



Work' as the route for refugee-immigrants' integration

'work' as the route to integration in Sw. refugee-integrationprogramme

Policy-text:

'The work-focus must be applied from 'day one'! 'an object of the organization is to avoid waste of time (sv. tidspillan) (SOU 2008:58, p 64).

- Beneficially or difficult to achieve for refugee-immigrants?



- In most nations with an extensive refugee-integration programme there exists some kind of measures to integrate refugees into society
 - ‘Refugee-integration-programmes in Europe has increasingly become *job-outcome orientated* (in UK, Denmark, Norway, Sweden)
 - The goal of integration in many EU-contexts is focusing on = labour market integration
 - Often with the emphasis on integration in paid labour *as quickly as possible*
 - Also with an emphasis on the individual *employability*
- Are these steps in the right direction for improving refugees ‘integration’?



It depends on....

- What is the *value of work* for the individual (refugee) – and society?
- What is the meaning of refugee-integration? What does it takes to become a participant in society? (economically, socially, politically)
- What does ‘full citizenship’ involve?

- And what does the refugee need in order to become employable?



Activation-ideology in Europe

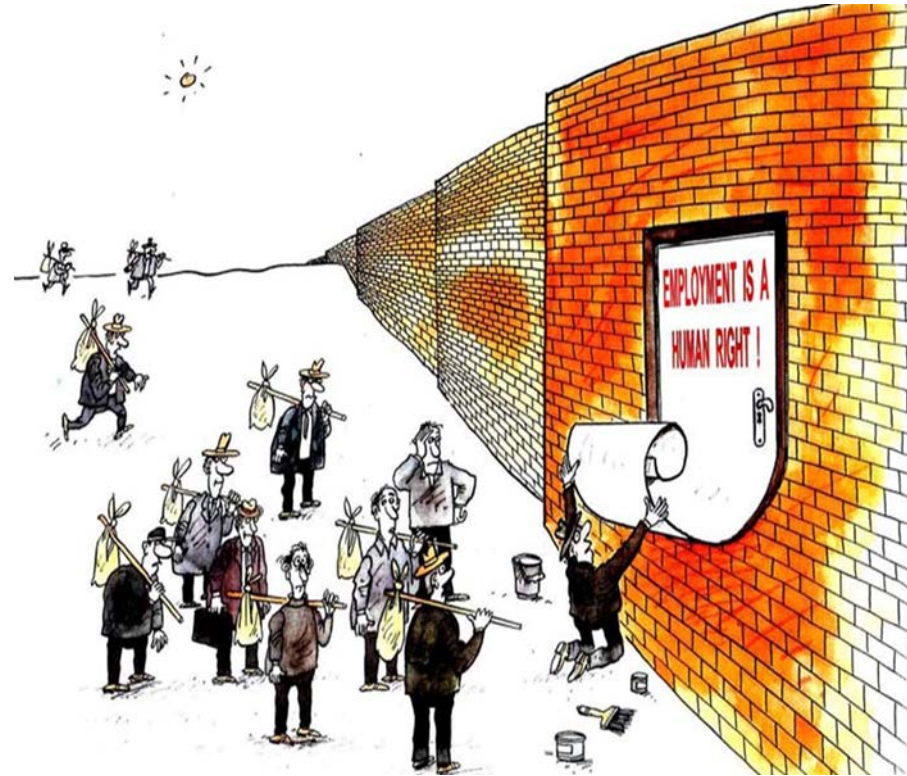
- ‘Worklessness is understood as the barrier to inclusion and the most stable path to inclusion is via paid labour market (Peck & Theodore 2000).’
- ALMP – from focus on ‘unemployment’ – into individuals ‘employability’
- Activation
- ‘work-fare’

- ‘Activation will not only encourage job-growth, it will also help bring the socially excluded back into paid labour and thereby restore ‘true citizenship (Handler 2003, p. 230)’.

The solutions:

- Improve individuals’ ‘job-readiness’
- Strengthen the rewards of being in work
- Weaken the rewards of being on welfare-benefit





Job-outcome policies often includes a double emphasis on
Work as a right – work as a duty

In sw. debate, what is politically perceived as important issues in refugees integration?

Costs associated with refugees 'delayed integration':

'that a large number of refugees *never* enter the labour market or that their establishment process is 'too slow' and that the 'expected high flows of (refugee) immigration is anticipated to become a challenge for the welfare state' (gov. bill 2009/10:60 p. 25).'

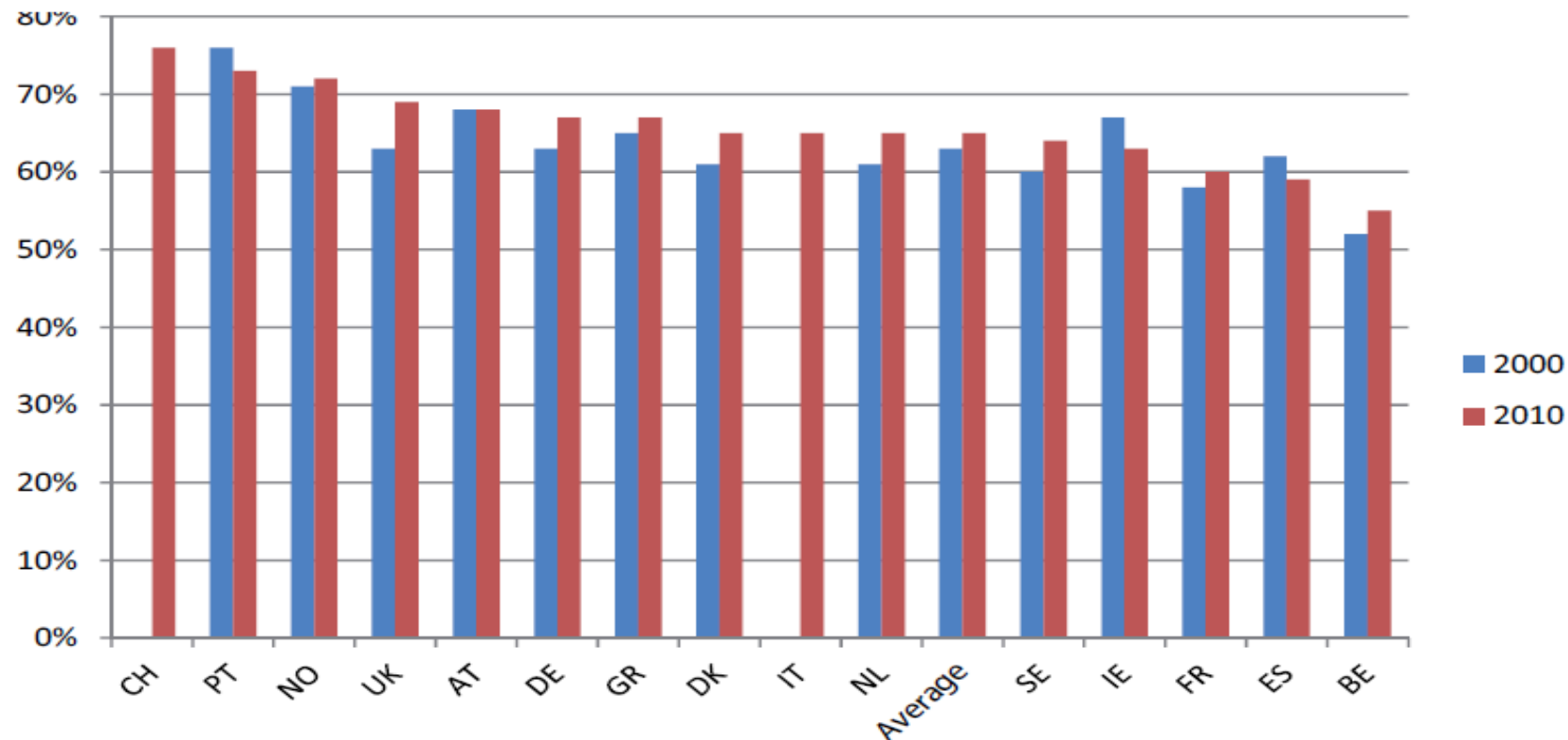
Refugees labour-integration/productivity is regarded as a social investment:

'Sweden benefits from immigration. Sweden needs the workforce /.../ and it will contribute to increasing our global competition. Many of the newly arrived are young and will be active in the labour market for a long period of time. The sooner they gain a foothold in the labour market, the more they can contribute to general welfare development (SOU 2008:58).'



Employment rate of immigrants in Europe

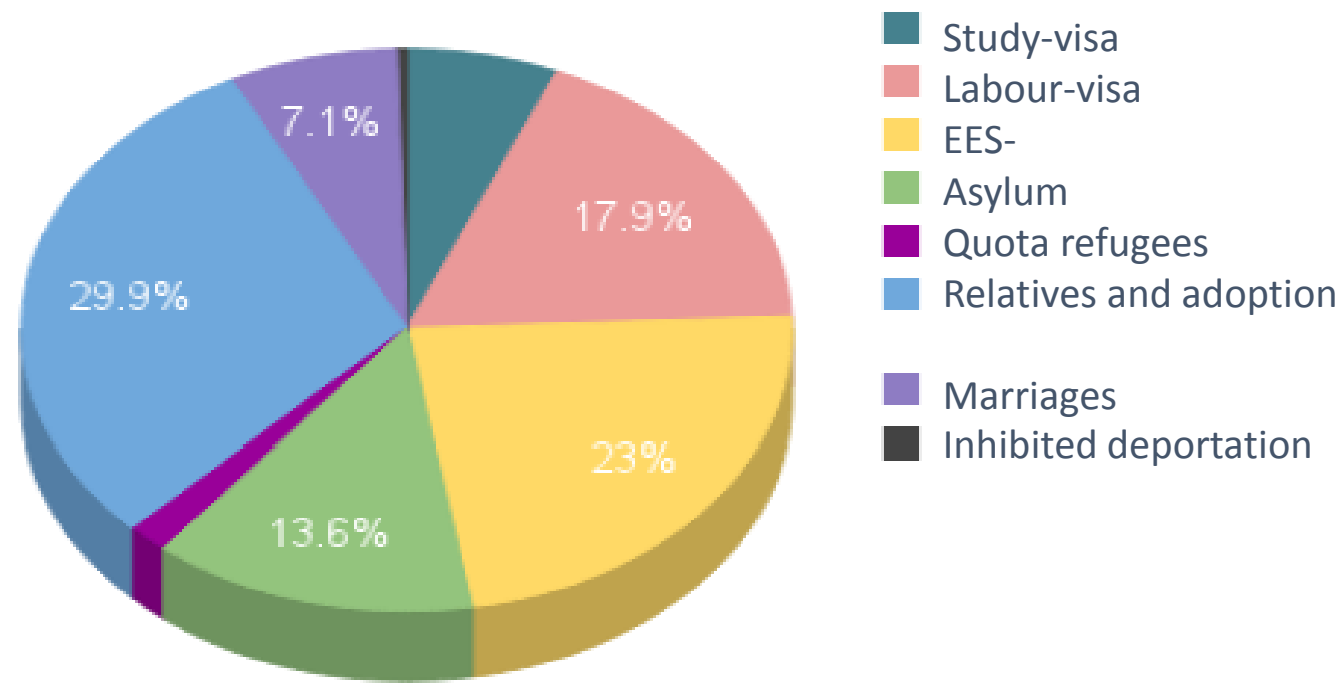
Figure 2.1 Employment among immigrants (aged 20–64) in 15 European countries (2000 and 2010).¹⁴



14. The country labels employed in the analyses presented in this section refer to the following: CH = Switzerland, PT = Portugal, NO = Norway, UK = the United Kingdom, AT = Austria, DE = Germany, GR = Greece, DK = Denmark, IT = Italy, NL = the Netherlands, SE = Sweden, IE = Ireland, FR = France, ES = Spain and BE = Belgium.

Refugee immigration in Sweden

Tot. granted residence permit 2005-2012



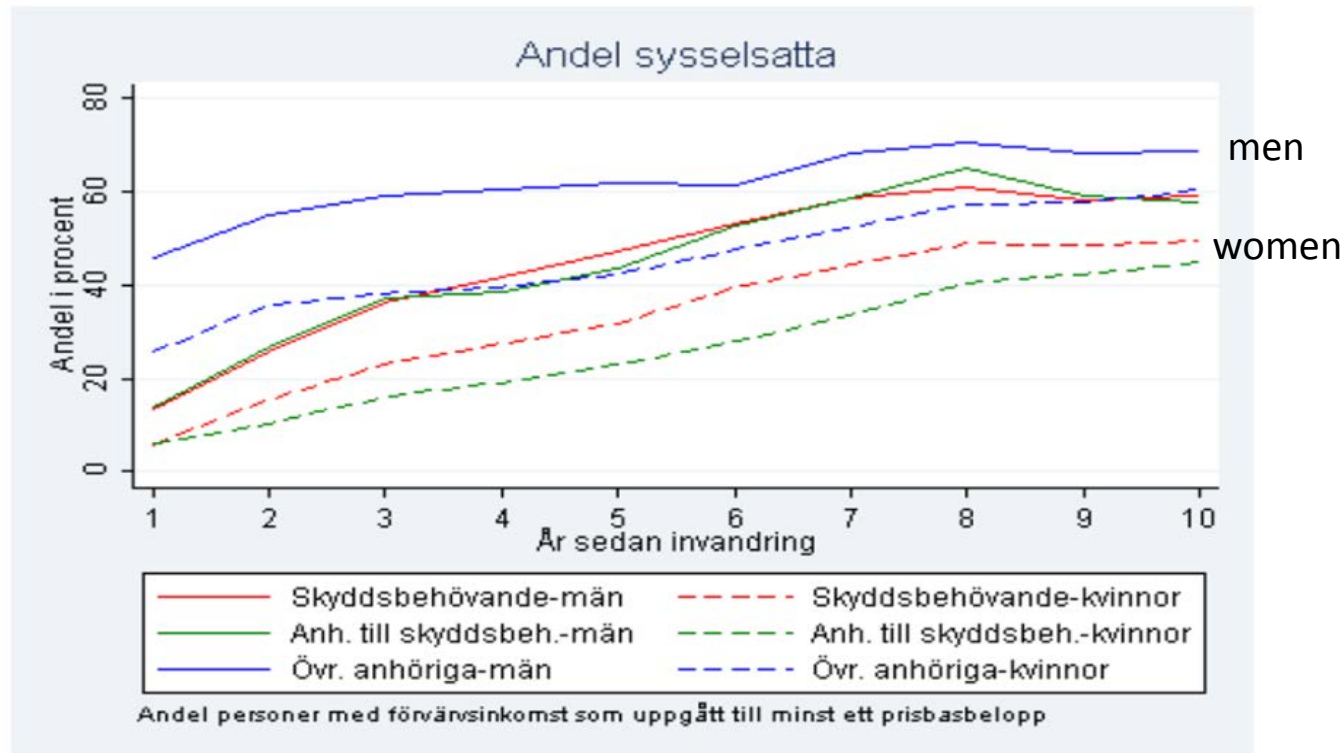
- An extensive share of immigrants in Sweden are refugee-immigrants (62 % of tot no. residence permit were refugees 2014)

2014:

- Germany: 48 000, Sweden: 33 000, France 21 000, Italy 21 000, UK 14 000, NL 13 000



Refugees employment in Sw



- After 10 years 40-60 % of refugees has entered the labourmarket (Eriksson 2011)
- Women enter labour-market later than men
- Refugees from African continent enter labourmarket later than other refugee-groups.
- Illiteracy and low education slows down the process

The value of 'work'

- Paid labour – is considered as the 'key' to socioeconomic participation
- The meaning of work for self-worth and social status (Elizur, Borg, Hunt, and Beck 1991)
- 'Fulfilling' transnational obligations, remittances.
- Work (activity) as a health-promoting factor (Silove & Steel; Lindencrona)
- Inactivity as stressors.
- Discrimination and marginalisation as stressors (Silove; Steel; McGorry, 1998)

Discuss what you think about the value of work in general, and for refugees?

- Is work of importance to become 'fully integrated'?
- What kind of work? (any job or *the* job)
- How long time is reasonable before refugees entering labour-market?



- The aim of activation-policies in general:

‘consist of different type of interventions in the labourmarket directed to shortening unemployment spells ’by proactively helping job-less people to re-enter the labour market (Bonoli 2012, p 181)

‘often includes policy measures that *condition* right to income support, so called ‘incentives’ (Lødemel & Trickey 2001)’.



Two sided character of policies used to stimulate people to enter labour-market

'Enabling policies' – encourage long-term employment

- Human capital development approach – improving long-term employability through upskilling (Lindsay, McQuaid & Dutto 2007)



'Work-fare policies' – employment on short term

- A focus on moving people 'from welfare to work'
- Activation as an obligation (Trickey 2000)



In Sw. context - what is politically perceived as important issues in refugees integration?

- Prevent the 'risk' for exclusion
- To 'wait' in passivity is degrading, de-moralising
- Refugees benefit from an identity as a 'worker' and not 'suffering refugee'

'Many municipalities have organized their introductory work in social services administration which probably affected operations in a 'caring' (sw. omhändertagande) direction (SOU 2008:58, p. 59).

- Social services 'produced 'needy' clients instead of self-reliant individuals (as contributors)



‘The solutions suggested in the programme are driven by a desire to alter the expectations and self-perceptions of the refugee, from (an assumed) marginalized, clientized and passivated refugee into an active and self-governed ‘new arrival’ with capacities and future prospects.

Empowerment through paid work and alteration of identity



From refugee – to citizen worker

- From *social worker* to *employment officer*
- Fast employment – work first
- Differentiated language teaching
- Incentive-structures, f.ex. time-limitations of the program, conditional benefit
- Limited social support
- Personal guidance
- Involves aims to alter the representation of *'refugee-client'* into *'worker-citizen'*

Municipality, Social services



Act on introductory compensation for refugees and certain other aliens SFS 1992:1068

Integration to local setting, individual introduction plans: housing, language, family, income, family reunion, childcare, social support. Coordinator of assessment and interventions.

Employment administration, employment services



Law establishment-services for newly arrived immigrants 2010:197

Integration to labour-market, individual labour market plans: contracts, labour market training, validation, assessment of employability and work-capacity.



Establishment guide
- Personal support, self-employed, non-professional guidance, coaching into labour. Social support, cultural codes.

Incentive-strategies



- Conditioned payment of benefit (the programme must begin within a year, benefit decreases if days off, if turn down a job-offer the programme may be terminated)
- Time-limitations on establishment programme (cannot be prolonged, must begin within a year after arrival)
- Conditions on performances (full time)
- If less than 25 % work capacity, the refugee is not allowed to participate in the programme



What do you think of this incentives used? Do they represent carrots or sticks? Will it make people motivated to enter labour-market faster?

Personal guidance – ‘introduction-pilot’ (coach)

- Aim: to speed-up the process to work, provide ‘social support’, prepare the refugee about cultural norms in Swedish society, at work-places, assist in contact with authorities
- Incentives: the coachs’ payment increases if the refugee becomes employed
- The introduction-guide is often an former refugee-immigrant

What do you think about the strategy of an introduction-guide?
What advantages or dis-advantages can you think of?



The changing of the label 'refugee' into 'newly arrival'

- Aim: the alteration of the associations with the category 'refugee'

'Instead of regarding the *refugee* primarily in terms of her ethnic affiliation, as an Iraqi or Somali, as an individual with a multitude of needs, dependent on officials' efforts and engagement, we need to alter the perspective and begin to perceive new arrivals as individuals with resources. The label is shifted into *new arrival*, who in turn is confronted with a quest to become active to make herself a future life in Sweden /.../To label someone as a 'new arrival' is far more neutral and free from connotations of clients and need/.../it invites a focus on the present and the future – not their history (of flight) (SOU 2008:58, p 68).'

What do you think about this initiative to change label from refugee to new arrival? Is it a move to empowerment, an identity-formation? What kind of identity does the policymaker want to promote?



Incentive-strategies

- Faster integration through 'work-first' strategies

Policytext:

'Long-term planning does not need to conflict with short-term jobs. 'If Zahra can drive a taxi today, does she have the right to study to become a doctor or is she instead expected to work? I suggest that she will drive taxi until she entered education or that she supports herself through repayable student loans. She needs only to pass Swedish-language tuition and civics, then she can make a living. But if she starts to study to become a doctor, perhaps she can work 'extra' as a taxi driver (Gov. bill 2009:32 p 63).

-What do you think? Is the 'work-first' strategy an adequate strategy to 'speed-up' the integration-process? What might the outcome be of such an strategy?



'work' as the route to integration in Sw. refugee-integrationprogramme

Fast employment for refugee-immigrants:

- Beneficially or difficult to achieve for refugee-immigrants?
- Empowering – or marginalizing?



Work *fast* – for everyone?

- Interview with official at the employment-services:

‘once while I was discussing the establishment-process with a lady, she just fell to the ground in a state of panic-attack. I learned that both her two children were drowned in the Mediterranean sea. (...) I manage to get her into my car, drove her to the emergency-room, although this is not my task. How to handle this is not within my field of competence. After, I asked the local head of the employment-services, ‘can we (officials) use more time for this cases of vulnerable people – it is absurd to ask them to participate in full time or to enter a job-program. But she just nodded her head and said: No, two year is the limit – it is the ‘work-line’ that is the guiding principle’.

What do you think this event might imply in terms of strategies for integration?



Some facts...

- Approx. 30 % of the refugees suffer from PTSD or other psychological or physical illness because of traumatic events (Board of health and welfare 2015)
- Approx 50 % of all refugees are looking for or are anxious about lost family members (Board of health and welfare 2015)
- 60 % of high-skilled refugees are employed in lower-skilled jobs (Ekberg & Roth 2014)
- Refugees with a 'foreign name' must apply three times more often than individual with 'Swedish name'(Carlsson & Rooth 2008)
- Approx. 30 % are Illiterate or have short educational background



Does work-focus actually boost refugees integration process?

Follow-ups of the Swedish politics

- 9600 completed the integration-programme 2014, of those were 5 % in paid employment on regular market, 13 % subsidized job, 4 % work on welfare-support, 9 % in education, approx. 40 % in labourmarket programmes (Employment administration 2015)
- 8 % were unemployed
- For approx. 40 % the activation-focus is beneficial – young men without family, well-educated (Employment administration 2015)



EU-research on the outcome of 'job-outcome' policies for refugees

'active policies for refugees, does not necessarily lead to employment (Beiser & Hou 2001 ; Waxman 2001)

despite refugees increased employability, they encounter labour market thresholds and discriminatory powers (Thomlison & Egan 2002; Bloch 2007)



The paradoxical results of active 'job-ready' strategies



Activation which don't lead to employment can on the contrary lead to passivity (Bengtsson 2014)

'Just as energy is continuously wasted when electronic devices are left on standby, labour power and human potential are gradually wasted when people are forced to participate in meaningless work-for-the sake activities (Bengtsson 2014, p 68)

'
activation policies for groups with complex social problems *can* be inclusive if the structural conditions and resources are adequate (Heidenreich & Aurich-Beerheide 2014, p 6)

