

STUDY

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The integration of refugees in Denmark



Policy Department for Economic, Scientific and Quality of Life Policies
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Abstract

This paper describes the extent and nature of the inflow of asylum seekers to Denmark in 2014 – 2015 and the political and public reactions to that. Based on that, the paper goes on to describe the political, legal and practical changes that followed with a focus on labour market integration and provides recommendations for the way ahead to further improve integration of refugees.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DR	Danish Broadcasting Corporation
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived
IGU	The Integrative Training Program <i>(Integrationsgrunduddannelsen)</i>
UIM	Ministry of Immigration and Integration <i>(Udlændinge- og Integrationsministeriet)</i>
UN	The United Nations

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and main issues

Like many other EU Member States, Denmark experienced a dramatic increase in the number of asylum seekers, mainly from Syria, in 2014 and especially in 2015. The inflow prompted political reactions but also dominated the public debate and the media.

The political reactions were double-sided. On the one hand, a series of tightening of the rules on asylum and immigration took place making it less attractive to apply for asylum in Denmark. On the other hand, the number of persons granted asylum in Denmark also led to the conclusion that there was a need to step up the effort to integrate refugees, not least with regard to labour market participation. This realisation led to a number of new initiatives, agreements, legal changes, projects etc.

It is difficult to precisely assess the effect of these initiatives, partly because the effect of one initiative cannot be isolated from the effect of the next, partly also because the effect of the favourable economic climate cannot be ignored. However, there are good indications that the initiatives have in fact made a positive difference.

Despite the positive development, challenges still remain in relation to the integration of the refugees who have arrived in the last few years, but also with regard to the refugees – and immigrants – who have been in the country for many years, or even for generations.

Conclusions and recommendations

Denmark has seen a positive development over the last few years, especially concerning labour market integration, which has been significantly helped by the boom in the economy. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that refugees are helped to gain employment which is lasting – otherwise the progress made will be washed away when the economy is not booming any longer. Consequently, more should be done to follow up on the refugees who are successful in finding a job to help them keep the job and obtain further qualifications, and to ensure that they learn the language.

At the same time, there is a need to bring more refugee women into employment. More should be done to reach out to those women and to find ways around the existing barriers.

It is also necessary to do more to integrate refugees who came previously and who have not benefited from the initiatives taken over the last few years. Here it is recommended to draw from the positive experience related to refugees who have arrived over the last couple of years, especially with regard to labour market integration, and implement the same approach towards other groups of refugees and immigrants as well.

Finally, there is a need to recall that integration is more than just having a job – other aspects of integration must not be forgotten.

While there is still room for improvement in Denmark, there are also experiences drawn which might be useful for other countries. One useful experience has proved to be the clear distribution of competence and responsibility. In Denmark, the state provides the financial and legal framework, whereas municipalities are responsible for providing integration programmes, housing etc. Civil society and businesses provide networks and jobs.

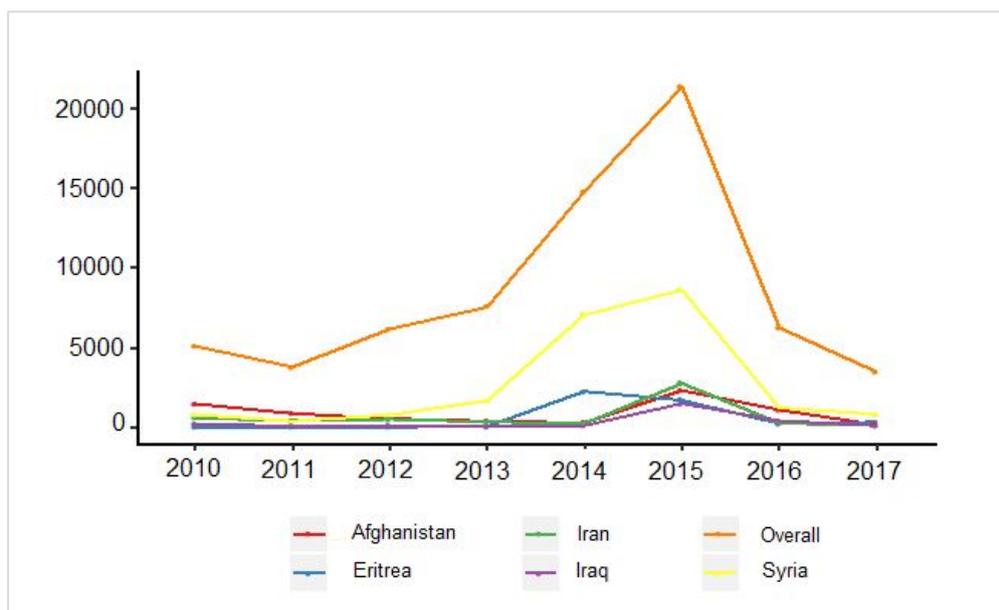
A clear focus on employment is necessary and the involvement of social partners in this respect is important. Finally, the resources of civil society are vital for the successful integration of refugees and immigrants – strategies for the cooperation between authorities and civil organisations are needed.

1. THE DIMENSIONS AND MAIN FEATURES OF THE INFLOW OF REFUGEES AND OTHER MIGRANTS

1.1. Evolution of the inflows of refugees and other migrants in the country since 2010

Apart from a decline from 2010 – 2011, the number of asylum applicants in Denmark increased gradually from 2010, peaking in 2015 after a rapid increase. According to the Ministry of Immigration and Integration (UIM), the total amount of asylum applications received in 2010 was 5,115. From 2013 – 2015, there was a substantial increase from 7,557 to 21,316 asylum applications, before decreasing again to 6,266 in 2016 and 3,500 asylum applications in 2017. The preliminary total for 2018 is 3,523.

Figure 1: Overview of asylum seekers in Denmark for the period 2010 – 2017



Source: UIM.

Residence permits were granted to 2,124 refugees in 2010. Similarly to the increase in asylum applications, the amount of residence permits granted to refugees peaked in 2015 at 10,849. The number remained high in 2016 at 7,493 granted residence permits to refugees. In 2017, the number had declined to a total of 2,750. The preliminary total for 2018 is 1,652.

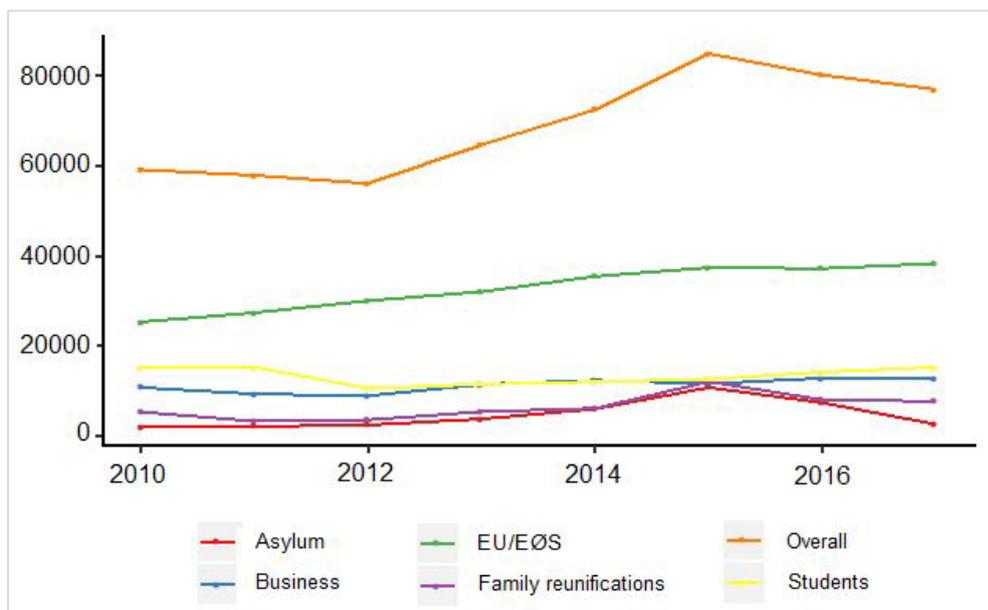
The recognition rate for first instance¹ decisions on asylum applications, including all nationalities, increased from 55 % in 2010 to 85 % in 2015². From 2015 onwards, the recognition rate kept on decreasing, reaching its lowest in 2017 at 36 %³.

¹ Negative decisions are automatically appealed to The Refugee Appeals Board unless the application is deemed manifestly unfounded. The overturned cases are not represented in these numbers. The percentage of negative decisions overturned by The Refugee Appeals Board was 21 in 2015, 20 in 2016 and 19 in 2017.

² UIM (2019).

³ UIM (2019).

Figure 2: Overview of all granted residence permits for the period 2010 – 2017



Source: UIM.

1.2. Evolution of the profile of recent inflows

The substantial increase in asylum seekers was primarily due to a rapid increase in the group of asylum applicants from Syria. Asylum seekers from Syria amounted to 48 % of the total sum of asylum applicants in 2014 and 40 % in 2015. Other sizeable groups were asylum seekers with Eritrea, Iraq, Iran or Afghanistan as their country of origin. Concerning the main socio-demographic characteristics, the largest group of asylum seekers was by far male applicants in the 15-29 years old age bracket. Males were in general more represented than females in all age groups⁴.

When the inflow of Syrian asylum seekers began, the conception was that their educational and professional level would be relatively high. This turned out not to be the case. One study carried out by UIM in 2016 indicated that more than one third of the Syrians granted asylum had none or only a few years of school attendance; more than half had completed a short education; whereas less than 10 % had completed a medium, long or higher education.

In a 2017 study which examined all refugees staying in Denmark regardless of their nationality and the length of stay, The Rockwool Foundation found that 53 % of the refugees had solely a primary school education⁵; 10 % of refugees had a high school diploma and 14 % had completed a vocational education. Only 18 % of refugees had completed higher education. In comparison, 37 % of the Danish population had completed higher education in 2017, 38 % had completed a vocational education, and 19 % had primary school as the highest level of education.

According to a study made by UIM and Rambøll Management based on a survey distributed to 20 municipalities concerning work experience, 61 % of the refugees have worked unskilled jobs. Only 16 % have worked skilled jobs. This information is shrouded by a significant amount of uncertainty, though, since work experience in this survey is known for only approximately a third of the refugees⁶.

⁴ UIM (2019).

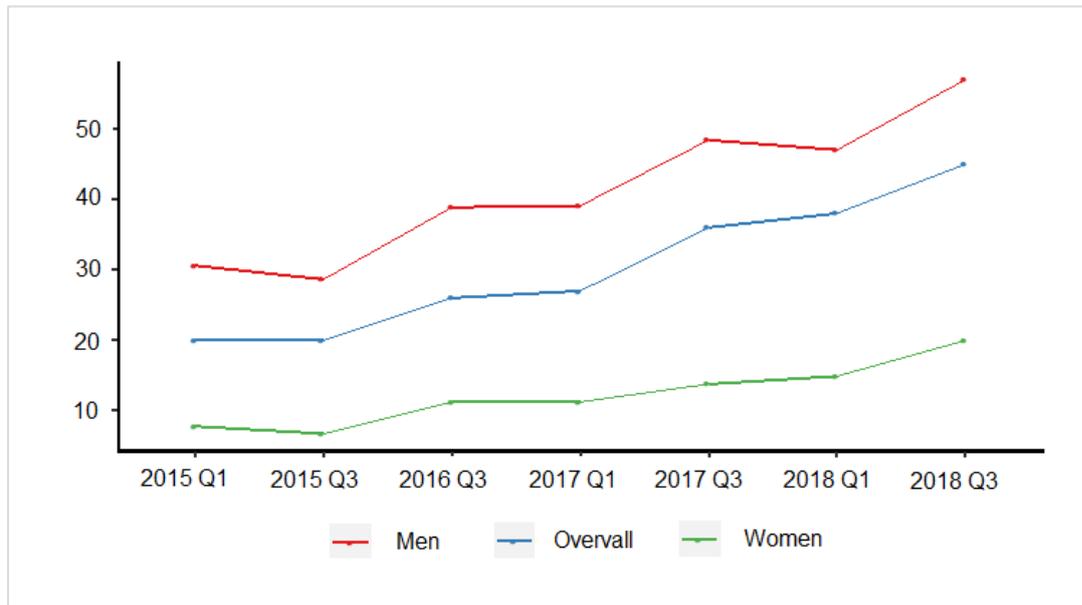
⁵ The Rockwool Foundation (2017).

⁶ UIM (2016), available in Danish at: <http://uim.dk/nyheder/2016/2016-02/ny-afdaekning-af-flygtninges-kompetencer>.

1.3. Overview of the level of integration of refugees in the country

The employment rate of refugees has been substantially lower than the employment rates of the Danish population and of other immigrants of non-Western origin. However, the development over the last few years has been positive. In the 3rd quarter of 2015, the employment rate of refugees after three years of stay in Denmark was 20 % overall: 29 % for men and 7 % for women. Since then it has increased to 45 % overall in the 3rd quarter of 2018: 57 % for men and 20 % for women.

Figure 3: Overview of the employment rate for refugees (%) after 3 years



Source: The Integration Barometer.

By comparison, the employment rate of immigrants of non-Western origin was 48 % for men and 43 % for women and of Danish origin 73 % for men and 72 % for women in the 3rd quarter of 2015. While the employment rate of people of Danish origin has remained relatively stable, the employment rate of immigrants has been increasing and was 56 % for men and 47 % for women in the 3rd quarter of 2018⁷. Also, significant differences can be seen between nationalities. For persons originating from Somalia, for instance, the employment rate in 2016 was as low as 31 %⁸.

According to a 2017 study from the Rockwool Foundation, which examined all refugees staying in Denmark regardless of their nationality and length of stay, the refugees with only a primary school education are the least employed with a rate of only 28 %, whereas those with a vocational or a long cycle higher education are the most represented refugees on the labour market with half of them in employment⁹.

A number of factors other than employment are relevant to determine the level of integration. To follow the development for a number of these factors, the UIM has developed the "Integration barometer"¹⁰. The barometer shows the development on nine different parameters, which are all considered to be important indicators for integration (employment, education, language, equal

⁷ Integration Barometer (2019), available in Danish at: <https://integrationsbarometer.dk/aktuelt/7>.

⁸ Statistic Denmark (2018).

⁹ The Rockwool Foundation (2017).

¹⁰ Integration Barometer, available in Danish at: <https://integrationsbarometer.dk/udviklingsrapporter/hele-landet-0219.pdf>.

treatment etc.). In this way it is possible to monitor the level of integration of immigrants with a non-western background and their descendants in Denmark.

1.4. Overview of the main challenges related to asylum seekers' and refugees' inflows in the country

Initially, the challenges flowing from the increase in asylum seekers in 2014 – 2015, and especially during late summer of 2015, related to practical issues and concerns such as providing shelter, food and the necessary basics. At later stages, it related to processing the large number of asylum applications, providing housing and establishing integration programmes, as well as securing day-care and schooling opportunities for the children once asylum was granted.

Other challenges have to be considered for the long-term perspective:

- The level of education and relevant professional experience among the refugees is low. Combined with the qualifications needed within most parts of the Danish labour market and the high wage levels, it makes it difficult for many to find a job and be able to provide for themselves. Besides being costly for society and negatively affecting the public perception of refugees, this hampers the integration of the individual and also often the family;
- Similarly, the lack of language skills (Danish and English) makes their way into the labour market difficult;
- A significant number of the refugees suffer from various forms and degrees of traumatisation making integration not only into the labour market but into society as a whole, more – and for some much more – difficult;
- Refugees often lack the networks that might otherwise help them find a job and become part of everyday life in Denmark;
- Most refugees come from contexts that are very different from the Danish one, socially, religiously and culturally. In many ways, this makes integration difficult. One aspect to be considered is the fact that while in Denmark both men and women work and have incomes of their own – which for most families is necessary to uphold a good standard of living – in many of the countries of origin women are expected primarily to take care of the children and the household.

2. EVOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL CLIMATE AND POLICY DEBATE IN THE COUNTRY

Although Denmark was not as affected in terms of numbers by the refugee influx into the EU during 2014 and 2015 as neighbouring Sweden and Germany, certainly the inflow into Denmark of refugees in that period heavily affected the political agenda, the public debate and the media.

As regards the political agenda, the development over the last years has been characterised by a movement whereby the major political parties have moved towards the course taken for years by the right-wing Danish People's Party, which has been advocating for a stricter immigration policy. The Danish People's Party has long maintained a vital role in Parliament and contributed significantly to the shaping of the Danish immigration policy for more than a decade. More recently, the further right-wing-leaning party, "*Nye Borgerlige*", has been founded and seems to be able to draw some support. The party's true influence on policy-making still remains to be seen. At the same time, the political majority has maintained a focus on the importance of integrating refugees into Danish society, especially through the labour market. This approach has led to a number of policy initiatives over the last few years as will be explained in chapter 3.

Similarly, the public opinion has been characterised by a double sided focus on both securing a stricter immigration policy, while still embracing the importance of integration. When the inflow of asylum seekers peaked in 2014 – 2015, concerns were voiced by mayors in many municipalities that it would become very difficult, as well as expensive, to provide housing and integration programmes for all those who were expected to be granted asylum and transferred to the municipalities. Those concerns were addressed in the agreement made between the Government and the municipalities in March 2016 (see chapter 3), which gave the municipalities better funding and a more flexible framework to perform their tasks relating to the various aspects of integration.

Despite the concerns, the overall impression from that period, however, is that at the local level broad support to take on the task of integrating those arriving was shown. Many initiatives to that effect were taken by NGOs, private persons, business owners etc. Among those were "*Venligboerne*" (a contraction of "friendly" and "neighbour"), a grass root movement, which arranged a broad range of activities with a view to further integration, helping with practical issues and creating networks for the refugees to become a part of. At NGO-level, The Red Cross and Danish Refugee Council created the project known as *Venner viser vej* (it directly translates to *Friends Pave the Way*) which offers the refugees volunteering friends to guide them and help them settle in Danish society and in the given municipality (see chapter 3). Both projects experienced positive responses and mobilised a sizeable number of volunteers. One downside to this, however, was that in many cases it proved difficult for NGOs and municipalities to convert the good will show by many private persons into practical and useful initiatives to actually help the refugees. This led to disappointment for some.

Immigration and integration policy is at the top of the political agenda and public debate in Denmark. This has been reinforced by, but is not the result of, the inflow of asylum seekers in 2014 – 2015, as it has been so for a number of years. Opinion polls on the issue over the last few years show that most consider it a duty to help the refugees who come to Denmark for protection, but at the same time find that the stay must be of a temporary nature until return is possible. According to one poll survey, 63 % of the Danish population believe that the refugees are entitled to help, while 61 % believe that refugees must be sent home as soon as it is possible to return¹¹. These tendencies are in harmony with the predominant political climate focusing on temporary stays as an objective. This is most recently

¹¹ DR (2015).

reflected in a political agreement from December 2018 between the government and the Danish People's Party which underlines that residence permits for refugees should always be temporary. The agreement was transformed into new legislation which took effect from March 2019.

The concerns voiced in the political and public debate about immigration and integration relate to a number of issues. One evolves around the economic consequences of immigration from third world countries. Analysis on the economic consequences today and in the future are made on a regular basis by the Ministry of Finance and others showing that immigration from third world countries is, and will continue to be, very costly unless the job rate for this group improves substantially¹². Obviously, the portraying of immigrants as an economic burden negatively affects the attitude towards migration, especially from third world countries.

Another major concern is the impact that immigration might have culturally. Some fear that the Danish culture, norms and values are challenged by immigration, especially immigration from Muslim countries. According to Gallup, two out of three from the Danish population agree that the country should do more to limit the inflow of refugees from Muslim countries¹³.

Analyses of the media coverage of the rapid increase in refugee inflow do not provide any clear picture. One comprehensive study of the media coverage from August 2015 to April 2016, made by Infomedia concludes that the coverage was overall very balanced and neutral in its communication¹⁴. On the contrary, another study, made by the University of Copenhagen concludes that opinions critical of refugees were vastly over-represented in the media¹⁵. It was, however, argued that the media were merely citing the major parties more often than other sources, and as those parties were promoting a strict immigration policy, this would naturally be reflected in the media coverage.

Although Denmark has not experienced violence from or against asylum seekers and refugees to the same extent as seems to be the case in certain other countries^{16,17,18}, there have been violent incidents. A photograph of a man spitting from a bridge at the refugees walking on the closed down motorway stirred a substantial amount of public debate¹⁹. The man was subsequently charged for racism and ultimately agreed to pay a fine²⁰. There are also a few reports on vandalism against asylum centres.

According to statistics from the National Police, there has been a significant increase in the number of charges raised against asylum seekers in the years following 2014. The charges relate to crimes such as theft, violence and sexually related offences. It should be noted that the numbers relate to charges, not prosecutions²¹. Furthermore, there have been a number of incidents concerning unaccompanied minors, involving thievery and other forms of criminal behaviour, especially in areas close to the asylum centres. This has led to political initiatives to target this problem, including a right for staff at the centres to detain the minors if deemed necessary.

¹² The Ministry of Finance (2018), available at: <https://www.fm.dk/nyheder/pressemeddelelser/2018/02/store-udgifter-til-indvandrere-uden-job>.

¹³ Politiken (2017).

¹⁴ Infomedia (2016).

¹⁵ Kristeligt Dagblad (2018).

¹⁶ Berlingske (2017).

¹⁷ Reuters (2018).

¹⁸ New York Times (2018).

¹⁹ Berlingske (2016).

²⁰ Berlingske (2016).

²¹ Berlingske (2018).

3. EVOLUTION OF THE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.1. Evolution of the legal and policy approach and strategies

The policy response to the significant inflow of asylum seekers in 2014 and 2015 has gone in two directions: the rules on asylum and immigration have been substantially tightened while at the same time, a number of initiatives to strengthen the integration of refugees have been put in place.

Box 1: Asylum – a short introduction

- Persons applying for asylum in Denmark will be registered by the police, after which the Immigration Service is responsible for processing the application and making a decision at first instance.
- Up until 2015 (see below), asylum could be granted either with reference to the 1951 Convention on Refugees or with reference to a need for protection for other reasons.
- Negative decisions will – with some exceptions – automatically be referred to the Refugee Appeals Board for a final decision.
- During the asylum procedure, the asylum seeker will be accommodated in asylum centres under the responsibility of the Immigration Service.
- Asylum seekers do not have access to the labour market for the first 6 months and then only under special circumstances.
- Asylum seekers have access to health care and various forms of tuition and activities.

The first significant concrete political initiative taken as a reaction to the rapidly increasing number of asylum seekers in 2014 was a proposal from the – then social democrat led – government to introduce a new type of temporary residence permit for refugees. Passed by Parliament in February 2015, it meant that refugees whose need for protection is due to the general situation in their home country are granted a residence permit for one year, which may be extended if there is still a need for protection (section 7(3) in the Aliens Act). Apart from the more temporary nature of this type of permit compared with other types of residence permits granted to refugees, it differs by not allowing family reunification during the first three years of the refugee’s residence in Denmark. This type of residence permit has so far primarily been granted to Syrians and amounted to between one third and one fourth of all residence permits granted to refugees for the years 2016 – 2018.

Just after a general election in June 2015, the newly elected liberal government introduced the so-called “sudden brake” on the inflow of asylum seekers. The first concrete measure introduced in that respect was the introduction of a new and considerably lower public allowance to persons who had resided in Denmark fewer than seven out of the last eight years, namely the “introduction allowance”. Passed by Parliament in August 2015 it applies to Danes and foreigners alike, but the aim, which was overtly stated when the initiative was introduced, was to make it less attractive to apply for asylum in Denmark and at the same time making it clear that one was supposed to contribute to the Danish welfare system for some time before one could fully benefit from it.

Another noticeable initiative on the part of the Government during the late summer of 2015 was the advertisements published in a number of Lebanese newspapers and social media in Lebanon to inform about the changes in the conditions for residence in Denmark, including the reduction in public allowances.

Since then, a number of the rules on immigration have been tightened. According to the homepage of the UIM (www.uim.dk) this amounts to more than 100 tightenings (as per February 2019) covering e.g. access to public allowances, the rules on naturalisation, asylum, deportation of rejected asylum seekers, family reunification, permanent residence and expulsion. The tightening included a temporary stop for the yearly quota of 500 refugees being resettled in Denmark upon agreement with the UN, as well as the much debated “jewellery law” that allows authorities to seize valuables from asylum seekers exceeding the value of 10,000 dkr to help pay for expenses during their stay. Most recently, the Parliament passed amendments to the Aliens Act in February 2019 meaning, *inter alia* that residence permits granted to refugees are now always temporary.

Integration

In September 2015, the Prime Minister invited social partners, business representatives, NGOs, researchers and other stakeholders from civil society to a summit on how to improve integration of the refugees Denmark was receiving in that period. From that arose a partnership between Government, businesses and municipalities – “Teaming up for Integration” – to inspire and support more businesses to employ refugees.

In March 2016, two significant agreements on integration were drawn-up. One between the Government and the social partners – a so-called tripartite agreement on integration in the labour market, the other – building on the first – an agreement between the Government and the municipalities to improve the framework for integration in the municipalities. Together, the two agreements – which between them comprise more than 50 initiatives – has laid the foundation for a more effective and job-oriented integration of refugees. The main contents of the agreements are described below.

Box 2: The existing framework for integration in Denmark

- The municipalities are responsible for the integration of newcomers. The State sets out the legal framework and provides the financing.
- Refugees are dispersed between the municipalities by a quota system. In connection with the decision to grant asylum it is decided which municipality he or she will be allocated to. Once in the municipality the refugee has access to public institutions and public services including medical care, schools and education etc. on an equal footing with other citizens in the country. The municipality shall provide accommodation for the refugee as well.
- All refugees will have an individual integration programme lasting up to five years the core elements of which are initiatives to help qualify the refugee for the labour market as well as Danish language courses.
- Until being able to provide for oneself, a refugee is entitled to public allowances, mainly in the form of the “integration allowance”.

The tripartite agreement on labour market integration was a reaction to the inflow of asylum seekers but also to the fact that the employment rates for refugees were poor. In 2015, only 20 per cent of refugees and reunified relatives aged between 25 and 64 years had obtained a job after three years of participation in integration programmes.

The initiatives included:

- Better screening of asylum seekers' formal and informal qualifications while they are still at the asylum centre having their application for asylum processed;
- Ensuring that job opportunities are a primary consideration when deciding to which municipality the refugee is transferred upon being granted asylum;
- Refugees and reunified relatives must be considered ready to work when they start integration programmes (meaning that, for instance, lacking language qualifications cannot be an excuse for not finding a job);
- Municipalities shall offer participants in integration programmes early and intensive job oriented measures to commence as soon as possible after taking over responsibility for their integration. 'As soon as possible' is now specified in the Integration Act to mean within one month;
- The content and organisation of Danish language education is to be updated and made more labour market oriented (see below);
- A new two-year programme that combines work and on the job practice with labour oriented education (the "IGU", which is explained in further detail below);
- Introduction of a bonus scheme for private sector companies that hire refugees and reunified relatives in regular, non-subsidised jobs.

The agreement between the Government and the municipalities²² had as its main objective to provide the municipalities with a more flexible and more effective legal framework to handle the integration of newcomers²³.

The initiatives include:

- More flexible rules on the municipalities' obligation to provide housing for refugees;
- Intensifying the integration programme (as explained above);
- More efficient sharing of information on skills and competencies when refugees are transferred from asylum centres to municipalities;
- Better screening of formal and informal qualifications;
- A more job oriented approach to Danish language courses (see below);
- Financial incentives for municipalities comprising a bonus granted to municipalities who succeed in finding regular jobs for refugees or family reunified persons.

In 2016, a reform of Danish language courses was agreed in Parliament building on the agreements mentioned above. The main intention was to create a better link between Danish language courses and the integration of newly arrived foreigners into the labour market. The initiatives included the introduction of a "beginner's language course" offered to all newly arrived foreigners with a special focus on the spoken language and conversations at work places as well as a two-year pilot scheme whereby larger companies can offer language courses.

²² The Ministry of Finance (2016), available in Danish at: <https://www.fm.dk/nyheder/pressemeddelelser/2016/03/bedre-integration-tidlig-indsats-og-mere-fleksibilitet-i-kommunerne>.

²³ This was criticised by some as on some points leading to less favourable conditions for the refugees, for instance in terms of what type of housing they could be offered.

The reform did not change the basic set up of Danish language courses whereby the municipality is obliged to offer Danish language courses within a month from taking over the integration responsibility for the refugee or immigrant. Courses are free of charge for refugees, who have access to up to five years of Danish courses and must follow the courses as part of the integration programme. The focus of the language teaching is integration into the labour market but issues such as democratic structures, the educational system etc. are also part of the curriculum.

Good practices

A number of initiatives, projects and practices have been developed over the last few years in order to improve the integration of refugees and immigrants. Many of them have focused on integration into the labour market which is generally seen as the key driver for successful integration. Other projects have focused on other aspects of the integration process – language proficiency, becoming part of the local community etc. Based on their effects, and/or the importance subscribed to them by the key actors interviewed for this report or by other sources, a few of the initiatives are briefly described here – see also Table 2 in Annex II.

The Integrative Training Programme (“Integrationsgrunduddannelsen – IGU”)

This innovative initiative was part of the tripartite agreement between the Government and social partners. It is based on the fact that many newly arrived refugees do not have the skills nor the productivity required to qualify for a job on regular Danish wage levels, which are relatively high. This is seen as a major obstacle to integration in the labour market. The IGU attempts to tackle this problem. It is a two-year programme during which the refugee has a contract with an employer and is paid an apprentice wage which is based on the collective agreements between the social partners. During the two years, the refugee will undergo 20 weeks of education, including language training, while working and learning at the workplace the remaining time. The IGU, targeting newly arrived refugees between 18 and 40 years of age, is meant to be a stepping stone into ordinary employment or education. It runs for a three-year trial period until July 2019 and is expected to be prolonged. So far (February 2019) almost 2,000 IGU-contracts have been made. An evaluation of the programme shows broad support to the IGU which is considered an important new tool to pave the way for more refugees to become part of the labour market. It is mentioned, however, that the administration linked to the programme can make it difficult for – and might deter – some companies, especially smaller ones with less HR-capacity.

Industry Packages (“Branchepakker”)

Industry packages is a concept developed jointly by consultancy firms and Danish municipalities and is now adopted in more than 30 (of 98) municipalities. It is targeting refugees and immigrants with no connection to the labour market with the aim of finding the most direct route possible into the regular labour market. This is done by taking, as its starting point, the needs and requirements in the local labour market and then – in cooperation between businesses and municipalities - building a training scheme for specific sectors with good job opportunities that are relevant to refugees with little education and work experience. By following that scheme, a refugee will gradually progress towards regular employment in the specific sector. Although no formal evaluation of the overall concept has been carried out yet, the concept shows good results in many municipalities and broad support from municipalities and businesses alike²⁴.

²⁴ Nordic Council of Ministers (2018), available at: <http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1254005/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.

"Friends Pave the Way" (Venner Viser Vej)

"Friends Pave the Way" is a nationwide project run in cooperation between the two major NGO's, Danish Red Cross and Danish Refugee Council. Funded by the Government and drawing on volunteers throughout the country, the aim is that every refugee will be offered a friend once they arrive in the municipality where they will live after being granted asylum. This is seen as a supplement to the integration efforts on the part of the municipality and usually includes help to settle and get accustomed to life in Denmark. The exact content of the relation between the refugee and the Danish friend is agreed between the two – it can relate to daily life issues, creating a network, practising Danish etc. "Friends Pave the Way" is now established in almost all municipalities and has been positively evaluated²⁵. Funding from the state for a 4-year period from 2019 – 2022 has recently been granted.

"The Copenhagen Model" – local integration strategies²⁶

In light of the fact that the municipalities are responsible for receiving and helping to integrate refugees, a number of cities have developed local integration plans or strategies building on the common framework provided by the Integration Act and the State funding. One example of this is the City of Copenhagen's integration initiative – the so-called Copenhagen Model for the reception and integration of refugees. Key elements in the strategy are: early screening of refugees during the asylum phase; starting a company internship programme for each refugee within one month and follow up through a mentor, counselling and interviews; offer of health assessments to all refugees; and finding a permanent residence for the refugee within six months.

3.2. Main strengths and weaknesses of the approaches/strategies adopted and lessons learned

This section contains a very brief assessment of some of the main features of the integration strategies adopted over the last few years in Denmark. This is further addressed in chapter 5.

- It is generally considered a strength that after being granted asylum, refugees are dispersed between the municipalities meaning that (almost) all municipalities take part in the integration task. Some point, however, to the fact that municipalities have different priorities and are not all equally successful in their efforts to integrate those they receive.
- It is generally considered a strength that integration of refugees focuses on labour market participation right from the start. To succeed with this approach, it is necessary, however, to obtain information on the refugees' competencies and pass this information on from asylum centres to municipalities more effectively than is currently the case.
- Some also argue that dimensions of integration other than labour market participation are in risk of being forgotten and that having a job in itself does not necessarily lead to integration into society.
- It is generally considered a strength that civil society is taking part in the integration process and that authorities and civil society organisations work together, but there are concerns that the line between what is the responsibility of the municipality and what is done by volunteers can be blurred. This may take away the incentive for the volunteers and confuse refugees.

²⁵ Friends Leading the Way – see LG Insight, available in Danish at: <https://lg-insight.dk/cases/venner-viser-vej/> + The Red Cross <https://www.rodekors.dk/bliv-frivillig/venner-viser-vej>.

²⁶ The Municipality of Copenhagen, available at: https://www.kk.dk/sites/default/files/uploaded-files/the_city_of_copenhagens_integration_initiative_for_refugees.pdf.

- There is wide support to strengthen the integration of newly arrived refugees but also a recognition that the large groups of refugees and immigrants who have been in the country for several years – and who were not met with the same approach as refugees arriving today – must not be forgotten as there is still a strong need to do more to succeed with their integration into society.

4. THE ROLE OF EU SUPPORT

4.1. The role of EU law, guidance and mutual learning in strategy development and implementation

It is difficult to find traces of EU law or support in the Danish approach to integration and the strategies and methods developed and implemented at national, as well as local, level.

The main and obvious reason for this is that Denmark opted out from EU cooperation in the field of Justice and Home Affairs, meaning that Denmark does not participate in the implementation of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

At state-level there is a knowledge about the EU Common Basic Principles on integration and the EU Integration Action Plan as well as participation in various EU conferences and networks. This does not seem, however, to visibly influence on national or local practices. In this respect one source pointed to the fact that the legal and societal framework for integration differs substantially between Member States making transfer of good practices difficult. The most comparable countries to Denmark in this respect are the other Nordic countries. Between these countries there is a tradition for sharing of experiences, policies etc.

4.2. The use of EU support and funding for reception

As already stated, Denmark does not participate in the implementation of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

With regard to the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD-DG EMPL), the Danish National Social Board, which is the managing authority in Denmark, has informed that the projects in Denmark funded by FEAD have not been targeting the reception or integration of refugees as such, although one project includes migrants in the group of end-recipients of assistance.

4.3. The use of EU support and funding for migrants' and refugees' integration

The Danish Business Authority (*Erhvervsstyrelsen*) runs a project database on all projects funded by the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund from 2014 onwards. A search here shows that a few projects include immigrants in the target group, although integration does not seem to be a focal point for these projects or the funds. Worth mentioning, though, is the project "Business Training" targeting vulnerable refugees who have arrived in Denmark over the last few years. Through a "Place and Train" programme, the aim is to combine on the job training with an effort to tackle social and mental issues. It is funded by the European Social Fund and run by municipalities in Southern Denmark and a branch of the Danish Refugee Council. A mid-term evaluation shows good results and the European Social Fund has made it possible to extend the project to other municipalities by providing additional funding²⁷.

The interviews conducted for this report indicate that there is not very detailed knowledge about the possibilities for funding of integration initiatives through EU-funds and at the same time there is a conception of EU funding being very cumbersome to apply for and administer.

²⁷ Integrationsnet, available at: <https://integrationsnet.dk/projekter/business-training>.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

The inflow of asylum seekers in 2014 – 2015, the large majority of which were granted asylum, stimulated a debate on the approach to the integration of refugees in Denmark. It was broadly recognised that there was a strong need to improve integration, and integration into the labour market in particular. This recognition was sparked, not only by the numbers of asylum seekers, but also by statistics showing meagre results of the efforts in the past, not least with regard to labour market integration. This led to a series of initiatives that between them target three groups: asylum seekers and refugees, the municipalities and the businesses.

- Tightening of the rules on immigration were enforced, often explained with the need to reduce the number of asylum seekers to be able to better integrate the refugees and immigrants already in the country. Also, social allowances were reduced with the aim of creating a stronger incentive to work.
- New initiatives were taken, both in terms of legislation and policy development, to make it easier for refugees to find a way into the labour market and to make it more attractive for businesses to take part in the integration of the refugees.
- The municipalities were given a more flexible framework and new incentives to succeed with their integration efforts and at the same time new obligations were imposed on them in order to secure a faster and more efficient approach to labour market integration.

Looking at the figures, this three-sided approach appears to have been successful. The employment rate for refugees and family reunited with refugees after three years of residence in Denmark was 20 % in 2015 – in October 2018 it was 45 %. Another positive effect that has been pointed out in interviews is that the approach at jobcentres for the refugees and their chances on the labour market is now much more positive than in the past.

What is not known, however, is to what degree each of the various initiatives contribute to positive development and whether in fact the favourable economic situation over the last few years is the main contributor to the positive results. Therefore, an obvious future challenge is the fact that at some point the economy will develop less favourably leaving refugees in risk of being the first ones to lose their jobs.

Another challenge is the fact that positive development in terms of labour market integration to a very large degree relates to men. If the employment rate of 45 % mentioned above is split by sex, it shows that while the rate is 57 % for men, it is only 20 % for women.

In addition, another challenge relates to the refugees who came before 2015 and were not met with the same job oriented focus from the start. These refugees are lacking behind in terms of integration and there is a need to address the challenges related to these groups.

Finally, there is a need to recall that integration is more than just having a job. The very strong focus on employment risks leaving other aspects of integration in the shadows.

5.2. Policy recommendations

There are a number of learning points from Danish experiences with the integration of refugees that can serve as recommendations for other countries:

- It is important to have a clear distribution of competence and responsibility

In the Danish model the state provides a financial and legal framework, municipalities are responsible for providing integration programmes, housing etc. and civil society and businesses provide networks and jobs, is hence a good example. This leaves room for local differences, but secures a certain level of security and standards. Leaving the responsibility to the local level implies a need for close dialogue between State authorities and the local level, and a responsibility for the State to monitor results and help steer the municipalities whose results should be better. This can be done, for instance, by economic incentives. The model also calls for the sharing of best practices and cooperation between municipalities.

- Another distinctive feature is the role given to the social partners

The tripartite agreement between the Government, the employer's organisations and the trade unions formed the basis for the re-orientation of the approach to integration in 2016 and the most innovative new feature, the integrative training programme (IGU, see chapter 3), is the result of an agreement between the employer's Confederation and the Confederation of Trade Unions.

The resources and strengths of civil society play a vital role in integration. It is advisable to set up strategies for the involvement of and support to NGO's etc. and to set up formal agreements between authorities and civil organisations to match expectations and avoid uncertainty with regard to roles and responsibilities.

- A clear focus on employment is necessary

This requires businesses to take responsibility and it demands that the responsible authorities provide the right guidance and training, and at the same time make clear to newcomers that they are expected to contribute and to become self-supporting as soon as possible.

While there are things to be learned from the Danish experience, there is still work to be done in Denmark as well:

- There is a need to include more female refugees in the labour market and find a way around the cultural barriers, which may impede progress in this area;
- There is a need to draw from the positive experience related to newly arrived refugees over the last couple of years and implement the same approach towards large groups of refugees and immigrants who have resided in Denmark for years with modest progress in terms of integration;
- There is a need to follow up on the refugees who are successful in finding a job to help them keep their job, obtain further qualifications and to ensure that they learn the language at the same time.

With regard to the EU, it is recommended that more is done to promote the possibilities of funding, especially at the local level. In that context the conception that EU funds are very bureaucratic to apply for and difficult to administer could also be addressed.

Furthermore, working across different sectors and administrative levels is often a prerequisite for success in integration projects. This approach could be promoted by setting up criteria to that effect when EU-funds are advertised. On top of this, EU-funded projects might have a clearer focus on effect and on transferability of results taking into account the differences between Member States.

Finally, at national level as well as at EU-level, there is a need for more evidence-based knowledge. There is a need to move beyond small scale evaluations of projects and to find funding for large scale, research-based knowledge. Even today, there is a lack of knowledge about what really works in terms of the integration of refugees and migrants.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX I – LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

- *Head of Labour Market Department, the Municipality of Kalundborg.*
- *Manager, Danish Refugee Council (NGO).*
- *Senior Advisor, Danish Refugee Council (NGO).*
- *Senior Advisor, Confederation of Danish Employers.*
- *Head of Integration Division, the Municipality of Copenhagen.*
- *Senior Advisor, the Municipality of Copenhagen.*

ANNEX II – ADDITIONAL TABLES

Table 1: Main legal and policy provisions for the reception, recognition and integration of asylum seekers and refugees in Denmark

Policy Field	Asylum seekers (during asylum procedure)	Persons granted asylum (refugees)	Main changes since 2014
Residence permits	During the asylum procedure the applicant is granted processual stay until a final decision has been made. The final decision contains a time limit for departure.	Asylum granted on the basis of the 1951 Refugee Convention is initially given for two years which can be prolonged for a maximum of two years each time. Asylum granted on the basis of a need for protection is given for one year after which prolongations are given for a maximum of two years each time. The new provision (2015) on temporary protection status is given for 1 year at the time for the first 3 years. After that it can be prolonged for a maximum of 2 years each time.	The provision on temporary protection status was inserted in the Aliens Act (section 7(3) in 2015). In February 2019 the Act was amended again. Now all residence permits granted to refugees are temporary.
Right to Family reunification	No	Yes	For those granted residence permit under section 7(3), of the Aliens Act, family reunification cannot be obtained for the first three years. The conditions for obtaining family reunification have been tightened on a number of points.

<p>Settlement restrictions (for persons granted asylum)</p>		<p>Persons granted asylum are dispersed between the municipalities, who are responsible for their integration for up to five years from reception. Moving to another municipality in this period is possible, but if the receiving municipality declines to take over responsibility for the refugee's integration programme, the refugee might lose the right to social benefits.</p>	<p>Adjustments of the criteria for deciding to which municipality the refugee should be transferred were made. Also the duration of the integration programme has been changed from 3 years to 1 year, with the possibility to extend up to 5 years.</p>
<p>Initial reception, emergency measures, and referrals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency housing • Emergency health care • Basic subsistence needs • Reception and recognition provisions • Family reunification • Settlement restrictions • Referrals <p><i>Distinguishing between exceptional and ordinary reception procedures</i></p>	<p>No exceptional or emergency measures in place.</p>	<p>No exceptional or emergency measures in place.</p>	<p>No exceptional or emergency measures in place.</p>
<p>Access to accommodation/housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing/accommodation/ • Housing support • Other... 	<p>Asylum seekers stay in asylum centres during the time their application is processed. In certain cases the asylum seekers are allowed to reside outside of the centre.</p>	<p>Upon being granted asylum the refugee is transferred to a municipality who is responsible for providing housing for the refugee.</p>	<p>The obligation for the municipality to provide housing has been made more flexible, meaning that the refugee can now stay in a temporary dwelling until he/she finds his/her own accommodation, and the requirements on what can serve as a temporary dwelling have been loosened.</p>
<p>Access to health care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Emergency/urgent healthcare; • Access to Full health care, ... 	<p>During their stay in the asylum centre asylum seekers have access to health care through the medical staff at the centres and if necessary hospitals etc.</p>	<p>Full access + for some a health assessment upon reception in the municipality.</p>	<p>The right to a health assessment upon arrival in the municipality was changed in 2016. Now it is for the municipality to assess whether a health assessment is deemed necessary. The full access to health services remain the same.</p>

<p>Access to education and training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School enrolment and attendance • Adult education • Vocational education & training • Language courses • ... 	<p>Adult asylum seekers make a contract with the asylum centre stipulating what education and activities should be followed. This includes a course providing basic knowledge of the Danish language, culture and society. Asylum-seeking children of school age are, like other children in Denmark, subject to compulsory school attendance.</p>	<p>Full access to schools, adult education etc. Access to free language courses.</p>	<p>Persons granted a residence permit under section 7(3) of the Aliens Act do not have access to free vocational training and further education.</p>
<p>Access to the labour market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills assessment/validation • Active labour market policy (counselling, mentoring, job search assistance, entrepreneurship promotion, and social networks) • Grants and preparatory courses • Employment subsidies, apprenticeships, traineeships, on-the-job trainings, temporary/voluntary work • Unemployment benefits 	<p>There is a basic assessment of skills. Under certain conditions asylum seekers with more than 6 months stay after the application for asylum can take up ordinary employment. There is no access to subsidised jobs.</p>	<p>Full access to the labour market. All refugees above 18 follow an integration programme whose primary component are activities (counselling, mentoring, preparatory courses, subsidised jobs) to help the refugee obtain ordinary employment.</p>	<p>Changes of the Integration Act in 2016 made the integration of newly arrived refugees more job-oriented. See chapter 3 for details.</p>
<p>Eligibility for welfare benefits (Social assistance services)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income support, eligibility for welfare benefits • ... 	<p>Expenses are covered by the Immigration Service. Cash allowances are given to pay for clothes etc. The normal system of social benefits does not apply.</p>	<p>Access to social benefits.</p>	<p>From 2016 the social benefits for people residing in Denmark for less than 7 out of the last 8 years were reduced significantly (now called the integration allowance). Since then they have been further reduced and the conditions to obtain rights to social assistance at a higher level have been tightened.</p>
<p>Social and political integration measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early orientation programmes (language, practical orientation, civic education etc.) • Integration programmes such as sport, culture, diversity promotion 	<p>Courses on language, culture, society.</p>	<p>The integration programme contains language courses free of charge, which also include knowledge about society, culture etc. Full rights in terms of constitutional rights. Voting rights, however, require Danish citizenship</p>	<p>See chapter three for changes of the language courses.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political participation (local level) • Residence and religion rights 		(Parliament) or 3 years of residence (local elections).	
<p>Measures for unaccompanied minors</p>	<p>Specific measures regulate separate rights for unaccompanied minors throughout the asylum process. The asylum procedure is basically the same as for other asylum seekers, but a personal representative will be appointed to support the minor during the process. Unaccompanied minors are placed in specific asylum centres for children during the processing of the application for asylum. Unaccompanied minors can, in certain situations, obtain a residence permit if they are deemed too immature to go through the asylum procedure or if their claim for asylum has been rejected. It is a requirement in both situations that the minor in a return- situation will be without a family network and no access to public services or the like - and would be left to fend for themselves.</p>	<p>Like other refugees, unaccompanied minors who are granted asylum will be transferred to a municipality which will be responsible for the integration process. Generally, they have the same rights as other children in Denmark. A temporary caretaker is usually appointed to assist the unaccompanied minor and will be given temporary custody of the child.</p>	<p>Following incidents involving unaccompanied minors (see chapter 2) in 2016, restrictions with respect to the stay at the asylum centres for unaccompanied minors were introduced. This included access for personnel to withhold pocket money for not following "house rules" and clearer guidelines with respect to the possibilities for the personnel to exercise physical power towards the minors to prevent destabilising behaviour.</p>

Source: <http://www.nyidanmark.dk/en-GB/Waiting/Asylum/Conditions%20for%20asylum%20seekers>; the Integration Act (<https://www.retsinformation.dk/forms/R0710.aspx?id=193999> (in Danish)) and the Ministry for Immigration and Integration.

Table 2: Examples of good practices: The Integrative Training Program

<p>Name/title of the measure Period of implementation <i>[Specify when the project/strategy/experience started, if it is still ongoing or finished and if concluded, indicate when]</i> Body responsible for implementation</p>	<p>The Integrative Training Programme <i>(Integrationsgrunduddannelsen – IGU)</i> Running from 2016-2019. Likely to be expanded for another 3 years. At the state level the Ministry for Immigration and Integration is Responsible. It is implemented through businesses and municipalities.</p>
<p>Type of intervention <i>[e.g. specify if the initiative concerns the reception or integration of migrants/asylum seekers; the policy field of intervention: employment support; education/training; health care; accommodation; transportation, other...]</i></p>	<p>Employment support</p>
<p>Territorial coverage (national, regional, local)</p>	<p>National</p>

<p>Financial allocations <i>[If possible specify the overall financial assignment and the source of funding (European, national, regional, local). If EU funds involved specify which funds]</i></p>	<p>National funding which – when passing the law on IGU – was expected to amount to approx. 5 mio dkr in 2016, 50 mio dkr. In 2017, 82 mio dkr in 2018 and further expenses in the following years.</p>
<p>Main goals and reasons for introduction <i>[Specify the objects of the project/strategy/experience and the results it is supposed to achieve]</i></p>	<p>To help more newly arrived refugees enter the labour market. No specific target for success was set up.</p>
<p>Main target groups Main partners/stakeholders involved <i>[promoter and partners of the project/policy; typology and roles of actors involved]</i> Main implementation and coordination procedures and mechanisms adopted</p>	<p>Refugees and families reunified with refugees between the age of 18 and 40 and with less than 5 years of residence in Denmark. Promoted by the Government (Ministry for Immigration and Integration), the Confederation of Danish Employers and the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions. The ministry coordinates. Implemented by businesses with the support of municipalities and within a framework consisting partly of a specific law on IGU and partly of collective agreements between the social partners.</p>
<p>Main actions/measures implemented</p>	<p>The IGU is a two-year programme during which the refugee has a contract with an employer and is paid an apprentice pay which is based on the collective agreements between the social partners. During the two years the refugee will undergo 20 weeks of education, including language training, while working and learning at the workplace the remaining time.</p>
<p>Main results/achievements to date and expected longer term expected impacts according to available monitoring/evaluations <i>[Both quantitative and qualitative – specify results and outputs]</i></p>	<p>So far, around 2,000 IGU-contracts have been made between refugees and businesses. As it is a two-year programme for each refugee so far quite a few have completed the IGU, which is why it is too early to judge about the effect in terms of ordinary jobs. But a solid mid-term evaluation shows broad support and belief in the model functioning as a stepping stone to further education or ordinary employment.</p>
<p>Main weaknesses/obstacles and how they have been addressed</p>	<p>It is mentioned that the administration linked to the programme can make it difficult for – and might deter – some businesses, especially smaller ones with less HR-capacity. In a number of municipalities, the local authorities are assisting businesses to overcome this obstacle. Another obstacle is the fact that to run the training programmes which form part of the IGU, a certain number of trainees are needed to form teams big enough to finance the training programmes. This has proved difficult, although it should be overcome by a closer cooperation and coordination between municipalities, businesses and the educational institutions where the training takes place.</p>

<p>Main strengths</p>	<p>The IGU was part of the tripartite agreement between the Government and social partners and is based on an agreement between employers' organisations and trade unions. This gives credibility to the model with both business and employees. The cooperation from both parties is necessary for the model to become a success. The combination of employment and structured training and education, including language training, is a strength as well.</p>
<p>Innovative elements if any</p>	<p>The initiative is based on the fact that many newly arrived refugees do not have the skills nor the productivity required to qualify for a job with regular Danish wage levels, which are relatively high. The IGU intends to get around this problem by a model that is based on collective agreements between social partners.</p>
<p>Main lessons learnt Main weaknesses/obstacles <i>[encountered in the implementation and the ways they were overcome]</i> Main positive elements Other relevant aspects</p>	<p>As explained above.</p>
<p>Additional comments (if any)</p>	

Source: Interviews for this report and an evaluation of the IGU-program (Ramboll, 2018: <https://integrationsbarometer.dk/tal-og-analyser/filer-tal-og-analyser/arkiv/evaluering-af-integrationsgrunduddannelsen> - in Danish).

Table 3: Examples of good practices: The Friends Pave the Way Project

<p>Name/title of the measure Period of implementation <i>[Specify when the project/strategy/experience started, if it is still ongoing or finished and if concluded, indicate when]</i> Body responsible for implementation</p>	<p>"Friends Pave the Way: Integrating refugees into communities". The project ran originally from 2016-2018, but was recently prolonged for the period 2019-2022. Implemented by Danish Red Cross in cooperation with the Danish Refugee Council.</p>
<p>Type of intervention <i>[e.g. specify if the initiative concerns the reception or integration of migrants/asylum seekers; the policy field of intervention: employment support; education/training; health care; accommodation; transportation, other...]</i></p>	<p>The Friends Pave the Way project links refugees with members from the host community. Through this link, the refugees gain a better understanding of European values such as democracy and rule of law, enabling them to join the work force and become active citizens. In return, the volunteer friends learn about the life story of the refugees, and this increases their understanding of the root causes of forced migration, its humanitarian impact and global interdependencies. The project addresses the individual (promoting integration) as well as the community (creating social cohesion).</p>

<p>Territorial coverage (national, regional, local)</p>	<p>The project is currently operating in 95 out of the 98 Danish municipalities and covers 93 % of the country. The project is locally embedded but offered throughout the whole country. The project is monitored from the head office of the Danish Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council but executed by local volunteers and volunteer managers supported by professional, regional consultants from both organisations.</p>
<p>Financial allocations <i>[If possible specify the overall financial assignment and the source of funding (European, national, regional, local). If EU funds involved specify which funds]</i></p>	<p>The project is being supported by the Ministry for Immigration and Integration of Denmark with EUR 1,7 million.</p>
<p>Main goals and reasons for introduction <i>[Specify the objects of the project/strategy/experience and the results it is supposed to achieve]</i></p>	<p>Like other EU Member States, in 2015 Denmark was in an extraordinary situation, calling for extraordinary solutions and immediate action. The Danish Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council stood together to launch one of largest integration projects in Denmark, unleashing the potential in civil society to promote integration and social change through intercultural dialogue and informal relations.</p> <p>Based on the principles of volunteering and volunteer management, the objective of the project is to link all newly arrived refugees (with a residence permit in Denmark) with volunteer friends or families in the community they are going to live in.</p> <p>Integration of refugees is more likely to succeed if they establish a network and connect with local citizens shortly after their arrival. Refugees with frequent contact to locals feel more welcome in their communities, they gain a better understanding of European values such as democracy, equality and rule of law, and they are more prepared and motivated to participate in society as workers, tax-payers, consumers and citizens.</p> <p>Volunteers meet refugees with dignity. They open their lives and hearts to the refugees for a couple of hours a week and help them write job applications, practise their language, translate letters from the authorities, etc. They do this, not because they are being paid or are obligated to by law; but because they want to. This creates the trust, legitimacy and recognition essential to break down social and cultural barriers in order to make refugees feel safe and to motivate them to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to take an active part in society.</p>

<p>Main target groups</p>	<p>The target group is all newly arrived refugees (with a residence permit in Denmark) and volunteer friends and families within the local community.</p>
<p>Main partners/stakeholders involved <i>[promoter and partners of the project/policy; typology and roles of actors involved]</i></p> <p>Main implementation and coordination procedures and mechanisms adopted</p>	<p>The Danish Red Cross, the Danish Refugee Council – both humanitarian, non-governmental, non-profit organisations and 93 municipalities in Denmark have collaborated as equal partners with the aim of linking all newly arrived refugees with a voluntary friend or family in their local community.</p> <p>The project is being carried out as a partnership between the Danish Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council and through collaboration and cooperation between municipalities. Volunteer managers support, supervise and recruit volunteer friends within the community, and they themselves are supported and trained by professional staff from the Danish Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council.</p>
<p>Main actions/measures implemented</p>	<p>Implementation of the concept of providing a voluntary friend to every newly arrived refugee in Denmark. At the end of 2017, 7,900 refugees had been matched with a voluntary friend within their local community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Development matching guidelines and matching tools (including online support). – Development of customised trainings provided free of charge for volunteers engaged in friendships with refugees in their community. – Providing professional training to volunteers. – Providing psycho social support to volunteers. – Fostering and enabling a positive local environment through dialogue and cooperation meetings. – Establishing Cooperation Agreements with local municipalities. – Assigning local coordinators.
<p>Main results/achievements to date and expected longer term expected impacts according to available monitoring/evaluations <i>[Both quantitative and qualitative – specify results and outputs]</i></p>	<p>The project is currently operating in 95 out of the 98 Danish municipalities. A total of 7,900 refugees had a volunteer friend or family at the end of 2017. Of these 7,900 refugees, 1,706 had been matched in 2017. To put this into perspective, municipalities in Denmark received 2,200 new refugees in 2017.</p> <p>An impact study of the project from 2018 conducted by an independent evaluator shows that 85 % of the municipalities in the project assess that refugees gain a stronger attachment to society and a greater knowledge about cultural norms and values, including understanding of democracy and citizenship. 56 % assess that the refugees’</p>

	<p>relationships with their volunteer friends help them find a job.</p>
<p>Main weaknesses/obstacles and how they have been addressed</p>	<p>The main challenge is voluntarism. This is both the cornerstone and the vulnerable point of the project. 44 % of the volunteer managers have reported that difficulties related to recruitment is the main reason for the project not to reach its final goal of offering all newly arrived refugees a voluntary friend from the local community.</p> <p>To meet the demands of volunteers, national recruitment campaigns have been organised in collaboration between the Danish Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council along with local supported recruitment initiatives initiated by the volunteers.</p> <p>Maintaining the strong cooperation and common direction between municipalities and the civil society might be challenged by the reduction of incoming refugees. In 2018, 54 of the municipalities in Denmark received five or less refugees.</p> <p>The use of written agreements of cooperation between the parts has proven to be a strong tool to define and sustain the workflows.</p>
<p>Main strengths</p>	<p>A pivotal reason for the project's success is the unique and innovative collaboration between the Danish Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council following handshakes between the Secretary Generals of the organisations on local cooperation between volunteer managers and the consultants supporting them. By joining forces and pooling resources, it has been possible to motivate municipalities and volunteers to participate and to ensure national coherence and consistency in the effort. This is also one of the main conclusions of the midway evaluation of the project from January 2018. The cooperation between the organisations has also allowed for more targeted and large-scale recruitment of dedicated and suitable volunteers.</p> <p>The positive impact on integration. 9 out of 10 municipalities and volunteer managers agree that refugees with a voluntary friend obtain a greater understanding of national and local values, overcome language barriers more easily and become a stronger network within the local community. The interviewed refugees agree and highlight the importance of Danish connections upon arrival, as the process until then has been lonely and isolated.</p>

	<p>The scalability of the project. The project could easily be adapted by other EU Member States targeting the same group of beneficiaries. The project could also be applied to other vulnerable groups to support labour market integration and participation in society.</p>
<p>Innovative elements if any</p>	<p>Another innovative feature of the project is that, during its implementation, it has collected knowledge and learnings and translated these into best practice models and methods for building partnerships between municipalities and volunteer organisations. Lastly, the project has developed customised training for volunteers engaged in friendships with refugees in their community. Moving forward, volunteer managers can order professional training for volunteers, when they see a demand for it.</p>
<p>Main lessons learnt Main weaknesses/obstacles <i>[encountered in the implementation and the ways they were overcome]</i> Main positive elements Other relevant aspects</p>	<p>To meet the demands of volunteers, the cooperation between the organisations is of great importance. This has allowed for more targeted and large-scale recruitment of dedicated and suitable volunteers.</p> <p>To maintain the strong cooperation and common direction between municipalities and civil society the use of written agreements between the parts has proven to be a strong tool to define and sustain the workflows.</p> <p>Main positive elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The strength and capability of the innovative collaboration between the Danish Red Cross and the Danish Refugee Council. – The positive impact on integration agreed upon from every participant in the project. – The scalability of the project, both in size and context. <p>Other relevant aspects</p> <p>Though the number of newly arrived refugees in Denmark is decreasing, there is still great potential in the connection between voluntary friends and refugees. Based on this conclusion the project is expanding its target group to include not only newly arrived refugees, but also refugees further in the integration process.</p>
<p>Additional comments (if any)</p>	<p>The project could easily be adapted by other EU Member States targeting the same group of beneficiaries. The project could also be applied to other vulnerable groups to support labour market integration and participation in society.</p> <p>The project has developed practical tools, guidelines, handbooks and training to support volunteer managers, volunteer friends as well the beneficiaries. The material</p>

	<p>is available in Danish, English, Arabic, Farsi and Tigrinya, and it covers aspects such as how to manage and adapt expectations; tools and approaches that encourage equal and respectful relationships; handbooks on how to cooperate with local authorities and/or with volunteers; and psycho-social and professional training for volunteers.</p> <p>The project has also developed and tested methods and models to strengthen cooperation and coordination between municipalities and volunteer organisations, since cooperation is a prerequisite for reaching the objectives of the project.</p> <p>Furthermore, based on experience from the project, and with support from the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Red Cross in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Iceland, respectively, published the best practice “Finding Best Practice: Inclusion of refugees and migrants” in February 2018.</p> <p>All materials and learnings are accessible online and could easily be transferred and adapted for other EU Member States.</p>
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Source: Danish Red Cross (2019).

Table 4: Examples of good practices: Industry Packages (*Branchepakker*)

<p>Name/title of the measure</p> <p>Period of implementation [Specify when the project/strategy/experience started, if it is still ongoing or finished and if concluded, indicate when]</p> <p>Body responsible for implementation</p>	<p>Industry Packages (<i>Branchepakker</i>)</p> <p>Industry packages is a concept originally developed by a consultancy firm (LG Insight) and the Municipality of Vejle on a basis of experience from other projects aiming to help refugees find their first ordinary job in Denmark.</p> <p>By 2018, approximately 25 % of all Danish municipalities had implemented the whole or part of the concept in cooperation with LG Insight and The Association New Dane.</p>
<p>Type of intervention [e.g. specify if the initiative concerns the reception or integration of migrants/asylum seekers; the policy field of intervention: employment support; education/training; health care; accommodation; transportation, other...]</p>	<p>Industry packages target unemployed refugees and reunified families with no formally approved education, guiding them toward the most direct route to their first job in Denmark within industries with a shortage of unemployed labour and thus good job opportunities.</p> <p>This is done by taking as its starting point the needs and requirements of the local labour market and then – in a cooperation between businesses and local municipality - building a training scheme for specific job positions within industries that are relevant to refugees with little education and work experience. By following the training scheme the refugee will focus on training relevant skills and acquiring useful knowledge to</p>

	increase employability and thus gradually progress towards regular employment within the specific industry.
Territorial coverage (national, regional, local)	Implemented on municipal level in more than 22 Danish municipalities. The concept, methodology and tools related to Industry packages has also been adopted by Swedish and Norwegian stakeholders responsible for local labour market integration initiatives.
Financial allocations <i>[If possible specify the overall financial assignment and the source of funding (European, national, regional, local). If EU funds involved specify which funds]</i>	In some cases municipalities have obtained funding for the implementation of the concept from The Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration. Otherwise it is for the municipality itself to secure financing.
Main goals and reasons for introduction <i>[Specify the objects of the project/strategy/experience and the results it is supposed to achieve]</i>	Industry Packages focus on helping the target group get their first job in Denmark. The concept focuses on municipal integration initiatives and practical training activities, usually unpaid internships, on low skilled industries with good job opportunities with the aim of securing the shortest way possible to employment. By aiming at a job within one specific industry, the concept secures coherent training activities with a clear aim of helping the refugees get their first job in Denmark and in this way becoming self-supporting.
Main target groups	Low skilled refugees and reunified families with limited or no connection to the labour market.
Main partners/stakeholders involved <i>[promoter and partners of the project/policy; typology and roles of actors involved]</i> Main implementation and coordination procedures and mechanisms adopted	Partners involved in the implementation and collaboration around industry packages are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The consultancy firm supporting and facilitating the implementation of Industry Packages (LG Insight/The Association New Dane); - Local project manager within the local Jobcentre; - The local municipality represented by the local Jobcentre represented by integration caseworkers (integration authority) and business consultants (responsible for facilitation of the training activities in collaboration with local companies); - The local language school responsible for the refugees' Danish language education; - Local companies training and hosting the refugees during the industry specific internships. The implementation takes 6 months and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of a local steering committee (management level – strategic focus and responsibility) as well as a local working group

	<p>(practitioner level – practical focus and responsibility);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local kick-off event for all relevant partners and stakeholders; - Training of relevant local integration professionals (e.g. caseworkers, business consultants, language trainers etc.); - Development of a local introductory course ensuring that the participating refugees choose a relevant industry; - Definition of local roles and responsibilities and development of local workflows making sure that everybody knows what to do and when.
<p>Main actions/measures implemented</p>	<p>Implementing the concept enables the organisation to coordinate multiple Industry Packages trails for a large number of refugees and reunified families. The refugee goes through the following activities as a part of Industry Packages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introductory course introducing the different Industries with good job opportunities (4 - 6 weeks); - Practical training (PT) 1, focusing on basic skills training (until skill level is acquired, usually 4 – 13 weeks); - PT 2, Individual and industry specific skill training (until skill level is acquired, usually up to 13 weeks); - PT 3, specialized industry specific skill training (until employed in first job).
<p>Main results/achievements to date and expected longer term expected impacts according to available monitoring/evaluations</p> <p><i>[Both quantitative and qualitative – specify results and outputs]</i></p>	<p>Although no formal evaluation of the overall concept has yet been carried out, the concept shows good results in many municipalities and broad support from municipalities and businesses alike.</p> <p>At the local level, results have shown a significant increase in the number of refugees and reunified families getting their first job or starting their education within the first 3 years of coming to Denmark. The best performing municipalities have raised the percentage of self-supporting refugees and reunified families (measured after 3 years in Denmark) for 15 to more than 50 % within two years after implementing Industry Packages as the main labour marked integration initiative.</p>
<p>Main weaknesses/obstacles and how they have been addressed</p>	<p>Industry packages has four core dogmas that need to be followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry Packages always focus on skills, norms and knowledge relevant to the respective industries; • Every element in the practical training must be relevant and experienced as useful and meaningful for the refugee;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training activities should be efficient and build on the principle of ensuring the refugee the most direct access to employment - “We are not wasting anybody’s time!”; • The refugee is recognised and acknowledged and the collaboration with the professional integration workers should build on clear agreements based on rights and duties. <p>If the municipality and the Industry Packages fail to comply with one or more of the dogmas, the concept will fail and the results newer show. In this way the dogmas are both the strengths and the weakness of the concept.</p>
<p>Main strengths</p>	<p>Industry Packages does not contain new activities and is established within the same legal framework as other integration activities and initiatives. What makes Industry Packages successful is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cohesive structured training activities focused on one specific relevant industry; - Systematic documentation of the level of competencies, skills and knowledge acquired through practical training and approved by the company in charge of the training; - A clear goal for involved parties.
<p>Innovative elements if any</p>	<p>One of the most central elements and reasons why the concepts can create significant results is that all involved go through the implementation process together. This means getting to know their internal and external colleagues, working closely together in the matching of expectations, developing common workflows and agreeing on ways of communication during the different phases of the Industry Packages. This can, if done successfully, help create the flexibility and common ownership that is crucial.</p>
<p>Main lessons learnt</p> <p>Main weaknesses/obstacles <i>[encountered in the implementation and the ways they were overcome]</i></p> <p>Main positive elements</p> <p>Other relevant aspects</p>	<p>To implement the concept successfully demands a strong management focus and willingness to ensure the necessary amount of human resources in the involved departments of the local Jobcentre and making sure that the course of every refugee involved follows the four central dogmas of the concept.</p> <p>A successful implementation of the concept also requires a flexible municipal organisation and a clear and coordinated communication between the involved professionals and to the participating group of refugees, making sure that everybody works together and with the same goals – that is ensuring the participating refugees the relevant qualifications to get their first job in Denmark.</p>

Additional comments (if any)	Industry Packages is not a project as such but a different way of organising the main labour market focused integration initiatives for low skilled refugees and reunified families. The concept is also not limited to refugees and reunified families, but is also used on other groups of low skilled unemployed people in need of practical training to raise their employability and chances of finding their next job.
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Source: Foreningen Nydansker (The Association New Dane) (2019).

This paper describes the extent and nature of the inflow of asylum seekers to Denmark in 2014-2015 and the political and public reactions to that. Based on that, the paper goes on to describe the political, legal and practical changes that followed with a focus on labour market integration and provides recommendations for the way ahead to further improve integration of refugees.

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