedmont 7 per cent, Veneto 7 per cent, Toscana 7 per cent, and Emilia Romagna 6 per cent⁵⁷.

⁵⁶ Data provided by the Ministry of Interior 2015, p 31.

Table 6.5 Results of Asylum Seeker Hearings

Migrants categories	2013	%	2014	%	2015	%
Refugees	3,078	13	3,649	10	3,349	5
Subsidiary protection	5,564	24	8,121	22	9,942	16
Humanitarian protection	5,750	24	10,091	28	14,521	23
Refusal	6,765	29	13,327	37	33,660	51
Others	2,477	10	1,142	3	2,640	4
Total	23,634	100	36,330	100	66,490	100

Source: Ministry of Interior, 2016

6.3 Benefits granted by different status

The decree of 15 July 2015, n 142, has extended to 6 months the permit that the **asylum seeker** receives. It can be renewed until a decision on the status is taken. Article 21 defined access to health services and to schools for children. Article 22, following the EU directive, allows for entrance to the labour market after only two months (before this it had been six months) from the presentation of the demand for international protection. However, it cannot be transformed into a work permit. During this period asylum seekers receive in kind or monetary support.

Foreign nationals who receive **refugees status or subsidiary protection** are granted a five-year renewable residency permit, which can be transformed into a working permit. It allows: registration at the local municipality; family reunification without house and income tests; a travel document (like a passport); and equal treatment to natives for work, social, health and house assistance. In particular, regarding paid employment, self-employment, and inclusion on professional registers, vocational training and on-the-job training refugees are treated as natives (Law No 154 of 7 October 2014). They receive native citizen access to the welfare state which implies the possibility of receiving income support for old age (65+), invalidity, maternity and large families (three minors or more). Citizenship can be acquired after only five years for refugees and ten years for holders of subsidiary protection and only after a tax declaration test for both.

The holder of a permit for **humanitarian protection** receives a permit for only two years, but they otherwise have the same rights as holders of subsidiary protection. More restrictive, however, is family reunification where a house and income test is requested. This last category of permit holders has a strong incentive to find a job and to transform their permit into a working permit.

There is also the possibility of granting *temporary protection (art.20)* to individuals coming from crisis-ridden areas for six months. This allows holders to work, and can be, at a later date, transformed into a permit for humanitarian protection.

6.4 Management for the Assistance and Integration of Asylum Seekers

During the second phase of assistance two types of system are at work with different actors:

- CARA (Centri di Accoglienza per Richiedenti Asilo) centers for the assistance of asylum seekers managed by the Government through local prefects, which use public or private structure in large, general buildings. There are only thirteen CARA centres which in 2015 hosted 7,290 people (see Table 6.1). They are planned by the Direction for civil services for immigration and asylum, but they are managed by the territorial representatives of the Government (prefects) which stipulate “contracts” with private institutions, associations or cooperatives to provide services.

- SPRAR which is based upon projects financed by the National Fund for Policies and Asylum Services (FNPSA)⁵⁸ and which is run by Municipality Association (ANCI) and by non-governmental associations. Local municipalities co-funded the project for an 23 per cent, though this has now been reduced to 5 per cent. In 2014-5 SPRAR has 430 projects with some 22,000 involved.

In 2014 CARA (CDA, CPSA, CIE) hosted 9,627 individuals for 139,000,000 euros, while the same year SPRAR hosted 22,961 persons for 197,499,225. If we add the cost of temporary structures, which are mainly looked after by first assistance helpers and which hosted 35,562 individuals for 297,000,000 euros, the total cost of first and second assistance is some 633 million⁵⁹. According to the references presented in the Ministry of Labour report (2015)⁶⁰ the *per capita* cost in Italy is lower than in Germany and Sweden, but higher than in France and the U.K.

Very little research exists on the functioning of these different structures. The first one seems less efficient because the large size of the structure seems not as well suited to granting tailored assistance and also quality controls for services are more difficult and very diverse.

The ongoing research of Stangers and Woffs (2016), who collected individual data at a CARA in Calabria, seems to suggest that youngsters with higher aspirations and better chances leave this type of structure and, very often, the country. This behaviour is in line with the general practice of labour migrants. Strom *et al* (2014) studying the wage profile of migrants in Italy finds that the “best” leave the country while the “worst” remain. This pattern is induced by the structure of the job market: there are low skill jobs with no career prospect. Migrants are concentrated in construction, agriculture and the family sector and these do not offer many upgrading options. The general impression and also the evaluation of the Ministry of Interior Report (2015) point out many positive experiences with the SPRAR project.

6.4.1 A Comparison of the SPRAR and CARA Systems

Key Success Characteristics of SPRAR

Small groups in general 10-20 persons, if possible families, and special projects for lonely minors and mentally disabled individuals.

Distributed in all the country by the ANCI Italian association of municipalities across a small area (principal of boarder sharing via a dispersal system⁶¹);

Organized by specific **projects** (463 in 1915) jointly managed by the local municipality, a local **voluntary association** which is in charge of the everyday management of adult foreign nationals (20,752), providing lodging, health assistance, psychological support, food, language courses, professional support in preparation of the hearing, skill screening, training courses and, last but not least, knowledge and skills for social integration. Special projects were devoted to minors (52 projects 943 minors) or to individuals with psychiatric problems and physical disabilities who need special support (31 projects 295).

The project lasts for six months and can, then, be extended for another six months. If international protection is not received and an appeal procedure is implemented any foreign national keep the status of asylum seeker until the final decision and he or she can remain in the structure where he is assigned. Abandoning the structure implies the end of support.

⁵⁷This is coordinated by the Central Directorate for Civil Services for Immigration and Asylum from out of the Department for civil freedom and immigration of the Ministry of Interior.

⁵⁸ See page 53 of the Ministry of Interior report.

⁵⁹ See page 54. The presentation of the results of the Leonessa Foundation research are also presented, which focus on the fiscal cost and benefits of migration.

⁶⁰ EMN, 2014, The Organization of Reception Facilities for Asylum Seekers in different Member States, European Migration Network Study, p.4.

The project receives funding directly from SPRAR and the project is given 34 euros per day for an adult and 76 euros per day for a child: and the voluntary association is responsible of the spending. The migrant receives some pocket money each day (1-3 euros) but all services are in kind.

The projects are not imposed to municipalities, thus the first problem to solve was to convince the Mayors to accept the project in their Municipality: which means a group of foreign nationals, with more men than women. Local resistance has been surmounted by long negotiation and the voluntary supply of services to the community organized with the Municipality by the association and the migrants played a positive role. Thus the asylum seekers declared themselves available for small jobs like, for instance, cleaning gardens, repairing streets, cleaning rivers etc: in line with the needs of the community. This increased their contact with the local community and made them proud of their contribution and introduced them into the social rules of the destination community. This approach relied upon the idea of Putnam (1993) that refugees need to rebuild trust and reciprocity feelings. Colson (2003) points out that the trust cannot be built unless reciprocated⁶². Masso (2009) also point out the important of personal experience at local level which are more efficient than national policies.

The success of the project can be measure by the rate of international protection status recognition, which is 70 per cent, much higher than the national average.

We should, however, remember that migrants that enter the SPRAR system are self-selected. In other words, they are people in search of refugee status, thus they invested in the experience fully. The foreign nationals who know that their status will not be recognized, do not want to abandon the CARA system for SPRAR, for instance⁶³.

The success of the SPRAR projects can be explained by the *possibility of tailoring the project to the needs of the destination Municipality and to the needs of the asylum seekers*. The list of good practices reported in the Ministry of Interior report (2015)⁶⁴, in the SPRAR report, in the Prefecture and in the EMN country case report show that the success story are all tailored to the local job market and the talents of the migrants. Unfortunately, these reports are just a list of good practices implemented in different cities at different times. There is no real evaluation, just an interest in learning from different experiences create future guidelines.

We list here a few SPRAR success stories: in Rome, the attendance by migrants at a locally-organized sewing course and the discovery of previous sewing experience among other migrants and the charitable offer of sewing machines produced a small sewing circle. In rural areas instead agricultural experience allowed the creation of a modest farm. Linguistic ability in English and French of two asylum applicants transformed them to support teachers in the local school. A “cous cous” cooking course was organized. In few cases special courses have been organized and supervision in “how to use money” and financial loans to avoid debts in future life.

It is clear that there is not a single strategy but many tailored strategies which are organized by informal contracts or formal conventions with supporting private or public institutions.

Analysis of the possible economic costs for hosting municipalities are not particularly positive largely negative (Ministry of Interior, 2015). In the province with most SPRAR projects the number of third country national employers is higher and the total number seems to increase somewhat. In addition in the areas with more SPRAR projects the reduction of employment during the recession is lower, more services for children are provided and also criminal activity seems lower. Far from attributing these positive effects to SPRAR, the results point out that no large negative effect is visible.

⁶¹ Comments of Fiorella Rathaus on the concept of integration in Fondo Europeo per i rifugiati 2008-2013, 2013, p.14.

⁶² Seminar of Daniela Di Capua director of the SPRAR system.

⁶³ And also by the annual report of the SPRAR, and the report on good policies 2007-2008.

A Comparison of the CARA and SPRAR Systems

Both the CARA system and the SPRAR systems provide: lodging, psychological support, language courses, cultural integration courses, labour counseling, direct training courses and information about the regional courses provided locally, and job-matching information.

Both use cultural mediators and train their staff accurately to favour professional and human assistance. SPRAR is becoming the point of reference for training personnel for centres. The Government has also created a register of the associations involved in asylum seeker assistance and helping individuals with international protection. The state has done so to monitor their involvement and service quality.

The number of courses implemented could be an indicator of the engagement of the structure in the labour-integration processes. However, no systematic information upon the duration of the course, and the quality of the education are available. The information we have is occasional and the result of the job placing could of course depend upon the quality of the services provided but also upon the human capital of the selected migrants participating in the projects.

The only deeper evaluation of the effectiveness of CARA and SPRAR was undertaken by the European Fund for Refugees, 2008-2013. The research is very rich with many in depth interviews. However, the limited sample of 222 asylum seekers (178 male - 44 female) does not allow a clear evaluation of the programs. 72 per cent had been in Italy for at least four years. 41 per cent had children and 22 per cent had children in Italy, 51 per cent had a job, while 75 per cent of these appreciated the job they were doing. 10 per cent had not followed a training course while 71 per cent had. The probability of having a job was just a little higher if migrants had attended a training course. 50 per cent of asylum seekers staying in a CARA center had a job, while 64 per cent in SPRAR centres⁶⁵. Even if very interesting, the limitation of the sampling and a sample dominated by Ethiopians, Eritreans, Somalians, Ivorians and Congolese, do not favour extrapolations for new waves of asylum seekers from different backgrounds.

6.4.2 Management of the Assistance of Individuals Granted International Protection

Being recognized as refugees or having a right to subsidiary or humanitarian protection is not a sufficient basis for a new life in Italy⁶⁶.

Refugees have the same rights of natives: equal access to training courses, to job placing offices, housing services, health assistance, schools for children etc. In addition they have the same access as other labour migrants to specific language and training courses. There has not been, despite repeated suggestions, a program tailored for the labour-market integration of foreigners with international protection. Nor does the 2015 Ministry of labour report on "Migrants in the Italian Labour market" present any information on the assimilation of asylum or internationally protected individuals.

Italy has a very limited welfare system. Unemployment benefits are granted only to fired workers or for temporary restructuring of firms⁶⁷. Migrants, like all citizens, receive income support only in few cases: for old age (65+), invalidity, maternity and large families with three or more children.

The very high national unemployment rate, 12 per cent or 45 per cent among the young gives some sense of the difficulties of the labour market. Labour migrants have an even higher unemployment rate, 18 per cent. The labour market data reveals two important pieces of information: first that the demand for labour is low and second that the labour-market system is unable to match demand and supply for natives let alone for

⁶⁴ Some of the SPRAR projects for minors (Lamezia and Acri) were very effective and followed the subjects after the end of their stay in the structure, knowing that they were the only point of reference for their life.

⁶⁵ They can receive a monetary voucher for the house.

⁶⁶ Earning integration special funds.

foreign nationals. It is difficult to expect a better match for refugees even if the association supporting refugees supports integration.

The informal economy is, instead, widespread. According to ISTAT (see Mistero del lavoro 2015) irregular employment ranged from 30 per cent of total employment in Calabria to 10 per cent in Emilia Romagna. Integration in the informal economy seems to be an option for many foreign nationals, but while in the short run this could be positive, in the long run it does not represent a channel for integration.

At the national level there is the need to coordinate support measures for refugees and in general for the unemployed, which are competences of regional governments. For that reason a Migrant Integration Portal (Vivere e Lavorare in Italia, Living and working in Italy) has been organized. It is the national point of reference for integration policies. It provides information and services both for public actors Ministries, Regions, local authorities and private non-profit organizations and also for migrants. Each month a newsletter is published in ten languages with summaries of all the news from the Portal.

(i) Refugees and asylum seekers have access to the Job Placing offices (Centri per l'Impiego) like natives and labour migrants. These offices provide information on the job market, skill mapping for the candidate, counseling and advice on the most appropriate training courses organized by the regional government. Foreign nationals can also apply for a *stage* or a training course in a firm, which should give them a better idea of their ability and of the investment required to meet employers demands.

Being registered is not compulsory, but it allows access to job and training course information and is a requirement for specific subsidies mentioned before and also for exemptions for health vouchers.

In large cities there are also additional services to help to find jobs organized by the local municipality. They are called Sportelli di orientamento al lavoro and replicate what the Centri per l'Impiego do. There are also internet services. The most famous is Cliclavoro www.cliclavoro.gov.it, which can be used with the assistance of a cultural mediator or professional personnel. Large cities with large numbers of asylum seekers are trying to implement specific programs, supported in foreign languages. But at the moment voluntary associations are still providing support for the integration of foreigners, in the first, second and third phases of the integration process.

The services implemented for migrants depends upon the funding and particularly upon EU funding.

(ii)- *Special training courses* are organized at the local level inside the national PON (Piano nazionale per l'Occupazione) with a specific (POS) regional plans and programs financed by the European Social Fund. Many regions organized these programs⁶⁸ and these courses are specific for refugees and are also open to asylum seekers. Information in the Turin region describes a program for 350 individuals, 2007-2013. A group of 150 individuals who knew Italian and had previous professional experiences were offered the *stage* programme, a six months work experience, and they received 350 euros per month. Nine were hired immediately and 31 at the end of the stage. 200 were, instead, given training courses to increase "employability", reinforce their autonomy and provide a large set of competencies. The courses included a language component. The programs seem very important but they are limited in terms of the numbers involved and last year it was not implemented, as it depended on the national redistribution of FES funding.

Additional training courses were organized at local level by NGOs, but if the information on the courses organized inside the national employment plan (PON) are limited, the information on the local courses are even more fragmented. There are no ideas on the length, attendance and program type. It is questionable if the main objective of the courses was to keep the migrants busy with an activity and make them feeling more

⁶⁷ Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Puglia, Sardegna, Sicilia, Molise and Piemonte.

integrated or if the organisers really wanted to provide professional skills needed in the area. However, even if only the first objective was met they were valuable.

A new pilot programme named INSIDE was implemented in 2015 and will continue until 2020. It is designed for holder of international protection and the programme is supposed to provide a mix of active labour-market policy services and improving individual skills to enhance employability. Unfortunately, so far only the selection of the projects have gone ahead.

(iii) Also, the *recognition of the education* and of previous experiences, have not, so far, forecast any special channel for asylum and refugees even if exceptions have sometime been made. For them, however, it is much more difficult to have their previous education recognised because the Ministry of education needs the original certificate, which is rarely available.

When is impossible to get education levels recognised, the best strategy is to inquire into the recognition of previous learning and then explore the possibility of a national exam to get the Italian certificate. The Ministry of the Education organizes free evening courses at local level for these exams. These are not specifically for migrants but are attended mainly by foreign nationals. Of course, Italian knowledge is key here.

If instead the migrant want to invest in his education, the Italian public education system is open to any foreign nationals, including asylum seekers and refugees. The possibility of vocational education is provided by the Istituti di Istruzione tecnica superior (IFTS) with twenty different types of specialization. The increasing number of online courses for working students increase their chance to participate.

(iv) *Language courses* are organized at the local level by the FAMI Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration⁶⁹ (OS2) which intend to reduce discrimination against foreigners in terms of access to national services. The courses are organized by the Regional Directorate for Education, in public schools at local level where centres for Adults education were active (CPIA Provincial Adult Education Centre). They are free and allow migrants to pass the A1 and A2 tests which are needed for employment in public administration and the last one is needed for long-stay residency permission. Schedule frequently do not match working engagements, which makes attendance difficult. Language courses are also organized by the NGO in charge of the second phase of assistance, but even if very precious these are not recognized and any foreign student has to pass a subsequent exam in a public structure.

(v) For *children* there are many educational options in the public system and professors to integrate those with weaknesses.

(vi) A promising new area of integration implemented by the ministry of Labour with the Italian National Olympic Committee is *integration through sport*.

6.5 Conclusions

The Italian government has slowly moved from an emergency approach, providing first assistance to those landing in Italy, to a more structured approach which provides tailored support to the person who has asked for international protection. The second assistance of the asylum seekers is tailored in both senses. First, it is tailored to the needs of the asylum applicant. But it is also tailored to the needs of the Municipality which hosts the asylum applicants. The integration process starts in fact in this initial phase, where people arrive and have to be guided into the social and administrative rules of the destination area so as to find a space for integration. Work with NGO or humanitarian or charitable association is vital because these manage the everyday life of migrants and their everyday integration. From what emerges there is not a clear distinction

⁶⁹ The program also has in its OS3 section a program to assist voluntary return.

between associations involved in first or second assistance or devoted to foreigners with international protection or labour migrants. There is, instead, a distinction between large associations with local units like, for instance, Caritas, Save the children, Medicins sans frontiers and small local NGOs. The large variety of associations makes difficult to have structured information on their involvement and actions, and the Ministry of Interior has, for the moment, only created a list of accredited institutions, which can be part of assistance projects.

The government is planning specific support for persons who already have international protection. Until now there was no concerted action but many concrete actions to support those in special need like, for instance, single mother with small children, people with handicaps are supported by charitable institution and the social services.

The Italian welfare system is universalistic. In other words it takes care of all people in need to avoid competition between the large Italian unemployed population and foreign nationals in need of assistance. However, without specific protection for foreigners, the criteria for social housing which takes into account the number of children, favours some foreigner national communities against natives creating a war among the more needy. The very high unemployment rate which worsened after the recession and structural youth unemployment discourages a revision of welfare distribution in favour of new categories.

Given the lack of any tailored measure for refugees, the support obtained in the previous phase becomes even more crucial. Reducing the duration of the asylum phase does not seem particularly productive because it would penalize these foreign nationals because only in this phase do they receive tailored support.

In addition even if the Italian Government has reduced the period in which the asylum seekers cannot work to two months, this strategy should be looked at more carefully. If having a job allows a foreign national to feel that he or she belongs and that they can rebuild their life, the limited knowledge of the destination language reduces the chances of upgrading and real integration, as MPI research shows⁷⁰. Probably, more language training before the labour market would be more appropriate.

The Italian government should, however, start to distinguish between migrants according to the type of entrance and consider migrants a diversified group. Until now as the 2015 report on "Migrants in the Italian labour market" clearly shows, no mention of the word "Refugee or Asylum" appears in all the volume. A better knowledge would allow credible suggestions for additional support to asylum seekers, even after their recognition as refugees. This would avoid the risk that needy persons remain without a house and employment relying upon humanitarian associations which help the homeless in dorms (in the North SERMIG, CARITAS are important organization involved in this activity) and charitable institutions which provide food and clothes. These associations try, when possible, to direct the marginal people to less marginal situations and provide counselling and training, but this service is again universal, with no target to refugee needs.

⁶⁹ MPI, 2016, New Federal Guidance for Implementation of WIOA Law Misses Opportunities to Support LEP/Immigrant Adults <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/news/federal-wioa-plan-requirements-ignore-opportunities-support-equitable-access-immigrantlep>.

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6.7 List of contacted institutions and experts

Ugo Melchionda, former IOM and President IDOS Centre (Caritas report)

Corrado Bonifazi, Director CNR-IRPPS, EMN Focal Point

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Dottor Donatella Giunti, Prefettura di Torino

Irene Ponzio, Deputy Director FIERI research centre

Marzia Sica, Compagnia di San Paolo, foundation funding migrant support measures

Dottor Giorgio Riso, Ufficio del lavoro di Torino

Dott. ssa Miranda Andreatta, Special Unit of the Ufficio regionale dell'Impiego

7 Case Study the Netherlands

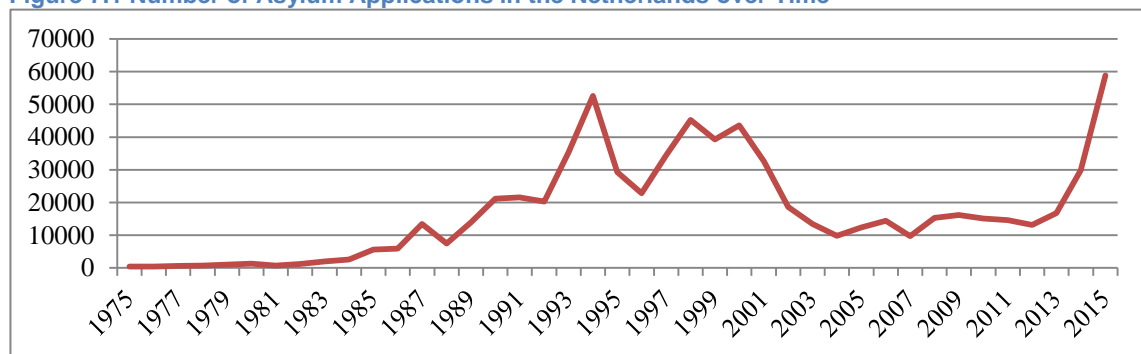
Aslan Zorlu
Inge van der Welle

7.1 Background: Profile of recent refugee flows

Since the mid-1980s, the Netherlands has attracted asylum seekers from conflict zones. In the early 1990s, large numbers of asylum applications were processed. After growing social and political tensions, a much stricter asylum policy was introduced in 2000, after which asylum applications were drastically cut and these remained at a low level up to 2014 (Figure 7.1).

From 2013 to 2014, the number of asylum applications more than doubled in the Netherlands. Since summer 2015, the Netherlands has been one of major destination countries for recent mass flows of asylum seekers. Table 7.1 shows gender and age composition of both first applicants and follow-up migrants (family members of asylum seekers). The vast majority of recent first applicants (circa 70 per cent) are men and about 20 per cent of male asylum migrants are minors. The majority (circa 60 per cent) of follow-up migrants are, meanwhile, women. Interestingly, the share of minors includes more females than males.

Figure 7.1 Number of Asylum Applications in the Netherlands over Time



Source: CBS Statline 2016.

According to statistics provided by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND), about 58,880 asylum applications were filed in 2015. This includes repeated asylum applications and family reunification applications. This is the highest number of applications ever in a year. The former peak was in the mid-1990s (about 52,500 applications in 1994)⁷¹. Of the total number of applications 43,093 were first asylum applications, thus new arrivals to the Netherlands. Looking at first asylum applications, most of asylum seekers come from: the Syrian Arab Republic (43 per cent); followed by Eritrea (17 per cent); Iraq (7 per cent); and Afghanistan (6 per cent). A substantial number of applicants are registered as stateless (7 per cent): these are mostly Palestinians from Syria (IND 2015). In 2015 almost 14,000 people arrived in the Netherlands through family reunification, mainly coming from the Syrian Arab Republic (65 per cent) and Eritrea (7 per cent) or who were stateless (18 per cent).

⁷⁰ Press release by COA, 12-01-2016. Accessed 21 March 2016. <https://www.coa.nl/nl/nieuws/totale-instroom-2015-was-59100>.

Table 7.1 Inflow of Asylum Seekers

	Fist Applicants					(Tied) follow-uppers				
	Total	Men of which		Women of which		Total	Men of which		Women of which	
		%	% (<18)	%	% (<18)		%	% (<18)	%	% (<18)
2013	9,840	62.1	24.7	37.9	34.6	3,630	45.0	81.3	54.8	61.8
2014	21,810	73.1	17.8	26.9	31.4	5,355	40.9	83.8	59.2	54.4
2015 January	895	70.4	16.7	29.6	26.4	705	41.1	81.0	58.9	54.2
2015 February	735	67.3	18.2	32.7	22.9	585	39.3	82.6	60.7	52.1
2015 March	805	65.8	19.8	34.2	32.7	560	41.1	87.0	59.8	47.8
2015 April	1,140	71.5	20.9	28.1	29.7	585	42.7	84.0	56.4	47.0
2015 May	2,250	70.7	19.5	29.6	22.6	1,000	37.0	83.8	62.5	49.6
2015 June	2,925	70.9	20.5	29.1	26.5	1,245	39.0	85.6	61.0	50.7
2015 July	2,980	74.5	21.4	25.5	26.3	1,645	38.3	86.5	61.7	50.2
2015 August	5,330	77.2	19.8	22.8	25.9	1,610	38.5	83.1	61.5	47.5
2015 September	6,435	79.2	20.3	20.8	30.2	1,970	40.6	79.4	59.4	45.7
2015 October	9,980	73.7	20.7	26.3	28.4	1,740	41.4	77.1	58.6	43.6
2015 November	6,240	69.9	26.5	30.1	31.1	1,065	39.0	72.3	61.0	43.1
2015 December	3,380	66.4	29.4	33.6	36.6	1,175	41.3	70.1	58.7	43.5

Source: CBS, Statline 2016

At 11 January 2016, 47,518 asylum seekers and refugees were staying in a reception centre in the Netherlands. The majority were male (69 per cent) and the biggest share was between 18-29 years old (38 per cent). About a quarter (26 per cent) of the residents of asylum reception centers were minors (see Table 7.2).

Table 7.2 Asylum Seekers and Refugees Residing in Reception Centers in the Netherlands, 25 January 2016 by Age and Gender (in per cent)

Age	Men	Women	Number
0-3 year	4.0	8.0	2,493
4-11 year	7.6	14.3	4,581
12-17 year	11.0	9.8	5,031
18-29 year	40.1	33.5	17,992
30-39 year	21.9	17.8	9,754
40-49 year	10.1	9.1	4,629
50-59 year	3.8	4.5	1,889
>60	1.4	2.9	896
Total	100	100	
Number	32,570	14,695	47,265

Source: COA 2016⁷²

Little is known about the qualification levels and the employment records of recent arrivals. In 2014 half of the Eritreans and 62 per cent of the Syrians, the two largest groups amongst recent arrivals, received social security payments (CBS 2015). According to estimates by COA, about one third of the recent arrivals have been through higher education (HBO/WO).

⁷¹ Statistics provided by COA: Accessed 21 March 2016. <https://www.coa.nl/nl/over-coa/cijfers>.

7.2 Legal Framework for Labour-Market Access

While in the asylum procedure, asylum seekers are not allowed to work for the first six months. If the asylum procedure takes longer than six months, asylum seekers can apply for a work permit. (tewerkstellingsvergunning – TWV). If a work permit is granted, asylum seekers are allowed to work 24 weeks a year. Working as a performing artist, a musician, in films or as technical assistant during performances is allowed for fourteen weeks a year.⁷³ A labour-market check, meaning a third-country national is only granted a work permit if there is no Dutch or EU-citizen available for the vacancy. This does not apply to asylum seekers.

Asylum seekers who have been granted a residence permit – this is a residence permit for a maximum of five consecutive years – are allowed to work without further requirements or restrictions. They do not need to apply for a work permit as, since 1 April 2014, a single work-residence permit has been introduced.

Labour-Market Orientation and Participation Statement as Part of Civic Integration Requirements

After being granted a residence permit, refugees have a civic integration requirement under the Civic Integration Act, like all foreign nationals from outside the EEA, Switzerland and Turkey between eighteen-years of age and state pension age. Within three years of being granted residence status, refugees have to pass a civic integration exam. Besides testing command of Dutch, the exam entails questions about Dutch norms and values as well as practical issues like finding work and the kinds of schools available for children. As of 1 January 2015 orientation on the Dutch labour market is a compulsory part of the integration exam. Additionally, a “participation statement trajectory” (het participatieverklaringstraject) has been introduced. There are two legal requirements for refugees in this trajectory: obligatory signing of the participation statement and participating in a workshop about “the fundamental values of Dutch society”. Those who refuse to sign the statement can be fined and are not entitled to Dutch citizenship or a permanent residence permit.⁷⁴ The participation statement includes the fundamental values of Dutch society as well as the main rights and obligations. The intention of described requirements is avoiding so called “lost time” from “lock-in effects” meaning refugees or migrants having no time to look for a job because of participation in language courses or preparation for the exams (Klaver et al 2015, OECD 2008).

Individual Responsibility for the Integration Process

The responsibility for the integration process has been individualized. As of 1 January 2013 the integration process is considered one’s own responsibility and municipalities no longer have a legal obligation to facilitate the integration process. However, refugees are the only group still entitled to some basic support by the municipality in their integration process.

Favouring General Employment Policies

In the past the authorities favored general/mainstream policies instead of target group policies. With regard to labour-market integration, the focus for example is on mainstream employment policies that should cater for the entire working age population and reticence to complementary services to overcome refugee or migrant specific employment obstacles. 1 January 2015 the Participation Act came into effect promoting reintegration of people with a so called “distance to the labour market”. The Act aims to increase labour force participation and reduce long-term benefit dependency, for example through the use of wage subsidies or compensation for extra costs. As of 1 January 2016 the Act Language Requirement (Wet Taaleis WWB) came into effect. The Acts provides more opportunities for municipalities to stimulate participation in language courses for refugees receiving social benefits.

⁷² <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/asielbeleid/vraag-en-antwoord/mogen-asielzoekers-werken>.

⁷³ Kamerbrief Participatieverklaring, 27 November 2015.

7.3 Policy approach

Recently, the Taskforce Work and Integration Refugees (TWIV) has been installed in which a broad array of authorities and organizations join forces to speed up the integration process and the participation of refugees. The Taskforce aims to invest in screening, matching, integration and improving information exchange and knowledge sharing between the authorities, businesses and organizations involved. There follows policy approaches towards refugees and asylum seekers and an assessment of how these have evolved recently for the main types of refugees integration measures.

7.3.1 Skills and needs assessment

COA, the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers, helps asylum seekers with their initial integration into Dutch society, as soon as they receive a residence permit. In many cases refugees do not have any proof of their formal qualifications or prior learning in their countries of origin. At the local reception centres COA assists asylum seekers (with residence permits) in preparing a portfolio in which prior learning and education are mapped out in as detailed a way as possible (called “the blue dossier”). However, to get these qualifications recognized formal proof and/or a recognition procedure is necessary (see qualifications and skills). Because of privacy, the portfolios are not automatically available for municipalities or other authorities involved. As the length of asylum procedures has been increasing due to the high influx of asylum seekers and asylum seekers are moving regularly between reception centres information gets lost or is not registered at all. Individual skills and needs are not taken into account when it comes to refugee housing.

7.3.2 Skills development

The main aim here is to start the integration process as soon as possible by language learning and lessons about Dutch society. Depending on availability, asylum seekers can voluntarily start a civic integration course during their stay in a reception centre. As soon as they receive a residence permit (status) and move to a municipality refugees can start a participation trajectory and integration courses to be able to pass the civic integration exam. Refugees receive a performance-related, conditional loan (max. €10.000) for integration and language courses. If they pass the civic integration within three years, the loan will turn into a gift. If one is not able to pass the civic integration exam, (s)he must refund this money. An additional consequence of not having the formal civic integration qualification is that individuals become ineligible for naturalization. The exams for Dutch as second language (NT2) are different levels, i.e. A1 (lowest), A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2 (the highest), depending on the foreign qualifications of immigrants. These levels correspond with language levels of Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Unskilled immigrants are expected to obtain NT-A2, the lowest level of the integration exam, while the NT2-B2 is required for those immigrants who wish to study at colleges and universities.

Until 30 years old refugees can apply for a study related grant. Refugees older than 30 years are dependent on the municipality where they reside. Several municipalities (e.g. Amsterdam, Utrecht, Heerlen) deliberately offer the possibility of studying while retaining welfare benefits.

7.3.3 Recognition of qualifications and skills

With regard to credential evaluation there has been a shift from recognition of former qualifications and skills based on formal proof only, towards complementary procedures for issuing an indication of the education level of migrants and refugees. This is especially beneficial for refugees as many refugees lack formal proof of their education (e.g. diplomas) and contacting the authorities in the country of origin or going there is not safe (Van der Welle 2009, Klaver *et al* 2015, Von Oven and Roos 2016). Two organizations provide credential evaluations: EP-Nuffic (higher education) and SBB (vocational training). In 2012, the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations (and afterwards the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment - SZW) launched a pilot project (implemented by EP-Nuffic and SBB) to develop a complementary procedure for credential evaluation based solely on information provided by the refugee, without formal proof of qualifications. This

resulted in an official 'education level indicator' (Indicatie Onderwijsniveau) of foreign credentials. Experiences were positive, and as of 1 January 2015 the Ministry SZW ordered that education level indication be offered to all migrants subject of the Civic Integration Act who cannot provide documentation to prove their education level. Therefore, currently there are two options for the formal recognition of qualifications and skills: credential evaluation (based on formal proof) and education level indication. "Competence interviews" can be part of the credential evaluation procedure. Applying for these procedures has been put into the civic integration courses as part of orientation on the Dutch labour market.

Because of the high number of refugees currently arriving in the Netherlands an extra credential evaluation desk has been set up and experts on education systems in the Middle East with knowledge of Arabic have been installed. Until now, applications for official education level indicators have been lower than expected (Von Oven and Roos 2016).

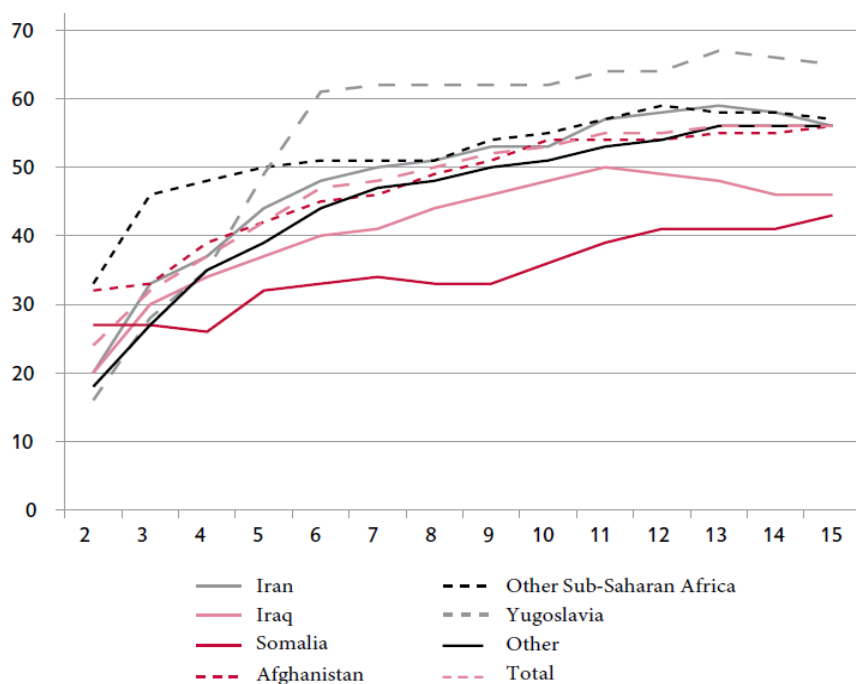
7.4 Review of literature on labour-market integration of refugees

Over the past ten years several studies were conducted into the labour-market position of migrants including the largest refugee groups (Hartog and Zorlu 2009, Bakker *et al* 2014, Klaver and Van der Welle 2009, Dourleijn and Dagevos 2011, Engbersen *et al* 2015, Bakker 2016, Zorlu 2013, Zorlu and Hartog 2012). The common denominator of these studies is that the labour-market position of refugees is the poorest among immigrant groups (see also Framework Amsterdam below). Compared to native Dutch and other migrant groups, refugees are considerably more dependent on social security and less likely to have paid employment. The refugees who have paid employment are overrepresented in low status and temporary jobs. However, there are significant differences between refugees depending on their country of origin.

Unlike family and labour migrants, refugees experience an initial disadvantage after getting a residence permit. In their first years with the permit, refugees find themselves at the margins of the labour market. The qualifications acquired in their home country are of little value. Hartog and Zorlu (2007) show that higher education acquired at home generally does not pay off during the first five years of working in the Netherlands. They need first to learn the language, develop new skills and polish their obtained skills. As they collect more host-country specific capital (skills, networks, knowledge about social norms etc.), their position improves sharply during the first six years. The evidence suggests that health is an important variable in explaining refugees' disadvantages. Both pre-migration and post-migration stress prevents refugees from fully participating in the social and economic process (Bakker 2016).

A recent study followed all refugees in the Netherlands (about 33,000) in registers who received a residence permit between 1995 and 1999, and stayed there until at least 2011 (Bakker 2016). This group is composed of asylum migrants from Iraqi (23 per cent), Afghanistan (19 per cent), the Former Yugoslavia (18), Iran (10), Somalia (3), other sub-Saharan countries (8 per cent), and from other countries outside Africa. Figure 7.2 shows developments in the employment position of refugees by country of origin over years of residence. The increase in employment is sharper in the first years after receiving a residence permit and it generally continues across the whole period with an exception for Iraqis for whom the employment rate begins to decline after ten to eleven years. We observe significant differences in employment rates by country of origin. Refugees from the former Yugoslavia experience the biggest improvement in employment, in particular in the first five years and their employment rate reaches about 65 per cent after thirteen years. At the other extreme, only 40 per cent of Somalian refugees are employed after fourteen years of residence. The employment performance of Iraqi increases more sharply than Somalians but declines after eleven years. The remaining groups perform better than Iraqis and their employment rate reaches about 55 per cent.

Figure 7.2 Percentage of Refugees Having a Job (More Than 8 Hours per Week) by Origin Country and Duration of Residence; Entrance Cohort 1995-1999



Source: Bakker 2016

The differences in the integration profile of various refugee groups indicates the relevance of group-specific factors, while all asylum seekers face roughly similar reception regimes (although the length of decision procedure can vary across groups). Obviously, refugee groups respond differently to policies and deal differently with obstacles. The literature could not fully explain this difference from observable characteristics. Some scholars tend to explain these differences in terms of cultural and religious differences between home and host countries. Little is known, however, about specific origin country differences. It is plausible to assume that these differences emerge either from varying level of incentives among refugees or from the different treatment of refugee groups by the host society.

Table 7.3 Rate of Employment and Social Assistance among Refugees in Amsterdam

Cohort	Employed	Social assistance
2007	37	35
2008	37	37
2009	42	33
2010	38	45
2011	38	49
2012	39	49
2013	34	64
2014	22	75

Note: Three measurement points; September 2012, July 2013, May and July 2015. The refugees are clustered at the year they were granted a permit and started their integration trajectory. On average, 29 per cent of employed receives a supplementary benefit.

Source: Gemeente Amsterdam. 2015. Beleidskader Vluchtelingen in Amsterdam 2015-2018

7.5 Current policy practices

There follow some of the most important factors hampering labour-market participation. These are based on an evaluation of labour-market integration policies according to the main authorities involved (Klaver *et al* 2015), as well as an overview of constraints on participation in the labour market for refugees and the profile of recent refugees:

- Long periods of inactivity because of lengthy procedures (waiting time for an intake at IND, asylum procedure, family-reunification procedures) and waiting time for housing in a municipality
- Barriers to accessing Dutch vocational and higher education
- Lack of trajectories combining language training with activation and activities towards employability
- Inefficient or lacking exchange of information to match supply and demand

Below current policy practices and initiated projects to overcome some of these challenges are described. These include possible strengths and weaknesses and an assessment of their overall effectiveness for the main prototypes of integration support measures for asylum seekers and refugees.

7.5.1 Skills and needs assessment

It is important to keep in mind that because of health-related issues, as well as traumas and other personal circumstances, many refugees cannot be matched directly to jobs or further education. They will need other trajectories to improve their participation. Only a limited number of recent arrivals will have the necessary qualifications, work experience and language skills (English) to be able to enter the Dutch labour market in the short term. The assessment for employability should be made as early as possible to avoid losing valuable time.

Municipalities and other authorities feel that improvements can be made in transferring information about refugees from reception centres to municipalities and in an earlier assessment of skills and needs before refugees are placed/housed in a municipality (Klaver *et al* 2015, Meijburg 2016). At the moment several ministries and COAs are exploring the possibility of broadening the early screening of refugees in reception centres to include information on competences, diplomas, work experience and language skills. The goal is to better attune information towards the needs of municipalities and potential employers, therefore, stimulating access to the labour market and further education. The intention is to make (better) use of the services of the UWV.⁷⁵ Information about vacancies has also to be more specific for necessary skills (including language skills) for the job (Klaver *et al* 2015). One of the solutions that has come up in Amsterdam is an app refugees could use to upload relevant information about their skills to allow for easier job matching (see job intermediation) (Meijburg 2016).

7.5.2 Skills development

The government has expressed its views that refugees should begin language courses as soon as possible, preferably when refugees are still living in a reception center. In many centres courses are being offered, often with the help of volunteers. However, many temporary facilities (noodopvang) cannot offer these services and regular moving around between different locations hamper meaningful participation. As soon as refugees are matched with a municipality they can start an integration course, for which they receive a loan. One of the main weaknesses regarding the policy approach towards language and integration courses is that these are considered first and foremost a refugee's own responsibility and this reduces the opportunities for

municipalities to counsel and stimulate so-called dual trajectories combining language training and work experience and on the job training (Klaver *et al* 2015). The main strength of this approach is that asylum seekers will not become “addicted” to help from institutions but, rather, take responsibility for themselves.

In general the municipalities found the funds that they receive for integration support to be insufficient. A large number of the refugees arriving in a municipalities requires extra attention, because of personal circumstances (e.g. traumas or other psychological problems), and insufficient language skills. They are often not employable in the short term. The Dutch Council for Refugees (VWN) estimates that, on average, refugees need about 1.5 years to be able to cope on their own (Muskee 2015). According to the VNG, municipalities spent on average over € 2.300, on integration support for refugees. Because of the increase in asylum applicants and to stimulate a good start in the municipality the funds municipalities receive to support the integration of refugees has been raised from € 1,000, to € 2,370 per refugee for the coming two years.⁷⁶ This increases the possibilities for municipalities to intensify policies to stimulate the participation of refugees. In most municipalities VWN provides integration support for refugees, providing practical and administrative support and stimulation participation in society. However, actual support and services differ radically from municipality to municipality (Klaver *et al* 2009, Klaver *et al* 2015).

Besides initiatives to stimulate a good start and general activation several initiatives aim at improving access to vocational training and higher education as well as study success. UAF supports highly-educated refugees with language training, transition programs, a buddy system, job support and, when needed, financial support. Table 7.4 shows an overview of expenditure for the diverse tasks and projects of UAF in 2014. Most of their funds are used for financial support and intake and study advice.

The UAF -Foundation for Refugee Students plays a special role in supporting highly-skilled refugees to attend formal education and to find a job. The UAF is a well-established organization with its significant budget (partly donations) and broad networks to enable refugees in attending secondary vocational and higher education as well as mediating for work.

Table 7.4 Expenditure on Main Tasks/Goals UAF, in Euros

Task	Expenditure
Financial support	4,148,369
Intake and advice	1,376,170
Participation work for refugees	129,287
Public relations and counselling	535,941
Job Support	584,042
Projects	931,522

Source: UAF 2014

To qualify for support, not only former education, family situation and study plans are taken into account, as of 2015 motivation for studying and feasibility are also considered. These changes are intended to reduce the number of refugees not finishing their studies. The past years, annually, on average, around 350 students started their studies with the support of UAF, mostly after a period of intense preparation (UAF 2015). In 2014 the UAF received far more applications than they were able to support. Most applicants (543) were Syrian nationals. Applicants who are not taken into consideration for support, received advice on relevant language courses. In 2014, 190 refugee students supported by UAF finished their studies and 219 found a job, 181 started an internship, 11 start-ups and 67 started working as volunteers for organizations (UAF 2015).

⁷⁵ Inter-authority Administrative Agreement on the subject of increased numbers of asylum applicants (Bestuursakkoord Verhoogde Asielinstroom) of the International Cooperation Agency of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) and the national governments.

One of the main weakness over the past years has been that fall out rates have been considerable. Whether the renewed intake and assessment procedure reduces these, is not clear yet. The strength of UAF support is the thorough knowledge of the student refugee population and the combination of counselling, study advice and support, as well as job matching.

Besides UAF support there are also initiatives from institutes for higher education to remove barriers for entry, for example transition programs for non-native speakers and tutoring. For example, Utrecht University will start 1 January a special pre-bachelor program for refugees with an IT background. For six months they get ICT and language courses to prepare for a “normal” bachelors. The University of Groningen and the VU University in Amsterdam have had a transition program to prepare refugees for university study.

At the lower levels of education, there are also initiatives to attract refugees for vocational education. Recently (14 Dec 2015), three pilot projects of *leerwerkloketten* (learning and working desks) in Groningen, Zeeland and Haaglanden have started to encourage inflow of refugees into secondary vocational education (MBO). These desks aim to combine expertise on education and work and simultaneously inform potential students about practical issues.

7.5.3 Job Intermediation

Indications from practitioners suggest that there are, generally speaking, two approaches. There is, first, an effort to detect higher-skilled and highly-employable refugees with a high level of English proficiency in a very early stage, even before the asylum procedure is complete. For these asylum seekers, qualifications recognition is accelerated and employers look eager to hire them if they possess qualifications fitting existing job vacancies. Employers benefit in this case from easily available labour, rather than from giving priority to asylum seekers. This group of asylum seekers makes up a small part of all asylum seekers and refugees. Currently, attention for rapid job matching for refugees with relevant qualifications with good command of English (and/or Dutch) has increased. Several pilot projects for job matching and screening of asylum seekers are running. Mostly these are joint initiatives of relevant partners, for example municipalities, the Dutch Refugee Council, COA, Employee Insurance Agency (UWV), employment agencies and private companies are involved. Asylum seekers who have less transferable qualifications but have a high degree of learning skills and ambitions which can make their original skills transferable may be placed in this group, though their participation will likely be delayed. The UAF -Foundation for Refugee Students plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between these types of refugees.

Most asylum seekers and refugees are not easily employable. These asylum seekers are lower skilled and need first to learn Dutch and complete a time-consuming integration trajectory. An intensive process is necessary for these asylum seekers, and this is the second approach. Low and unskilled migrants have more difficulties in completing the civic integration program. When a low skill level is combined with health problems, associated with an asylum background, the probability of participation in the labour market nose dives and dependence on social welfare system is more likely. For this particular group, incentives offered to asylum seekers themselves are possibly more effective than incentives to employers to hire them.

Recent responses to large inflows of asylum migrants show that lessons have been learnt from earlier experiences with asylum seekers. The actors in the field (such as employment and welfare agencies, employer organizations, municipalities, ministries etc.) try to shorten the transition time and the distance to the labor market. They hope to eliminate time-consuming and discouraging obstacles through good coordination and early interventions so that refugees will end up with a suitable position in the labour market.

Several municipalities and employers have taken a proactive approach in strengthening job intermediation for refugee and establishing partnerships with other authorities. Especially in sectors with labour shortage, private initiatives from employers and branche organizations have evolved and have targeted refugees with

specific skills offering internships, on the job training and jobs.⁷⁷ Most of these initiatives are small scale, and target specific skills or professions and are demand driven. Here shortly we will describe three initiatives in different municipalities:

- In Eindhoven, the municipality, COA, VWN and UWV have taken the joint initiative to gather relevant information for job matching, as soon as refugee status has been obtained. Refugee profiles are scanned for possible candidates for job matching.
- In Amsterdam several pilot projects have been initiated to match refugees already living in the municipalities as well as refugees waiting for housing in Amsterdam but still residing in a reception centre with potential employers who have difficulties in finding suitable candidates for their vacancies. For every candidate an assessment will be made about what the person needs to qualify for the job: for example an intensive language course or recognition of qualifications (Klaver *et. al.* 2015). The municipality of Amsterdam city council has developed a refugee policy with ambitious targets⁷⁸. According to this new policy document, all refugees should complete the obligatory civic integration and up to 45 per cent of them should find employment within 3.5 years. Additionally, their welfare and health should be improved. No clear and measurable target is defined for health. Amsterdam city council also promises to pay particular attention to women and LGBT individuals.
- In a smaller municipality in the north of the Netherlands, Stadskanaal/Musselkanaal, a Company offering Facility Services (Hectas) and the COA initiated a work-learning trajectory for cleaning services. COA provides funding and facilities for refugees living in the Stadskanaal and Musselkanaal reception centres to follow vocational training in cleaning: as soon as they receive refugee status HECTAS will offer them a job.

In addition to the above initiatives, we also observe other smaller initiatives reported in the local and national media. For example: a national newspaper, Het Financiële Dagblad reports on 9/12/2015⁷⁹:

- Labour shortages are mainly in the technical sector. A study of technical training institute ROVC among 228 companies showed that three quarters of the technical companies in the Netherlands suffered labour shortages. They fail to find suitable workers.
- The temporary employment agency Ranstad started, together with the COA, a pilot project in two cities in Utrecht and Musselkanaal by 9 December 2015 to find a job for 95 refugees who had recently been granted an asylum permit.
- The construction groups Dura Vermeer announced work experience positions for highly-educated refugees.
- The cleaning company Asito (10,000 employees) will help refugees entering the labour market.

The national broadcasting NOS reports, 9 December 2015⁸⁰ that the trade association of entrepreneurs for refrigeration and air conditioning (NVKL) would offer training positions to twenty refugees from January 2016.

One of the main strengths of these initiatives is that refugees living in reception centres are targeted, thereby reducing the period of inactivity. Second, these are initiatives to match labour-market supply and demand. The main weakness is that only small groups with specific skills are targeted, and it does not remove barriers for a large share of the refugee population with a larger distance to the labour market. It is now too early to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of these new approaches.

⁷⁶ For example NVKL (www.nvkl.nl) started a project in January 2016 offering housing and education for twenty refugees in their training centre. They need trained mechanics in cryogenics and air conditioning.

⁷⁷ Gemeente Amsterdam 2015. Beleidskader Vluchtelingen in Amsterdam 2015-2018, October 16.

⁷⁸ Randstad en COA helpen 95 vluchtelingen aan werk. *Financieel Dagblad*, December 9. <http://fd.nl/ondernemen/1130913/randstad-en-coa-helpen-95-vluchtelingen-aan-werk>. Accessed March 21.

⁷⁹ Vluchtelingen ingezet voor nijpend personeelstekort. 9 December. <http://nos.nl/artikel/2073976-vluchtelingen-ingezet-voor-nijpend-personeelstekort.html>. Accessed 21 March 2016.

Among recent initiatives, there is a lack of (particular) attention for women among asylum seekers and refugees. It is already known that a vast majority of recent asylum seekers are from Muslim countries, such as Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia. In these communities, the social and economic position of women is relatively weak. This holds particularly for low skilled Muslim women among whom labour-market participation is extremely low (Zorlu and Hartog 2012). Highly-educated Muslim women paradoxically have a greater chance to achieve a respectable position. So, one may expect that policy makers will target these less employable groups. Yet, we unfortunately have little to report on this issue at this moment.

7.5.4 Recognition of Qualifications and Skills

During the “Education Level Indication” pilot the experiences were evaluated through a written questionnaire amongst the mediating authorities (COA, VWN, UAF, educational establishments, and the municipalities) twice. The authorities reported positive results on the individual/personal and the procedural level. On the personal level they mentioned that an official indication of the education level gives refugees and asylum seekers perspective and motivates integration, it decreases the barriers towards further education or employment and can boost self-esteem. On the procedural level the authorities noted that it smoothes the registration process for further education. Besides, the indications provide a good overview for employers and mediating authorities of former education, and therefore facilitates job matching (Von Oven and Roos 2016). Whether this really means easier access to the Dutch labour market and further education remains to be seen. One of the crucial points is that the education status is not always clear, and therefore not always taken into account (Klaver *et al* 2015).

7.5.5 Incentives for Economic Integration

The incentives of asylum migrants to participate are closely related to their skill levels. Nowadays, there is a belief among people involved in the asylum chain that one-third of asylum seekers are highly educated: though no scholarly evidence for this assertion is available. It is certain that a large number of asylum seekers are low skilled and a relatively small number are highly skilled. The evidence on international skill transferability suggests that highly-skilled refugees initially face a low degree of skill transferability (Zorlu 2013). This is usually due to social, cultural and economic differences between home and host countries. In addition, asylum seekers have occupations that are typically home country-specific and less international. For instance, occupations such as lawyers and army professionals are often difficult to find among asylum migrants, compared to labour migrants. However, highly skilled refugees have great potential to compensate their initial disadvantages. The opportunity costs of investing in host country capital are low for them: therefore, higher-skilled refugees are more inclined to learn the dominant language quickly, and to take additional training to improve the transferability of their home country qualifications. This mechanism drives personal investment in (supplementary) education. On the demand side, the need for highly-skilled refugees is visible, in particular in technical branches. Some sectors in the Netherlands suffer from structural shortages of qualified labour. For instance; companies in information and communication technologies (ICT) and some segments of technical branches have difficulties in finding qualified workers, as mentioned above.

Difficulties related to employability are rather high for lower skilled refugees and in particular for low skilled women. This group has relatively high opportunity costs for investing in language and additional education and training. The difference between social assistance and their potential earnings is small. Financial incentives for participation are low, while the social and psychological costs of participation are likely relatively high due to adjustment costs. At the same time, idleness with social assistance may be a serious option for asylum immigrants who are not used to having “gratis money”. The compulsory civic integration exam challenges low skilled refugees to successfully complete their integration trajectory and to search for work. Local authorities, municipalities and educational institutions provide asylum seekers support in reducing the costs of participation in relation to receiving benefits. Notwithstanding this, there are structural shortages for low-wage workers at the lower end of labour market, in branches such as horticulture, restaurants, construction, cleaning etc. The problem is that these jobs make little difference in social welfare states and are unattractive to many low-skilled workers.

7.6 Conclusions

The high variety in the skills distribution and the demographic structure of asylum seekers demands a tailored approaches. Society's response to the last massive inflow of asylum seekers focussed on the most employable highly-educated asylum seekers and refugees. Employers seem eager to look for highly-qualified workers for their difficult-to-fill-vacancies and officials/practitioners tend to score by picking up low hanging fruit. Most asylum migrants are low skilled. They need language courses and qualifications to enter the Dutch labour market. In this start-up process, relatively low incentives for low skilled asylum seekers and refugees are perhaps the most important factor. The compulsory integration trajectory with measurable achievement norms challenges low incentive problems.

The studies on the labour-market integration of asylum seekers suggest that the transition from asylum seekers to a refugee and thus, the labour market is not a smooth one. After an often long period of waiting and uncertainties, asylum seekers have to find housing, learn Dutch, take civic integration courses and (supplementary) education and look for job. Though these activities do not necessarily follow a sequential order in practice and need often simultaneity, the organizations involved in the refugee process have followed a sequential order in previous years. However, there is a growing awareness among the associated organizations and public about the inefficiency of the sequential approach. Related organizations try to start now with screening and arranging necessary formalities much earlier in the process to shorten the start-up period. The taskforce Work and Integration Refugees has been installed to coordinate and effectively organize collaborations and, some municipalities/educational institutions started with pilot projects.

Amsterdam city council where the largest number of refugees is concentrated tries to facilitate recent refugees in housing, civic integration and educational trajectories and to improve the labour-market participation of refugees as outlined in a new policy document. The municipality closely collaborates with the UAF social and educational institutions, both vocational training (MBO) and higher education (HBO and WO). In addition to Amsterdam, some other municipalities including Eindhoven have started to host a significant number of recently arrived asylum seekers and perform a specific refugee policy to match talents and jobs. First impressions suggest that Eindhoven tend to focus on easily employable refugees.

The national task force sounds very promising. However, the effectiveness of this type of coordination policy is hard to assess. There are no clearly defined targets. Lessons from earlier experiences teach us that new pilots and other initiatives start with good intentions, but are difficult to evaluate according to norms of scientific research. Recently started projects also seem to be in this fashion and tradition: there are no clearly defined final targets. Ideally, the design of these projects should satisfy the norms of a randomized experiment to be able to draw causal conclusions.

Overall, in the Netherlands most labour-market integration support measures have targeted employable asylum seekers and refugees, a fraction of the overall refugee population. Many eye-catching projects focus on highly-educated asylum migrants. This is of course good for utilizing the skills of the highly-educated, but recent initiatives targeting the less employable groups, e.g. women and the low-educated, cover only a small proportion of this group. This low-skilled refugees should go through civic integration programs. The longer they stay in integration programs, the greater the probability of not-completing the civic-integration programs, due to decreasing incentives and eventual policy shifts. Long-lasting negative effects should, then, be expected.

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8 Case Study Spain

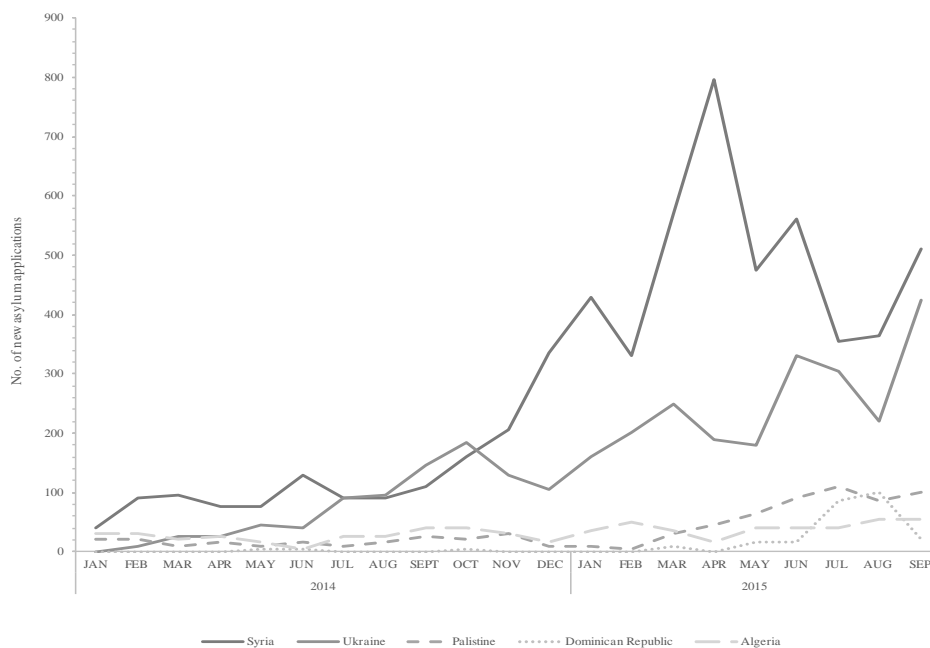
Albert F. Arcarons

8.1 Background

8.1.1 Profile of recent refugee flows

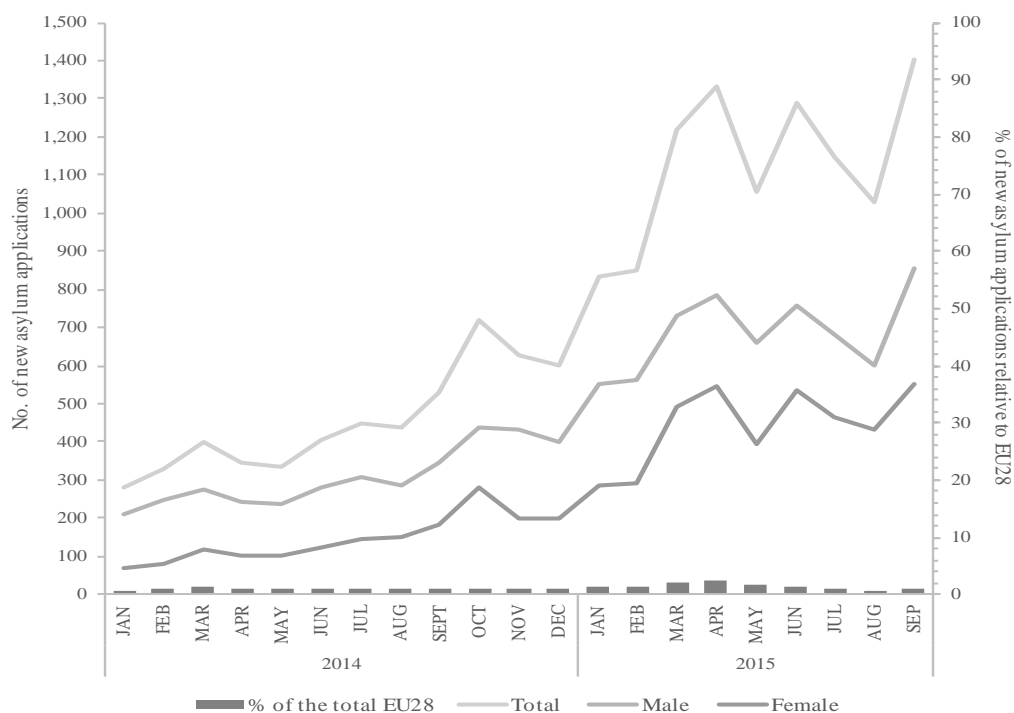
Spain has witnessed a substantial increase in the number of first-time asylum applicants from Syria and Ukraine since the second half of 2014. These two countries of origin accounted for about 60 per cent of the total number of applications in the third quarter of 2015, followed, though at some distance, by Palestinians, Dominicans and Algerians (see Figure 8.1). Among applicants, a clear majority are men (61 per cent), and these usually come unaccompanied. In a context of a negative demographic development, Spain having, in fact, one of the lowest fertility rates in the world, first-time asylum applicants present a favourable age structure, as three out of four fall into the 'working-age' category of 18 to 64 years old (Eurostat 2015b).

Figure 8.1 Top Five Citizenship of First-time Asylum Applicants, Spain 2014-2015



Source: Own elaboration, Eurostat 2015

Figure 8.2 Number of New Asylum Applications and Relative Weight within the EU28 Total, Spain 2014-2015



Source: Own elaboration, Eurostat 2015.

The typical qualifications of asylum seekers in Spain is unknown as information has not been systematically collected⁸¹. Despite this recent substantial increase in absolute number of first-time asylum applications⁸², Spain's relative weight with respect to the EU28 total remains marginal (see bar graph in Figure 8.2). The relative figure for the country reached its maximum in April 2015, to stand at only 2.31 per cent of the total number of applications (Eurostat 2015b; CEAR 2015).

Spain is one of the European countries in which the asylum application process is more toilsome. The government's priority, in line with most of its European homologues, has been the tightening of border control policy, especially in Melilla⁸³. On top of this, when the application is formalized on national grounds, bureaucratic obstacles and delays in the decision process are common. Thousands of pending cases are piling-up at the Refugee Reception Office (OAR)⁸⁴ in Madrid, the body responsible for advising the representative of the Minister of Home Affairs on the final-decision. Important delays occur, then, at the 'admission for processing' stage⁸⁵, and once the application is accepted, at the 'first-instance decision' stage. The process lasts, on average, a year and a half (CEAR 2015, 123).

⁸⁰ In the second part of this report, data on the level of qualifications of asylum seekers and refugees who participated in the main labour-market integration programme of one of the largest NGOs in the country are presented. No representative data on educational profiles are available for Spain.

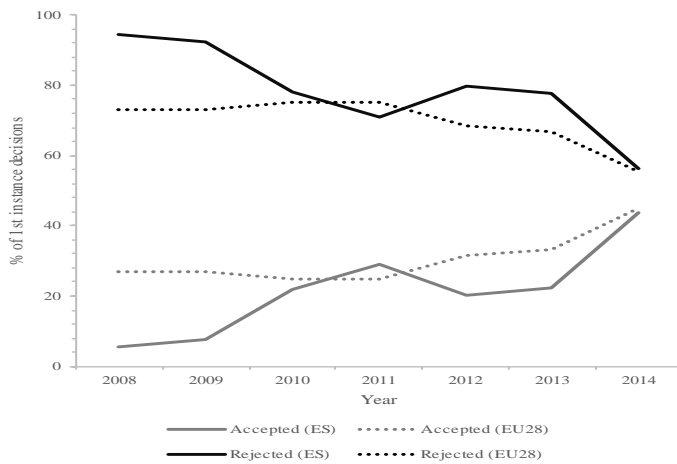
⁸¹ "Asylum applicant refers to a person having submitted an application for international protection or having been included in such application as a family member during the reference period. *New asylum applicant* refers to a person having submitted an application for international protection for the first time." (Eurostat 2015b).

⁸² This tightening process has been recently reaffirmed with the government's legalisation of on-the-spot deportations, which violates the basic right of asylum. UNHCR Spain denounces this practice at <http://www.acnur.es/noticias/noticias-de-espana/2312-acnur-pre-ocupado-por-las-devoluciones-en-la-valla-de-melilla>.

⁸³ The OAR plan to add 76 new employees in January-February 2016 to catch up with the pending applications and expedite the administrative process.

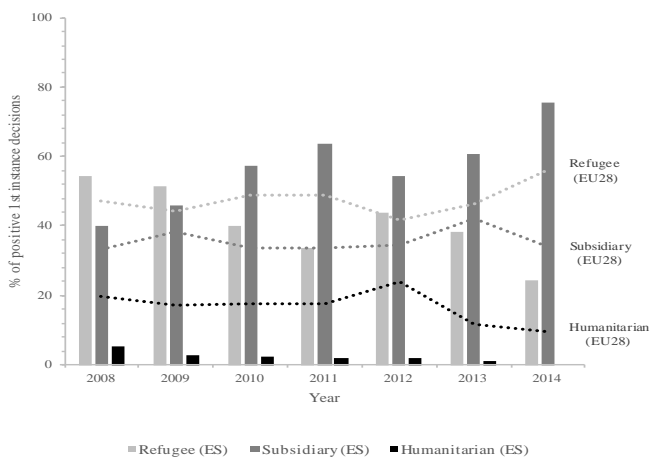
⁸⁴ A process that should be automatic within two days can take up to two months, leaving asylum seekers completely unattended. In this two-months impasse, it is often the local/regional administration that takes responsibility, even though it is not their competence.

Figure 8.3 Percentage of Positive and Negative First Instance Decisions, Spain and EU28



Source: Own elaboration, Eurostat 2015.

Figure 8.4 Type of Decision (Percentage) among Positive Decisions, Spain and EU28



Source: Own elaboration, Eurostat 2015., Eurostat 2015.

The rate of acceptance is not particularly high: it stood at around 40 per cent in 2014. This despite its substantial increase from 2013 onwards, when the acceptance rate doubled in one year and converged with EU28 average levels (see Figure 8.3). If we look not only at the rate of acceptance, but at the character of positive first instance decisions⁸⁶ instead, Figure 8.4 shows how over the last six years, favourable decisions for granting the refugee status have actually declined in relative terms in favour of the granting of subsidiary

⁸⁵ "First instance decisions are decisions (positive and negative) considering applications for international protection as well as the grants of authorisations to stay for humanitarian reasons. First instance decisions include decisions granted to persons who are a subject of the Dublin III Regulation (Council Regulation 604/2013/EC)." (Eurostat 2015b).

protection status⁸⁷: 76 per cent for Spain vs. 34 per cent for the EU28 in 2014 (dotted line). Subsidiary protection is mostly given to Syrians, and UKHCR Spain (ACNUR) considers its increase ‘protection downgrading’ within the framework of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

8.1.2 Legal Framework and Labour-Market Conditions

The absence of an implementing regulation for Law 12/2009 on the rights of asylum and subsidiary protection is arguably one of the major legal impediments for the socio-economic integration of asylum seekers and refugees in Spain. The implementing regulation has been pending for approximately six years, and, therefore, the implementation of the law refers back to Law 5/1984, and its 1994’s update (Law 9/1994). The lack of this implementing regulation for the ‘asylum act’ of 2009 generates legal uncertainty and, at the same time, signals the absence of a national integration model, something also true for economic immigrants (Cebolla-Boado and González Ferrer 2013). A second signal of the absence of an integration model, is the approval of a Royal Decree in September 2015 (see Table 8.1) which provided thirteen million euros in order to prevent the system from collapsing⁸⁸. The Spanish system of reception and integration was conceived for a lower number of persons, and there seems to be the expectation that the numbers will decrease again in the near future.

Table 8.1 Summary of the Spanish Legislation Related to Refugees and Asylum Seekers (2000-2015)

Type and year:	Description:
1. Royal Decree 816/2015	- Establishes a grant to the main NGOs for an extraordinary expansion of the resources available in the national system of reception and integration.
2. Royal Decree 557/2011	- Adopts the implementing regulation for Organic Law 4/2000.
3. Law 12/2009	- It is known as the ‘asylum act’ and regulates the rights of asylum and subsidiary protection. One of the major changes is the introduction of the concept and status of subsidiary protection.
4. Royal Decree 865/2006	- Establishes the benefits for beneficiaries in refugee reception centres.
5. Organic Law 4/2000	- Regulates the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals in Spain and their social integration.

Source: Adapted and expanded from DEMIG (2015) and Poptcheva and Stuchlik (2015).

Legal access to the labour market is often identified as a key factor in the integration of refugees and asylum seekers (Fric and Aumayr-Pintar 2016). The European Commission recommends member states ensure labour-market access to asylum seekers no later than nine months after they have submitted their application for international protection, if, as is typical, a first-instance decision has not already been taken⁸⁹. In the case of a positive decision, immediate labour–market access must be granted according to the specific conditions of the legal national framework, and the same conditions as nationals must apply for employment-related training and for employment itself⁹⁰. Spain occupies, on paper, a rather liberal position in terms of legal access to the labour market for asylum seekers⁹¹. Asylum seekers have the right to work six months after their application has been made, regardless of whether they have a residence permit⁹². Meanwhile, the so-called *tarjeta roja* (red card) is issued to them as their identification in their job searches, and has to be renewed every six months.

The negative characteristics of the Spanish labour market, magnified by the economic recession, make the socio-economic integration of asylum seekers and refugees difficult. A favourable labour-market situation is the main pull factor for asylum seekers when requesting international protection. Unemployment is negatively associated with the number of asylum applications, and the Spanish unemployment rate stood at double the EU-28 average in October 2015: 21.6 per cent vs. 9.8 per cent (Eurostat 2015d). Labour-market

⁸⁶ Although Spain is one of the European countries in which the subsidiary protection and the refugee statuses are most similar, they still present major differences in terms of the granting of rights and benefits in the integration process.

⁸⁷ *Royal Decree 816/2015*, of 11 September, accessed at: <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2015/09/12/pdfs/BOE-A-2015-9805.pdf>.

⁸⁸ Article 15(1) of the *Reception Conditions Directive 2013/33/EU*.

⁸⁹ Article 26 of the *Directive 2011/95/EU* on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection.

⁹⁰ The *Law 12/2009*, of 30 October, can be accessed at <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2009-17242>.

⁹¹ The reduction of this period has been a common practice of many European countries in the last two years.

participation and activity are key steps towards integration, though the quality of labour-market conditions also matters. It might be worth noting here that the Spanish labour market is highly segmented, having the second highest temporality rate in the EU-28 (Eurostat 2015c).

The Spanish minimum wage is low compared to other advanced European economies. In 2015 it was half that of France and Germany, for example, 750€ vs. approximately 1500€ (Eurostat 2015a). These and other factors have meant rising inequality, and an increase in the number of working poor. The size of the informal sector, which accounts for about a fifth of the country's GDP, some estimates suggest, makes labour-market integration even more difficult. In the face of these adverse labour-market conditions, asylum seekers see Spain as a jumping off point for the North of Europe, rather than a place to settle (Buck 2015). Though the Spanish authorities notify those who leave the county that the Dublin regulation⁹³ might apply to them, asylum seekers often risk being resettled in Spain and leave, anyway.

8.1.3 Evolution of the policy approach

Asylum policy is in Spain an exclusive competence of the central state. The asylum system is centralised in the Ministry of Home Affairs, which involves the Ministry of Employment and Social Security (MEYSS), and particularly in its General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration, which implements reception and integration programmes. The Spanish system of reception and integration enforces, in parallel with the legal process, an ambitious three-phase programme which is expected to take up to eighteen months, but that can reach a maximum of 24 if the beneficiary is considered vulnerable (see Figure 8.5).

If the asylum seeker is eligible and agrees to take part in the programme, he/she is offered a place where there is available accommodation⁹⁴. This often implies a move with respect to the region from where the initial petition was made. Thus, though the allocation attempts to accommodate the demands of beneficiaries, the final decision of the central administration is discretionary, and lacks coordination with regional and local administrations⁹⁵. This high degree of centralisation relegates regional and local governments into a secondary position in the decision-making process⁹⁶.

During the first six months at Refugee Reception Centre (CAR), asylum seekers are expected to attend a replete programme in which language courses and labour-market orientation are offered, among other services. One of the main challenges during this period (phase 1), apart from learning Spanish and acquiring/validating labour-market competences, is to be prepared to find a job in the current labour market which can be kept after the programme ends. This rarely happens, and becomes the main objective of the integration phase (phase 2), with the monitoring of a training and employment specialist. In the third phase, also known as the autonomy phase, occasional assistance and sporadic monetary transfers to round off the integration process are available. In the second and third phases, asylum seekers and refugees are mostly mainstreamed into general labour-market support schemes and services already in place for economic immigrants and natives.

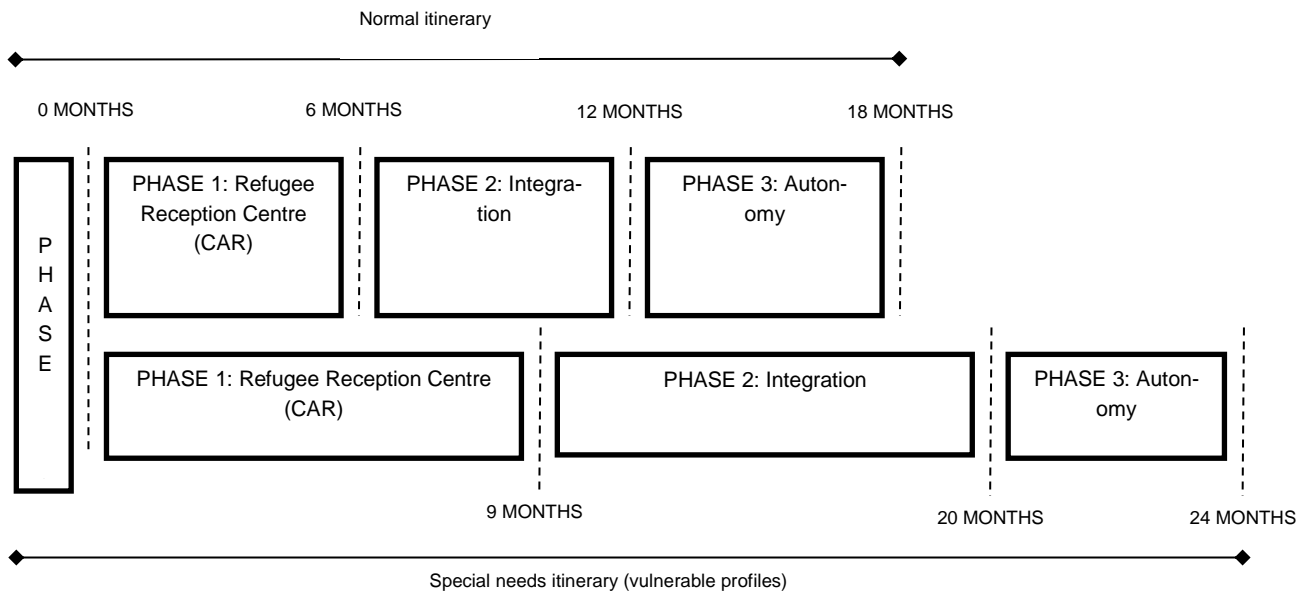
⁹² Details of the Dublin III Regulation, i.e. Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council can be consulted here: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:180:0031:0059:EN:PDF>.

⁹³ The system can currently accommodate, in January 2016, 1,727 persons in different reception centres across the country.

⁹⁴ The *SAIER*, which stands for 'Advice Service for Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees' is run by the city council of Barcelona and is a good example of the collateral effects of the decisions taken at the national level. This service attended 1,041 asylum seekers in 2015, redirecting 64 to a labour-market orientation programme named AMIC, and 386 to another programme of advice for refugees on job placement called ACSAR.

⁹⁵ Different steps towards the integration of the different levels of the administration have been proposed lately. The creation of the Centre of Resources of Autonomous Communities is a representative example of this.

Figure 8.5 Structure of the Spanish National System of Reception and Integration



Source: Own illustration.

The lack of resources is one of the most important obstacles affecting the sustainability of the national integration system. Since 2014, when the system started to collapse, it has become less flexible in the length of its phases⁹⁷, and the criteria for defining vulnerability has become more restrictive. The tendency has been to move to more linear and compartmentalized phases, a policy that runs up against the cyclical nature of the integration process of a person into a host society. Moreover, the already low monetary transfers and support in the second and third phases have been reduced significantly. In general, the Spanish model seems to lean more towards the provision of occasional services, rather than stable, predefined policies.

The country has specialised policy-wise in the reception stage rather than in the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers, perceiving the latter more as a cost than an investment. Steps towards successful labour-market integration policies are, however, imperative, as the country expects, according to the resettlement quota established by the European Commission and agreed on September 2015, the arrival of 15,000 refugees in the next two years; this does not include those already accepted and new inflows. In reality though, the resettlement process is developing at a slow pace, and Spain has only received eighteen asylum seekers to date.

If at the end of the legal process refugee status and subsidiary protection status is denied, applicants have two options: they can either appeal the decision, or accept it and automatically become irregular. Most become irregular and, if they decide to stay, a new process of settlement, the same that applies to economic immigrants, begins with the help and advice of NGOs and the local administration, outside the framework of the national system. Local and regional governments often attend the persons left out of the national system for different reasons. In practice, organisations and local/regional administrations assume a significant part of the financial and political costs of the implementation of integration policies.

⁹⁶ The average-stay in the Refugee Reception Centre (CAR) of Alcobendas for example has decreased from an average of 10 months to 6.7 in the last two years.

8.2 National reports and studies

The Refugee Reception Office (OAR) has, since 2008, published annually the report *Asylum in figures* (Oficina de Asilo y Refugio 2015)⁹⁸. These reports include the profiles of applicants for international protection; the geographical distribution of petitions within Spain; and the recognition of the refugee and subsidiary protection statuses are broken down by sex, country of origin, and age. The Spanish Refugee Aid Commission (CEAR) complements the figures of the OAR with an initiative named *Refugees are more than numbers* (*Refugiados más que cifras*)⁹⁹.

The same organisation also publishes annual reports entitled *The Situation of Refugees in Spain*¹⁰⁰ with a section dedicated to issues related to the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Through these yearly reports, which began in 2003, the evolution of the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers and related issues and obstacles can be traced. In their last report, they focus on two of the greatest obstacles for refugees and asylum seekers seeking employment: the difficulties in the process of recognition and the homologation of educational qualifications; and the problems encountered in the procedure for the testing and recognition of professional skills (CEAR 2015, 119). The NGO ACCEM in its 2014/15 annual report also discusses labour-market integration issues on pages 20 and 21, and comments on the role of the Ariadna Network (discussed in the following section).

8.3 Inventory of REFMISMES

Support measures for the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers are implemented nationally by four Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)¹⁰¹ and four Refugee Reception Centres (CARs)¹⁰². The four NGOs, following the directives of the responsible public authorities, design integration policies, and submit them to public calls in order to obtain funds. The major part of the implementation of labour-market support measures is coordinated by the *Department of Immigrant Integration*, within the *Ministry of Employment and Social Security (MEYSS)*, and co-financed by the European Commission¹⁰³. Labour-market support measures¹⁰⁴ usually take place at the integration stage (phase 2), and build on the competences beneficiaries acquire during the six month reception period (phase 1). The latter are basically preliminary competences that aim at preparing beneficiaries for employment by dealing with pre labour-market related aspects such as language courses, adjustment of expectations and educational profiling, pre-employment training, and labour-market orientation and literacy.

8.3.1 The Ariadna Network

The main body of specific measures for labour-market integration has been inserted into the *Ariadna Network* since 2008 (see Table 8.2). The network has three commissions: executive, coordination, and

⁹⁷ *Asylum in figures*' reports can be retrieved online at: <http://www.interior.gob.es/web/archivos-y-documentacion/documentacion-y-publicaciones/publicaciones-descargables/extranjeria-y-asilo/asilo-en-cifras>.

⁹⁸ Information on this initiative is available at <http://www.refugiadosmasquecifras.org>.

⁹⁹ CEAR's annual reports can be retrieved online at: <http://www.cear.es/publicaciones-elaboradas-por-cear/informe-anual-de-cear/>

¹⁰⁰ *The Spanish Refugee Aid Commission (CEAR)*, *The Catholic Migration Commission Association (ACCEM)*, *The Spanish Red Cross*, and *La Merced Migraciones (LMM)*. LMM was the latest addition to the system in 2014.

¹⁰¹ Refugee Reception Centres (CARs) depend directly on the MEYSS, and are located in the autonomous communities of Madrid, Andalucía, and Valencia.

¹⁰² Mainly through the *European Social Fund (ESF, 2007-13)*, and the *Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF, 2014-20)*. The details of the last Spanish national plan for AMIF funding can be consulted here: <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/3/2015/EN/3-2015-5328-EN-F1-1-ANNEX-2.PDF>.

¹⁰³ A selection of concrete labour-market support measures from different administrations, NGOs, and CARs are listed and detailed in Annex 1.

technical. The members of the first two commissions, which include representatives of the MEYSS and coordinators of the CARs and NGOs, are expected to meet periodically. MEYSS uses the network primarily as an instrument to evaluate and justify the programmes it co-finances, and also to encourage bottom-up initiatives from training and employment specialists. The latter are members of the technical commission, and share their experiences in regular meetings, though they also cooperate informally.

Table 8.2 Labour-market Integration Programmes for Refugees and Asylum seekers, Spain 1996-2016

Year:	Name of the programme:
1996	Horizon
1998	Integra
2002	Eneas Equal
2005	Eneas 2 Equal
2008	<i>Ariadna (national programme currently in force)</i>
2015	<i>Operational programme (Royal Decree 876/2015, expansion of resources)</i>

The main aim of the Ariadna network is to ease coordinated actions between the actors in the system to improve the employability of asylum seekers and refugees. At the same time, the network also seeks to stimulate key complementary actions such as the sensitization of civil society and the business sector, and the lifelong education of its training specialists in order to improve quality standards. Moreover, the actions of the network are also influenced by transversal objectives, including gender, equality of opportunity, and promotion of new technologies. The network is based on a shared methodology of integrated *Individualized Job-Placement Itineraries* which are agreed with, and tailored for, beneficiaries according to key parameters such as education level, professional competences, immediate economic needs, and short/long term career expectations. Training and labour-market specialists often use the employment ratio of beneficiaries as the main indicator for assessing the impact of their support measures at the end of each calendar year¹⁰⁵. Other more 'qualitative' endemic problems in the Spanish labour market, namely temporality and over-education, are also reflected in the support measures offered, and these are, therefore, considered in the evaluation. Building on this common methodology, each NGO and CAR designs and implements its own specific labour-market support measures individually. As I will discuss in more detail in the next section, there is a gap, however, between how the network was devised, and how it is actually implemented.

Main prototypes of support measures

One of the most important changes in Spanish labour-market support measures for refugees and asylum seekers, since the end of the 1990s, has been the move towards a competence management methodology. Training and education are the main factors associated with labour-force participation, job placement and attainment, and income. To tackle the problems of over-education and skills-mismatch the emphasis is often placed on an initial skills and qualifications assessment and profiling, to then proceed to either the validation and certification of professional skills, or the recognition of educational qualifications, depending on the profile of the beneficiary. Asylum seekers and refugees still face, however, two important obstacles in these respects: the Spanish labour-market is mostly credentialist, and the process of recognition of qualifications is legally unclear and burdensome.

The recognition process for formal qualifications can last two to four years depending on the specificities of the case¹⁰⁶. On top of the personal and time costs for the claimants, it also requires a fixed and non-refundable fee of 160€, plus the costs of the certified translation of the transcripts and its mailing. This procedure applies to persons who have already finished their studies and are in possession of the required certifying documentation. The documentation needed is, in many cases, an unrealistic requirement for asylum seekers and refugees due to the extreme conditions in which they often leave their countries at origin. For the cases

¹⁰⁴ Programmes are annual.

¹⁰⁵ The *Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport (MECD)* is responsible for the recognition process of formal qualifications.

in which required documentation cannot be submitted, competence tests are not available, as in the case of professional skills/competences certification. These tests could be provided with the collaboration of the administration and universities, but no steps in this direction have yet been made. Asylum seekers with unfinished but certified studies, often also struggle to finish them without financial support. Moreover, they are not eligible for a scholarship until they obtain a residence permit. NGOs and CARs accompany asylum seekers and refugees in the recognition processes of finished or unfinished studies. This includes facilitating information on how the system functions; subsidising its derived costs; and promoting cooperation between universities at origin and destination for the transfer of academic records.

Regarding the evaluation and accreditation of professional competences obtained via work experience and/or non-formal education, Spain has progressed in the right direction since the creation of the *National Institute of Qualifications (INCUAL)* in 1999, and the establishment of the *competences certificate*. The system still presents rigidities in its functioning, mainly because though the skills certificate is mentioned in the 2009 asylum act, the specific regulation on how it should work is still pending, and this hampers the process. Moreover, trained asylum seekers or refugees who could not validate or certify their skills in the Spanish system are excluded, as are those who worked in the sector they are trained for but did so in the non-formal economy (CEAR 2015, 128). NGOs usually work with asylum seekers and refugees on these aspects providing job training in renowned public institutions and/or private businesses.

Internships (i.e. unremunerated) are usually a common active labour-market policy NGOs promote an increase in the employability of asylum seekers and refugees given the high entry barriers that characterise the Spanish labour market. It is a commonly used practice to obtain the mentioned certificates of professional competences. Internships usually have two components, a theoretical one in a training centre, and a practical one in a company. These internship schemes require bilateral arrangements between NGOs and the private sector, and aim at bridging the gap between labour demand and supply. NGOs must initially evaluate their level of involvement and commitment of the businesses willing to participate. They must do so in order to ensure a certain degree of continuity and utility for the programme. These internship schemes do not entail any economic cost for the participating businesses, as NGOs usually assume the insurance costs of the participants. The schemes also serve as a way to target employers directly by disseminating information on the specific rules and regulations related to asylum seekers and refugees for businesses that are either interested in hiring them, or in contributing to improve their employability. Employment specialists of the different Spanish NGOs consulted agree on the fact that, all things being equal, those who participate in internships are more likely to be employed in the mid/long-term than those who do not.

Most labour-market support measures are implemented alongside more transversal objectives such as language learning and gender equality. In migration research, it is well-known that these two aspects are significant in labour-market integration. Spanish NGOs and CARs design various strategies to reduce the gender gap in labour-market participation and attainment among asylum seekers and refugees, and also to deal with gender-biased preconceptions, stereotypes, and segregation on the demand-side. As mentioned, the main rationale is to follow a competence-based approach rather than a gender-based one. This general approach still needs, however, to be complemented with more specific initiatives on issues, such as gender role attitudes and conciliation. Training specialists attempt to ensure gender parity in the different workshops they organise, and, in some cases, gender participation quotas are imposed. Moreover, to tackle conciliation issues, the timing of the activities is established in a way that does not clash with other obligations, such as picking up kids at school. On the demand side, they work on challenging male/female-dominated sectors by encouraging beneficiaries to participate in training activities they are willing or feel capable of doing irrespectively of gender prejudices. Moreover, in order to test the preferences of the demand side, a regional branch of one of the main NGOs carried out an experiment which consisted in sending curriculums with and without names – or any other aspect that could provide clues on the gender of the applicant – of equally or similarly trained profiles to employers of different sectors to test their reaction.

8.3.2 Focus on the Red Cross Annual Intervention in 2015

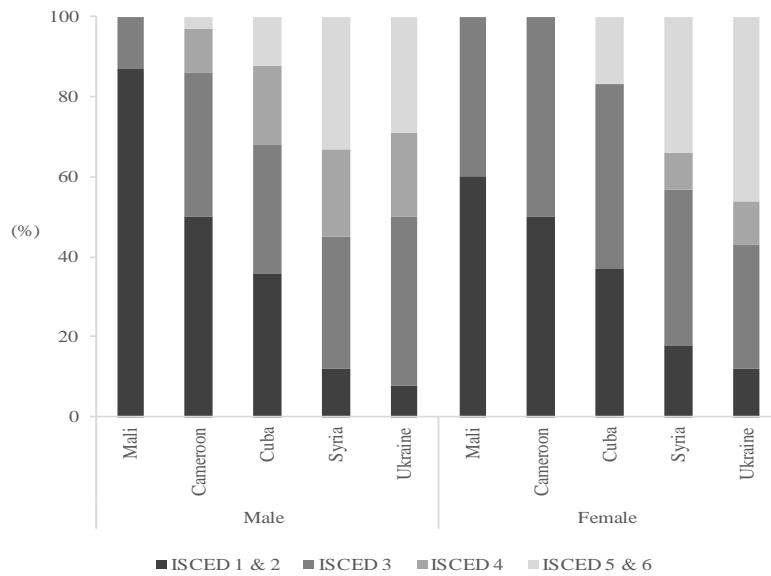
Using data generated by the i3L application, I describe here the annual intervention (January-December 2015) of one of the largest NGOs in the network. The data are not representative of Spain as a whole, but they do provide some hints about beneficiary profiles, as well as their labour-market outcomes at the end of the year.

In 2015, the organisation had 665 users for their Ariadna network labour-market training programme, of whom about two thirds were men, and only one third women. In terms of nationality, the NGO worked with nationals of 56 different countries, the top five being Ukraine (21 per cent), Syria (12 per cent), Mali (8 per cent), Cuba (7 per cent), and Cameroon (5 per cent). Educational profiles were also diverse. About one third of the beneficiaries had completed a primary/first cycle of secondary (ISCED 1 and 2) level education. About another third had completed the second cycle of secondary education (ISCED 3), 12 per cent had non-tertiary post-secondary education (ISCED 4), and finally 20 per cent had attained either the first or the second cycle of tertiary education (ISCED 5 and 6). Among the highest-educated (ISCED 5 and 6), the majority were from either Ukraine (40 per cent) or Syria (20 per cent).

In Figure 8.6, I show only the top five nationalities that participated in the main training programme in 2015, and describe their educational attainment and breakdown by sex. For both men and women, the overall pattern across groups is the same: those from Mali being the lowest educated, followed by Cameroon, Cuba, Syria, and Ukraine, in that order. Within-group educational differences by gender are, however, striking in some national groups. Ukrainian and Cuban women were better educated than their male co-nationals. Syrian women have about the same proportion for both sexes. In the case of Cameroon and Mali, neither men nor women are represented in this educational category. Women from most groups have higher or similar proportions to men in the lowest educational category (ISCED 1 and 2). In fact, of the five, only Malian men score higher in this educational category than women, who have a significantly higher percentage in the ISCED 3 category.

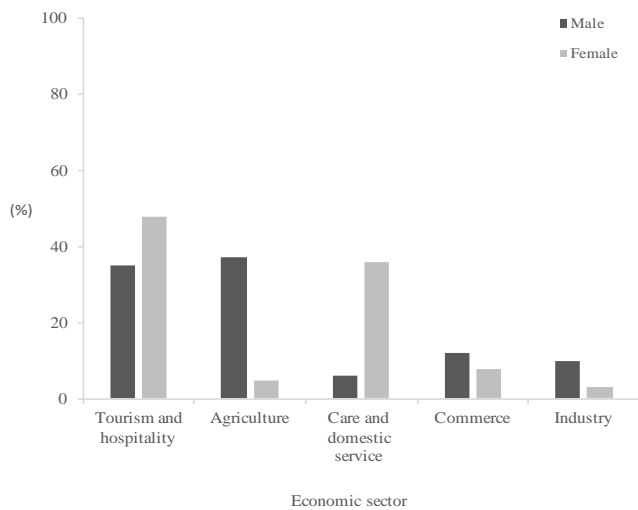
In terms of labour-market outcomes, the NGO's interventions resulted in a job placement ratio of 28 per cent. Among beneficiaries who got a job at the end of the year, the great majority of them signed a temporary contract (92 per cent). The rest either opted for self-employment (3 per cent), or managed to get a permanent contract (5 per cent). Of those in employment, about fourth quarter found a job in the tourism and hospitality sector. The second most common sector was agriculture (18 per cent), followed by care and domestic service (13 per cent), trade (7 per cent), and industry (5 per cent). Regarding gender differences, women outweighed men in the care and domestic service and tourism and hospitality sectors, while men outnumbered women in the rest, especially in agriculture (see Figure 8.7).

Figure 8.6 Educational Level by Nationality and Sex



Source: Own elaboration with i3L data.

Figure 8.7 Economic Sector by Sex



Source: Own elaboration with i3L data.

8.4 Strengths, weaknesses and potential success factors

The most promising factor of the Spanish labour-market integration system is its network structure, which promotes the sharing of information between actors involved in the implementation of support measures. Sharing information increases efficiency in the management of the available resources affecting ultimately

the quality of the support provided. All the information about the main characteristics of beneficiaries collected by each organisation is centralised in a database by means of a shared computer application named i3L, which was designed, and which is currently managed, by the MEYSS. For example, the use of i3L allows a particular NGO or CAR to redirect a beneficiary to another organisation in the network with training programmes, considered to be best suited to the educational profile or the needs of the beneficiary. In this sense, each training specialist notifies his or her proposed exchanges within the application depending on the available spaces, and then the training specialist of the destination organisation accepts the redirection¹⁰⁷. Then, at the end of the year, the resulting database allows each organisation to extract the data relative to their own intervention in order to evaluate the impact of its support measures. For the MEYSS, as the monitoring body, the dataset serves as a tool for assessing the support measures jointly, and assess where the main deficiencies lie. It also helps in the traceability of the European funds spent¹⁰⁸.

On a similar note, periodically scheduled meetings between the implementing organisations and the administration, and also between the training specialists of the different organisations, provide the opportunity to jointly identify the main deficiencies of the system. In meetings with the representatives of the administration, training specialists through their coordinators, have the opportunity to give voice to their concerns about obstacles encountered in their daily experience. This practice allows for a bottom-up transmission of information, and the easy proposition of new initiatives. Ultimately, these meetings serve as a way for the system to readjust itself.

The integration scheme also presents, however, important weaknesses at different levels. The most fundamental one, from which the others are derived, is the absence of a clear labour-market integration strategy over the long run, which results in a provision of support measures that are mostly subject to the availability of economic resources. The move of the system, in 2014, towards more compartmentalized phases of integration is a sign of this. The result is a linear integration design which follows the opposite logic of labour-market integration itineraries, which are usually non-linear. Another signal of the lack of a clear integration strategy is that the network structure seems to work better in theory than in practice. Meetings between the members of the executive commission and coordinators of NGOs and CARs have been postponed since August 2015, on the grounds of high management costs and low productivity.

The lack of data collection and transparency, but also their exploitation, add up to this same concern of an absence of a long-term integration strategy. No representative disaggregated data on the labour market outcomes of asylum seekers and refugees are collected by any national statistical body (e.g. the Spanish Statistical Office). This contributes to the invisibility of asylum seekers and refugees as a social group, especially when they are not part of, or end their participation in, the national system of reception and integration. It also precludes the evaluation that impact support measures have on the short-term labour-market outcomes of beneficiaries and, then, throughout their life course.

The data generated by the Ariadna network have some important shortcomings. First, observations are highly selected, i.e. they are representative of beneficiaries, not the group of asylum seekers and refugees as a whole. The data are recorded by NGOs and CARs themselves, and, therefore, only include those asylum seekers and refugees who approach, or who are assigned to them. Moreover, in the data only information on persons participating in ESF/AMIF-financed national programmes is available¹⁰⁹. As a consequence, the characteristics and outcomes of the total number of participants in all the programmes each organisation offers is registered in a parallel dataset by each of them individually. Second, the data have high levels of attrition as beneficiaries might withdraw from the programme they participate in, or be redirected to other programmes which depend on other sources of funding. Third, the access to individual-level

¹⁰⁶ This process of redirection can be either partial or total. The former implies that the beneficiary is only redirected temporarily for a specific activity, and the latter implies the transfer of this person's record from one organisation to the other.

¹⁰⁷ The network does not have, however, a legal entity, and each organisation has to justify its intervention individually.

¹⁰⁸ These data were later used to write a joint informative report for the administrative unit of the ESF/AMIF.

data is password protected, and only used for training and employment specialists in order to produce aggregated analyses for their annual reports/evaluations.

The logic of the system generates disfunctionalities between timing and needs. Low flexibility in financing, with an annual programme structure in place imposed on NGOs and CARs from the central administration, generate extra costs and reduce the quality of the support measures offered. Moreover, although organisations assess the impact of their programmes with the data generated through the i3L application, the constant changes in the administration in defining the implementation criteria have hindered the proper evaluation of programmes over time. The system is also hermetic, or closed to new organisations¹¹⁰, a characteristic that might impede the emergence of innovative practices, and ultimately reduce its quality. The configuration of the system means a few NGOs, which are almost entirely dependent on state resources, severely affected by the economic recession.

In terms of the articulation between different administrative levels, the asylum system is excessively centralised and seems to ignore the fact that labour-market integration is fundamentally a local process. There are few synergies with regional authorities, despite the fact that in Spain these authorities are responsible for several competences that directly affect the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers. As a result of this lack of coordination between the different levels of the administration, dysfunctions at the state-level generate costs to local and regional administrations: these could be avoided with a more decentralised and better coordinated system. There is also a lack of horizontal coordination among different ministries. A representative example of this is the almost inexistent collaboration between the MEYSS and the MECD in the recognition of academic titles.

On top of these problems related to the implementation of labour-market integration measures, the existing administrative delays and the protection downgrading process have tangible consequences on the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees. Inefficient legal procedures, especially the extension of the red-card period (i.e. the asylum seeker status), have a negative impact on both the supply and the demand side. On the supply side, asylum seekers cannot have access to different services (such as for example scholarships) until they obtain the residence permit. On the demand side, employers are more likely to offer temporary contracts while the applicant is waiting for the resolution of his/her formal request.

8.5 Conclusions

Despite the particularly negative labour-market context in Spain, with high unemployment and precarious employment levels, this report has identified potential successful practices for the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers. These could well inform existing labour-market integration policies, or inspire new ones, in other member states:

The Ariadna network, at least at the theoretical level, could be identified as a useful framework in which to implement labour-market support measures. It increases the efficiency and the optimisation of resources, and, at the same time, works as a mechanism for communicating and sharing good practices among the different implementing actors.

Another good practice is the focus on providing individualised and tailored employment plans of action. These usually consist in initial screening interviews for assessing the qualifications, skills, and needs of the beneficiaries. At the same time, they demand a pro-active attitude from them.

¹⁰⁹ Some steps have been taken in this respect, with the incorporation of the NGO LMM in 2014, and two new organizations in 2015-16.

The outreaching and partnering with employers in order to increase their sensitization can also be identified as a good practice. An example of this could be the annual ceremony the network organises to award the company or employer with the best practices for the labour-market integration of refugees and asylum seekers (see annex 1).

In bilateral agreements with the business sector, one of the most commonly used (good) practices is the organisation of unremunerated placements by means of bilateral agreements. Among other things, these serve as a way to obtain professional skills certificates for the beneficiaries. NGOs usually assume the insurance costs involved in order to promote the participation of the employers.

Trade unions, at the regional and local levels, also complement and improve the support offered by, for example, assisting refugees in the recertification of qualifications, which is long and arduous in Spain. A good initiative in this respect is the skills recognition support offered by the Catalan trade union AMIC-UGT in coordination with the regional and local administration (see annex 1).

Finally, the promotion of the use of information technologies for the acquisition of tools for active job search is another good practice. An example of this is the collaboration of one of the NGOs with LinkedIn Spain (see annex 1). The initiative also raises awareness among employers who use the platform for hiring purposes by posting different articles on unknown or misunderstood issues concerning the labour-market reality of refugees and asylum seekers. This is a good example of a low-cost initiative that has the potential of reaching a wide audience.

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8.7 List of Contacted Institutions and Experts

- *Spanish Ministry of Employment and Social Security (MEYSS)*
 - *Directorate General of Migrations, General Secretariat of Immigration and Emigration*
 - 1. Carmen Blanco, Deputy Director General of the Sub-Directorate General of the Legal Regime
 - 2. Natalia Molina, Permanent Observatory for Immigration (OPI)
 - 3. Amapola Blasco Marhuenda, Deputy Assistant Director-General of the Subdirectorato General of Integration of Immigrants
 - 4. Montserrat Tobías Tobías, Head of Service of the Sub-Directorate General of Integration of Immigrants
 - *Refugee Reception Centre (CAR) of Alcobendas (including a visit to the facilities)*
 - 5. Flor Salvador, Director
 - 6. Jose M^a Tovar, Employment Specialist
 - 7. Gema Jiménez, Training Specialist
- *Ministry of Home Affairs*
 - 8. Marcos Baras, Head of Area of the Office of Asylum and Refugee (OAR)
- *NGOs working with refugees*
 - *Red Cross:*
 - 9. M^a Antonia Jiménez Milla, Officer of the Plan for Employment at the Department of Social Intervention and Employment, Red Cross Spain
 - 10. Esther Juan, Coordinator of the Employment Programmes, Red Cross Catalonia
 - *Spanish Committee for Refugee Aid (CEAR)*
 - 11. Rodrigo Fernández, Area Coordinator for Training and Employment
 - 12. Pascale Coissard, Responsible of the Area of Political and Social Impact, CEAR Catalonia (CCAR)
 - 13. Susanna Nicolás, Coordinator of the Area of Occupation, CCAR
 - *ACCEM:*
 - 14. Lorena Iglesias, Coordinator of Employment
 - *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR Spain):*
 - 15. María de Zabala Hartwig, Protection Unit

- La Merced Migraciones:
 - 16. Marta de la Iglesia, Head of Integration
 - 17. Carlos Bargeiras, Employment Specialist
- *Local and regional authorities of areas with a recent influx of refugees*
 - *Regional Government, Catalonia*
 - 18. Xavier Bosch, General Director of the Directorate-General for Immigration
 - 19. Àngel Miret, Head of the Refugee Reception Committee
 - *Local Government, City Council of Barcelona*
 - 20. Ramon Sanahuja, Director of the Attention Service for Immigrants, Foreigners, and Refugees (SAIER)
 - 21. Ignasi Calbó, Head of the Refugee Cities Programme
- *Experts*
 - 22. Anna Terrón, President of InStrategies, European Commission, and Ex-Secretary General of Immigration and Emigration
 - 23. Gemma Pinyol, Project Manager at InStrategies, member of the Spanish Intercultural Cities Network (RECI), and the Centre for International Affairs in Barcelona (CIDOB)
 - 24. Gracia María Moreno, PhD (candidate) at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)

9 Case Study Sweden

Pieter Bevelander
Henrik Emilsson

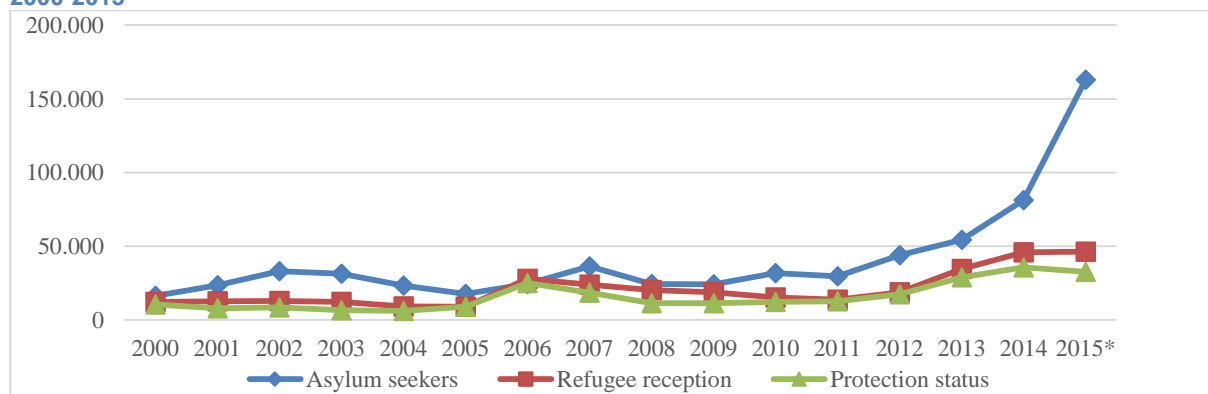
9.1 Background

9.1.1 Asylum seekers

From 2000 to 2015 almost 500,000 persons applied for asylum in Sweden. 162,877 of them in 2015 alone (see blue line in Figure 9.1). They come from, to name the biggest contributors, the ex-Yugoslavia (16 per cent), Iraq (13 per cent), Syria (12 per cent), Somalia (9 per cent), Eritrea and Afghanistan (5 per cent), and Russia and Iran (3 per cent), while 6 per cent were “Stateless”, mostly Palestinians. In the period 2012-2014, 30 per cent of asylum seekers were from Syria. In 2015, the asylum seekers were mostly from Syria (31.5 per cent), Afghanistan (22.5 per cent) and Iraq (12.8 per cent). When it comes to gender, the share of men was between 61 and 70 per cent for all years between 2000 and 2014. In 2015, the share of males was 70.4 per cent. The higher gender imbalance in 2015 is due to an increase in the number of unaccompanied minors (35,369) where there is a huge overrepresentation of males. Over the period in question, about 70 per cent minors were male.

Due to rise in unaccompanied minors, the general age composition of asylum seekers in 2015 is probably different from earlier years. 0-6 years (11 per cent), 7-12 (8 per cent), 13-17 (24 per cent), 18-24 (18 per cent), 25-34 (22 per cent), 35-44 (10 per cent), 45-64 (6 per cent), 65+ (1 per cent).

Figure 9.1 Asylum Seekers, Persons Granted Protection Status, and Persons Eligible for Introduction Programs, 2000-2015



Source: Migration Board, accessed 2016-01-11 and own adoptions.

* Refugee reception numbers for 2015 is up until November 2015.

9.1.2 Recognition rates

The recognition rate increased in the last years. UNHCR data for first time applications were 24 per cent for the 2000-2004 period, 38 per cent for 2005-2009, and 71 per cent for 2010-2014. Data from the Swedish Migration Agency also show increasing recognition rates. However, the data is not comparable to UNHCR data. In 2009, the recognition rate was 27 per cent. It rose to 28 per cent in 2010, 30 per cent in 2011, 34 per cent in 2012 and 49 per cent in 2013. From 2014 onwards, the Migration Agency considers Dublin Cases when they calculate recognition rates. Without Dublin cases, the recognition rate was 77 per cent in 2014 and 2015. With Dublin cases, the numbers were, respectively, 58 per cent and 55 per cent. The average number of days for asylum decisions were 203 in 2009, 130 in 2010, 149 in 2011, 108 in 2012, 122 in 2013, 142 in 2014, and 229 in 2015.

9.1.3 Refugee reception

Between 2000 and 2014, 221,354 persons were granted protection in Sweden, 59 per cent of them men (see grey line in Figure 9.1). The largest groups were from Iraq (19 per cent), Syria (17 per cent), Somalia (12 per cent), and Eritrea (8 per cent). If one disregards a few years at the beginning of the 1990s, when many refugees came from the former Yugoslavia, the number of persons granted international protection has been at an all-time high since 2006. In 2006 and 2008 more than 22,000 persons from Iraq were granted asylum. When the number of Iraqis became fewer, other groups increased. Between 2009 and 2011, Somalis were the largest group. From 2012 to 2014, Syrians grew in numbers and are currently the largest group of refugees, but Eritreans, Somalis and Afghans are also numerous.

Persons granted international protection and a reuniting spouse arriving in Sweden within six years are eligible for an introduction program (see orange line in Figure 9.1). This is, thus, the most important administrative category for integration (the so-called introductory program).

9.1.4 Educational background

Table 9.1 shows the education level for participants in the introduction program. The latest available data is from June 2015, when there were 47,702 participants in the program (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015a). About a third of them had fewer than nine years education, while almost a third had some kind of post-secondary education. In the last two years the average educational background has increased somewhat. On average, women have a lower education level than men.

Table 9.1 Education Level for Participants in the Introduction Program, 2013-2015

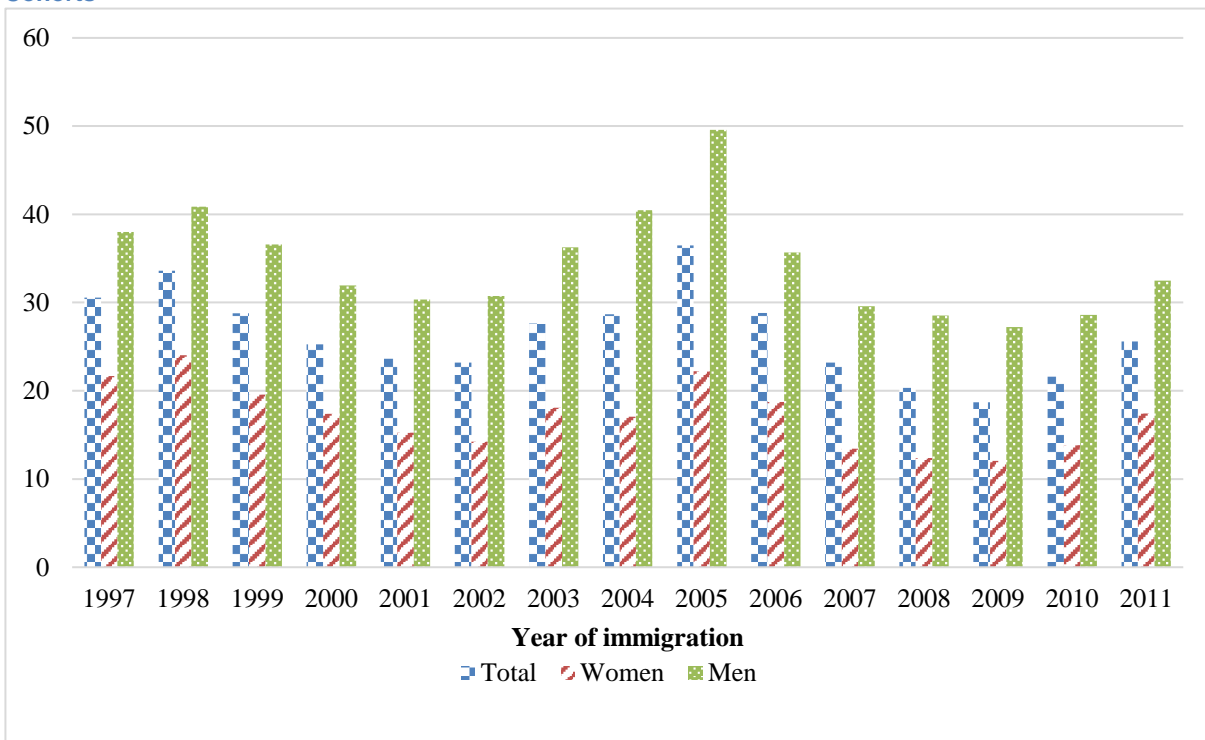
	2013 (December)			2014 (December)			2015 (June)
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Total
Fewer than 9 years	49	37	43	41	30	37	33
9 years	12	15	14	13	16	15	16
Secondary education	18	21	20	19	22	21	21
Post-secondary education, fewer than 2 years	3	4	4	4	5	5	5
Post-secondary education, 2+ years	17	22	20	22	27	24	25

Source: Swedish Government (2015) and Arbetsförmedlingen (2015a) and own adaption

9.1.5 Employment

Figure 9.2 show the employment rate for all refugee cohorts since 1997, three years after settlement. For the cohorts arriving in the late 1990s, the employment rate was about 30 per cent. It then dropped to about 25 per cent for the cohorts arriving in the early 2000s. The cohorts coming in the mid-2000s were relatively successful with an employment rate of about 30 per cent. The employment rate then decreased gradually for the cohorts arriving in 2006 to 2009. The last two cohorts, arriving in 2010 and 2011, have seen some improvements. However, the employment rate after three years is still low. Only 26 per cent of those that settled in a municipality and were eligible for an introduction program in 2011 were employed in 2014. Women had a much lower employment rate compared to men during the whole period.

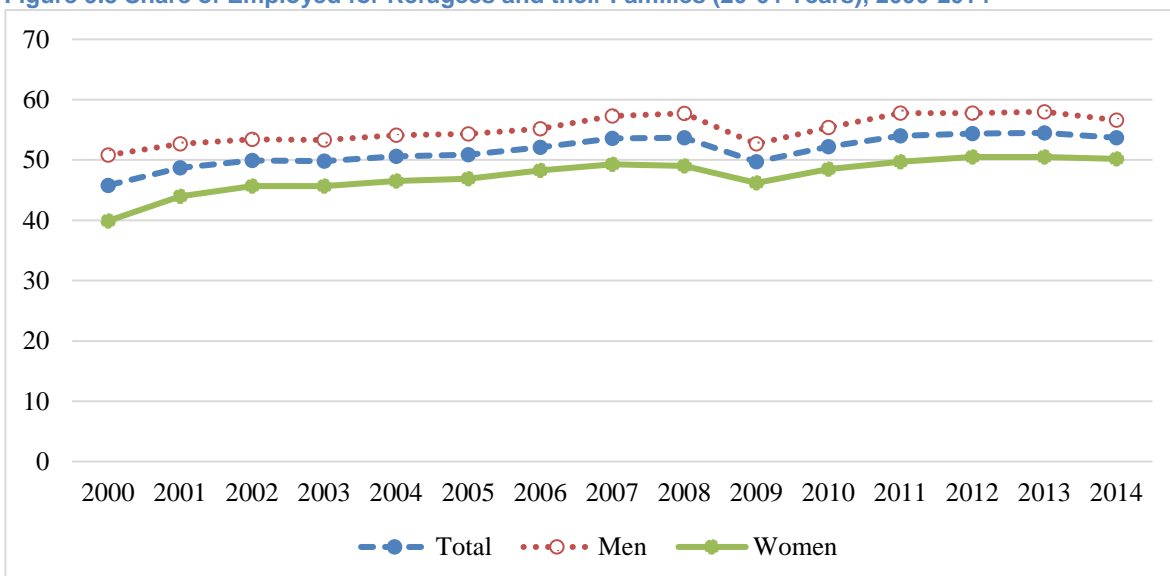
Figure 9.2 Share of Employed (20-64 Years of Age), Three Years after Settling in Sweden for the 1997-2011 Refugee Cohorts



Source: Statistics Sweden

Figure 9.3 shows the employment rate for the entire refugee group between 2000 and 2014. It rose gradually, from 46 per cent in 2000, up to 54 per cent in 2008. After a drop to 50 per cent in 2009, the year of the economic crisis, the employment rate was back at 54 per cent in 2011 and has been stable since then. The gap in employment rate between males and females was about 7-8 percentage points during the 2000-2014 period. In 2014 it was at an all-time low: 6.4 percentage points.

Figure 9.3 Share of Employed for Refugees and their Families (20-64 Years), 2000-2014



Source: Statistics Sweden

9.2 Legal framework for labour-market access

9.2.1 Asylum seekers

Most asylum seekers do have a right to work. In practice, an asylum seeker must have proof of being exempt from the obligation to have a work permit. An exempt is given if a person provides proper identity papers or in some other way helps to prove their identity. Also, the application is to be considered in Sweden. Thus, Dublin-cases are not allowed to work. If an asylum application has been refused and a deportation or refusal-of-entry order has entered into force, asylum seekers are only able to apply for a work permit under certain circumstances without leaving Sweden. This is made possible by the 2010 labour migration law. In order to receive a work permit as a labour migrant, the following conditions must be met:

- The Migration Board must receive an application within fourteen days of the decision concerning the application for asylum having entered into force
- The person must have a valid passport, and have had a work-permit exemption during the asylum process.
- The person must have been working for four months for the same employer prior to the date that the Migration Agency received the application for a work permit
- The employer must offer the opportunity to continue working for another twelve months
- The terms of employment must be at least on the same level as Swedish collective agreements or those that are customary in the relevant occupation or industry. The terms of employment include insurance coverage as well as salary. The requirements also apply to the previous four months.
- The applicant must be offered a monthly pre-tax salary of at least SEK 13,000. The requirements also apply to the previous four months.

According to the statistics provided by the Migration Board (2015) relatively few asylum seekers work in the regular labor market. During 2014, only 447 people were registered as having employment, a decrease of about six per cent compared with 2013 when 478 people had a job. Only a few rejected asylum seekers, meanwhile, use the opportunity to apply for a work permit. In 2014, there were about 620 work permit requests from previous asylum seekers, up from 430 in 2013 (Migration Board, 2015). In 2015, 237 rejected asylum seekers did get a work permit and became labour migrants. In 2013 and 2014 the number was 141 and 155.

9.2.2 Persons granted international protection

Almost all persons granted protection in Sweden receive a permanent residence permit and full inclusion in the welfare state.¹¹¹ There are very few formal distinctions between citizens and non-citizens in Swedish labour-market regulations. It makes no distinction between EU-citizens and third-country nationals, who can apply for all jobs in the private or public sector, save for a few public jobs such as police officers and professional soldiers, judges and national politicians. The most practical obstacles for immigrants in the labour market are found in regulated professions, where you need a license or authorization to work.

9.3 Policy approach

The goal of Swedish integration policy are equal rights, obligations and opportunities for all, regardless of ethnic and cultural background. Following this goal, the ambition is to support immigrants through general measures that cover the entire population. All newly arrived immigrants who lack basic Swedish language skills are entitled to free language training and free access to labour-market services. For refugees and their

¹¹⁰ Temporary permits can be given for short-term illness and if there are temporary obstacles to execute a deportation order.

families, mainstream services are supplemented by targeted support for 24 months after arrival. These migrants are also entitled to an introduction program.

In Sweden there are no formal distinctions between refugees and those granted asylum with subsidiary protection. Both groups are given permanent residence permits from day one and have the same order of rights to general welfare services and introduction measures. To simplify matters in what follows, both groups will be termed “refugees”.

After the 2014 election and the formation of a Social Democratic and Green Party minority government, integration disappeared as a policy area and no specific minister was assigned. However, the policy area of migrant newcomers was kept and it is the responsibility of the Minister of Employment. According to the Ministry, the goal of the policy area is about creating more opportunities for newcomers to quickly get into work or education. “All steps in the refugee settlement process shall be aimed at finding employment.”¹¹²

From the government’s point of view, the main problem is the lack of capacity in the municipalities to (re)settle refugees (Swedish Government, 2015). Although the number of municipalities settling new arrivals increased in all Swedish counties in 2014, the total number of places (housing as well as places in the introduction program) does not cover the needs of the refugee population. Increasing waiting times for new arrivals with residence permits at reception centers is then delaying labour-market entrance and subsequent integration. In addition, the situation in certain municipalities, especially those that have most new arrivals and asylum seekers, is strained. This applies not least in preschools, schools and in health care. The situation is also affected by a lack of access to housing, particularly smaller apartments in urban areas or where there is access to public transport and social services.

9.4 Literature review

Emilsson and Luik (2016 forthcoming) have studied the effects of human capital and migrant categories for migrant labour-market integration.

First, they show that refugees have lower labour-market integration compared to other migrant categories. This is even the case when controlling for other factors. After controlling for human capital, demographic and contextual factors, Emilsson and Luik find that the employment gap is lowest for labour migrants (10 per cent), and substantially larger for family (24 per cent) and refugees (29 per cent) migrants. Controlling for available factors increase the employment probability between family migrants and refugees. It is also surprising that controlling for demographic, contextual and educational factors increases the probability of employment between native born and labour migrants. Thus, labour migrants do better than natives.

Second, they show that education level and education type are important factors and their results are in line with Dahlstedt and Bevelander (2010). Migrants need at least a three-year post-secondary education to be successful in employment terms. However, a higher education level than a three year post-secondary education does not, typically, improve migrants employment levels. More importantly, differences in education level and type explain a very small part of the employment gap between natives and migrants. Human-capital characteristics explain about 5 percentage points, one fifth, of the gap between natives and refugees.

The results clearly show the difficulties of humanitarian and subsequent family migrants in using their education on the Swedish labour market. This might be a sign of the low quality of the education they bring, or it might reflect transferability issues. For the migrants that have most or all of their education in Sweden, returns on human capital is much higher. The study indicates that selection effects are of tremendous

¹¹¹ Stated goals at the government website, accessed 2016-01-14. <http://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/nyanlandas-etablering/>.

importance since there is huge unexplained component in employment probability between natives and family migrants and refugees. In comparison to family migrants and refugees, labour migrants have a very strong employment outcome in relation to their human capital. This fact indicates the importance of the selection effect.

Emilsson and Luikma's results confirm earlier studies (see Joyce, 2015 for a more comprehensive literature review). The effect of formal education on immigrant employment and earnings has proven to be positive, especially if some part is achieved in Sweden (Nordin, 2007). However, differences in formal education cannot explain most of the difference in the employment rate of the native and foreign-born (Eriksson, 2010). Szulkin *et. al.* (2013) finds that the composition of the immigrant group in Sweden is the most important explanatory factor for the large employment gap in Sweden compared with other countries. Thus, the employment gap between natives and foreign born is not explained by systematic differences in education, age, family status or the question of where one has immigrated from.

Bevelander (2011) find that human capital characteristics matters. He shows that demographic as well as human capital factors are important in explaining employment integration. "The younger and the better educated an individual is, the higher the probability of being employed. Having children affects the probability of being employed positively for males and negatively for females. Further, the results indicate that in general living in Stockholm compared to the two other large cities, Gothenburg and Malmoe, enhances the chance of being employed for immigrants." At the same time, Bevelander and Pendakur (2014) find that admission status is also important in explaining labour-market integration. Even though Bevelander does not include labour migrants, he find, after controlling for a set of personal and immigrant intake characteristics as well as contextual factors, that family reunion immigrants have faster employment integration than asylum claimants. Asylum claimants have, in turn, faster employment integration than resettled refugees.

9.5 REFMISMES

There is a comprehensive infrastructure in place to deal with migrant newcomers. However, the recent high migration intake has changed this somewhat and many now believe that there are capacity constraints. The main constraints are related to housing, both for asylum seekers and refugees. Many accepted refugees have to wait for long periods at reception centres for accommodation in a municipality. In addition, the services for newcomers, such as introduction programs and language training are not built to withstand the current numbers.

9.5.1 Introduction Program

In 2010, the government moved responsibility for the introduction program from the municipalities to the Employment Service, a state agency responsible for the labour market. The aim was to focus the program on labour-market integration. While the main elements in the program remains the same as before — language training, civic orientation, and labour-market activities — the basic content and scope of the program are for the first time laid down in law. The target group for the introduction program are refugees and the family of those that arrive in the country within a two year period from first residence. Later, in 2012, the time period for family was extended to six years after first residence. This group is eligible to take part in an introduction program. It is not mandatory. However, a person who does not participate has no right to other kinds of economic support. The program lasts for a maximum of 24 months. Due to the large number of newly-arrived refugees, the Employment Service has warned the government that they are struggling to live up to the ambitions of the program. The program was designed for about 10,000 persons. However, in 2012 there were on average 12,000 participants per month and it grew to 23,000 in 2014 and reached over 50,000 at the end of 2015 (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015b and <http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se>). As the number of participants has increased so has the costs of the program, from about 5 billion SEK in 2011 to 16 billion SEK in 2015.

These costs cover, introduction benefits to the participants, remuneration to the municipalities and expenditures related to labour-market services are included. In addition, the Employment Service received 700 million SEK in 2014 to administer the introduction program (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015c).

In addition to a stronger labour-market focus, the reform introduced two new instruments designed to speed labor-market integration. First, a new economic compensation, the introduction benefit provides stronger economic incentives both to participate in the program and to work alongside it. The benefit – slightly higher than the social assistance level – is dependent on “active participation” and is not affected by the income of other household members. There is the idea that this creates stronger incentives for both spouses and other family members to work and/or take part in activities. In the new system the household income is doubled if both participate. If participants find work, they keep both their income and the benefit in the short run. The second new instrument were the introduction guides. The guides were independent actors who were supposed to help the new arrivals find a job. The newcomers choose their own guides (from a selection of private and nonprofit organizations) and the compensation to the guides was partly based on their success.

The Employment Service measure the results of the programs 90 days after the end of a program. In 2013 and 2014, 5,872 respectively 6,736 persons belonged to this category. 90 days after completion of an introduction program, about half of the men and women were still in some form of labour-market program at the Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015c). In 2013, 12 per cent of women and 24 per cent of men were employed. The numbers for 2014 were, respectively, 11 and 28 per cent. About 7 per cent were studying.

The Swedish National Audit Office have done three separate audits of the programs (Riksrevisionen (2014a, b, c). The Audit Office is quite critical of the effectiveness of the program. The Employment Service’s mission is complicated partly because there are few suitable jobs to convey, and there are significant flaws in the procured services content, scope and quality. A good deal of time and resources must, therefore, be devoted to controlling the service suppliers to make sure that the newcomers get the services that the state has paid for. They also find that the matching of newcomers with a municipality, where their skills are needed, does not work. This is because most new arrivals have an educational and professional background that is not specific enough for a match to work out. Moreover, there tends to be a shortage of housing in the municipalities with good labour-market conditions. In practice, this means that it is difficult to maintain a labour-market perspective in the settlement process. Finally, the National Audit Office’s examination of the introduction guides found significant flaws. The main problem was the lack of quality assurance, which lead to low effectiveness and the inefficient use of state funds. While formal evaluations suggest that guides fulfil a role in providing social support and that the newcomers are satisfied with their services, the efforts to help newcomers enter the labor market are often lacking (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2013; Riksrevisionen, 2014c). The free-choice model has also been questioned due to the newcomers’ limited ability to make informed choices of guides. All in all, the guides have not been as successful in facilitating the transition to work. For example, from December 2010 to March 2013 only 991 payments were made for initial employment and only 84 for one year of unsubsidized employment: to put this in perspective 21,763 persons had been in an introduction program. Follow-ups also show that newcomers with an introduction guide are no more likely to enter employment or higher studies than their peers without a guide.

Introduction programs as a whole have had mixed success, at least in the short term. Clearly, these programs have ensured that employment services makes contact with and provide services to refugees much earlier than was done by municipalities before the 2010 reform (Agency for Public Management, 2012 and 2013; Liljeberg, L. & Sibbmark, K., 2011). But the transition into the labor-market remains sluggish. So far, there is only one evaluation of the new introduction program (Andersson Joona. P., Wennemo Lanninger, A. och Sundström, M., 2015). This study looks at the effects on employment, income and transition to regular education for participants starting the program in 2011, compared to those in the old system, starting the previous year. The results show that there is no difference between the groups in terms of the probability of being employed, income level or participation in regular education after one to two years in the program.

Only about 27 per cent of those who had started the program in 2010 and 2011 were employed at some time during 2011 and 2012. Women were about 15 percentage points less likely to be employed and had about 14 per cent lower income than men. The difference was similar in both groups.

9.5.2 Swedish Language Training

All adult immigrants, including EU citizens, have the right to free Swedish classes organized by municipalities. Around 60 per cent of new arrivals take advantage of the program (Statistics Sweden, 2009). Since the late 1990s, the number of students in SFI has increased and stood at 124,750 in 2014 (Swedish Government, 2015). The costs for 2014 came to about 2.4 billion SEK.

Courses should normally be available within three months of the individual's registration as a resident of a municipality. Depending on his or her educational background and prior knowledge, the student is placed in one of three study programs with varying levels of difficulty. The different programs are made up of A-D courses, each building on the previous course, with D being the highest level. Regardless of the study program begun by a student, he or she is entitled to continue studies up until the highest level, which corresponds to B1/B1+ in the European framework.

It is difficult to evaluate language training, since there are many reasons to drop out of a class. However, the general perception is that effectiveness is low. This is shown by the many reforms to improve the courses. The government introduced a new syllabus in 2003 and national exams in 2008 to standardize provisions, and earmarked additional funds for SFI teacher training in the period 2007-15. In 2010 a national SFI bonus, an incentive of 10,000 SEK (€1,100) for participants (guest students and labour migrants were not eligible for the bonus) to complete the course early, was introduced. The yearly expenditures for this reform was about 70 million SEK. So far these reforms have met with limited success. The 2003 syllabus failed to affect results (Agency for Public Management, 2009) and the SFI bonus was terminated as of July 2014, after it was shown to have very limited effect (Åslund and Engdal, 2012). Special commissions have also examined whether newcomers could be required to learn Swedish faster by introducing a time limit on participation or introducing an SFI voucher whereby students could choose their own language provider.

Moreover, there are large numbers of dropouts (National Agency for Education, 2013).¹¹³ Evidence on the influence of SFI on labour-market outcomes is also somewhat mixed. A year after the completion of SFI, only 36 per cent of participants had a job (Agency for Public Management, 2009). Students who dropped out or finished at levels B, C, and D had similar employment rates as non-participants, all higher than students who only finished level A. According to another evaluation, SFI participants initially have lower employment and earnings than their peers who do not participate, but who catch up later (Kennerberg & Åslund, 2010).¹¹⁴

9.5.3 Validation

Validation is defined as “a process of a structured assessment, valuing, documentation, and recognition of knowledge and competences that an individual has gained, irrespective of how they have been acquired.”¹¹⁵ In order to simplify the process, one governmental agency, the Agency for Higher Vocational Education, has been in charge of coordinating the national validation strategy since January 2013. The national structure is

¹¹² In 2012, 38 per cent of the students completed a course, 23 per cent dropped out, and 39 per cent continued the course the following year. The share of those who completed or those who dropped out of their courses has remained virtually unchanged over the past years. Another way of presenting the results is to follow a cohort. For the 2010 beginners, 62 per cent finished at least one course up until 2012, while 25 per cent dropped out without finishing a course, and 13 per cent continued their studies in 2013 without completing a course. There are some clear differences between men (55 per cent) and women (67 per cent) in the share that complete at least one course. Of the men who were beginners in 2010, nearly one-third dropped out without finishing a course up until 2012.

¹¹³ After ten years in Sweden the income level is comparable but participants have about a 5 percentage point higher employment rate. These differences are greater for women than for men, for the less educated than for highly educated, and for individuals from non-European countries.

¹¹⁴ www.valideringsinfo.se/en/.

divided into: (1) assessment of foreign credentials; and (2) validation of prior learning gained through work experience, which is open to both the native born and immigrants.

Since 2013 the Council for Higher Education has been responsible for assessing all kinds of foreign credentials: secondary diplomas, post-secondary vocational education, and academic degrees. The only exception is qualifications for performing regulated professions – i.e., professions that require official authorization or registration to work in Sweden – such as doctors, real estate agents, and electricians.¹¹⁶ For regulated professions, immigrants have to apply for the right to practice in Sweden from the agency responsible: for instance, the Board of Health and Welfare for nurses or the Electrical Safety Board for electricians.

In 2011 more than 5,000 people from 137 countries applied for an assessment of their higher-level education. Of those, more than 4,150 people received a statement of equivalence with the Swedish educational system (Agency for Higher Education (2012)). The number of applications has more than doubled over the past decade. While processing times fell by about two months between 2009 and 2011 (from 148 to 90 days for cases with complete documentation), there are no recent evaluations of how validation affects labour-market integration. The study by the Agency for Higher Education (ibid) found that a majority of users thought validation had helped their future careers, provided a good starting point when planning their future career in Sweden, and boosted their self-esteem.

9.5.4 Labour-market services

All persons with residence permits have the same rights to access labour-market services. Table 9.2 shows the number of persons registered at the Employment Service. While the total number was quite stable between 2012 and 2014, newly arrived immigrants are a growing group. They also have less success entering the labour market. In 2014, 40.6 per cent of all those registered obtained employment during the year. The corresponding number for migrant newcomers was 19.7 per cent (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015c).

Table 9.2 Registered at the Employment Service

	2012	2013	2014
Total, of which	1,075,021	1,094,002	1,055,512
Newly arrived immigrants*	60,749	73,571	89,572
Born outside Europe (excluding newly arrived)	212,352	221,929	221,076

Source: Arbetsförmedlingen (2015c)

*Registered in Sweden for 0-36 month

9.5.5 Subsidized employment

So-called *new-start jobs* are available to anyone who has been out of work for a long time (or, for humanitarian or family migrants, have been in the country less than three years). Depending on the age of the worker, the employer receives an amount equal to a normal employer's fee: (31.42 per cent) for those 20-25 years old, which represents 31 per cent of gross salary; or a double employer's fee for those 26 years or older, which represents 63 per cent of gross salary. *Step-in jobs* are offered to humanitarian and family migrants during their first three years after admission, and must be combined with Swedish courses. A subsidy of 80 per cent of employer wage costs is paid to the employer for a maximum of two years. In 2011 about 14,000 new arrivals were employed through subsidized employment, either in new-start jobs or step-in jobs. The number of newly arrived migrants in step-in jobs is increasing, from 6,641 in 2012 to 8,965 in 2014 (Arbetsförmedlingen, 2015c).

On paper new-start jobs have better outcomes: migrants who have had a *new-start job* have a higher probability of entering the labor market in three years, whereas there is no such evidence for those that had *step-in jobs*. Meanwhile, people often move from *step-in jobs* to *new-start jobs*, and selection effects might mean

¹¹⁶ Most regulated professions can be found here: www.uhr.se/sv/Information-in-English/Qualifications-recognition/Akademisk-start/Work-in-Sweden/Regulated-professions-in-Sweden/.

that the most resourceful newcomers take advantage of both programs. The jobs on offer are, for the most part, low skilled: in sectors such as hotels and restaurants, retail, and for the municipalities, in health care and other services. Few are in large companies or offer opportunities for progression; it is easy to replace a subsidized worker with another subsidized worker (National Audit Office, 2013). In 2012, the state's total cost for *step-in jobs* was SEK 339 million (€39 million) (SEK 13,000 or €1,500 per month per participant for roughly 6,500 participants) while the cost of *new-start jobs* for migrant newcomers was SEK 410 million (€47 million; the average cost per new arrival was SEK 9800 or €1,100).

9.5.6 Education

Sweden has a long tradition of vocational education and training (VET) for adults, provided in many different forms, including initial vocational education and training (IVET) for adults, higher vocational education, supplementary education, post-secondary training, folk high schools¹¹⁷, internships, labor-market education, and competence development in the workplace. The main objective of this type of training is usually to assist labor-force entry, but it can also lead directly to higher vocational education and training or to higher education.

Funding barriers are minimal: almost all adult education and vocational training is free of charge. Participants who go through Employment services can support themselves through social assistance or unemployment benefits. For vocational education that more closely resembles traditional education (e.g. adult education and higher vocational education), student loans are available for all persons with a permanent residence permit and most persons with a temporary permit.

9.6 Conclusions

The Swedish policies for migrant newcomers are celebrated for being comprehensive, ambitious and for providing few obstacle for labour-market mobility.¹¹⁸ All persons granted international protection have access to free language training and labour-market services. The downside is that the introduction programs are expensive, the actual labour-market integration is sluggish, and there are few introduction measures that are proven to be effective. The new 2010 introduction program: increased: funding; the economic incentives for participating in employment programs; and access to labour-market services. However, no improvement in overall labour-market integration is noted for the group as a whole in connection to this change. Further, ambitious programs of subsidised employment have had limited positive effects. Labour-market integration success is more determined by structural factors, such as overall economic growth and the strength of local and regional labour markets.

Thus, the good practices of the Swedish approach is more a question of the general access to services and resources for migrant newcomers. No-one is hindered to improve their human capital by a lack of economic means, and there are very few structural barriers hindering labour-market mobility. The current refugee crisis is putting the Swedish model to a difficult test. The laws and regulations for introduction programs and language training are guaranteeing certain public services to migrant newcomers within specific time frames. Due to a lack of capacity in the upcoming years, especially in terms of staff, facilities and housing, it is likely that the quality of services will decline somewhat.

¹¹⁶ Read more about folk high schools at the National Agency for Education: <http://www.skolverket.se/om-skolverket/andra-sprak-och-lattlast/in-english/the-swedish-education-system/2.927/what-are-folk-high-schools-1.109278>.

¹¹⁷ See, for example, the MIPEX. <http://www.mipex.eu/sweden>.

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10 Case Study United Kingdom

Alastair MacIver

10.1 Background

10.1.1 Profile of recent refugee flows

10.1.1.1 Spontaneous arrival

During 2014, 25,033 asylum applications were received in the UK, excluding dependents (Home Office, 2015a). Compared to the peak of 2002, the number of applications made in 2014 was low and represents no real increase in the numbers of applications, viewed within the period of the previous five years (Home Office, 2015a). For reasons of geographical location, the maintenance of border controls and non-participation in EU relocation schemes, the United Kingdom has therefore not experienced a rise in arrivals due to the refugee crisis. The countries from which most applications are received are Eritrea, Pakistan and Syria. In 2014, 59 per cent of asylum applications were refused at initial decision and 44 per cent were refused at final decision (Home Office, 2015a). Year end June 2015, the UK received 23,515 new asylum applications, excluding dependents (Office of National Statistics, 2015). The largest number of asylum applications came from nationals of Eritrea (3,568), Pakistan (2,303) and Syria (2,204). For an indication of the increase in application from Syrian nationals it suffices to observe that in 2010 there were 127 applicants for asylum and Syria was the 27th country as a source of asylum applicant; in 2014, Syria ranked 3rd on this scale and the number increased to 2,025 (House of Commons Library, 2015).

10.1.1.2 Resettlement

As noted above, the refugee crisis has not led to increased arrivals in the UK, and indeed, the UK Government continues to reject the model of relocating refugees from Greece and Italy very explicitly. Instead of spontaneous arrival and relocation, however, the United Kingdom favours a resettlement model, whereby, through cooperation between central government, UNHCR and local authorities, vulnerable refugees arrive directly from Syria and refugee camps in the region. More specifically, the United Kingdom (“UK”) exercised the right under Protocol 21 not to opt in to the Emergency Relocation Mechanism introduced by Council Decisions under Article 78(3) TFEU in September of 2015. Moreover, the UK has decided not to opt in to the proposed “Permanent Crisis Relocation Mechanism” to be established by the insertion of Article 33A in the Dublin III Regulation. As an alternative, the UK Government has determined to expand the Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme (“VPRS”), originally established in January 2015 in cooperation with UNHCR. The VPRS aims to relocate 20,000 individuals during the 2015 to 2020 period. The VPRS is exclusively for the benefit of Syrian nationals and granted on the basis of vulnerability. “Vulnerability” is defined as vulnerability in the region of origin by reference to Syria or the Refugee Camps from which refugees are drawn for the VPRS (Home Office, 2015b). It is of particular note that “vulnerability” therefore does not necessarily imply a degree of incapacity that would prevent labour-market integration in the UK (e.g. LGBT individuals are vulnerable “in region” by reason of their status). Moreover, it suffices that one member of the family unit be classified as vulnerable in the region of origin for the family to qualify. Although there is no current data on the educational and employment background of resettled refugees, as an indicative measure, practitioners report that of the 350 claims for benefits received from VPRS arrivals to date, around 250 have been for Job Seekers’ Allowance (“JSA”) rather than for Employment Support Allowance (“ESA”), a benefit destined for individuals prevented from working by disability or ill health. This initial finding suggests that the majority of VPRS beneficiaries do not require specialist labour-market integration measures to address obstacles arising from ill-health or disability, although the considerable minority making use of ESA indicates that such support may be required for a great number of the beneficiaries. As of September 2015, 252 Syrian nationals had been resettled under the VPRS (Home Office, 2015b) and 1,000 had arrived following agreement with

local authorities by December 2015. The Department of Work and Pensions (“DWP”) estimates that around 6-7,000 claims for benefits will be made by those within the 20,000 resettled under the VPRS. This is because the 20,000 figure includes dependent children. Equally, the other two chief resettlement schemes are the Gateway Protection Programme (“GPP”), resettling around 750 annually (Home Office, 2015b), and the Mandate Refugee Scheme (“MRS”), resettling as many as 100 per year (UNHCR, 2015).

10.1.2 Legal framework for labour–market access

10.1.2.1 Asylum seekers

Asylum seekers do not normally have access to the labour market in the UK. As such, the UK did not opt in to the recast Reception Conditions Directive (Directive 2013/33/EU), laying down in its Article 15(1) the right for asylum seekers to access the labour market no later than nine months from the date on which an application for asylum was made. Instead, under Paragraph 360 of the Immigration Rules, in the UK, an asylum seeker may apply for permission to take up employment twelve months after an application for asylum is made, in compliance with Article 11(2) of the “old” Reception Conditions Directive (Directive 2003/9/EC) whereby the Member State must, at that time, decide “the conditions for granting access to the labour market for the applicant”. If permission to enter employment is granted by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under Paragraph 360 of the Immigration Rules, it is subject to the restrictive conditions of Paragraph 360A. In particular, asylum seekers may only take up employment in roles which are included on the Shortage Occupation List maintained by the United Kingdom Borders Agency (“UKBA”). The Shortage Occupation List contains a list of occupations and minimum salary requirements that must be met before employment can be taken up. The Shortage Occupation List is divided into “tiers” allocated under the points system. Asylum seekers are placed in “Tier 2” and confronted with an extremely limited range of occupations which, in most instances, do not correspond to their previous experience and training. In many cases, according to practitioners in the Bridges Programmes, this has the effect of *de facto* excluding asylum seekers from the labour market altogether. Furthermore, permission to enter employment is subject to the qualification that it may not be in a self-employed capacity and, equally, that there can be no engagement in setting up a business. Accordingly, the Immigration Rules preclude asylum seekers in the UK from taking on employment in significant areas of the labour market. In addition to this, the rapid settlement of asylum claims, using six months as the chief “Reference Period” (House of Commons Library, 2015), together with the impact of Case Resolutions I (2007) and II (2011) have the practical implication that an asylum seeker typically either receives status or has his or her application refused before the possibility of requesting permission to work is available under Paragraph 360. This legal regime is also instituted within a policy context in which central government is increasingly demonstrating a preference for a resettlement model in contradistinction to a spontaneous arrival model: this is to be set out in an upcoming Annual Asylum Strategy. Theresa May outlined these changes in a speech to the Conservative Part Conference of 6 October 2015. Since persons under resettlement schemes, including the VPRS and GPP, receive refugee status, and attendant employment rights, on arrival in the UK, and as they are not required to make an application for asylum, specific assistance for the labour-market integration of asylum seekers has lost some of its urgency. As a consequence of this legal and policy context, the efforts of both policy makers and third-sector actors in the UK are focused on the labour-market integration of persons who have received status, in other words refugees, and who, accordingly, have access to employment without any legal restriction.

10.1.2.2 Refugees

Refugees in the United Kingdom can receive a number of different legal statuses. These are most significantly: Refugee Status (“RS”) and Humanitarian Protection (“HP”). Under both RS and HP, pursuant to Paragraph 339Q of the Immigration Rules, refugees receive leave to remain for five years duration, even though the likelihood is that it will be indefinitely renewed should return lead to persecution. Beneficiaries under the VPRS are notably granted HP. Under Paragraph 344B of the Immigration Rules, persons granted RS or HP are entitled to work without any restrictions as to employment or occupation. Accordingly, refugees with RS or HP are not restricted by the Shortage Occupation List, which obtains for asylum seekers. The

maximum five-year period of status has, as such, been identified as impeding labour-market access, since, even if status is renewed, it creates sufficient uncertainty as to the long term presence of a refugee employee in the mind of employers (Stewart and Mulvey, 2014). Furthermore, another factor to note in the case of spontaneous arrivals relates to the transition to employment rights and benefits. In particular, once an asylum seeker has been granted status, be it RS or HP, he or she has 28 days to vacate the accommodation that has been provided to them. Due to the brevity of this period, there is a strong incentive to secure housing and out of work benefits rather than employment. The focus therefore becomes one of receiving refugees into the mainstream DWP benefits system, rather than longer term integration. A similar approach is in evidence, with respect to the VPRS, even without the asylum seeker period, since efforts are directed towards moving VPRS beneficiaries onto the DWP benefits system after initial support from local authorities.

10.1.3 Policy approach

Policy approaches to the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees are best considered separately but each is based on the perception that spontaneous arrival involves the unnecessary dangers of travel for individual claimants and that these may be motivated by economic considerations. As a consequence, in preference to spontaneous arrivals, the policy approach to refugees is to favour the resettlement of refugees who have been confirmed to be vulnerable “in region”. In like manner, the policy approach to the labour-market integration of asylum seekers is informed by the conception of access to work as an economic pull factor to be mitigated (University of Sheffield Policy Briefing, 2016). Although this approach is currently challenged by the House of Lords’ second reading of the Immigration Bill, which would grant asylum seekers access to employment only six months after their applications, the twelve month bar on employment can be said to be premised on the notion that the right to work acts as an economic pull for asylum claims. The cumulative result of these policy approaches is to regard labour-market integration as an incidental consideration, in the case of resettled refugees, or simply undesirable, in the case of asylum seekers. Indeed, as noted by a number of the practitioners consulted, there is currently no strategy for the integration of refugees and asylum seekers, including labour-market integration, in England or indeed any promulgated by central government. The absence of strategy is particularly significant given that neither asylum nor welfare is a devolved area of competence. This absence is to be contrasted with the Scottish Government’s *New Scots: Integrating Refugees in Scotland’s Communities 2014-2017* (“*New Scots*”) and the *Refugee Inclusion Strategy* of the Welsh Assembly Government. In both the Scottish and the Welsh strategies, employment is acknowledged as an important indicator of integration both as a public outcome which should be equivalent to those achieved by the general population and as a matter of “fulfilling potential” (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008). Nonetheless, according to those civil servants designing the response to the arrival of VPRS refugees, the present absence of general integration strategy from central government in the domain of refugees and asylum seekers has led to a *de facto* policy approach of mainstreaming refugee support and assistance regarding access to employment or making use of flexibility within existing systems. Until 2010, the DWP operated under the *Working to Rebuild Lives* strategy which recognised the importance of refugee employment for integration. The continuing importance attached to the labour-market integration of refugees can however be evidenced by extensive cooperation between the DWP and the Home Office in advance of the arrival of VPRS beneficiaries.

Underemployment is regarded as being as harmful as unemployment by a number of respondents. One of the chief risks of underemployment is the precariousness of working conditions and the illegality of the wage. Accordingly, labour integration *at any cost*, as might be promoted by welfare reform, was not considered by third-sector practitioners to represent a desirable objective.

10.1.4 Literature review

This bibliographical review can be usefully divided into five principal areas. The first concentrates on the conceptualisation of integration, including the role and significance of employment to researchers and policy makers. The second relates to empirical findings which have identified factors which influence integration,

including labour-market integration, and consequentially points to both promoters of and barriers to that process. The third considers the temporal focus on short-term outcomes both from policy makers and researchers. The fourth considers the interrelation between agency and social structures in examining how refugees respond to potential barriers to labour-market integration. Finally, the fifth bibliographical area is employment outcomes for refugees who have been beneficiaries of the GPP resettlement scheme.

The first area is the conceptualisation of integration and the place attributed to labour-market integration. The “Indicators of Integration” framework developed by Ager and Strang (Ager and Strang, 2004) has been particularly influential. It refers to the achievement of public outcomes within employment (in addition to *inter alia* housing, education and health) equivalent to those achieved within the wider host community, social connection and have “sufficient linguistic competence and cultural knowledge, and a sufficient sense of security and stability, to confidently engage in that society in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship”. The objectives of achieving equivalence of public outcomes, social connection and confident engagement in society have in particular been taken up by the *New Scots* strategy promulgated by the Scottish Government.

The second area presents empirical findings relating to integration drivers. Factors influencing refugee integration have been highlighted based on longitudinal questionnaire responses from refugees from 2005 to 2009, beginning from when their asylum claims were determined (Cebulla, Daniel and Zurawan, 2010). This is clearly to be distinguished from the conceptual model of integration set out by Ager and Strang. Indeed, while Cebulla, Daniel and Zurawan incidentally refer to the equivalence of public outcomes, their conception of integration is exhaustively defined by English language proficiency, employment and housing (Cebulla, Daniel and Zurawan, 2010). They find the following seven factors to influence refugee integration: country of origin; time spent in the UK prior to the asylum decision; English language skills; age and gender; health; previous education and employment; and the presence of friends and family (Cebulla, Daniel and Zurawan, 2010). Equally, they demonstrate that the employment of refugees after 21 months is at 49 per cent rather than 80 per cent, the employment rate for the general population at the time (Cebulla, Daniel and Zurawan, 2010).

The third area highlights the temporal perspective adopted by both researchers and policy makers in approaching refugee employment outcomes. Shutes in particular has argued that welfare reform in UK, with its stress on short-term outcomes, can be seen to lead to refugees encountering relatively poorer working conditions and to the reproduction of the inequalities previously met by refugees (Shutes, 2011). It has been pointed out by Ott that this short-term emphasis has conditioned the research focus to concentrate on the same short-term outcomes (Ott, 2013). The timeframe for labour-market integration being pursued by government may not be explicit, but it may be apparent from the programming and expectations under which the support and assistance proceeds (Ott, 2013).

Fourth, another research focus in the field of refugee integration in the UK has been on the response of refugees and asylum seekers to host society structures. Archer and Piętko-Nykaza have developed a model of analytical dualism and reflexivity which takes account both of the agency of refugees and asylum seekers and rooted social structures (Archer, 1996) (Piętko-Nykaza, 2015). . Despite the interrelatedness of structure and agency, the analytical dualism of Archer and Piętko-Nykaza maintains that each is relatively autonomous and their interplay is best understood when each is treated as a separate object of study. Reflexivity, in turn, is name given to the internal dialogue which a refugee or asylum seeker pursues regarding their wishes and concerns, on the one hand, and the possibility of giving them expression, on the other. These two conceptions therefore view integration as a two-way street involving both measures taken by the host society authorities and refugees and asylum seeker responses to those measures. This has been notably applied in the context of the barriers created by the professional structures and qualifications maintained and required by the teaching and medical professions in the UK. Piętko-Nykaza identifies four different responses or strategies adopted by refugees in response to barriers and personal dilemmas: acceptance, compromise, ambivalence and withdrawal (Piętko-Nykaza, 2015). These vary significantly in function of the time spent in

the UK and the degree of aspiration (Piętka-Nykaza, 2015). This literature on analytical dualism and reflexivity is important in placing the refugee's perspective centre stage and examining how structures are mediated by agency.

Fifth, the literature has also addressed the employment outcomes of refugees who have been beneficiaries of the GPP resettlement programme. Resettled refugees are strongly motivated to pursue work but, nonetheless, few refugees succeed in taking up employment (Cramb and Hudek, 2005) (Evans and Murray, 2009). Despite this, most refugees are satisfied with resettlement services, particularly initially (Cramb and Hudek, 2005) (Evans and Murray, 2009). The most recent evaluation demonstrated that at eighteen months after arrival, only three of 71 refugees within the GPP had acquired experience of paid work (Platts-Fowler and Robinson, 2011). Of those three working, all were Iraqi males who had confronted underemployment. Country of origin also figured as a factor with Iraqi refugees applying for jobs, while Congolese and Rohingya refugees pursued language classes and focused on adaptation to life in the UK (Platts-Fowler and Robinson, 2011).

10.2 Inventory of REFMISMES

10.2.1 Skills and needs assessment

The regime established in respect of asylum seekers by Paragraph 360A(i) of the Immigration Rules, which limits permission to take up employment to the roles and salary requirements included on the shortage occupation list, systemically assigns asylum seekers to "Tier 2 (General)". "Tier 2 (General)" is ordinarily attributed to a non-EEA economic migrant under "Points Based System", set out in Part 6A of the Immigration Rules, where individuals have a relatively advanced level of formal education. Since asylum seekers will not ordinarily have this level of skill or qualification, they will be legally excluded from employment. Accordingly, as regards asylum seekers, the absence of skills and needs assessment, inherent in the blanket attribution of the Tier 2 Shortage Occupation List, in particular according to practitioners, has the effect of legally excluding them from the labour market.

The *Refugee Integration and Employment Service* ("RIES") was operational from 1 October 2008 to 1 October 2011 and designed to support individual refugees and their dependants to integrate into the UK after refugee status is granted. It followed on the success of the earlier pilot project, the *Strategic Upgrade of National Refugee Integration Services* ("SUNRISE"), which ran from 2005 to 2008. It was operated by the Refugee Council and a number of local authorities. The RIES offered a twelve-month programme to refugees, in particular at the moment when status was granted. While, some of its support involved addressing difficulties created by the transition to mainstream benefits and housing, after the special asylum regime, RIES also included an Employment Advice Service. This service encompassed a degree of skills and qualifications assessment, assisting refugees to recognise their own skills and experience through curriculum vitae writing.

Refugee Integration Service ("RIS") is operated by the Scottish Refugee Council. It is financed by National Lottery funding as a *de facto* successor to RIES. It offers assistance to refugees who have been granted RS or HP and lasts twelve months in the form of an advice and support service concerning initial access to benefits and employment options with the aim of securing long-term labour-market integration. As part of this service, the skills and needs of the refugees concerned are assessed and linked and further information is provided.

Moreover, since the VPRS process involves a voluntary acceptance of resettled refugees by a local authority, the Home Office has adopted a referral mechanism to this effect with information about the individuals to be resettled. Such referrals include information about the medical and other special individual needs. In this

respect, a degree of skills and needs assessment is performed by the Home Office in cooperation with UN-HCR. In future, for “Phase II” of the scaled-up VPRS, according to the practitioners consulted, there is discussion of an assessment that would refer beneficiaries to a particular local authority based on their skills and the labour-market needs of the area.

Through an initial “Skills Audit”, the *Bridges Programmes* place a strong emphasis on not only assessing the skills and needs of refugees but assisting individuals to recognise themselves which skills and experiences are of value in the UK labour market. A significant part of this effort is directed towards assisting refugees to articulate their skills, experiences and qualifications in their countries of origin in terms which are comprehensible and attractive to employers in the UK. In particular, identifying which professions in the UK are the closest equivalents to those existing in the refugee’s country of origin and which other roles are allied to them. The preparation of *curricula vitae* and interviews are an important aspect of the “Skills Audit” and best equip refugees to explain and demonstrate their value to employers with a view to prospective work placements. The Life Skills courses offered by the *Bridges Programmes* in this regard also contribute to the effort to assist refugees to communicate and build confidence in discussing their skills and professional strengths.

10.2.2 Skills development

In England, adult asylum seekers become eligible for free English as a second or other language (“ESOL”) classes after being in the country for six months (Skills Funding Agency, 2014). Refugees, on the other hand, are immediately eligible for free ESOL classes from their arrival in the UK (Skills Funding Agency, 2014). In Scotland, asylum seekers are eligible for free English classes without having to meet any periods of residence requirements (Scottish Government, 2009). The Scottish Funding Council offers a fee waiver for asylum seekers who are attending college undertaking full or part-time ESOL courses. Refugees are eligible to apply for a fee waiver and discretionary bursary support for Further Education courses is also available, which includes ESOL courses (Scottish Funding Council, 2010). In addition, hardship funds are available for course materials and travel. For asylum seekers in particular, this is extremely important, since permission to take up employment is extremely limited, and maintenance allowances do not cover the costs of pursuing English language courses.

As regards refugees, one significant difference between HP and RS is with respect to fees payable for education and skills development: refugees with HP, including those under the VPRS, are required to pay overseas fees, whereas refugees with RS are eligible for the home student rate. This limit on access to education for VPRS beneficiaries may therefore present a barrier to their longer-term integration with the job market in roles commensurate with their skills and experience.

In this connection, one issue emphasised by third-sector respondents is the application of sanctions to refugees who miss interviews with at the Job Centre Plus due to attendance of ESOL or further education courses. The DWP by contrast, point out that attendance of ESOL courses is, as such, included in Claimant Commitments, required to be agreed by claimants of JSA and ESA. Flexibility has, as such, been promoted in respect of Claimant Commitments for refugees under the VPRS programme so as to include completion of ESOL courses as one of the few conditions for receipt of JSA or ESA. The ESOL courses are designed so as to allow refugees to acquire a sufficient proficiency in English to enter the labour market in compliance with health and safety needs. Where refugees have opted to pursue more advanced English classes at further education institutions and therefore not attended DWP ESOL courses, according to third sector practitioners, refugees have often seen themselves subject to sanctions.

10.2.3 Job intermediation

While asylum seekers meet very restrictive conditions, even if permission to access the labour market is granted under Paragraph 360 of the Immigration Rules, limited job intermediation is possible in the form of

volunteering opportunities. In particular, this has been acknowledged by the *New Scots* (Scottish Government, 2014) strategy and the Scottish Refugee Council has been active both in making representations to the Home Office in respect of volunteering and in offering opportunities through volunteer jobs events.

The *Phoenix Mentoring Project* was established by the North of England Refugee Service. It aims to provide a general mentoring service to all those aged 16 to 25 years living in Newcastle upon Tyne and the surrounding area. Despite the general scope of the *Phoenix Mentoring Project*, it prioritises asylum seekers and refugees. Mentors are volunteers who assist the learning of beneficiaries with a broad range of obstacles, including those relating to integration and employment.

The *Bridges Programmes* arranges short-term work placements, of around twelve days, with a broad range of employers. The *Bridges Programmes* requires proficiency in English to be demonstrated, principally for health and safety reasons. Work placements are acknowledged as being invaluable for the labour-market integration of refugees and indeed, according to practitioners, are seen by employers as representing stronger evidence of skills and competences than those attested to by recognised qualifications.

A number of the practitioners consulted reported on an absence of understanding on the part of Job Centre Plus as to the meaning and importance of work placements for refugees. Indeed, a number of refugees have seen themselves sanctioned, whereby their benefits have been suspended, for carrying out unremunerated work placements while in receipt of Job Seekers' Allowance. A number of respondents believed this to be a significant factor in disincentivising the labour-market integration of refugees. Indeed, while intervention by third sector organisations on behalf of a refugee often offered an effective remedy, in other cases there is anecdotal evidence that sanctioning has been sufficient to dissuade refugees from pursuing work placements and other forms of job intermediation. Given that work placement is considered to be among the most significant factors in promoting labour-market integration, the *de facto* imposition of disincentives to follow such schemes in the form of sanctions results in the unemployment and underemployment of refugees.

10.2.4 Recognition of Skills and Qualifications

The UK exercised its right under Protocol 21 not to opt in to the recast Qualification Directive (Directive 2011/95/EU). As such, the UK does not apply and is not bound by Article 28 of the recast Directive with respect to access to procedures for recognition of qualifications, in particular ensuring equal treatment between refugees and nationals, and access to schemes for the assessment and validation of prior learning.

UK NARIC is the National Recognition Information Centre, the National Agency responsible for providing information, advice and opinion on vocational, academic and professional skills and qualifications from all over the world. It is managed by ECCTIS Limited on behalf of the UK Government, under a contract to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills ("BIS"). One of the potential obstacles for refugees which emerges from the *UK NARIC* system relate to the finding that a qualification is equivalent or lower than that which they are required to obtain in the UK in order to secure employment. As such, as was particularly stressed by practitioners, access to student finance and favourable tuition fees is restricted to applicants seeking to obtain a qualification, which is higher than that which they have previously been awarded.

In Scotland, a *Scoping Study* on the potential of a Scottish "recognition centre" acknowledged the potential deficiencies of the *UK NARIC* system, especially from the point of view of assessing and validating prior learning. There is particularly the problem of certification which has been destroyed (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Partnership, 2010). This is of special relevance to refugees and highlights a lacuna in the integration framework with the same material scope as Article 28 of the recast Qualification Directive.

A number of sector specific schemes have the objective of providing special access routes for refugees to regulated professions or assisting awareness and the recognition of qualifications. Among these have been *Refugees into Teaching* ("RIT") and *Refugees Into Teaching in Scotland* ("RITeS") in the teaching sector

(Smyth and Kum, 2010). From 2005 to 2011, *RITeS* involved cooperation between the Scottish Government, the General Teaching Council and University partners with the objective of making refugee teachers eligible for professional service recognizing equivalent qualifications, and assuring English proficiency.

Equally, specifically designed programmes such as *Refugee Doctors (Scotland)*, *Refugee Health Professionals-Building Bridges* assist refugees to refresh medical knowledge and skills before taking professional qualification exams (PLABS Part 1 and Part 2); understand UK medical procedures and systems through clinical attachments; and find employment through the CAPS (“Clinical Apprenticeship Scheme”) or other routes. Accordingly, while such programmes do not provide the recognition of qualifications *per se*, they provide a route for refugees to enter the medical profession. While results have been mixed, in terms of the responses from refugees, longer term refugees with a high degree of aspiration and persistence have successfully integrated into the profession (Piętko-Nykaza, 2015).

10.2.5 Incentives for economic integration

As noted above, Paragraph 360A (ii) and (iii) of the Immigration Rules preclude asylum seekers from self-employment or starting a business.

Refugees into Business was a scheme run by the Refugee Council to introduce refugees to the formalities of running a business in the UK. In terms of geographic scope it covered both Greater London and Birmingham. Among other things *Refugees into Business* introduced refugees to the incorporation, taxation and regulatory requirements of running a business in the UK. Furthermore, the scheme encompassed information about access to finance and business set-up loans. There was a perception on the part of the practitioners contacted that this was of particular importance because there was an observed lack of understanding among refugees regarding the formal aspects of starting and maintaining a business in the UK. In particular, it was a useful clarification that norms that might apply in the country of origin do not apply in the UK. The example of street vending without permission from the local authority was cited as an example. Most importantly, the provision of information and support as to these formal aspects was observed to help refugees avoid difficulties with the relevant authorities, especially in the form of enforcement action and financial penalties.

As regards current programmes, the DWP can facilitate access to self-employment through Specialist Employability Support (“SES”) for disabled claimants, including refugees. The SES will, in particular, offer advice regarding the formalities and information sources for starting a business.

It was suggested by some third sector practitioners consultants that there is the perception among human resources departments that incentivising the employment of refugees might contravene equal opportunities legislation, in particular the Equalities Act 2010, in the sense that it would disadvantage other applicants in a particular role. Moreover, well-intentioned bespoke scholarships and academic positions created by universities for refugees often create difficulties from the perspective of equal opportunities legislation. Incentives, economic or otherwise, can therefore encounter this actual or perceived legal barrier.

10.3 Conclusions

It is important to stress that the regime for asylum seekers established by Paragraphs 360 and 360A of the Immigration Rules exclude asylum seekers from much of the labour market in the UK both in *de jure* and *de facto* terms. This is an important limitation on the personal scope of labour-market integration measures in the UK. Now it has been found that early labour-market integration of asylum seekers promotes the long-term employment of refugees, extending into the period after status determination (Cebulla, Daniel and Zura-wan, 2010). This limitation, then, is much to be regretted and leads to skills attrition. Equally, the formal five-year duration of both RS and HP create additional legal barriers to labour-market integration for refugees

who have been granted status. Accordingly, the legal framework in place for both refugees and asylum seekers in the UK, create particular obstacles to securing employment over both the short and the long term.

The absence of a refugee integration strategy in England and from central government also represents a limitation on the approach to labour-market integration strategy in particular. While there is a degree of coordination between the DWP and the Home Office with regard to new arrivals under the VPRS scheme, the absence of a strategy means that longer-term consideration has not been given to what integration requires and which public authorities and third sector organisations are best placed to offer support. In a similar way, the *New Scots* and *Refugee Inclusion Strategy* plans set out by the devolved administrations, are required to develop a policy approach within the parameters set by central government, which principally focus on the initial priority of receiving refugees into the welfare system.

The early and free provision of ESOL English language courses to asylum seekers in Scotland helps to ensure that language skills can be developed to a level where labour-market integration is possible by the time status is granted. Likewise, the effort to provide volunteering opportunities to asylum seekers, in particular by the Scottish Refugee Council, helps to remedy the limitations of the Paragraph 360 restrictions in terms of long-term integration.

In terms of other good practice, skills assessments and job intermediation offered by the *Bridges Programmes*, *RIS*, *RIES* and others help refugees to understand and articulate their own skills and experiences in terms comprehensible and attractive to employers. Exercises of this kind help to establish confidence between refugees and employers and to provide more meaningful demonstrations of skills and competences than those qualifications formally recognised by *UK NARIC*.

Equally, sector-specific schemes, which stop short of providing direct recognition, such as *Refugees into Teaching*, *Refugee Doctors* and *Refugee Health Professionals* can, in the same way, be seen as facilitating labour-market integration, even though, as Piętka-Nykaza has shown, refugee agency may be decisive in this context.

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10.5 List of contacted institutions and experts

Rob Evans, Head of Asylum and Family Policy, Home Office

Mark Knight, Strategy- Working Age Benefits, Department of Work and Pensions

Andrew Morrison and Derek Mitchell, Migration, Population and Diversity, COSLA

Maggie Lennon, Director, The Bridges Programmes

Gary Christie, Head of Policy , Scottish Refugee Council

Lisa Doyle, Head of Advocacy, Refugee Council

Ryan Mundy, Deputy Director, Council At-Risk Academics (Council for Assisting Refugee Academics)

Shanthi Gunsekera, Senior Policy Officer, Diversity and Social Policy, Greater London Authority

Appendix: Inventory of REFMISMES

	Austria	Austria	Austria
	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Title	Education and training coaching and vocationally oriented German courses for third-country nationals, recognised asylum seekers and persons entitled to subsidiary protection aged 25 or less	Quantum leap! – Modular qualification and labour-market integration of recognised asylum seekers and persons entitled to subsidiary protection	Modular qualification and activation of third-country nationals, recognised asylum seekers and persons entitled to subsidiary protection in Vienna and Lower Austria-South
Implementing institution/organization	Die Wiener Volkshochschulen GmbH	Caritas der Erzdiözese Wien –	Österreichische Jungarbeiterbewegung – Berufspädagogisches Institut der ÖJAB
Geographical scope	Vienna	Vienna	Vienna, Lower Austria
Target group of beneficiaries	Third-country nationals, recognised refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection under 25 who have acquired basic education	Recognised refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection	Adult third-country nationals, recognised refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection with no or little German language skills (special focus on women)
No. of beneficiaries	N/A	N/A	32 (of which 24 are planned to be women)
Objective	Improving job-specific language skills and providing orientation to enhance participants' chances to continue their education or enter the labour market	Advancement of job-related skills to facilitate labour-market entry of participants	Labour-market integration through acquisition of recognised diploma for language and job training
Actions	Individual coaching including the design of a tailored course programme for each participant	Counselling, coaching, language courses and other qualification measures (special job trainings for professions such as caregiver, nursery assistant and children's group attendant)	Assisted by socio-educational counselling, participants can acquire an Austrian language diploma (ÖSD) and receive a specialised training recognised at European level, e.g. office administrator
Annual budget	€105,000.00 (total cost)	€331,280.00 (total cost)	€165,089.59 (total cost)
Online information source	http://www.vhs.at/16-vhs-ottakring/projekteundkooperationen/projekt-bide.html	N/A	N/A

	Austria	Austria	Austria
	LANGUAGE COURSES / AND JOB PLACEMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Title	Integrations- und Bildungszentrum St. Pölten (Integration and education centre St. Pölten)	Pole Position – Startklar für den Arbeitsmarkt (Ready for the labour market)	Fachwerkstatt03 – ein Projekt zur arbeitsmarktnahen Qualifizierung (A Project for labour market-oriented training)
Implementing institution/organization	Diakonie Flüchtlingsdienst gem. GmbH	Berufsförderungsinstitut Tirol	Berufsförderungsinstitut Oberösterreich
Geographical scope	Lower Austria	Tyrol	Upper Austria
Target group of beneficiaries	Recognised refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection	Integration of participants in the Tyrolean labour market through job-specific language and professional training	Integration of participants in the labour market through job-specific language and professional training
No. of beneficiaries	526 places for the language courses and job-specific trainings, 90 planned placements for the labour-market integration programme	N/A	N/A
Objective	Improve qualifications of participants and support them in finding internships or regular employment	Integration of participants in the Tyrolean labour market through job-specific language and professional training	Integration of participants in the labour market through job-specific language and professional training
Actions	Provision of German language courses (also job-specific programmes) as well as IT courses to improve employability. Vocational counselling and job application training as well as personal assistance in finding internships and employment	Job-specific language courses and qualification measures in home care, catering, electrical engineering, metal industry, industrial cleaning, sales, construction, IT and forklift driving	Pre-qualification or qualification for various segments of the labour market such as health professions, training supervision, social work, storage and shelving, catering, and dry construction, including job-specific language courses, practice and a compulsory internship
Annual budget		€250,000.00 (total cost)	€274,730.44 (total cost)
Online information source	https://fluechtlingsdienst.diakonie.at/einrichtung/integrations-und-bildungszentrum-st-poelten-ibz-st-poelten	http://www.bfi.tirol/weiterbildung/news/aktuell/pole-position-startklar-fuer-den-arbeitsmarkt.html	http://www.bfi-ooe.at/bfi-web/fachwerkstatt-201516.html

	Austria	Austria	Austria
	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS	SKILLS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Title	Sprache Inklusive (Language inclusive)	INTO Wien – Integration of refugees	Treff.punkt Österreich –
Implementing institution/organization	Kärntner Berufsförderungsinstitut GmbH	Diakonie Fluchtlingsdienst gem. GmbH	Caritas der Erzdiözese Wien – Hilfe in Not
Geographical scope	Carinthia	Vienna	Lower Austria
Target group of beneficiaries	Recognised refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection	Recognised refugees	Recognised refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection
No. of beneficiaries	N/A	N/A	N/A
Objective	Supporting the integration process of participants	Comprehensive integration project including measures for qualification and labour-market integration	Enabling active participation of refugees in the Austrian economic, cultural and social life through a comprehensive integration programme
Actions	Language courses with professional, intercultural and social components. Additional competence-specific vocational counselling and assistance in the recognition procedures for already acquired qualifications	Drafting of a long-term career and education plan, application assistance and placement of participants	German language courses with child care, opportunity to obtain a certified Austrian language diploma (ÖSD). Special professional and advanced language courses (up to B1), personal coaching, introduction to the Austrian labour market
Annual budget	€134,278.51 (total cost)	€955,500.00 (total cost)	€1,010,000.00 (total cost)
Online information source		https://diakonie.at/einrichtung/wien-integration-von-fluechtlingen	https://www.caritas-wien.at/hilfe-angebote/asyl-integration/beratung-fuer-asylwerberinnen/treffpunkt-oesterreich/

	Denmark	Denmark	Denmark
	RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Title	REFMISMES 1 (Skills and qualifications assessment and profiling)	REFMISMES 2 (Language course)	REFMISMES 3 (Access to vocational education and training (VET) and further education)
Implementing institution/organization	Asylum Centers	Stærk fra Start, cooperation between Køge Business School and Center for Danish and Integration	AMU-centers (vocational education centers)
Geographical scope	The whole country	Local	Country wide
Target group of beneficiaries	Asylum seekers	Refugees and immigrants, ages 16-25 years old	Refugees, vocational training (AMU centers are not only focused on this target group)
No. of beneficiaries		75 students are currently enrolled.	Municipalities can refer refugees to these centers if deemed relevant
Objective	Assessing/upgrading the practical skills of the asylum seeker	The project is intended to prepare and equip the participants to be able to enter into employment or further education.	Clarification of competences and training
Actions	The job centers in the asylum centers can help the asylum seekers find internships	Preparatory educational process in which refugees and immigrants are prepared to pass the minimum national requirement for education (9th or 10th grade), and also take an official Danish exam. Courses taught are, in addition to Danish, math, English, "society" and culture. The courses last 1-3 years depending on the needs of the student, and they are allocated a personal supervisor, with a view to plan for afterwards.	Training courses, including e.g. Danish lessons, and specific trade terminology.
Annual budget			
Online information source	https://www.rodekors.dk/det-goer-vi/roede-kors-asyl/det-goer-vi/voksenundervisning-og-praktik	http://www.sprogcenternordsjaelland.dk/	http://www.amukurs.dk/

	Denmark	Denmark	Denmark
	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	JOB INTERMEDIATION	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Title	REFMISMES 4 (Specific professional skills development programmes for labour-market integration)	REFMISMES 5 (Access to traineeships, apprenticeships and internships)	REFMISMES 6 (Labour counselling and professional orientation)
Implementing institution/organization	"The Association New Dane" and "LG Insight"	"Restart", an organization linking the municipality and private businesses	The Association New Dane
Geographical scope	The concept is developed to be used across the country, but certain municipalities have been more proactive in cooperating	Refugees from local area; matched for jobs in the whole country	Country wide, depending on whether a municipality chooses to engage in the program
Target group of beneficiaries	Refugees (among others), vocational	Refugees – all levels of education, and including a special program targeted at women.	Highly-skilled refugees
No. of beneficiaries	Currently spreading to a growing number of municipalities making use of the model	Ca. 150 pr. year in total.	
Objective	Municipalities can give refugees who need clarification about appropriate employment types, or due to lacking, among others, vocational/linguistic qualifications have difficulties getting normal employment, an offer for internship in a public or private company, in order to clarify competences or strengthen/increase competences.	To integrate refugees in the work place	This program is aimed at participants deemed more likely to be successfully integrated in the labour market. The program aims to familiarize the refugees with the Danish labour market, and clarify how their competences can be incorporated into the Danish labour market.
Actions	Refugees (and immigrants) receive training within one of 6 areas of industry in several steps of business internships. The participants are placed in areas where there will be a greater likelihood of employment following the program.	General assistance in integration, including mentoring, helping refugees find internships and subsidized employment. Special programs for inclusion of female refugees, including courses about	The program "Help a refugee NOW!" (Hjælp en flygtning NU!) involves business leaders, who have a significant knowledge of their industry, and a broad network in the field, becoming mentors for refugees.
Annual budget		The municipality pays the organization per refugee	
Online information source	http://www.foreningen-nydanske.dk/site/sites/default/files/Branchepakker_infolder.pdf	http://restart-mentor.dk/	http://www.foreningen-nydanske.dk/site/who-we-are

	Denmark	Denmark	Denmark
	JOB INTERMEDIATION	RECOGNITION OF SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS	INCENTIVES FOR EC. INTEGRATION
Title	REFMISMES 8 (Access to labour-market information, job matching and placement services. Incentives for the employment of refugees or asylum seekers)	REFMISMES 9 (Validation and certification of skills including informal and non-formal skills; Recognition of qualifications)	REFMISMES 10 (Support for self-employment and entrepreneurship among refugees)
Implementing institution/organization	Jobservice Danmark (part of the Danish Agency for the Labour Market and Recruitment).	Ministry of Higher Education and Science	Vejle Municipality
Geographical scope	Country wide	Whole country	Local
Target group of beneficiaries	Refugees who are able to enter the workforce	Educations and other qualifications of immigrants, including refugees, often from applications by the immigrant but municipalities and employers can also ask for such evaluations.	Refugees (and immigrants)
No. of beneficiaries		In 2014, 5,853 evaluations	
Objective	Facilitating the contact between private businesses and refugees, to help refugees find work and, in the longer run, be able to obtain or maintain employment. The aim is to make it as unproblematic (in terms of expenses and administration) for the employers to take on board refugees who may need training and clarification about their competences, and thereby to promote greater inclusion of refugees.	To clarify the competences and qualifications of citizens	To inform and guide refugees in terms of Danish work culture in the field of self-employment, the municipality, and how "Danes do business"
Actions	The program "Together for integration" ("Sammen om integration") guides and provides funding for companies who wish to take on refugees, either in internships or subsidized employment, and in this process potentially also offer mentorships and the strengthening of qualifications of the "Jobservice Danmark" refugee also facilitates the recruitment process to match companies with refugees.	Evaluation of diplomas and other forms of qualifications, as well as information and guidance to e.g. employers about international qualifications and how to translate this into a Danish context	Help establish a network to professional counsellors, facilitating contact with the relevant authorities.
Annual budget			
Online information source	http://star.dk/da/English.aspx	http://ufm.dk/en/education-and-institutions/recognition-and-transparency/recognition-guide	http://www.vejle.dk/Erhverv/Start-af-ny-virk-somhed/Etnisk-vejledning.aspx

	France	France	France
	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	JOB INTERMEDIATION	JOB INTERMEDIATION
Title	REFMISMES 3 OFII information session	REFMISMES 4 OFII partnerships	REFMISMES 5 Counselling at CPH
Implementing institution/organization	OFII	OFII	Various associations
Geographical scope	Countrywide		In temporary accommodation centres for refugees country-wide
Target group of beneficiaries	Refugees (and all other non-EU citizens after obtaining the first permit of stay)	All signatories of the integration contract	Refugees accommodated in the centres, depending on the projects implemented by the body that runs the centre
No. of beneficiaries			Total capacity of CPH: around 1,500
Objective	Information on practicalities and basic facts	Streamlining signatories of integration contract into the job market and providing job assistance	
Actions	Information session, including on labour market and employment-related social services		Individual support to access job market
Annual budget			
Online information source	www.ofii.fr	www.ofii.fr	Massy centre run by Cimade: http://www.lacimade.org/poles/centre-massy/rubriques/35-Les-missions-du-CPH

	France	France	France	France	France
	JOB INTERMEDIATION	COMPLEX	SKILLS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	JOB INTERMEDIATION
Title	REFISMES 6 Accelair projet	REFISMES 7 Centre d'Accueil Préparatoire	REFISMES 1 OFII Skill assessment	REFISMES 2 OFII language training	REFISMES 8 Roleref
Implementing institution/organization	Forum Réfugiés	France Terre d'Asile	OFII	OFII	France Terre d'Asile
Geographical scope	Rhone Departement	Ile-de-France Region	Countrywide	Countrywide	/
Target group of beneficiaries	Newly recognized refugees	refugees	Refugees (and all other non-EU citizens after obtaining the first permit of stay)	Refugees (and all other non-EU citizens after obtaining the first permit of stay)	refugees
No. of beneficiaries	Some 800 households in 2014; some 90% of newly recognized refugees in the Rhone Departement		For ex 60,000 in 2010, 37,000 in 2014	Some 23,000 persons per year	
Objective		Overall support	Skill assessment and job intermediation	Skill development	Set partnerships with companies to create job opportunities
Actions	Customized support for accommodation and job search		Assessment of professional skills, vocational counselling and guidance	Language course	
Annual budget	1.4 million EUR		5.3 M€ en 2013; 3.9 M€ in 2014		
Online information source	http://www.forumrefugies.org/missions/missions-aupres-des-refugies/programme-d-integration-des-refugies-accelair	http://www.france-terre-asile.org	www.ofii.fr	www.ofii.fr	http://www.france-terre-asile.org

	France	France	France	France	France	France
	JOB INTERMEDIATION	JOB INTERMEDIATION	JOB INTERMEDIATION	JOB INTERMEDIATION	JOB INTERMEDIATION	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Title	REFMISMES 9 Support to medical professionals	REFMISMES 10 SINGA integration activities	REFMISMES 11 Counselling at CASP	REFMISMES 12 Counselling at Jesuite Refugee Service	REFMISMES 13 "Bail glissant" project	REFMISMES 14 Fellowships awarded by the Entraide Universitaire française
Implementing institution/organization	Association for the reception of refugee doctors and other health attendants (APSR)	SINGA	CASP, Centre d'action sociale protestant	Jesuit Refugee Service	ELIA association	Entraide Universitaire française (French University Mutual assistance)
Geographical scope	Countrywide	Paris (expanding now outside the capital)	Paris	Paris	Bouches du Rhône Departement	Countrywide
Target group of beneficiaries	Refugee doctors and medical attendants	Refugees and French society	Refugees	refugees	refugees	Refugees, especially older than 28
No. of beneficiaries	Some 100 individuals per year		100 refugees per year	Some 100 per year	Some 30 per year	Some 130 per year
Objective	Facilitate their professional integration	Favour refugee entrepreneurs and fight against xenophobia	Favour refugees' integration in the labour market	Favour integration into the labour market	Help refugees find housing and employment	Allow refugees to continue their studies
Actions	Counselling and coaching	Counselling and network creation	Counselling	Counselling	Counselling	Scholarships
Annual budget						
Online information source	http://apsr.asso.fr	http://singa.fr	http://www.casp.asso.fr	http://www.jrs-france.org	http://www.eliasud.org	http://entraide-universitaire.fr

	Germany	Germany	Germany
	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	JOB INTERMEDIATION
Title	Integration courses	Vocational language courses	Employment Promotion according to Social Security Code Book III
Implementing institution/ organization	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees / Ministry of Interior	Federal Office for Migration and Refugees / Ministry for Work and Social Affairs	Federal Employment Office / Employment Agencies
Geographical scope	National	National	National
Target group of beneficiaries	Asylum seekers with a high probability of recognition; recognized refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection; all other eligible immigrants	Asylum seekers with high probability of recognition; recognized refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection; all other eligible immigrants	Only asylum seekers with high probability of recognition; all other asylum seekers, as well as tolerated refugees are entitled to receive job counselling
No. of beneficiaries	As required	N.A.	As required
Objective	Provision of German language courses	Provision of German language courses for vocational purpose	Enhancing skills and qualifications of unemployed; job intermediation services
Actions	600 h German language tuition plus 60 h tuition on German culture and society	Up to 730 h vocational language tuition	Measures of an active labour-market policy: labour counselling and professional orientation; job intermediation; job training measures
Annual budget	Due to increased demand, the annual budget has been doubled in 2016 to 570 million Euros	N.A.	N.A.
Online information source	http://www.bamf.de/DE/Willkommen/DeutschLernen/Integrationskurse/integrationskurse-node.html	http://www.bamf.de/DE/Willkommen/DeutschLernen/DeutschBeruf/deutschberuf.html?nn=1367900	https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/

	Germany – Federal level	Germany – Federal level	Germany – Federal level
	JOB INTERMEDIATION	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT / RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS / JOB INTERMEDIATION
Title	Employment Promotion according to Social Security Code Book II	Vocational language courses (short-term programme limited until March 2016)	Early Intervention (pilot project, 2014-2015)
Implementing institution/ organization	Federal Employment Office / Local jobcenters	Federal Employment Office	Federal Employment Office / Federal Office for Migration and Refugees
Geographical scope	National	National	9 cities
Target group of beneficiaries	Recognized refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection	Asylum seekers with high probability of recognition	Qualified asylum seekers from 9 countries of origin
No. of beneficiaries	As required	Number of participants in 2015: 115,000 persons	1,400 persons
Objective	Enhancing skills and qualifications of unemployed; job intermediation services	Language tuition as base for labour-market integration. Non-recurring programme in 201	Providing job intermediation already during the asylum process
Actions	Measures of an active labour-market policy: labour counselling and professional orientation; job intermediation; job training measures	Up to 300 h language tuition	Measures of an active labour-market policy: labour counselling and professional orientation; job intermediation; job training measures; recognition of qualifications
Annual budget	N.A.	Up to 120 million Euros	N.A.
Online information source	https://www.arbeitsagentur.de		

	Germany – Federal level	Germany – Federal level	Germany – Federal level
	SKILLS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT / SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS	ALL CATEGORIES
Title	Perspektiven für Flüchtlinge (Perspectives for Refugees)	Prototyping Transfer (2015-2017)	General mainstreaming in measures of labour market
Implementing institution/ organization	Federal Employment Office	Ministry for Education and Science	All federal ministries
Geographical scope	National	National	National
Target group of beneficiaries	Asylum seekers with high probability of recognition; recognized refugees and persons entitled to subsidiary protection; tolerated refugees with subordinate access to labour market	Asylum seekers and refugees who have acquired an qualification abroad	Officials in ministries
No. of beneficiaries	6,500 in 2016	N.A.	N.A.
Objective	Comprehensive employment promotion by a modular programme	Validation and certification of qualifications	Mainstreaming of all existing programmes and measures with regard to asylum seekers and refugees
Actions	12-weeks modular programme: profiling, job orientation, skills assessment, job application training, job matching and placement services, vocational language tuition	Individually designed tests that enable a comprehensive-skills assessment (including informal and non-formal skills)	Opening of ESF and structural development programmes also for asylum seekers and refugees (as far as functionally concerned)
Annual budget	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Online information source		https://www.bibb.de/de/26147.php	

	Germany – Federal level	Germany – Federal level	Germany – Regional level
	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OF INTERMEDIATORS	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OF INTERMEDIATORS	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Title	Network Programme “Integration durch Qualifizierung” (Integration by Qualification; IQ)	Network Programme “Integration von Asylbewerbern und Flüchtlingen” (Integration of Asylum seekers and Refugees; IvAF)	Language courses
Implementing institution/ organization	Federal Ministry for Work and Social Affairs	Federal Ministry for Work and Social Affairs	All Federal States
Geographical scope	16 networks all over Germany	30 networks all over Germany	Regional
Target group of beneficiaries	Intermediators of labour-market integration; multipliers	Intermediators of labour-market integration; multipliers	Asylum seekers and refugees without access to federal integration courses
No. of beneficiaries	2015: 3,000 intermediators 2016: 5,000 intermediators	2015: 3,000 intermediators 2016: 5,000 intermediators	N.A.
Objective	Empowerment of job intermediators in employment agencies and jobcentres to deal competently with the needs of asylum seekers and refugees	Empowerment of job intermediators in employment agencies and jobcentres to deal competently with the needs of asylum seekers and refugees	Enabling early access to language tuition, for asylum seekers without eligibility to the federal integration courses
Actions	Focus on intercultural trainings	Focus on legal trainings	Financial and organisational support for language courses
Annual budget	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Online information source	http://www.netzwerk-iq.de/	http://www.esf.de/portal/DE/Foerderperiode-2014-2020/ESF-Programme/bmas/2014-10-21-ESF-Integrationsrichtlinie-Bund.html	

	Germany – Regional level	Germany – Regional level	Germany – Regional level
	SKILLS ASSESSMENT	SKILLS ASSESSMENT / SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Title	Early assessment of skills and needs	Engagement of job coaches	Job placement training
Implementing institution/ organization	F.e. Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, North Rhine-Westphalia (governments of the Federal States)	F.e. Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, Bavaria (governments of the Federal States)	Free State of Bavaria in cooperation with the head organisations of the Bavarian economy and regional employment agencies
Geographical scope	Federal state	Federal state	Bavaria
Target group of beneficiaries	Asylum seekers in first reception facilities with high probability of recognition	Asylum seekers with high probability of recognition	Asylum seekers with high probability of recognition
No. of beneficiaries	North Rhine-Westphalia: 3,600 persons in 2016	Rhineland-Palatinate: Job coaches in each commune; Saarland: engagement of 7 job coaches	20,000 in 2016 Up to 60,000 until 2019
Objective	Early intervention for labour-market integration	Early intervention for labour-market integration by counselling and coaching of asylum seekers	Preparation of asylum seekers for access to apprenticeship or regular employment
Actions	Skills and needs assessment, basic language courses for beginners	Engagement of job coaches in the communes, financed by the federal state	Financing different measures of language tuition, skills assessment, skills development, recognition of skills and qualifications etc.
Annual budget	N.A.	Bavaria: 5 million Euros in 2016	N.A.
Online information source			https://www.bayern.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Vereinbarung_Integration-durch-Ausbildung-und-Arbeit.pdf

	Germany – Regional level	Germany – Regional level	Germany – Regional level
	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT / INCENTIVES FOR ECONOMIC INTEGRATION	INCENTIVES FOR ECONOMIC INTEGRATION	All REFMISMES
Title	Intermediation of young refugees into apprenticeship	Information and support of employers	Comprehensive programmes for labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees
Implementing institution/ organization	F.e. Bavaria, Rhineland-Palatinate, Berlin, Lower Saxony (governments of the Federal States)	All Federal States	F.e. Baden-Württemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate, Saarland, Saxony-Anhalt
Geographical scope	Federal state	Federal State	Federal state
Target group of beneficiaries	Young asylum seekers, refugees and tolerated refugees	Employers who are interested in employing asylum seekers and refugees	Asylum seekers and refugees; all other actors of labour-market integration
No. of beneficiaries	Lower Saxony: 500 young asylum seekers in 2016	N.A.	N.A.
Objective	Preparation of young asylum seekers and refugees for an in-plant apprenticeship	Counselling of employers who are interested in employing asylum seekers and refugees about the legal provisions	Overall coordination of measures for the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees
Actions	Different measures of language tuition, job orientation and internships	Establishment of Internet Portals and guidelines. Lower Saxony: Establishment of a Central Information Centre on “Refugees and Employment”	Coordinating measures
Annual budget	N.A.	Lower Saxony: 100,000 Euros in 2015-2016	N.A.
Online information source		http://www.fluechtlinge.niedersachsen.de/startseite/fluechtlinge_niedersachsen/angebote_fluechtlinge/erwachsene/zentrale-beratungsstelle-arbeitsmarkt-und-fluechtlinge-zbs-auf-139250.html	

	Germany – Regional level	Germany – Local level	Germany – Local level
	All REFMISMES	All REFMISMES	All REFMISMES
Title	Establishment of one-stop facilities for labour-market integration	Establishment of one-stop facilities for labour-market integration at the local level	Particular communal measures for labour-market integration
Implementing institution/ organization	F.e. Hamburg (“Work and Integration for Refugees”); North Rhine-Westphalia (Integration Points) (governments of the Federal States in cooperation with the regional employment agencies and jobcentres)	F.e. administrative districts of Offenbach, Marburg-Biedenkopf, Hersfeld-Rotenburg (all Hesse); Lippe (North Rhine-Westphalia) and others more	Unknown number of German communes
Geographical scope	Federal state	Municipality or administrative district	Municipality or administrative district
Target group of beneficiaries	Asylum seekers and refugees; all other actors of labour-market integration	Asylum seekers and refugees; all other actors of labour-market integration	Asylum seekers and refugees; all other actors of labour-market integration
No. of beneficiaries	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Objective	Bundling of all services regarding labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees	Bundling of all services regarding labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees	Support of labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees
Actions	All kinds of REFMISMES	All kinds of REFMISMES	Different REFMISMES, f.e. financing of language courses, establishment of local job opportunities
Annual budget			
Online information source	http://www.hamburg.de/arbeit/nofl/4626458/work-and-integration-for-refugees/		

	Germany – Companies and Employer’s Organizations	Germany – Companies and Employer’s Organizations	Germany – Companies and Employer’s Organizations
	All REFISMES	All REFISMES	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT / INCENTIVES FOR ECONOMIC INTEGRATION
Title	Different programmes and measures for the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees	Different programmes and measures for the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees	Intermediation of young refugees into apprenticeship
Implementing institution/ organization	Chambers of Industry and Commerce	Chambers of Crafts	Central Association of Chambers of Crafts in cooperation with the Federal Government and Federal Employment Office
Geographical scope	Regional scope	Regional scope	National
Target group of beneficiaries	Asylum seekers and refugees; employers	Asylum seekers and refugees; employers	Young asylum seekers, refugees and tolerated refugees; employers
No. of beneficiaries	N.A.	N.A.	10,000 young asylum seekers and refugees up to 2018
Objective	Support of labour-market integration by different REFISMES. By end of 2015 more of 100 single measures and programmes of the regional Chambers	Support of labour-market integration by different REFISMES. Most of the 53 regional Chambers of Crafts had started measures and programmes by the end of 2015.	Preparation of young asylum seekers and refugees for an in-plant apprenticeship
Actions	Counselling of employers for employment of refugees; job matching between employers and refugees; fairs for job matching; counselling for recognition of skills and qualifications; participation in regional job networking activities; additional facilities for apprenticeship of young asylum seekers; vocational language courses	Counselling of employers for employment of refugees; job matching between employers and refugees; fairs for job matching; counselling for recognition of skills and qualifications; participation in regional job networking activities; additional facilities for apprenticeship of young asylum seekers; vocational language courses	Different measures of language tuition, job orientation and internships
Annual budget	N.A.	N.A.	20 million Euros up to 2018
Online information source			http://www.zdh.de/fileadmin/user_upload/presse/Pressemeldungen/2016/0205_Gemeinsame_Erklaerung_BMBF_BA_ZDH_Ausbildung_Fluechtlinge.pdf

	Germany – Companies and Employer’s Organizations	Germany – Companies and Employer’s Organizations	Germany – Voluntary Organizations and Private Volunteering	Germany – Voluntary Organizations and Private Volunteering
	All REFMISMES	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT / JOB INTERMEDIATION / INCENTIVES FOR EMPLOYMENT	JOB INTERMEDIATION	JOB INTERMEDIATION
Title	Measures for the labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees	Measures the for labour-market integration of asylum seekers and refugees	Job intermediation by mentoring	Organized activities by volunteers for job intermediation
Implementing institution/ organization	Different Associations of German Economy	Different companies	Different voluntary services	Different voluntary services
Geographical scope	National	National	National	National
Target group of beneficiaries	Asylum seekers and refugees; employers	Asylum seekers and refugees	Asylum seekers and refugees	Asylum seekers and refugees; employers
No. of beneficiaries	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Objective	General support of labour-market integration of the target group	Integrating asylum seekers and refugees into professional life within companies	Enabling job contacts and networking of asylum seekers and refugees by voluntary mentoring	Supporting job matching and job mediation
Actions	All kinds of actions	Access to apprenticeships and internships; specific professional skills development programmes; job matching		Different online service portals, f.e. worker.de, Everjobs, Work for Refugees, Erfolgspaten
Annual budget	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Online information source				http://www.workeer.de/ https://www.everjobs.com/ https://www.work-for-refugees.de/ ; http://www.erfolgspaten.de/

	Italy	Italy
	INTEGRATED	INTEGRATED
Title	1. SPRAR Asylum seekers assistance	2.CARA Asylum seekers assistance
Implementing institution/ organization	SPRAR system through ANCI which delocalized the assistance from projects between a local Municipality and a non profit association of a small group of migrants	CARA through local prefects who organize assistance with external providers in centres which host around 100 migrants with the exception of the Mineo Cara which is 20 times larger.
Geographical scope	National but dispersed in small municipalities 430 projects in 430 different local municipalities	National but only 13 centres
Target group beneficiaries	Asylum seekers: adults and children and persons with mental disabilities	Asylum seekers: adults and children and persons with mental disabilities
No. of beneficiaries	In 2015(Oct) 430 projects 22.000 individuals	In 2015(Oct) 13 centres 7.290
Objective	Main objective to support the asylum seekers with tailored interventions providing lodging, food, psychological support, counselling, language courses, training for autonomous life in the destination country. Specifically for labour integration: Skill mapping (obtaining information on the education and training and employment history of the beneficiary and joint assessment of professional competences and aspiration, confrontation with the local demand for labour and adjustment of the short run and long run labour investment), internal skill training, connection with the available professional schools (VAT) or language and training courses provided by other institutions locally. Support to start individual business	Main objective support the asylum seekers with tailored interventions providing lodging, food, psychological support, counselling, language courses, training for autonomous life in the destination country. Specifically for labour integration: Skill mapping (obtaining information on the education and training and employment history of the beneficiary and joint assessment of professional competences and aspiration, confrontation with the local demand for labour and adjustment of the short run and long run labour investment), internal skill training, connection with the available professional schools (VAT) or language and training courses provided by other institutions locally. Support to start individual business
Actions	Language courses, counselling, training courses organized locally or organized participation in courses organized by the local government in charge of training. Information on how to find a job etc. The small scale of the projects favour the possibility of creating tailored support actions which are also tailored to the local environment and increase the chance and the sense of integration of the migrant. Special actions are devoted to minors and to individuals with need of psychological support.	Language courses, counselling, training courses organized locally or organized participation in courses organized by the local government in charge of training. Information on how to find a job etc. The large scale of the centres make it difficult to tailor the actions to the individual needs of the participants.
Annual budget	197.499.225 for 22931 individuals in 2014	139.000.000 for 9627 individuals in 2014.
Online information source	SPRAR, 2015, Annual Report http://www.sprar.it/images/Rapp_Prot_Int_2015_-_SINTESI_INGLESE.pdf	

	Italy	Italy
	JOB INTERMEDIATION AND TRAINING	JOB INTERMEDIATION AND TRAINING
Title	POR	INSIDE Inserimento Integrazione NordSud Inclusione
Implementing institution/organization	Local Centri per l'Impiego They apply for a project inside the national PON which is financed by the European social fund.	Ministry of Labour, FSE, Italia Lavoro The call has been launched the 23-11-2015 and the application for projects are demanded for 9/12/2015
Geographical scope	local	Pilot but attention is national
Target group of beneficiaries	The actions of the Centri per l'Impiego is universalistic (native, labour migrants, family members etc) but	Holder of international protection guest in the SPRAR structures
No. of beneficiaries	Turin centre 350 individuals	NA
Objective	Match supply and demand and build the human capital necessary for finding employment	To promote target actions across the country to favour the social-economic integration of holders of international protection
Actions	Skill assessment Job matching (for 8 without stage) Placing in stage (150, 31 employed after the stage) Training for future employability (200)	The project is just preliminary: there are more announcements of the presentation of projects than anything else. Recognition of 672 talents which favour socio-economic integration
Annual budget	Financed by the European social fund.	Financed by 2014-2020 European fund FSE and FAMI
Online information source	http://www.provincia.torino.gov.it/speciali/2014/rifugiati_politici/dwd/scheda_rifugiati.pdf	http://www.lavoro.gov.it/Notizie/Pages/20151125_IN-SIDE.aspx

	Spain	Spain
	SKILLS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT	JOB INTERMEDIATION
Title	1. Labour-market diagnostic interviews	2. Internships/apprenticeships
Implementing institution/ organization	ACCEM	CEAR
Geographical scope	National level	National level
Target group of beneficiaries	Asylum seekers, refugees, applicants and beneficiaries of stateless status, applicants and beneficiaries of temporary protection, and vulnerable immigrants	Applicants and beneficiaries of international protection
No. of beneficiaries	N/A	30
Objective	<p>The overall objective is to obtain information, assess, and evaluate the employability of a person in relation to his/her professional interests based on a competence management approach. Specific objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obtain information on the training and employment history of the beneficiary. - Joint assessment of training and professional competences and capabilities. - Assess factors that could affect the employability of the person (expectations, self-esteem, attitude towards employment, motivation...). - Assess the abilities and techniques developed in the job search process. - Evaluate and auto-evaluate in relation to the interests, expectations and professional objectives. - Joint reformulation of the competences and design of the competence profile. 	<p>Contribute to the comprehensive training of the participants complementing their theoretical and practical level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the understanding of the appropriate work methodology to the professional reality in which participants will have to operate, comparing and applying the knowledge acquired. - Encourage the development of methodological, personal and participatory expertise. - Obtain practical experience that facilitates labour-market entry and improves their future employability.
Actions	Diagnostic interview, self-diagnosis of competences, and joint elaboration and delivery of a document of Certification of diagnosis of professional competences.	Agreements and conventions are established for training practices, defining material costs, the legal framework of the status of the person, insurance, taxes, etc., in order to promote the integration and knowledge of the beneficiary of the labour market.
Annual budget	N/A	N/A (direct insurance costs around 30€ per person)
Online information source	N/A	http://cear.es/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Informe-2009-de-CEAR.pdf (p. 150)

	Spain	Spain
	JOB INTERMEDIATION	RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS
Title	3. Ariadna network awards	4. Skills recognition support
Implementing institution/organization	ACCEM, RED CROSS, CEAR, CARs and MEYSS	Trade union AMIC-UGT Catalonia, with the support of the Attention Service for Immigrants, Foreigners, and Refugees (SAIER)
Geographical scope	National level	Local level (city of Barcelona)
Target group of beneficiaries	Applicants and beneficiaries of international protection, private sector, and general public	Open to all citizens in Barcelona, though its main target group are immigrants with or without a residence permit
No. of beneficiaries	95 companies	106 (in 2013)
Objective	<p>-The aim of these awards is to recognize the best practices of those companies that contributed to the labour-market integration of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection.</p> <p>- At the same time, these awards recognise and disseminate the contribution of the awarded companies to the improvement of the quality of life of these persons.</p>	<p>-The main aims of the service are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to support immigrants in the recognition of foreign titles and diplomas, when they perceive the central government is not doing enough. It covers the homologation and validation of basic, vocational and university degrees. - to promote a more integrated and multi-level skill recognition support given the non-existence of pro-active national policies. - Deal with overqualified profiles of refugees (specially women). - Move from a legal framework that recognises foreign qualifications to actual policies that expedite this process. -Promote networked coordination among universities, consulates, central and regional government, and the local administration.
Actions	<p>Elaboration and publication of the call.</p> <p>Creation of the specific awards commission (GEP) formed by specialists of the different participating organisations and institutions.</p> <p>- The GEP is in charge, among other things, of the diffusion, process design, awareness and communication, and award ceremony.</p> <p>- Creation of local groups that process and decide upon the applications of the companies.</p>	<p>Provide personalized advice on whether a process for homologation or validation is feasible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify which Spanish titles correspond to the users' academic experience. - Assess on how to get foreign diplomas homologised, and study experience validated - identifying the most appropriate services to address, as well as guidance on which documents are needed and in which form (translations etc.). - Provide support if problems arise in the process, in dialogue with the administration. - Follow up users after a formal decision has been taken on their demand - Submit applications on behalf of users, when they are in particular need of support. -Refer users to other services.
Annual budget	11250	N/A
Online information source	www.redariadna.org/premios.php	http://adapt.it/englishbulletin/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/ef1558en.pdf (Ludwinek, Leonicikas, and Trifu 2015, 44–47)

	Spain	Spain
	JOB INTERMEDIATION INSTITUTIONAL	JOB INTERMEDIATION
Title	5. Training of the personnel of the Ariadna's network	6. Collaboration with LinkedIn Spain
Implementing institution/organization	ACCEM, RED CROSS, CEAR, CARs and MEYSS	La Merced Migraciones (LMM)
Geographical scope	National level	Regional level (autonomous community of Madrid)
Target group of beneficiaries	Applicants and beneficiaries of international protection, and specialists of each organisation	Applicants and beneficiaries of international protection, and companies/employers
No. of beneficiaries	35 specialists/ year	40 beneficiaries and 6 businesses
Objective	Creation of spaces for reflection and strengthening of the cooperation between the participating organisations, and improvement of the specific knowledge and skills of the network specialists. - Provide tools for the professional teams that attend applicants of international protection in order to facilitate their professional duties in the context of the Ariadna network. - Achieve greater efficiency and quality in the labour-market integration of beneficiaries.	The overall objective of the programme in which this initiative is inserted in is to encourage synergies with companies with the aim of bringing the particular reality and needs of refugees and asylum seekers closer to that of the employers in terms of hiring expectations, needed profiles, and corporate culture. The aim is also to create spaces of awareness and social transformation.
Actions	- Design of a long-term training program with the involvement of stakeholders (participatory approach). It consists of a year programme in which thematic training modules are established – one or two per year depending on the available funding opportunities.	This initiative involves two actions: - Training for the acquisition of tools for active job search by means of workshops in which employees of LinkedIn Spain trained beneficiaries to make a good use of the platform with the objective of finding a job. - Sensitisation targeted to companies that use LinkedIn to search for employees (as an example of this, see link in the last row).
Annual budget	5,000 per training programme	N/A
Online information source	N/A (intranet information only for the members of the organizations within the Ariadna network)	Example: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/tarjeta-roja-al-refugiado-marina-sicilia-castresana?trk=prof-post

	Sweden	Sweden	Sweden
	JOB INTERMEDIATION	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Title	Subsidized employment	Introduction program	Language training
Implementing institution/organization	Employment Service	Public Employment Service and Local municipalities	Local municipalities (they can also sub-contract to any other organization)
Geographical scope	National	National	National
Target group of beneficiaries	New-start jobs: Newly-arrived immigrants (protection status and family migrants with less than three years in the country) and all long term unemployed. Step-in jobs: Newly arrived immigrants (protection status and family migrants with less than three years in the country)	All persons granted international protection and their spouses.	All non-Scandinavian speaking persons with a lack of Swedish language skills
No. of beneficiaries	Varies. There are no quotas. For all persons that find employment and have a right to subsidized employment, the employer receive a subsidy for hiring them. Around 10,000 person in each of the two categories in recent years.	About 50,000 at the end of 2015	124,750 in 2014.
Objective	Labour-market integration for persons with no previous labour market experience.	To speed up the labour-market integration for newly-arrived immigrants.	Learn Swedish .
Actions	The subsidies are designed as rights based subsidies. For all persons eligible who find employment, the employer gets the subsidies upon request to the Employment Service.	The program lasts for 24 month and includes at least language training (sfi), civic orientation, and labour-market services.	All municipalities must offer language courses according to a curricula decided by the government. The language training is part of the introduction program, but also many other migrants outside of the introduction program take advantage of the training.
Annual budget	About 2.6 billion yearly (based on 20,000 newly arrived in subsidized employment)	About 16 billion SEK for 2015. The budget is based on the number of persons eligible for the introduction program.	2.4 billion SEK in 2014. The budget is dependent on the number of students.
Online information source	http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/For-arbetssookande/Stod-och-service/Fa-ex-tra-stod/Ny-i-Sverige/Instegsjobb.html http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/For-arbetssookande/Stod-och-service/Fa-ex-tra-stod/Ny-i-Sverige/Nystartsjobb.html	http://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/Om-oss/Var-verksamhet/Etablering-av-nyanlanda/Etableringsuppdraget-i-siffror.html#.Vuk7pY32a70	http://www.skolverket.se/om-skolverket/andra-sprak-och-lattlast/in-eng-lish/the-swedish-education-system/adult-education/2_900

	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom
	SKILLS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT	SKILLS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT	SKILLS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT
Title	Skills Audit	Refugee Integration Service ("RIS")	Refugee Integration and Employment Service ("RIES")
Implementing institution/organization	Bridges Programmes	Scottish Refugee Council	Refugee Council
Geographical scope	Glasgow	United Kingdom	United Kingdom
Target group of beneficiaries	Refugees	Refugees	Refugees (including beneficiaries of Humanitarian Protection)
No. of beneficiaries	386	N/A	8,000
Objective	Refugees are able to recognise and articulate which of their skills and experiences are of value in the UK labour market.	Ensuring initial and longer term integration by helping to secure access to accommodation, education and welfare and, later, by matching potential employment opportunities to skills.	Refugees are integrated in terms of meeting initial needs and facilitating longer term employment.
Actions	Interview and CV Preparation; Life Skills and Advanced Life Skills Classes.	12 month programme begins by assessing skills and needs in order to address initial critical necessities such as housing, education and access to benefits; Providing links to employability options to assist longer term employment at the earliest opportunity.	Assessment of skills and needs in terms of both short and longer term obstacles to integration. Provision of information and knowledge, adapted to obstacles to employment faced by refugees, in particular as regards requalification and language training.
Annual budget	94,000 GBP (Total Funds of Bridges Programmes in last published annual report.)	2,000,000 GBP	N/A
Online information source	http://www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk/clients	http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/how_we_can_help/i_have_refugee_status/leave_to_remain_in_the_uk/refugee_integration_and_employment_s	http://www.refugee.org.uk/node/136

	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom
	RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS	RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS	RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS
Title	Refugees into Teaching ("RIT")	Refugee Doctors (Scotland)	Refugee Health Professionals-Building Bridges
Implementing institution/organization	Refugee Council General Teaching Council	Bridges Programmes NHS Scotland Robert Gordon University British Medical Association British Dental Association	Refugee Council NHS Health Education North Central and East London London Metropolitan University
Geographical scope	United Kingdom	Scotland	London
Target group of beneficiaries	Refugees (including beneficiaries of Humanitarian Protection) with a background in teaching	Refugees with Medical Qualifications	Refugees with Medical Qualifications
No. of beneficiaries	N/A		200
Objective	Integration of refugees in the teaching sector.	Integration of refugees within the healthcare sector.	Integration of refugees within the healthcare sector.
Actions	The programme offers assistance with vocational English language training, recognition of existing qualifications or re-training and preparation for job applications.		The provision of tailored English language and communication skills required to compete in the healthcare sector. The conversion of professional qualifications to meet requirements laid down by the bodies regulating healthcare profession including General Medical Council, General Dental Council, and Nursing and Midwifery Council. Access to relevant UK work experience, placements and references. Familiarisation with the health care sector in the UK. Provision of knowledge about the labour market, recruitment process and employability skills to apply effectively for vacancies in a highly-competitive job market.
Annual budget	1,000,000 GBP		Building Bridges
Online information source	http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/refugees_into_teaching	http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/medicine/about-medical-training/refugee-doctors-programme.aspx	http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/what_we_do/refugee_services/refugees_into_jobs/refugee_health_professionals

	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom
	RECOGNITION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS	JOB INTERMEDIATION	JOB INTERMEDIATION
Title	Refugees Into Teaching in Scotland ("RITeS")	Phoenix Mentoring Project	Work Placements
Implementing institution/organization	Scottish Government, General Teaching Council	North of England Refugee Service	Bridges Programmes
Geographical scope	Scotland	Newcastle upon Tyne and surrounding areas	Scotland
Target group of beneficiaries	Refugees with Teaching Qualifications	Young People between 18-25 (refugees are prioritised)	Refugees with English proficiency
No. of beneficiaries	301	N/A	130
Objective	Integration of refugees in the teaching sector.	The holistic development of the young person.	Acclimation to the employment culture. Production of evidence of skills and competences as an alternative and complement to those attested to by recognised qualifications
Actions	Recognition of equivalent qualifications developing targeted vocational English proficiency.	Volunteer mentors assist beneficiaries with a broad range of obstacles, including those relating to integration and employment.	Short-term work placements, of around 12 days, with a broad range of employers.
Annual budget	N/A	N/A	N/A
Online information source	www.migrantteachers-rights.org/get-engaged/find-out-more/62-integrating-refugee-teachers-with-rites-in-scotland	www.refugee.org.uk/phoenix	www.bridgesprogrammes.org.uk/clients/client-work-placements

	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	United Kingdom
	SKILLS DEVELOPMENT	INCENTIVES FOR ECONOMIC INTEGRATION	INCENTIVES FOR ECONOMIC INTEGRATION
Title	ESOL Courses for Asylum seekers	Specialist Employability Support	Refugees into Business
Implementing institution/organization	Scottish Funding Council	Department of Work and Pensions, Private Contractors	Refugee Council
Geographical scope	Scotland	United Kingdom	Greater London and Birmingham
Target group of beneficiaries	Asylum seekers	Disabled Employment Support Allowance Claimants, including refugees	Refugees
No. of beneficiaries	N/A	N/A	N/A
Objective	Early English as second or other language training for asylum seekers from arrival.	Claimants are equipped to successfully work as self-employed or start a business.	Claimants are equipped to successfully work as self-employed or start a business.
Actions	A fee waiver for asylum seekers who are attending college undertaking full or part-time ESOL courses without any minimum residence requirement. Discretionary bursary support for Further Education courses. In addition, hardship funds are available for the significant expense of course materials and travel encountered by asylum seekers, in order that they can attend ESOL courses without impediment.	Advice regarding the formalities and information sources for starting a business.	An introduction is provided to incorporation, taxation and regulatory requirements of running a business in the UK. Knowledge is shared about access to finance and business set-up loans.
Annual budget	N/A	N/A	N/A
Online information source	www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Circulars_SFC202010/SFC_20_2010_Guidance_-_Fee_Waiver_Policy_2010-11_11_Jun_2010_%7B215618280%7D.pdf	www.kennedyscott.co.uk/specialist-employability-support.html	www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/services/2796_refugees_into_business

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