SURPRISE:
meeting
other
culture

HANDBOOK

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international NORDPLUS ADULT project
(NPAD-2016/10046)

HANDBOOK

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ABOUT THE PROJECT "SURPRISE".

The joint international project SURPRISE (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Sweden) is a testimony of our time. Europe has become a target for hundreds of thousands of immigrants and refugees from Near East and African countries where people suffer from war, hunger, persecutions and poverty. Their new reality in the Western world is a challenge for both imigrants and people living there and for culture. Also the traditional "European" mindset is challenged. "Refugees welcome" has been a slogan for the open doors policy attacket by the right wing political populists in some European countries.

The immigration process and its challenges should be looked upon also from some broader historical perspective.

Moving from agrarian society concerned with conformity, and then through an industrial society concerned with nationalism and uniformity, the project SURPRISE addresses informative society concerned with diversity within a global context. We are moving into the 21st century with a planetary worldview.

The project SURPRISE - HANDBOOK is meant for educators involved in the immigrants' and refugees' adaptation process. Educators are not only schoolteachers; they can be social workers, social assistants, mediators between the refugee individuals and the host country's administration etc. More than that – adoptions of truly global perspective allows viewing culturally diverse students in the classroom as resources for unparalleled opportunities for enrichment for both partners in education. It may be appied to educators per se. Mutual enrichment can be achieved by greater repertoire of approaches to teaching and learning to cope with varied styles of learning. After all, the nowadays European society is made of multicultural communities. Both teachers and students alike are called to cultivate interpersonal skills and respect for other cultures. Teachers are invited to enable students to compare and contrast them with other cultures. The project SURPRISE is based on fact that in current European society individuality is retained and valued, and we deal with cultural mosaic created from millions of unique pieces. Migration is a challenge for culturally sensitive and internationally focused educators with orientation toward the present challenge and future. The project SURPRISE deals with communication between representatives of distinct ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds, which plays an integral role in the process of development of cohesion, and the EU labor market. The project SURPRISE works for development of diverse teaching strategies designed to respond to each student as an individual.

It should be noted that the mere presence of an ethnically and racially diverse student population due to legal, moral or social imperatives does not make a school multicultural. True, a diverse classroom is an ideal laboratory in which to learn multiple perspectives required by a global society and to put to use information concerning diverse cultural patterns. The project SURPRISE promotes:

1. *sensitivity to other cultures and racial / ethnic groups that are marginal to the dominant culture,*
2. *supports entire paradigm shift, different mindset, which gives rise to a whole new way of seeing the world as inclusive,*
3. *promotes change in institutional and societal structures – so as to create an environment which is inclusive of all Baltic and Nordic groups, is safe of differences and environment where everyone benefits.*

These goals cannot not be reached within the European context solely. Adopting a truly global perspective allows to view culturally and linguistically diverse students as resources who provide unparalleled opportunities for enrichment. The project responds to the need for greater repertoire of approaches to teaching and learning to cope with varied styles of learning. Teachers and students alike cultivate interpersonal skills and respect for other cultures on both European and global scale. The concept of diversity encompasses more than commonly accepted determinants of ethnicity and race, since cultural and socioeconomic factors play a large part in how a person interacts in society. The project SURPRISE works for development of the European society towards a society in which individuality is retained and valued and for a cultural mosaic created from millions of unique pieces.

MIGRATION

Migration is a complex process which affects the people differently. Most often it is associated with stressful events, barriers and challenges because of which the psycho-social issues and other health issues are more prevalent among the migrants. On the other hand, massive influx of refugees put enormous stress on "the native population" of Europe. In responding to this, several research studies have tried to draw some approaches and suggested preventive, promotive and curative strategies for migrants. For succesful integrations of imigrants and refugees several organizations operate on both national and all-European levels. Reacting to the unprecedent influx lots of efforts have been taken at local, national and international levels by the governments, organizations and individuals.

However, their trip to Europe has been only "past" sufferings of migrants and refugees before they reached the desired destination in some European country. Now they move into an unknown world, now they are confronted with unprecedent circumstances and regulations, challenges, and naturally they ask many questions about their cultural context, settlement, rights to keep their ethnic and religious identity, job opportunities, medical care etc. Questions and uncertainties are too diverse to mention them here. Answers to those questions require vast spectrum of knowledge and competence in what we call "interventions". This prescribes both the background and target of the SURPRISE project handbook.

The International Organization for Migration (located in Switzerland) has come into force on 1951. Since then it has been involved in formulating and implementing varieties of activities and programs to help the migrant population. Some of them are:

- Resettlement and repatriation services of refugees,
- Assisted voluntary return and reintegration program,
- Counter trafficking services,
- Immigration and visa support service,
- Recruitment and employment facilities,
- Migration training program,
- Migration health assessments and travel assistance service,
- Health promotion,
- Migration health assistance to crisis-affected population.

"We need to address the relationship of migration to critical adjoining policy domains, including development, humanitarian, climate change, and peace and security, in a truly comprehensive way" - William Lacy Swing, the Director-General of the UN International Organization for Migration.

The above programs are aimed at trying to make the migration process easier and less complicated and responding and assisting those who are negatively affected from the migration.

Services for migrants such as trans-cultural mental health units have been started in Paris, Bordeaux, Strasbourg etc., and units for victims of torture and forced exile started by Paris, Marseille, Lyon etc., the global forum on migration and development, regional consultative processes on migration, improvements in the protection of migrants' rights by International Labor Organization and so on programs have started world-wide in order to reduce the psychological and social distress among migrants.

However in spite of the availability of services to migrants and refugees the accessibility of the available services is very poor. It is a recognized fact. There are many barriers, which are blocking them in accessing such services. These barriers are mainly cultural and linguistic, belief in non-medical interventions, the necessity of producing legal documents and fulfilling the eligibility criteria for accessing health care services and poor help seeking behavior. It is very important to address these hurdles in order to address the psycho-social and health issues of the migrants. Above all stand cultural barriers, recognized as an obstacle in many case studies.

Migration is a universal phenomenon, which existed with the subsistence of the human beings on earth. Moving from one place to another for a better living conditions, food, employment, education, business etc. has been taking place since ancient days. People

migrate from one place to another for several reasons, but the goal or main reason behind changing the residence would be improving their living conditions or to escape from debts and poverty. Migration is also a social phenomenon which influences human life and the environment around. Migration has been increasing largely at international level especially since the last decade. Today it is estimated that 3.1% of the world population are internationally migrated; in other words, 214 million people are known as international migrants currently. Due to socio-cultural diversity it is expected to rise further in coming years.
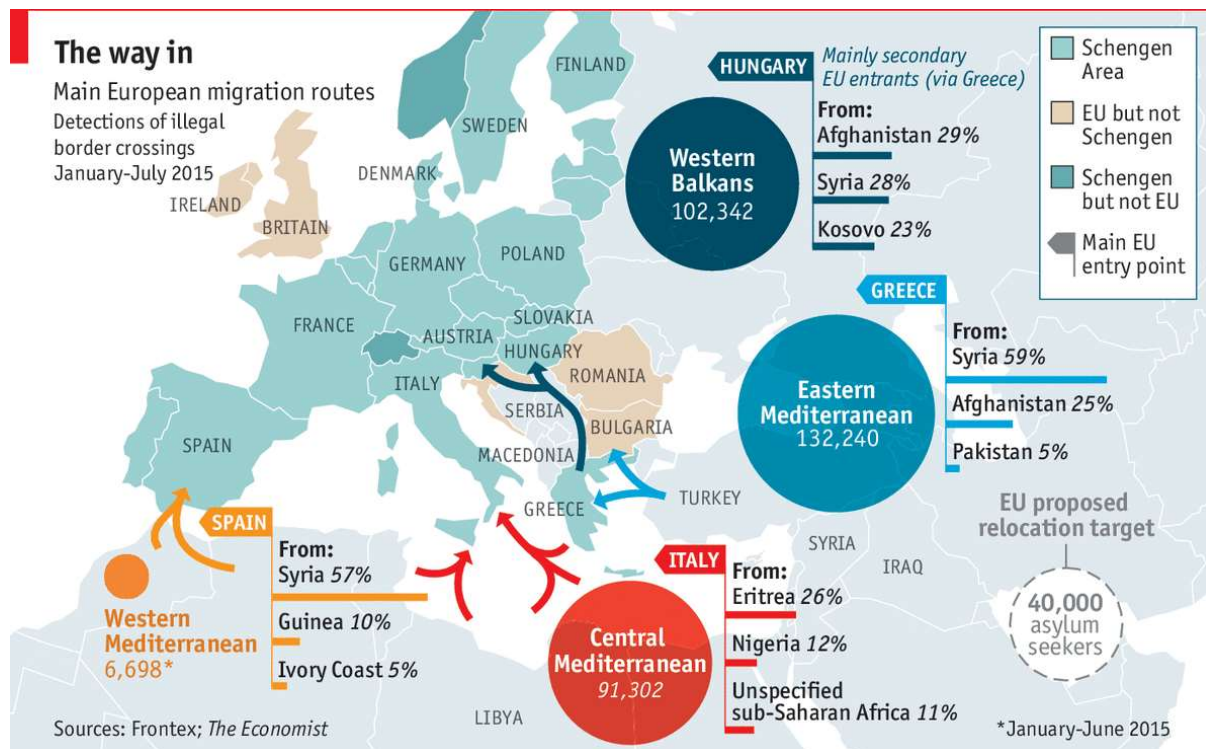
Main European Migration Routes, 2015. © The Economist.

Hence, migration has a great impact on any geographical area and it is known as one of the three basic components of population growth of any particular region (the other two are, mortality and fertility). Migration involves certain phases to go through; hence, it is a process. Many times lack of preparedness, difficulties in adjusting to the new environment, the complexity of the local system, language difficulties, cultural disparities and adverse experiences would cause distress to the migrants. Moreover, subsequently it has a negative impact on mental well-being of such population. Due to globalization, modernization, improved technologies and developments in all sectors, the migration and its impact on human well-being is a contemporary issue; hence, here is an attempt to understand the migration and its impact on the mental health of the migrants based on the studies conducted around.

Migration is a social phenomenon and can be understood as a part of society. It is also called as a process of people adapting to a new environment which involves making decision, preparations, going through the procedure, shifting physically to another geographical area, adjusting to the local cultural needs and becoming a part of the local system.

People migrate from one place to another place for many reasons such as education, employment opportunities and weather issues and so on. However there are a number of theories that have been developed to understand the different factors, which influence people to leave a particular place and move to another, e.g., E.G.Ravenstein (1895) provides laws of migration as follow:

- Every migration flow generates a return or counter-migration,

- The majority of migrants moves a short distance,

- Migrants who move longer distances tend to choose big-city destinations,

- Urban residents are often less migratory than the inhabitants of rural areas,

- Families are less likely to make international moves than young adults,

- Most migrants are adults,

- Large towns grow by migration rather than natural increase.

Some researchers suggest useful "push-pull theory" which lists out the numbers of factors that push people from the place of origin and the factors which attract people to the place of destination. The push and pull factors are as follows:

Push and pull factors of migration:

Push factors	Pull factors
Not enough jobs	Job opportunities
Primitive conditions	Better living conditions
Desertification, famine or drought	Political and religious freedom
Lack of political or religious freedom	Enjoyment
Slavery or forced labor	Education
Poor medical care	Better medical care
Loss of wealth	Attractive climats
Natural disasters	Security
Pollution & poor housing	Family links
Landlord / tenant issues	Industry
Discrimination	Better chances on marrying
Poor chances on marrying	
War	

TERMS

The concept of migration is a broader one and different synonyms have been used for the people who migrate. It is based on the type of process involved in it and the reasons for such migration. These terms are:

- **Emigrant** (a person who is leaving his/her resident country with the intent to settle elsewhere),
- **Immigrant** (a person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence),
- **Refugee** (a person who is residing outside the country of his or her origin due to fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion),
- **Asylum seeker** (a person who has left his country of origin for any reason and applied for the shelter and protection in some other country),
- **Internally displaced person** (a person who is forced to leave his or her home/region because of some very unfavorable conditions such as political, social, or financial, environmental etc. reason, but does not cross any boundaries) etc.

J.Wolpert suggested that people migrate when the value of "place utility" of another location is greater than other locations. In the historical approach, J.Caren says that migration occurs from time to time due to the pressures and counter-pressures both from the internal and external sources and due to the structural transformation of socio-economic and political setup.

Types of migration:

Type	Description
Internal migration	Involves movement of the people from one place to another within a state, country or continent.
External migration	Changing the residence from one place to another, usually in a new different state, country, or continent.
Population transfer.	People migrante from one place to another in a large group, when a government forces them for the same, based on their religion / ethnicity. This is also known as involunatry / forced migration.
Impelled migration	Here the individuāls are not forced out of their country, but leave the country because of unfavourable situations such as warfare, political problems, or religious persecution. This type also called as reluctant / imposed migration.
Step migration	When a series of migrations take place in a person's life and these migrations are shorther, less extreme, take place from a person's place of origin to his final destination. E.g., moving from a farm to a village, to a town and finally to a city.
Chain migration	When a series of migrations take place within a family or defined group of people. Usually the chain migration begins with one family member, later he/she helps / brings other family members / community members to the new location.
Return migration	The process of voluntary return back of migrants to their place of origin is known as return migration. Is is also known as circulae migration.
Seasonal migration	The process of migrating to a new place for a period of time in response to employment non-availability or unfavourable climate conditions. E.g., farm workers go to the cities for the job following the crop harvests.
Victims of Human Trafficking	Persons who come to this country understanding that they are arriving legally for employment purpose, but are in reality brought illegally through traffickers and are held captive in their places of work. These persons often are required to turn their passports over to their "handlers" and then have no proof of citizenry in any country.
Victims of Torture	Persons who establish that they, personally, suffered torture as part of the persecution they fled, and, as such, were at such risk that they could not await the normal refugee process to escape, resulting in their seeking asylum as a torture victim.
Unaccompanied minor	Persons under the legal majority age in this country who arrive as refugees but not as members of families or related to persons who are of majority age.

Migration from on cultural setting to another involves change of mindset.

Patterns of migration.

The patterns of migration have been identified as short distance migration, rural to rural migration, long distance migration, rural to urban and vice versa. In the international setting the migration patterns have been identified broadly as North American System, Western Europe System, Persian Gulf System, Asia-Pacific System and Southern Cone System. However, in recent years migration has become of the "clash of civilizations" issue. In practice it means migration from on cultural setting to another. It involves change of mindset. Since the beginning the people have been studying the impact of migration on different aspects of the human life, and impact on the mental health of the migrants is one important area which has been attracting the people.

When individuals migrate from one place to another, the process involves a series of factors, such as preparations and fulfilling all procedures, reaching the destination, adjusting to the new culture and society, compromising with their beliefs and practices, accommodation, assimilation etc. This process may not be favorable to everyone. There are some special groups such as women, children, elderly who are more prone to certain mental health issues during the migration process.

Striving for better life.

International migration motivated by the striving for a better life is growing explosively. Quantitative research that examines the happiness of migrants has been performed in different academic disciplines (psychology, sociology, and economics). The spread of research

over various disciplines has restricted researchers from reaching overall conclusions on the following issues: 1) do migrants become happier? and 2) do migrants become as happy as 'natives' in the host country? In answer to the first question, the review reveals that migrants can become happier by migrating but it strongly depends on the specific migration stream. In answer to the second question, migrants typically did not reach similar levels of happiness to those of natives.

In search of hope and home.

The calamity in Syria has led to the largest humanitarian crisis since World War II. Psychologists are increasing efforts to help Syrian and other refugees from around the world.

Case of a woman witnessed 15 men shot outside her home in Syria – she could no longer speak. "She just sat there," remembers the witness, "she had a veil over her face, so it was hard to get a read on her, but I could see the pain in her eyes."

The war in Syria is adding dramatically to a mounting refugee crisis worldwide. According to a 2016 report from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), by the end of 2015, 65.3 million people—more than the population of Canada, Australia and New Zealand combined – had been forced from their homes because of persecution, human rights violations, conflict and other violence. Of those, 21.3 million were refugees, with 16.1 million under UNHCR's mandate and 5.2 million Palestinians registered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. Another 40.8 million were internally displaced. And 3.2 million were seeking asylum. More than half of the refugees under UNHCR's mandate are from Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia. Many are seriously traumatized. A study of refugees in Germany in 2015 found that almost half had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). 13% had adjustment disorders. Most patients were experiencing anxiety, PTSD and depression, with depression especially prevalent among adults. "They felt like they were in a concentration camp, that there was no hope," medics say.

An EU solidarity plan, agreed in 2015, envisaged relocating 160 000 Syrian and Eritrean refugees throughout the EU, from overcrowded camps in Greece and Italy. Only a fraction have left the camps so far.

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ATTITUDES

Migration is a controversial issue. More and more people in Europe consider immigrants as a source of insecurity in their countries. And consequently fewer have contact with imigrants in Scandinavia and the Baltic States. Ethnic minorities, urban people, people with higher education and higher income, as well as people who have work experience abroad, as a rule, are more tolerant towards immigrants. Furthermore, people who evaluate the political and legal systems of a host country and its police higher are more tolerant.

As of August 2016, immigration was the issue picked most often by respondents (34%). The other top five issues that respondents picked that month were the EU/Europe (31%), the National Health Service (31%), the economy (30%), housing (22%), and defence/international terrorism (19%).

Immigration was the issue picked most often by respondents in European countries.

The British agency YouGov research group asked respondents from 19 of the world's leading economies about the impact of immigration. Specifically, people were asked the following question: "Overall, do you think immigrants from other countries into your country have a positive or negative effect on the country?" The broad selection of territories from around the globe nonetheless provides an interesting insight into how feelings towards immigrants vary between different regions. Here are the results:

YouGov results – attitude towards immigrants:

United Arab Emirates	The oil-rich Arabian nation to be the most welcoming country when it comes to immigration. A massive 67% of people there said they feel positive about immigrants coming into the country.
Philippines	Just 3% of respondents said they feel negative about immigration.
Vietnam	Known for its beaches and bustling cities, nearly half of respondents in Vietnam (49%) said they felt positive about immigration.
India	Despite having the second biggest population in the world (ca 1.3 billion people), India is generally very positive towards immigration. Just 11% of respondents said they feel negative about it.
Indonesia	Just 12% feeling negative about immigration. It's the third southeast Asian country to feature at this end of the ranking, which suggests a trend across the region.
Australia	43% of Australian respondents said they feel about positive about immigration.
Saudi Arabia	30% of respondents said they felt positive about immigration while 19% felt negative.
Singapore	The most popular response was 'neither nor positive nor negative' (45%).
USA	The recent US election exposed a country divided and few issues split the country more than immigration.
Hong Kong	The autonomous territory on the Chinese coast is literally split down the middle on immigration. 22% of people there feel positive while 23% feel negative.
Sweden	Far-right politics is on the rise, with support growing for anti-immigration party Swedish Democrats.
Germany	just 26% of German respondents said they feel positive about immigration.
Finland	The second Nordic state to feature in the top 10 most hostile states towards immigration.
Great Britain	One of the main reasons Brits voted to leave the EU in June 2017 was to restrict the number of immigrants coming from the 28-nation block.
Norway	Nordic states dominate the top of the list. In Norway less than a third of people (28%) feel positive about immigration.
Denmark	The most hostile state in the Nordic region.
France	France is the most hostile European country towards immigration.
Thailand	Nearly half of people (49%) living in the south-east Asian nation feel negative about immigration.

Refugees refuse to live in Eastern Europe.

Since August 2015, about 2 million migrants and refugees have entered Europe. Thousands entered Italy or Greece hoping to carry on to wealthy Western Europe where most want to settle and build a new life. The Baltic countries have fulfilled their obligations under the EU quota scheme. Instead of making their way to Britain, Germany or Scandinavia, hundreds of refugees from the Middle East were sent to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia – among the EU's poorest countries. The European Union was struggling to implement its 2015 agreement to share 160 000 refugees across 28 member states. The project SURPRISE focused its attention to their adaptation there.

Unfortunately the EU relocation programme has failed in this part of the continent – e.g., as to March 2016, 72 out of 90 Iraqis and Syrians sent to Lithuania have left the country. More than half of the 63 refugees given asylum in Latvia under its EU quota have also fled. Mohamed Kamel Haj Ali (in Lithuania) said: "When we left from Turkey to Greece, our final goal was Germany or Holland. But the land route from Greece was already closed, so we had no choice but to enter the relocation programme, which brought us here." Haj Ali said: "The ones who left for Germany said they left Syria out of fear of death from bombs, but here they feared they would die from hunger. So they took the risk and left. They are satisfied living in a German refugee centre, and are receiving everything they are entitled to."

"All people who care for their fellow man and form healthy relationships with others are based on attempts to understand one another. The value of life does not depend on the land a person comes from. Europe is on the verge of change, and we want to accept the changes ahead, not deny them."
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In Lithuania.

According to Lithuanian media reports, almost 80 % of people who are relocated to Lithuania leave as soon as they find the opportunity. In doing so, they risk the possibility of losing their status and not being able to move freely around the Schengen Zone. Many people who leave Lithuania are heading towards Sweden and Germany. Those who leave risk having their refugee benefits suspended after a month of absence. In March 2016 Eurostat published a study noting that Lithuania is among the least popular EU countries for people seeking asylum in Europe (for details please visit the site: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics). According to research, the biggest share of those applying for asylum in Lithuania come from Syria, Russia and Iraq. There are many reasons for Lithuania's unpopularity among asylum seekers – among them Lithuania is considered a country in crisis. Lithuania is a small country with nearly 3 million people and an average salary among the lowest in the EU. Lithuania is one of the least multicultural countries in Europe, and many people are not open to the idea of having refugees around them. 46% of Lithuanians "completely disagree" with letting asylum seekers into their country. They also perceive refugees as a threat to Lithuania's economy, security and national culture.

"When we mention the word 'refugee,' the first thing that may dawn in our minds might be war as a direct cause associated with the humanitarian crisis. Hence, with such a naming: *refugees reception centre*, should be at least a new start towards making its residents start to forget the pain of the past." However, the centre in Lithuania is situated in almost the smallest and most remote village just some metres from a NATO base in the area! All the refugees there complain of hearing the sounds of cannons, aircraft and choppers, and reported that their children cried when they saw the troops march nearby in the military costume. They talked about how many times they were woken up at night by the sounds or by nightmares, for being close to an environment they have just escaped and expected no return to. Then they found themselves facing it again, just like they were trapped. Adding to that is the prejudice and sectarianism with what refugees are met by locals, and not only in that tiny naïve village, but almost all over Lithuania. The majority of Lithuanians state openly they don't want refugees and Muslims in their country, they even protested in the streets of Vilnius many times for that. Finding a job is another major disaster refugees face there. The fact is Lithuania already lacks job opportunities for nationals who live in the country. Not only there are no job opportunities for refugees – even when the job centre would try to find jobs for them, they come with unqualified jobs totally far away from what the refugees have studied.

In Estonia.

Nearly half of the refugees that have arrived in Estonia under the EU's migrant distribution plan are not currently in the country. 71 of the total of 150 quota refugees to have been relocated to Estonia since 2016 are currently not there (March 2016). Estonia has pledged to accept 550 asylum-seekers from Italy and Greece over a period of two years under the EU migrant relocation and resettlement plan. The greatest challenge refugees in Estonia face is their own expectations. Many refugees, especially the ones relocated from other EU countries, find themselves discontent with life in Estonia.

In Latvia.

In agreeing to receive asylum seekers Latvia will accept a total of 531. Only 20 from the total number 346 so far have decided to stay there. Latvia has virtually no experience receiving or integrating refugees from other parts of the world.

Many refugees relocated to the small Baltic states face alienation and poverty and end up moving elsewhere in Europe. Dr. Hosam Abu Meri, a well-known gastroenterologist and chairman of the Latvian Arabic Culture Center explains: "Latvia doesn't have very good experience with integration". Mekharena from Eritrea only learnt he was going to Latvia a day before his flight. He was not allowed to choose the destination himself, and was not happy about it: "We all know that in Germany they give you an apartment and 400 EUR pocket money. But in Latvia they don't give us anything – just 139 EUR a month." "Those are our allowances and we can't afford to pay people more – we aren't that kind of country," said A. Latkovskis, head of the Parliamentary Commission for Internal Affairs. "They can of course look for work. But by Latvian law you have to speak the language to get a proper job and it usually takes years to learn."

Mekharena from Eritrea.

It is the low living standard that makes refugees leave Latvia as soon as they get their papers. "Most of them couldn't survive here. They can't accept the difference [between incomes in Latvia and Germany]. Lots of them borrowed money to get to Europe and they need to pay it back," he says. He himself paid people smugglers 3000 USD.

Mekharena says: "I have a higher degree in engineering, but I'll be doing manual labour on a building site. I hope it will work out." He would like to join his family in London. "If I move to another country, they won't accept me. I know several people who left Latvia. They all went to Germany but none of them can work there," says Mekharena. The refugees who leave Latvia "wait for half a year to submit their applications again, but they are dependent on their friends for help".

A Syrian mother of three children, who in July 2016 said she was planning to settle in Latvia, had already learned some Latvian, told that she left Latvia as the mentor provided by the state was unable to help her family solve various practical day-to-day problems. Eventually she decided to ask money for apartment rent from her brother who lives in Germany, but at the end of August 2016 the family left for Germany. Only the father remains in Latvia – he works at the asylum center "Mucenieki" as an interpreter. He told that this was

not a surprising development, as it was nearly impossible for a refugee to settle in Latvia. He says that he has tried to help mentors communicate with asylum seekers arriving in "Mucenieki", but seeing how uninterested the mentors were, he stopped interpreting.

Refugees are moving on from all the three Baltic States. Of 349 asylum seekers taken in by Lithuania, 248 left as soon as they had received official refugee status. Benefits for refugees in Lithuania vary from 102 to 204 EUR a month. In Estonia the situation is similar: of the 136 who arrived on the EU programme, 79 have moved elsewhere in Europe.

Many in the Baltics support the refusal of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary to house refugees. "They don't stay long in Latvia, almost all of them left. That means they were just looking for a better life," said K. Krēsliņš of the right-wing National Alliance, Latvia. "The Russians came and didn't integrate well. That's why Latvians are concerned about migration."

According to Mr. Abu Meri there aren't that many asylum seekers willing to go to Latvia. And even when asylum seekers are resettled in a country, there's no guarantee they'll stay there after they have been granted asylum and residence. "The Visegrad countries Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as well as Latvia do not support the mandatory refugee quotas as such," said Latvian Foreign minister E.Rinkevics. "Our (Latvia's) current stance is that we do not support anything. Our flexibility is very limited, Our position now is the most negative one."

With all that being said there is no wonder they cannot stay there for long and they just leave the country toward other destinations in Europe to try to seek asylum again.

"To make it attractive to stay, benefits would have to be boosted to a level which would be very unpleasant for our own population, which is not that well-off" – *Ilmārs Latkovskis, head of the Citizenship, Migration and Social Cohesion Committee, Latvian parliament.*

"If they move to another country, they cannot apply for work, they cannot reside there, they cannot receive benefits. And if they are apprehended in another member state, they will have to be returned to the state of relocation." – *Giedrius Sudikas, spokesman for the commission's office in Lithuania.*

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IDENTITY AND CULTURAL DIVIDE

Our project SURPRISE focused on cultural and religious clash or discrepancy between two civilizations, to say at least, and ways to overcome it. The project SURPRISE took together specialists and practicioners from all the Baltic States and Sweden to make an insightful study for further practical recommendations to overcome the discrepancy. The first question we asked was: "Does Identity Matter?"

Media on multiculturalism and national identities has debated those issues actively, asking a question: is identity just a "label" or whether it matters in affecting outcomes, such as education, employment or political orientation? And what about daily behavior? Various empirical investigations are available (some of them mentioned in the current Project SURPRISE website) on identity formation with focus on parental investment in their child's identity, and use this to understand the impact of the child's own identity on own outcomes a generation later. The results of some of researchers suggest that *identity does not have a significant effect* on education, employment and political orientation, suggesting that a strong ethnic / religious minority identity does not constrain the second generation or hamper socio-economic integration. Sounds provocative! However, we undergo *first generation* move from Near East to EU, and consquently past inherited *identity matters,* both in religion and traditional behavior in a new country. Strong impact of the the past identity is affected by the presence and involvement of ethnic / cultural communities in the host country (e.g. in Sweden where is large Muslim community).

> "Identity does not have a significant effect on education, employment and political orientation, thus suggesting that a strong ethnic/ religious minority identity does not constrain the second generation or hamper socioeconomic integration."
>
> *Zs. Koczan, University of Cambridge.*

Christianity and Islam: Short comparison chart:

	Christianity	Islam
Year Formed	28-33 CE.	610-622 CE.
Original Language	Aramaic, Greek, and Latin.	Arabic.
Place of origin	Roman province of Judea (Palestine).	Arabian Peninsula, Mecca.
Place of worship	Church, chapel, cathedral, basilica, home Bible study, personal dwellings.	Mosque, any place which is considered clean by Islamic standards.
Founder	The Lord Jesus Christ.	Prophet Muhammad. According to Islamic scripture, all people who follow God's revealed guidance and the messengers sent with it 'submit' to that guidance, and are considered Muslims (i.e. Adam, Moses, Abraham, Jesus, etc.).
Population	Over a billion adherents worldwide.	1.6 billion Muslims.
Status of Jesus	Son Of God.	Muslims believe Jesus to be a perfect, sinless, highly revered Prophet and a messenger of God. His name in Arabic is Isa ibn Mariam (Jesus the son of Mary). Jesus was immaculately conceived through God, but is not God or the son of God.
Status of Muhammad		Deeply loved and revered in Islam. The last Prophet, but is not worshipped. Only God (the creator) is worshipped in Islam; God's creation (including prophets) are not considered worthy of worship.
Position of Mary	Mother Of God.	Mary receives significant admiration also from Muslims. Prophet Muhammad said she is one of the four best women that God created. She is free of sin as the mother of Jesus.
Sacred Texts	Christian Bible (Canonical books) + Church Tradition.	While the Qur'an is the only holy text of Islam, the Hadith, which is said to be the sayings of Muhammad, is also highly revered.
Symbols	Cross, IHTYS ("Jesus fish"), Mary and baby Jesus.	Muhammad's name in calligraphy is common. The star and crescent, although not Islam per se (it is inspired by the Ottoman empire).There is also the black standard that says "There is no god but God and Muhammad is the last messenger of God" in Arabic.
Religious Law	Has existed among Roman Catholics in the form of Canon law.	Shariah law (derived from Quran and Hadith) governs prayers, business transactions, and individual rights, as well as criminal and governmental laws. Religious debate, or 'Shura' is utilized for practical solutions to contemporary issues.
Day of worship	Sunday, the Lord's Day.	Prayer five times daily is obligatory. Friday is the day of congregational prayer, obligatory for men, but not for women.

	Christianity	Islam
Holy Days	Christmas (Birth of Jesus), Good Friday (Crucifixio and Death of Jesus), Sunday (Day of rest), Lent, Easter (Resurrection of Jesus), saints' feast days.	Ramadan (month of fasting), Eid-ul Adha (feast of the sacrifice), Eid-ul Fitr (sweet festival at the end of Ramadan).
Revered People	Varies by denomination: saints, the Pope, patriarchs, cardinals, bishops, nuns, church pastors, or deacons.	Prophets, Imams (religious leaders).
Prophets	Prophets of the Old Testament are venerated.	God sent thousands of divinely inspired messengers to guide mankind: Adam, Solomon, David, Noah, Abraham, Ismail, Issac, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. There are 124 000 prophets, who were sent to all the world's nations.
Virtue on which religion is based upon	Love.	*Tawheed* (oneness of God); Peace.
Practices	Prayer, Sacraments, worship in church, reading of the Bible, acts of charity, communion.	Five pillars: Testament that there is one God and Muhammad is his messenger (*shahadah*); prayer five times daily; fast during Ramadan; charity to the poor (*zakat*); pilgrimage (*Hajj*).
On Marriage/Divorce	Definition of marriage and divorce acceptance varies by sect/denomination.	According to the Qur'an, men may marry more than one woman, but no more than four, as long as he can support them and treat them fairly. Divorce easy for men, difficult for women.
On Women	Equal to men. In some denominations, they may become nuns.	Varies. Some Muslims view women as equal, while others believe women should be subservient. Clothing is usually controlled (e.g., hijab, burqa); health choices may be restricted. Surat An-Nisa 4:34 allows for "light beating" of "disobedient" wives.
Marriage / Divorce	A Holy Sacrament (for Roman Catholics and Orthodox). Definition of marriage and divorce acceptance varies by sect/denomination.	Islam is totally opposed to both monasticism and celibacy. Marriage is an act of Sunnah in Islam and is strongly recommended. Men can only marry the "people of the book" i.e., Abrahamic religions. Women can only marry a Muslim man. According to the Qur'an, men may marry more than one woman, but no more than four, as long as he can support them and treat them fairly. Divorce easy for men, difficult for women.
On Women	Equal to men. In some denominations, they may become nuns.	Varies. Some Muslims view women as equal, while others believe women should be subservient. Clothing is usually controlled (e.g., *hijab, burqa*); health choices may be restricted. Surat An-Nisa 4:34 allows for "light beating" of "disobedient" wives.
On Clothing	Conservative Christians dress modestly. More moderate or liberal Christians generally reject such clothing restrictions.	Women must present themselves modestly to cover hair and body shape. Men must be modestly dressed and covered from waist to knee. In most Muslim culture, women wear a

	Christianity	Islam
		form of the *hijab*; in some, they must wear the full-body cover known as the *burqa*.
Human Nature	Man is created in God's image and likeness, however, he has inherited "original sin" from Adam. There he is in need of Redeemer of sin, which is given by Grace of God.	Humans are born pure and innocent. Upon reaching adolescence, they are responsible for what they do, and must choose right from wrong.
Means of Salvation	Through Christ's Passion, Death, and Resurrection.	Belief in one God, remembrance of God, repentance, fear of God and hope in God's mercy.
Confessing sins	Protestants confess straight to God, Catholic confess mortal sins to a Priest (Orthodox have similar practice). God forgives sins in Jesus.	Forgiveness must be sought from God, there is no intermediary with him. If any wrong is done against another person or thing, forgiveness must first be sought from them, then from God.
Second coming of Jesus	Affirmed.	Affirmed.
Spiritual Beings	Angels, demons, spirits.	Angels, demons, spirits, *jinn* (genies).
On Food/Drink	Though the Old Testament says certain meats should not be consumed, Christians usually feel this information does not apply to them (in the New Testament) and so eat what they want to eat, except those who fast.	Muslims are only supposed to eat foods that are considered *halal*. Pork is forbidden. Requirement for prayer and ritual butchery of meat. Quick and swift slaughter at single point on the throat; blood has to be completely drained.
Primary God(s)	A single, all-powerful God in "Trinity" form: God, the Father; Christ, the Son; and the Holy Spirit (or Ghost).	Only Allah, who is seen as being all-powerful. "They do blaspheme who say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity: for there is no god except One Allah." —Surat Al-Ma'idah 5:73.
Definition	Christian = disciple of Jesus Christ.	Islam is an Arabic word for "Submission or surrender in Ultimate Peace". Muslim means a believer in One God (Al-Illah or Allah).
On Other Religions	Many Christians believe all other religions are false (moderates may or may not believe this).	Most Muslims believe all other religions are false. "Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day...until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued."—Surat At-Tawbah 9:29 Disbelievers will go to eternal hell.
On LGBT	Varies. Christians who believe in more literal interpretations of the Bible do not accept homosexuality; some see it as a crime. "Do not be deceived...men who have sex with men...will not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 6:9-10).	Gnerally homosexuality is not accepted. Verses from the Qur'an condemn it and modern *fatwas* (Islamic law interpretation) often ban homosexuality as a crime, punishable by death in some countries. Sex change is not permitted.
Life after death	Eternity in Heaven or Hell, Purgatory (Roman Catholics).	All beings created with reason will be accountable to God Almighty on the Day of Judgement. They will be rewarded for every atom's weight of good, and either forgiven or punished for evil deeds.

THE CULTURAL DIVIDE:
ISLAMIC VIEWS ON WESTERN CULTURE.

Majorities of residents in the Islamic World say Western nations do not care about poorer nations, nor are they willing to share their technological knowledge with them. Also Western nations do not treat the minorities in their own countries fairly, and that Westerners have immoral lifestyles and weak family values.

When it comes to the way that Western nations treat Arab/Islamic countries, residents are even more negative – they say Western nations do not respect Islamic values, do not support Arab causes in international organizations and do not exhibit fairness toward Arab/Islamic countries in general.

Respondents say they admire the West for its scientific and technological expertise, particularly in the area of advanced technology. Residents also express considerable admiration for the West's political values. Resentment of the West are perceptions that Westerners:

- are arrogant and believe their societies and civilization are more superior and advanced,
- are excessively prone to interfere in the internal and political affairs of other nations,
- are insufficiently attached to their own religion, religious beliefs and ethnicity.

The Muslim Brotherhood is creating a "parallel structure" in Sweden.

A report from Sweden claims that the Muslim Brotherhood (MB; founded in 1826) is working to increase the number of practising Muslims, and more than that – it is creating a "parallel social structure" in Sweden with the help of "political elites" who foster a culture of silence. The power structure can help the Islamist group to achieve its ends. The MB aims to organise Muslims politically in order to create a global, Sunni Islamic Caliphate. A group of Muslims walk the Imam Hussein Memorial March in Malmo. The group is arguably the largest Islamist organisation in the world and has in the past been linked to mainstream Islamic institutions, including to the Muslim Council of Britain. The organisation has been accused of fostering links to militants and is classed as a terrorist organisation by the governments of Bahrain, Egypt, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. However, mainstream Muslims say that the MB misrepresents Islam in Europe and encourages tension with the secular society and puts community cohesion in jeopardy. As migration to the country increases, so the problems will intensify. MB is targeting political parties, NGOs, academic institutions and other civil society organisations. "Islamists aim to build a parallel social structure competing with the rest of the Swedish society the values of its citizens. In this sense, MB's activists pose a long-term challenge in terms of the country's social cohesion" – this is quote from the onfrmed researchers say.

Western perception of women in Islam from artists' perspective:
Versailles garden sculpture in spring looks like burkah.

"Given that MB's goal is to increase the number of practising Muslims in Swedish or European territory, there is a great likelihood that a *tug of war* will occur between the majority community and the Islamic community with the MB's encouragement." At the same time opposition groups in Sweden run the risk of being branded racist or Islamophobic.

In a blog post they said the suggestion that criticism in Islam was difficult in Sweden is 'almost conspiratorial', and said past research had refuted the idea that the Muslim Brotherhood was building a parallel society.

However, the available information rather points towards the Muslim community being diverse and there being competition between Muslim groups, says journalist Magnus Norell from Malmo.

Cultural assimilation

Cultural assimilation is the process by which a person's or group's culture come to resemble those of another group. W.Clark defines immigrant assimilation as "a way of understanding the social dynamics of the host society and it is the process that occurs spontaneously and often unintended in the course of interaction between majority and minority groups".

Immigrant assimilation is a complex process in which immigrants not only fully integrate themselves into a new country, but also lose aspects, perhaps all of their heritage too. Social scientists rely on four primary benchmarks to assess immigrant assimilation:

1. socioeconomic status,
2. geographic distribution,
3. second language attainment,
4. and intermarriage.

Cultural assimilation may involve either a quick or gradual change depending on circumstances of the group. Full assimilation occurs when new members of a society become indistinguishable from members of the other group. Whether or not it is desirable for an immigrant group to assimilate is often disputed by both members of the group and those of the dominant society. Cultural assimilation does not guarantee social homophile. Geographical and other natural barriers between cultures even if started by the same dominant culture will be culturally different. Nowadays, an increasing number of people are migrating to other countries than ever before. This raises questions about the integration of newcomers into society.

Immigrants should accept the new culture as their own because: it can afford immigrants a fair chance to succeed. Specifically, immigrants would avoid many conflicts and interact with locals successfully, especially in the workplace, if they adopt the local culture and customs. For example, in Western culture, people usually keep a distance from each other when having a conversation. Thus, obviously, those immigrants who adhere to this custom are more likely to be welcomed. In addition, because of their willingness to merge into the new culture, they, more often than not, integrate into the new society more quickly than their reluctant counterparts and tend to have a better chance to succeed.

1. They should keep their own culture. Immigrants keeping the culture of their home countries would benefit the society. The main reason is that a mixture of different cultures and traditions could give a country color and vibrancy. However, such an argument ignores the fact that too much culture diversity undermines a society by alienating people from each other. It is because similarities unite people whereas differences have a tendency to divide. Conversely, culture assimilation contributes

to reducing hostility and improving the mutual understanding between immigrants and locals, thereby creating a harmonious society.

A need for dialogue of understanding.

Several social commentaries in the Western media present opinion that Islam is beginning to replace Soviet Communism as the enemy of Western culture. Islam is seen as a religion committed to despising infidels, espousing terrorism, undermining all Western governments. Embarked on a jihad, a holy war, against the West, it is seen as the enemy of the Enlightenment.

Existing in various forms, Islam seeks to stress submission of life to the one self-existent Reality on which all things depend. It is far from being a monolithic entity, committed to world domination. There are as many different forms of political and religious relationships within the Muslim world as there are forms of Islam.

Unfortunately there are organisations, like the mis-named 'Muslim Parliament' and the Islamic Liberation Party, which match the demonic stereotype fairly closely. There are those who seek to undermine the traditions of tolerance which have been so hard won, and who are backed by governments hostile to Britain. It would be wrong to imply that Muslims in Britain are a potential threat to democratic traditions. The strength of the "anti-Western" movements in Islam is partly due to feeling that the Western powers, who in recent history conquered virtually every Muslim country, denigrate and demonise Islam as a backward and reactionary faith, while continuing to profit from the material resources of Muslim states. If one analyses what is meant by "anti-Western", it turns out that it is pornography, racism, the breakdown of the family and the pursuit of financial gain that are being attacked. These vices are seen as produced by the emphasis on personal autonomy and freedom.

Many Muslims are immigrants from small rural communities, without expert theological leadership and without skills of debate that would make them feel comfortable in academic discussions. They see the European Enlightenment as a destroyer of moral values, and as the mainstay of a society that holds them in contempt. What they not see is that the Christian religion has been domesticated by the Enlightenment, its crudenesses smoothed over, its hatreds dampened, its horizons widened. In the process, it has discovered two things:

1. The European Enlightenment is itself a product of religious thought, the thought that all humans are created free and equal, with dignity and moral responsibility. That is a thought to which Islam is committed.

2. The other is that, unless it is constantly renewed by critical reflection, religion tends to become repressive and stifle creativity.

Enlightenment is not a danger to religion, but a painful means to its purification. Islam, entering fully into Western life, is only just entering into this debate. Demons lurk in all religions, as in all ideologies of any sort. One must not empower the demons by accepting their claim to manifest the true faith. On the contrary, it is only by understanding the true faith of Islam that the demons of hatred can be exposed as its betrayers. Islam represents one of the highest expressions of human spirituality, though naturally it also reveals the complexity of human motivation and the bestiality which corrupts even the highest revelation when it gets into hands all too human. If a real dialogue can be established between Islam

and other faiths and with the Enlightenment, it will have a future very different from the one the proponents of the demonic stereotype fear. To fail to initiate such a dialogue of understanding, at every level, is to begin to create the very threat that one fears.

Islam and the West: How great a divide?

A.Jamal, Priceton University profesor r in Muslim studies.

In 2006, the [Pew Global Attitudes Project](#) released data of Muslim and Western perceptions of each other and on the Muslim experience in Europe (the poll surveyed more than 14 000 people in 13 nations globally). In a wide-ranging interview at the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, A. Jamal, ass. prof. in the Department of Politics at Princeton University and a specialist in the study of Muslim public opinion, discusses sthe negative perceptions Westerners and Muslims have of each other, the role of the media in perpetuating stereotypes.

Have you revealed a growing divide between the Islamic and Western worlds?

There certainly is a divide. Whether it's growing or not is not very clear, however, because we don't have very good data across time in all these countries. Where there is systematic data across time, we tend to see that attitudes have remained pretty constant.

Were there any survey results you found particularly encouraging to bridge the divide?

Is it encouraging that we still have these decades-old stereotypes emanating both ways: the West versus the Muslim world, and the Muslim world versus the West? No, it is not encouraging at all. Actually, it's quite disappointing. It's more disappointing if you look at the fact that it is in the United States' strategic interest in the region to win the hearts and minds of people in the Muslim world. Where there is a need for US involvement and US mediation of conflicts, such as the Arab-Israeli and Afghanistan conflict, there is a total loss of trust in the Muslim world of all things American or Western. This also hurts our ability to deal with issues and problems diplomatically because there is this huge tension.

Similarly, the Muslim world is not effectively communicating with the Western world. What we do see is that [Osama] bin Laden is communicating with the Western world or the president of Iran, [Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad is communicating with the Western world. What we don't see are the moderate Muslim voices communicating with the Western world.

On the topic of democracy and Islam, do you see some hope in the survey findings from Western Europe. Are you optimistic there?

What we see among the Western European Muslim population is great enthusiasm reflected in percentages of more than 75 percent and 80 percent of people who believe Islam

and democracy are compatible. That's because they are living experience and proof of the compatibility of the two. They are maintaining a cultural, religious tradition, and also enjoying the freedoms of democracy.

What, in your view, is working and what isn't, to increase communication and dialogue between the Islamic world and the West?

I think what's not working, or what we're underestimating, is the influence and power of media, including satellite television, to circulate irresponsible statements made by public officials on both sides, the dehumanizing of Westerners in the eyes of Muslims and of Muslims in the eyes of Westerners. But we're not doing much to combat the stereotypes that exist. Muslims want Westerners to think of them more respectfully, to think of them as equals. Westerners don't see Muslims as thinking similarly to them. When it comes down to it, humans think alike, but we have to listen to one another more carefully. That type of communication is missing.

What stereotypes are you seeing?

If we were to survey popular movies that have captured the interest of Muslims and Americans that come out of Hollywood, the pattern in those movies is often of a fundamentalist Muslim raging wildly for some lunatic reason. The same pattern of portraying the Muslim "other" can be seen in the findings of the survey. Again, Muslims are not seen as tolerant. They are seen as fanatics, not respecting democracy. And yet, if you deal with Muslims on a daily basis – and I don't say this because I'm Muslim – you see this is not the reality. I'm also saddened by the fact that Muslims also tend to misunderstand what Westerners are all about: They see Westerners as arrogant, greedy and selfish — through the lens of colonialism. The more erroneous and pervasive these stereotypes, the more justification it gives people to hold images of the other as less human, which ultimately leads to conflict. Once you dehumanize another people, it becomes easier to use a military option against those people.

You say that neither the Muslim world nor the West see the moderate middle in the other. What role is the US media playing in perpetuating this problem?

If we examine what type of news is being broadcast from the US to the Muslim world we are likely to see statements that come off as anti-Islamic, as implicating an entire religion. You are likely to get statements, however irresponsible, that there is this ongoing rift between Christianity and Islam.

How do you see Islamic media portraying the West?

As a society obsessed with sex, drugs and alcohol, a society that doesn't understand the larger meaning in life. And there is nothing further from the truth. When you know Americans and Westerners and you know about their values, they're very committed to many of the same values that Muslims take pride in holding and cherishing. It's not that there *is* a cultural divide; it's that we've *constructed* this cultural divide. And what this survey report illustrates is that we've been all too successful in constructing this cultural divide, this constructed dichotomy of good and evil. Which side you are on determines who is called good and who is called evil.

The survey shows that Muslims in Muslim countries view the West as immoral. Is this an Islamic perception of Western culture gleaned from movies, TV and the Internet, or a perception of government policy, such as the Iraq war? Or is it a combination of factors?

I think it's certainly a combination. I think Muslims know the West through the type of shows and movies that are broadcast in the region. The type of movies that will sell are those that are either overtly violent or tend to be more sexual. That's unfortunate. Muslims then think that American culture stands for alcoholism and relationships that are outside of the boundaries of marriage. Those are still big taboos in the Muslim world. So you're dealing with a very conservative, traditional society on these issues. And what they see from the West is basically the flaunting of these immoral acts in the media. Muslims also hear news stories of teenage pregnancy and child molestation, and these stories are given increasingly more attention in the Muslim press than they are even here. In the minds of Muslims, you have this sad civilization in the West that is trying to dictate to the rest of the world how to live their lives. There is a strong conviction that the Western world does not have the moral foundation to be dictating to Muslims how to lead a decent life.

You have said that the West increasingly sees Osama bin Laden as the primary spokesperson for the Muslim world, but the survey shows bin Laden is losing credibility in the Muslim world.

Look at the last year of news coverage coming out of the Middle East. Who has been covered in Western media? Hamas spokespeople, the Iranian president; Osama bin Laden, Ayman al Zawahiri and that little video of Abu Musab al Zarqawi when he was killed. What other speakers or images from the Muslim world have we seen? Have we seen intellectuals? Have we seen researchers? Have we seen thinkers? Have we seen ordinary people on the street?

As you point out, and as the data point out, support for bin Laden is falling in the Muslim world. Yet it is almost as if the Western media has still "elected" him as an evil icon. In the Arab Muslim world, where we tend to see the highest levels of anti-Westernism, bin Laden has never really enjoyed solid support. Yet he has become an icon to the West, and that is a great concern. It affects and angers Muslims, and it also frightens Westerners. It reifies the divisions.

The survey shows declining support for terrorism in some Muslim countries. For example, we saw a significant drop in support for suicide bombings in Pakistan and Jordan between 2004 and 2005. What explains this drop and do you think this represents a lasting development?

I think it is a lasting development because the suicide bombers have used their operational tactics in these countries. […] The Muslim world has come to understand that if you support suicide bombings, there may be attacks targeting your own people. In addition, they see the daily images emanating out of Iraq, the senseless loss of life due to suicide bombings in marketplaces, mosques and whatnot. These images are having a huge effect across the Muslim world. Muslim suicide bombers are killing other Muslims, and I think a lot of people are beginning to question what is going on in the lives of suicide bombers.

This is one of those topics that have to be dealt with and negotiated internally within Muslim societies. If you give Muslims this opportunity to learn through trial and error, we see that they are rational people who have rational interests and regard for human rights.

The survey shows there is no common view of Muslims in Europe. Great Britain, for example, seems to have a much more negative view of Muslims than France. What explains this difference from country to country?

I think each European country's view of its Muslim minority population is really contingent on the relationship the country has had with their Muslim communities and with the broader issue of immigration. France has a better relationship with the Muslim community because it has a better understanding and a more favorable opinion about immigration. Therefore, it will have a more favorable stance toward Muslim immigrants. Also, remember that France just emerged from the riot issue, and there is a lot of questioning, self-doubt and almost guilty feelings about the Muslim population.

We're fast approaching the anniversary of 9/11, yet a majority of the public in several Muslim countries, including 65 percent in Indonesia, does not believe Arabs were responsible for the attacks on New York and Washington. What, in your view, explains this?

In parts of the Muslim world, there's a sense of victimization and the feeling that 9/11 epitomizes the culmination of Western imperialism. In their opinion, 9/11 set the stage for the US invasion of Iraq, for complete US domination of the region. The US needed a reason, a justification, to go into Iraq and 9/11 provided it. People from these regions believe this. People wonder how 19 hijackers ordered and directed by a man in a cave can attack the largest nation, which also owns a vast military arsenal. They say it's simply impossible, that the US wanted it to happen so it could set the stage for complete domination of the region. They believe the US doesn't care about people, doesn't care about their religion and that, in fact, implicating their religion serves US interests in a grandiose fashion. That, I think, is what's more remarkable about this disbelief about 9/11. It's not that Muslims are in denial, or however you want to characterize it. It is that there's no trust. The only thing that they understand about the West is that the West is out to get them.

Mixed maariages are common in Europe.

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CONTEXT FOR SOCIAL WORK WITH IMMIGRANTS

Migrant men and European women.

The recent surge of migration into Europe has been unprecedented in scope, making for a massive humanitarian crisis, as well as a political and moral dilemma for European governments. But one crucial dimension of this crisis has gone little-noticed: sex or, more technically, sex ratios. It is a disturbing fact that only 27% of recent refugees to Europe are female. In every age group, from nearly every country of origin, women are greatly outnumbered. And the difference is even more pronounced for immigrants from Africa, the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent. Gambia, Bangladesh and Pakistan, for example, sent virtually no women at all. Over all, refugee men outnumber refugee women nearly two to one. To absorb newcomers peacefully, Europe must insist they respect values such as tolerance and sexual equality. In Europe today women run cities, corporations, and day-care centers. They work in sweatshops, clean other people's houses, train for military duty, and fight wildfires. They play tennis and drive cars and do laundry and shop for school supplies. Some of them get arrested and some of them make the arrests. Some sit on judges' benches and some sit in the US Congress. Wherever you go, there they are. Women in Europe have made, and continue to make, western history and the history of the nation.

In the New Year's eve night 2015 gangs of young men, mainly asylum-seekers, formed rings around women outside Cologne station and then robbed and sexually assaulted them. More than 600 women reported to the police that they had been victimised. After Cologne Europeans started to see menacing young men imbued with the sexism that is all too common across the Middle East and north Africa. Such fears are not absurd. A 2013 Pew poll of Muslims around the world shows that more than 90% of Tunisians and Moroccans believe that a wife should always obey her husband. Only 14% of Iraqi Muslims and 22% of Jordanians think a woman should be allowed to initiate a divorce. And although Arab societies take a harsh view of sex crimes, women who venture alone and in skimpy clothing into a public space in, say, Egypt can expect a barrage of male harassment.

It would be otherworldly to pretend that there is no tension between the attitudes of some refugees and their hosts. European women cherish their rights to wear what they like, go where they like and have sex or not have sex with whom they please. No one should be allowed to infringe these freedoms. Half of Syria's cities have been blasted to rubble, hundreds of thousands of people lie dead and tens of thousands are starving in towns

undersiege. Thousands more refugees arrived in Greece every week. Those who would shut them out must explain where they should go instead.

Migrants who take the most hazardous routes into Europe, for example by crossing the Mediterranean in leaky boats, are disproportionately young men. Overall they make little difference to Europe's sex ratio, but in some areas and age brackets they may skew it. This is a problem—districts with more young single men than women are more prone to violence, especially if those men are jobless.

Norway swung to a male surplus in 2011, four years before Sweden, while Denmark and Switzerland are nearing a sex ratio of 100. Germany, which had an unnatural deficit of men after two world wars, has seen its sex ratio jump from 87 in 1960 to 96 in 2015. Meanwhile, Britain's sex ratio rose from 93 to 97 in the same period. British statistics officials project that men will be in the majority by 2050. Researchers don't have a clear idea of what happens to a society when the population becomes more masculine.

It makes good sense that so many young men are leaving countries like Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria: their demographic is often at greater risk of being coerced into joining fighting groups, or being killed rather than captured by such groups. But the result is that 66,2% of adult migrants registered through Italy and Greece were male, according to the International Organization of Migration (IOM).

That imbalance sounds radical, especially when you look more closely at who those males are. It's true that many male migrants hope that, if granted asylum, they will be joined in Europe by their wives and children, who would help balance out national sex ratios. But importantly, more than 20 percent of migrants are *minors* below the age of 18, and the IOM estimates that more than half of them traveling to Europe are traveling as *unaccompanied* minors – 90% of whom are males. This heavily male subset is all but guaranteed asylum because of their status as unaccompanied minors.

QURAN ON WOMAN

"Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded. As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them." (4:34)

"And the men are a degree above them" (2:228)

"Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them..." Men determine how women dress. (33:59)

"And abide quietly in your homes..." Women are confined to their homes except when they have permission to go out. (33:33)

"Your wives are as a tilth unto you; so approach your tilth when or how ye will." Wives are to be sexually available to their husbands in all ways at all times. They serve their husbands at his command. This verse is believed to refer to anal sex, and was "revealed" when women complained to Muhammad about the practice. The phrase "when and how you will" means that they lost their case. (2:223)

"Maybe, his Lord, if he divorce you, will give him in your place wives better than you, submissive, faithful, obedient, penitent, adorers, fasters, widows and virgins" A disobedient wife can be replaced. (66:5)

To see how these overall figures affect specific countries – and why there is reason for concern – consider the case of Sweden, which has been especially transparent about its migration statistics and whose ratios mirror the broader trend in Europe in many respects. Sweden has received more asylum applications per capita than any other country in Europe – 163 000 in year 2015. The country's population is just 9.7 million. Interestingly, when you break down the data by nationality, the bump of applicants aged 16 from Afghanistan is particularly noticeable. There are about seven or eight times more 16-year-old refugees from Afghanistan than from Syria; the ages of those applying to stay in Sweden from Syria and Iraq are more evenly spread.
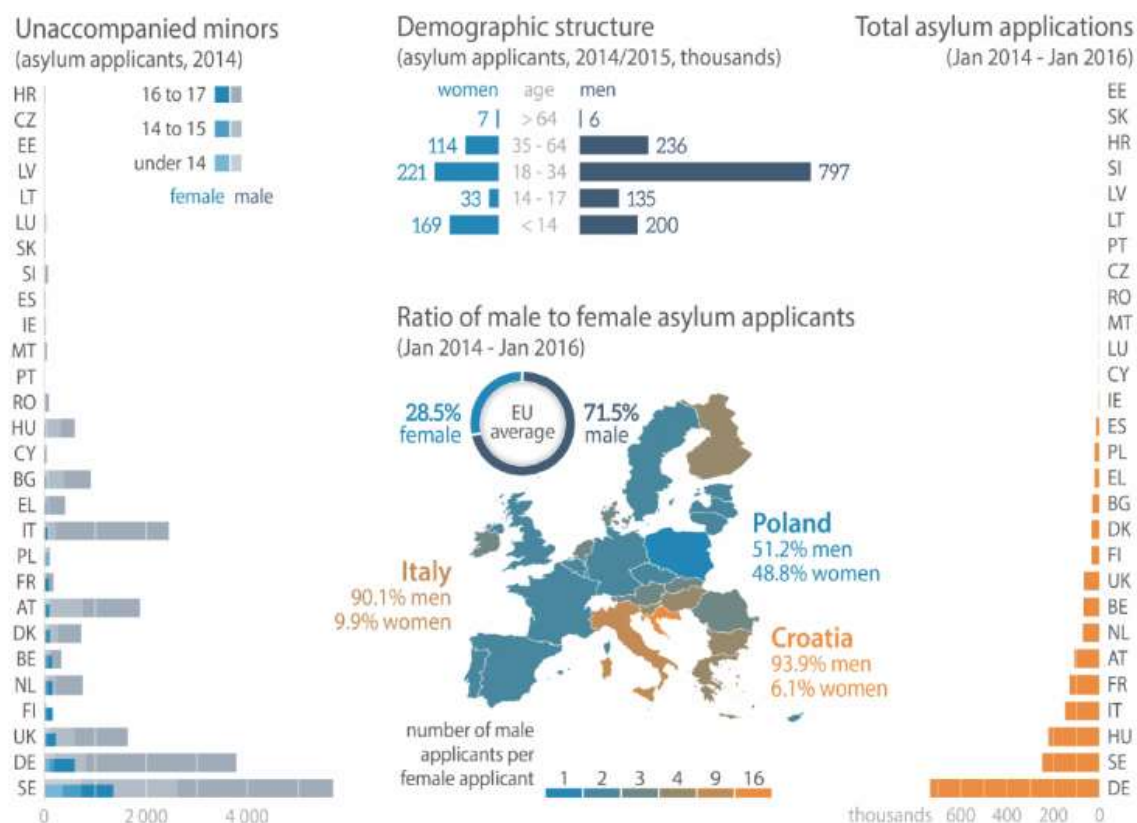
Gender imbalance in European countries. © epthinktank.eu.

According to the Swedish government statistics 71% of all applicants for asylum to Sweden in 2015 were male. More than 21% of all migrants to Sweden were classified as unaccompanied minors, representing more than half of all minor migrants to the country. For *accompanied* minors, the sex ratio was about 1,16 boys for every one girl. But for *unaccompanied* minors, the ratio was 11,3 boys for every one girl. In other words, the Swedish case confirms IOM's statistic that more than 90 % of unaccompanied minors are male. Indeed, on average, approximately 90 unaccompanied boys entered Sweden every single day in 2015, compared with eight unaccompanied girls.

Those numbers are a recipe for striking imbalances within Sweden. Consider that more than half of these unaccompanied minors entering Sweden are 16 - 17 years old, or at least claim to be. In this age group more than three-quarters are unaccompanied, meaning they are overwhelmingly male. According to calculations based on the Swedish government's

figures, a total of 18 615 males aged 16 - 17 entered Sweden over the course of the year 2015, compared with 2 555 females of the same age. Sure enough, when those figures are added to the existing counts of 16-17-year-old boys and girls in Sweden – 103 299 and 96 524, respectively, according to the US Census Bureau's International Database – you end up with a total of 121 914 males in Sweden aged 16 - 17 and 99 079 females of the same age. The resulting ratio is astonishing: these calculations suggest that as of the end of 2015, there were 123 16-17-year-old boys in Sweden for every 100 girls of that age.

Majority of immigrants to coming to Europe are young men.

If that trend continues, each successive late adolescent cohort of 16-17-year-olds will be similarly abnormal, and over time the abnormality will become an established fact of the broader young adult population in Sweden. Due to the huge numbers of young males entering the country, Sweden now shows a greater imbalance between genders than does China, long the most gender-imbalanced country in the world, where the male-to-female ratio of approximately 117 boys for every 100 girls in this age group now comes up short of Sweden's gender gap. China's sex ratios are still more abnormal across other age groups; the imbalances there extend all the way down to birth sex ratios due to the country's severe birth restrictions, while Sweden's abnormalities do not. But young adult sex ratios are arguably the most crucial of all for social stability. V.Hudson, director of a program on women, peace and security (Texas A&M University) says this should make Swedes concerned, because her research has linked skewed sex ratios in China and India to more violence against women and higher crime levels. What's happening in Sweden, "is one of the most dramatic alterations of demography over such a short period of time that I've ever seen." Eurostat projects the male-female gap will dip below 1 million in 2080. But such projections are highly uncertain, as the Swedish example shows.

Canada is the one country so far that seems to think this is cause for concern. Faced with similarly skewed sex ratios among asylum-seekers, its liberal administration accepts only women, accompanied children and families from Syria (from 2016).

Swedes don't quite know what to make of this sudden male surplus, which is highly unusual in the West, where women historically have been in the majority in almost every country. But it may be a sign of things to come in Europe as changes in life expectancy and migration transform demographics. "This is a novel phenomenon for Europe," says F. Billari, (University of Oxford) demographer, President of the [European Association for Population Studies](). Policymakers in Sweden and other countries should think of the long-term consequences of an unprecedented alteration in the young adult sex ratios of their societies. The Canadian approach should be carefully studied, and perhaps adapted by other countries. After all, if the sex ratios of the migrants' countries of origins are balanced, is it not odd to accept predominantly male migrants for asylum? For Sweden – or any other European country – to wind up with the worst young adult sex ratios in the world would be a tragedy for European men and women alike.

Swedish interior minister A.Ygeman says that the government is planning over several years to deport up to 80 000 people whose asylum applications are set to be rejected. Sweden rejected around half of the 163 000 asylum requests received in 2015. Swedish migration minister M.Johansson said authorities faced a difficult task in deporting such large numbers, but insisted failed asylum seekers had to return home.

Migration and crime.

Views on how immigration is connected with crime are diverse and much debated. On the one hand there is FEAR OF TERRORISM, indeed, as bombings take place in European countries. On the other hand, there are oponents who attribute crime to extremists alone. In the overwhelming majority of cases, terror attacks are carried out by unattached young adult men. Most of these men are unmarried, and virtually none have children. Indeed, the Islamic State discouraged its male fighters from having children to make them more willing to engage in suicide attacks, and widows of suicide bombers are quickly forced to remarry, while remaining on birth control.

But fear of terrorism might not be the only reason to be leery of highly abnormal sex ratios among the young adult population. Societies with extremely skewed sex ratios are more unstable even without jihadi ideologues in their midst. Numerous empirical studies show that SEX RATIOS CORREALTE SIGNIFICANTLY WITH VIOLENCE AND PROPERTY CRIME – the higher the sex ratio, the worse the crime rate. There is a link between sex ratios and the emergence of both violent criminal gangs and anti-government movements. It makes sense: when young adult males fail to make the transition to starting a househol, particularly those young males who are already at risk for sociopathic behavior due to marginalization, a common concern among imigrants, their grievances are aggravated.

There are also clearly negative effects for women in male-dominated populations. Crimes such as RAPE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT become more common in highly masculinized societies, and women's ability to move about freely and without fear within society is curtailed. In addition, demand for PROSTITUTION soars; that would create a deeply ironic outcome for Sweden, which invented the path-breaking Swedish abolitionist approach to prostitution.

However, both the Census-data driven studies and macro-level studies find that IMMIGRANTS ARE LESS CRIME-PRONE THAN NATIVES with some small potential exceptions. There are numerous reasons why immigrant criminality is lower than native criminality. One explanation is that immigrants who commit crimes can be deported and thus are punished more for criminal behavior, making them less likely to break the law.

Another explanation is that immigrants self-select for those willing to work rather than those willing to commit crimes. According to this "healthy immigrant thesis," motivated and ambitious foreigners are more likely to immigrate and those folks are less likely to be criminals. This could explain why immigrants are less likely to engage in "anti-social" behaviors than natives despite having lower incomes. It's also possible that more effective interior immigration enforcement is catching and deporting unlawful immigrants who are more likely to be criminals *before* they have a chance to be incarcerated.

"Behind the scenes in Stockholm".

In general terms, violence has decreased in Sweden in the last 20 years. At the same time, surveys repeatedly show that people in the Western countries have a perception that violence is actually increasing. Perceptions of increased violence have been linked to the number of immigrants. Nonetheless, research shows that there is no evidence to indicate that immigration leads to increased crime. Despite the fact that the number of immigrants in Sweden has increased since the 1990s, exposure to violent crimes has declined.

Data from the Swedish Crime Survey shows that in terms of lethal violence, there has generally been a downward trend over the past 25 years. Nonetheless, the level in 2015 – when a total of 112 cases of lethal violence were reported – was higher than for many years.

The number of confirmed or suspected shootings was 20 per cent higher in 2014 than in 2006. The statistics also show that 17 people were killed with firearms in 2011, while the corresponding figure in 2015 was 33. Figures from the [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)](#) show that in 2012, 0,7 murders were committed in Sweden per 100 000 inhabitants.

There is a connection between immigration and criminality. The well-known Swedish economist T.Sanandaji noted that the employment rate for native Swedes is about 82 percent, but it's only 58 percent for immigrants, and lower still for non-Western immigrants. But in immigrant-heavy neighborhoods, lawbreaking is comparable to the much higher overall rate in the US. Immigrants have found integration into Sweden's homogeneous culture very difficult, partially because low-skill jobs have been disappearing as Sweden. Though many immigrants, like Sanandaji himself, have managed the challenge, others rely on welfare-state subsidies. And apply for them a lot. Joblessness and alienation have sparked riots and other antisocial behavior. At outdoor festivals such as "We Are Stockholm," women have been groped. Public swimming pools have become venues for gangs of young immigrant men to harass women. Malmö has been losing its small Jewish population, and the Simon Wiesenthal Center issued a travel warning due to threats and attacks on Jews by Muslim immigrants.

The number of reported rapes in Sweden has risen. But the definition of rape has broadened over time, which makes it difficult to compare the figures. The government, in obedience to feminist diktats, has broadened the definition of rape very considerably to include many things that most Americans would not consider rape. It is also misleading to compare the figures with other countries, as many acts that are considered rape under Swedish law are not considered rape in many other countries.

For example: If a woman in Sweden reports that she has been raped by her husband every night for a year, that is counted as 365 separate offences; in most other countries this would be registered as a single offence, or would not be registered as an offence at all. Also willingness to report such offences differs between countries. For example, Sweden has made a conscious effort to encourage women to report any offence.

Some 13 per cent of the population were the victim of an offence against them personally in 2015 in Sweden. This is an increase on preceding years, although roughly the same level as in 2005. Studies of the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention show that the majority of those suspected of crimes were born in Sweden to two Swedish-born parents. The studies also show that the vast majority of people from foreign backgrounds are not suspected of any crimes.

Prejudices and negative attitudes towards Muslims exist in many areas of society. A report published by the Equality Ombudsman in 2015 shows that Islamophobia is manifested in threats, violence, verbal abuse, media attacks, harassment in schools, unfavourable opportunities for finding a job, and in other ways.

People from foreign backgrounds *are suspected* of crimes more often than people from a Swedish background. According to the most recent study, people from foreign backgrounds are 2,5 times more likely to be suspected of crimes than people born in Sweden to Swedish-

born parents. The main difference in terms of criminal activity between immigrants and others in the population was due to differences in the socioeconomic and cultural conditions in which they grew up in Sweden. This means factors such as parents' incomes, and the social circumstances in the area in which an individual grew up.

Immigration may cause crime in peaceful cities.

The Swedish Police Authority identified 61 areas around the country that have become increasingly marred by crime, social unrest and insecurity in June 2017. Of these 61 areas, 23 are considered to be particularly vulnerable ('no-go zones'). Although many claim that "Muslims will soon be in the majority in Sweden", it is estimated that there are a few hundred thousand people in Sweden whose roots are in predominantly Muslim countries. However, some 17 percent of Swedes are foreign-born, but only 3 to 5 percent identify as Muslim. But this figure says nothing about how many are religious or not. The Muslim faith communities have approximately 140 000 members. This is about 1,5% of Sweden's population. The largest faith communities are the Church of Sweden, the Pentecostal Movement and the Roman Catholic Church. Of Sweden's ten million inhabitants, 6,2 million are members of the Church of Sweden.

HOW MUSLIM MIGRATION MADE MALMO INTO SWEDEN CRIME CAPITAL

Malmo, this once quiet city, is overrun with violence. The culture of fear is so palpable that parents are no longer comfortable sending their children out to play. After being handed a list of measures to curb the violence in the city, Justice and Migration Minister M.Johansson stated: "We must get rid of the weapons, we need tighter punishment so that those who are held for serious gun crime can be arrested immediately and not just be released a few days later." It is fact that the bulk of the violence stems from the Muslim immigrant community (20% of population in Malmo). And it's a truism that Swedish politicians have denied in bold-faced lies and assurances to the public. Thousands of Muslim immigrants were received by naïve and welcoming townspeople. This has been true in France, England, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, and Sweden. Since the great migration into Europe, crime, largely committed by migrants, has gone up manifold, leaving many to reassess their naïveté about hosting duties.

Syrian refugees share stories about torture.

Fast facts: Syria's civil war:

- *More than 250,000 Syrians have been killed in the fighting,*

- *Almost 11 million Syrians have been displaced from their homes.*

Syria's civil war isn't just being fought on the ground but also in its prisons. Activists accuse the government and the opposition of arbitrary arrests and widespread use of torture. According to the Syrian Network for Human Rights, more than 13 104 Syrians have been killed under torture in detention since the beginning of the conflict (476 in 2016). "There were detentions before the revolution but it's never been this gruesome," said Fadel Abdul Ghany, the head of the SNHR.

Mohammad Al-Abdallah of the Syria Justice and Accountability Centre was imprisoned by the Syrian government. He is concerned that accountability for torture may be overlooked as different parties attempt to end the conflict. "When the biggest priority is wrapping up of the conflict and reaching a settlement there is a big fear that justice will be sacrificed," he said. "All parties are involved in torture ... It is up to the armed group on how they will treat the arrested person and it is exactly word to word copied from the government's book of torture."

The effects of torture can remain even when a prisoner is released from captivity. Physical pain, nightmares, paranoia, sleep deprivation and emotional withdrawal have all been observed by health workers. The psychological consequences of detention and torture are often worse for those living as refugees. "There are impacts of the experience of torture itself and there are also impacts of multiple and cumulative trauma that refugees have encountered in their lives and continue to live through," explained A.Sovcik, of the Centre for Victims of Torture, an organisation that offers psychotherapeutic and physical therapy to refugees in Jordan. "The crushing realities of living... as a refugee... and encountering all sorts of extraordinary stress ... is such a source of additional trauma, it makes it hard to go beyond the past trauma and be able to heal and move forward."

Victims of torture and family members of those who died during arbitrary arrests share their stories.

Yehia, 29, Deraa: "The screams of the women were unbearable".

"It was five in the morning. Dozens of policemen came and surrounded our neighbourhood. I was asleep at the time. Someone removed the blanket from my face and dragged me and my two brothers out of the house and bundled us into a car. I was taken to what looked like a military basement. Sixty-five people were put in one room. First I was there with my three brothers. Twenty-four hours went by and we were given no food or water. We weren't even allowed to go to the bathroom. For 16 hours the men would come and ask us questions. The investigators would come at 4pm and interrogate us until 12pm the next day.I was blindfolded and my hands and feet were tied. Sometimes they would use electric cables and give us electric shocks. They would beat us with iron rods after

pouring water on our bodies so that it hurts more. They would keep beating us for four to six hours. They hit me on my neck and on my back. One officer jammed a rod in my knee so hard that it's left a permanent injury in my leg.

I was scared of dying. I was scared.

The voice of the women from the next cell haunted me more. There were at least 50 women next door. The screams of those women were unbearable. My friend Mohammad and I would bang our fists on the wall and try to do something to stop [what was going on in there] but we just couldn't tear down those walls. I can't forget it.

One day, while I was being moved from one prison to another, I peered through from under my blindfold. I saw a young man, probably 24-25 years old, lying on the floor with his head next to the drain. Something was leaking from it and I realised it was blood. He had a hole in his head. His body was kept next to the drain so that the blood didn't spill on the floor and so it could drain out. I can't shut that image out of my head.

These days, I can't work because of the injury on my leg. I work once in 10 days and then my body gives up. I am working in the construction business but I work only for four or five days in a month because I cannot move.

I have two sons and my wife is pregnant with another child. My legs start to hurt so much, I don't have any work now.

When my young son asks for chocolates, I cannot give him anything. I feel helpless.

Last week, I reached for the kitchen knife and tried to slash my wrists. My wife screamed and ran to stop me. I don't see any meaning to my life any more."

Abu Yazan, 24, Deir Az Zor: "Torture was an everyday routine".

"I was working on my land when they [the Syrian government] arrested me and everyone else around me who was working at that time. I was detained for 40 days. It was very tough. They accused me of being involved with the armed groups. They kept asking me where the fighters were in our area, who are from the Free Syrian Army. They asked all of us the same questions. They would beat us. They would rape women in the other rooms and make us hear their voices, their screams. They didn't let us sleep.

I was in a room with four other people, my friend and my brother were with us at the time. My brother-in-law was also arrested. It was a collective and random arrest. We could hear them torture them in the room next to us. My brother-in-law died of torture. They beat him to death at some point in the other room.

I was released after some time. I went back to my village, I didn't have anywhere else to go. In June, 2014, ISIL showed up in our area. A few months later in September, when I was working on the land again, the fighters came. They wanted information about the regime and the Free Syrian Army. Every interrogator would accuse me of something different. I was detained for nine months until August last year. They put me in one of their safe houses along with 200 others. It was an old army airport outside the city. There were people from all the provinces across Syria. Torture was an everyday routine.

They slaughtered four people who were in the same room as me. They were from Raqqa who either had information or criticised them in Raqqa. They were accused of being agents. Every two or three days they gave us a little bit of food – just enough to keep us alive. We slept on the floors. There was a toilet in the same room. It was disgusting. Usually there were 20 to 30 people in the same room depending on the day, but sometimes they put me in solitary confinement for a day or two for interrogation.

One day the regime soldiers came and clashes broke out. They let 70 or 90 of us out of the prison. I went back to my village and took my wife and fled. I am always thinking about the things I saw in the prisons. I am scared of those thoughts. I just want to go home where there is no ISIL. I want the war to be over. We know it will never be the same. Our house was bombed after we left. But I just want to work on my land and live.'

Bilal Al-Mashraf, 28, Homs: "I was hung naked from the ceiling".

"I was studying French in Homs and graduated from Al Baath University. I wanted to do my PhD. I was teaching at a school and doing my master's at the same time. During the first years of my course, the revolution began. Throughout my time in the university, I felt the injustice. In Homs, a mere 5 percent of the population had control over everything. Students who had connections with the members of the Baath party possessed an undue advantage and got ahead. There was inequality even in the education system.

On April 18, 2011, there was a protest in the city centre. The day before security forces had shot and killed eight or nine protesters. I went to attend the funeral march. By 2pm, the crowd was huge, I think there were at least 10 000 people. At that time the protests weren't organised through Facebook or social media, it was spontaneous. I was arrested the next year. I was coming out of the university when I was stopped at a checkpoint. They took my ID and let me wait and then they started hitting me. For the first one and a half months I was alone in a cell. They beat me badly. I was stripped naked. The first day no one spoke to me. In the days that followed, they started talking to me and joked with me all the time, while trying to get general information about me. They asked me about the revolution and if I am supporting any militias or if I attacked a police station. I kept saying no, I am just a student. They tied my hands and hung me from the ceiling for two days. I was naked.

No one asked me any questions for two days. Then the beatings began. I would probably get rest for a few minutes to eat and then be beaten up again. They hit me in my leg and my private parts. I was kept in an underground cell. For two months I did not see any sun. I would hear strange voices of people crying and screaming to Allah for help and for mercy. Desperate voices in the dark. They tortured everyone. Whoever they tortured they would put him in the first cell so that everyone can hear his screams.

I was shifted to a tiny cell with six people where there was no space for everyone to sleep or sit together. We had sleeping shifts, each of us had three hours to sleep and then make way for the next person. I was thinking of my family, my mother. She didn't know where I was. I was afraid of my future. If I ever go out of prison will I ever get work? I kept praying, my faith in God kept me alive."

Immigrants and education.

School is the first contact many refugee children and young people have with the world outside their family. An organised school life and good teacher – student relationship are important factors in the successful resettlement of refugee students. The regular contact that teachers have with their students place them in an ideal situation to observe, monitor and respond to the student's resettlement difficulties and needs. Some refugee students may have lost their families, be separated indefinitely from family or living in a different family context, such as a nuclear family. Students who are living with their families are often affected by trauma and resettlement issues experienced by their parents and there may be strained family relationships. These students may receive very little, if any, emotional support at home. The teacher may be the only supportive adult available to the student.

The education of immigrants today is as controversial as it has been in the past. For example, in the 1920s US public schools were for the purpose of Americanizing the imigrant – to teach him or her English and American attitudes and ideas. By the 1960s schools were mired in the problems of black education; the problems of the education of immigrant children became immediately assimilated to the problems of the education of poor minority of Spanish speaking children. In the elementary and secondary schools, the argument was that the recognition of culture – and, for those of foreign language background, language and the use of culture in teaching was essential for the academic progress of children of minority background. The demand for maintenance of culture and language has weakened and is no longer the dominant element of language minority groups; ethnic and racial minorities are concerned with jobs for their people, and this is the sturdiest support for special programs using foreign language.

> "Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imaginations so they can create the world of the future. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read will be crucial. Continual instruction beyond the early grades is needed."
>
> *(International Reading Association, 1999)*

Children of imigrants more likely to go into higher education.

The disruption of education for children has been one of the worst consequences of the Suyrian conflict. Years of schooling lost directly correlate to poorer employment prospects and increased social disadvantages in years to come.

Children of immigrants are more likely to enter higher education and get a degree than their peers who do not come from an immigrant background – these are data from England. The study by the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)](#) found that 58% of people aged 25-44 with foreign-born parents go into higher education, compared with 46% of those with British-born parents. Why so? – Perhaps because the imigrant born children were at greater risk of downward social mobility than those from non-immigrant backgrounds.

The reason for the UK's educational success with children of immigrants is not clear, however, tt could be greater levels of motivation. People coming into a country can see education is their way to move up the ladder. Part of it might be the system that's more permeable – if you have those kinds of skills, this system will give you the educational opportunity. Or it could be the labour market outcomes, rewarding the skills of people.

- Fear of the downward social mobility.
- Greater levels of motivation.
- Academic selection ultimately becomes social selection.

The report showed a similar picture in Northern Ireland, where 38% of people aged 25-44 born of "native" parents and 53% with foreign-born parents attain third-level education, which means getting a degree in the majority of cases. In other European countries the proportions are roughly equivalent regardless of parental origins. What happens in most European countries is that academic selection ultimately becomes social selection.

Popular theory says children raised in immigrant families do better in school than the offspring of comparable native-born children, despite language barriers and cultural misunderstandings. The concept has a name: the "immigrant paradox" - these kids have a remarkable capacity for upward mobility.

"I found that knowing each student's strengths and embedding that in the programming, combined with high expectations, negated the deficit approach. Additionally, it is crucial to implement non-normative assessment strategies that reflect the learning experiences in the classroom, rather than using standardised tests that assess against the norms for native English speakers."

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WHAT IS CULTURALLY COMPETENT SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE?

Social policy, immigrant integration, incorporation and assimilation.

"Integration" and "incorporation" are sharply contested terms. The immigrant INTEGRATION policies are principally of two types:

1. Those focused on immigrants, often specifically on the development of language skills, knowledge of the host country, and other competencies as a prerequisite to citizenship acquisition. At least nominally, these exist so that newcomers will be able to perform as well as the native-born with respect to economic opportunity (i.e., employment and hiring), political participation, education, etc.;

2. Others, chief among them political "multiculturalism," are attempts to redefine (both via symbolic and concrete means) the relationship of a society on the whole to ethnocultural diversity. Examples include anti-discrimination policy, equal opportunity policies, affirmative action policies, cultural recognition and minority rights policies, and recognition of religious governance, to name a few.

Integration policies are not the same as immigration policies; the latter is preoccupied with movement, control over entry, and status of foreigners, while the former deals with policies that improve immigrant sociocultural, political, and economic INTEGRATION into the host society.

The latter has been our primary concern in the SURPRISE project, specifically where immigrant integration policies intersect with social policy and related institutional arrangements. For social policy – like welfare provisions and other matters of social spending – the nominal goal is also improved economic, political, and sociocultural positions and identification. In that immigrants start out as newcomers, often fleeing economic hardship and political strife, they are often a population in need of social assistance. Therefore, overlaps between social policy and immigrant integration policy are bound to occur, both by accident and by design. In this handbook we outline debates over political responses to

immigrant-driven ethnic diversity. As this is a large and heavily interdisciplinary body of work, it would be impossible to cover everything pertinent in the space allotted. In response, we narrow our emphasis in two ways: First, we emphasize comparative research in the sense that we mainly focus on cross-national studies. Second, our topical focus is limited to national-level policies that directly bear on immigrant incorporation and ethnic diversity more generally.

Many people view ASSIMILATION as a linear process of progressive improvement and adjustment to the European society. The general assumption is guided by an implicit deficit model: to advance socially and economically in the EU, immigrants need to "become European" in order to overcome their deficits in the new language and culture. As they shed the old and acquire the new, they acquire skills for working positively and effectively – a process that may not be completed until the second or third generation after entry.

Today's immigration is overwhelmingly composed of newcomers from Asia, North Africa and Latin America, areas with significantly different languages and cultures than those of previous European immigrants in the late 1800s and earlier decades of the 1900s. Concerns have been raised about the speed and degree to which these immigrants can assimilate—and hence about the social "costs" of these new imigrants – before they begin to produce net benefits to their new society. The traditional assumption is that immigrants have costs to the EU society in the initial period after arrival, but that the costs decrease and the benefits to society increase as duration of residence increases. It is further assumed that the benefits to society also increase with greater assimilation to European culture. Recent research findings, however, especially in the areas of perinatal health, mental health, and education, raise significant questions about such assumptions. Indeed, some of the findings run precisely opposite to what might be expected from traditional notions and theories of assimilation.

Integration Challenges.

Expectations:	In general, the reasons why people come to Europe are closely related to their expectations and thus affect how they perceive their situation. For example, most refugees knew little about the country of destination. The main expectations of life for all participants were:
	• Finding a better life,
	• Safety and security,
	• Good education for children,
	• Good health care.
	Some of the individual interviewees mentioned expecting friendly people and a more stable, less stressful life. For the most part, the reality of living in Sweden has lived up to the expectations of these parents, with a small number of exceptions, whereas in the Baltic States situation turned out different – allowances were insufficient and climate was colder than expected.

Language:	• English language was mentioned as the main challenge for immigrants. • Some parents feel they lose authority because their children have better Swedish than they do, so they speak to their children in the language of their country of origin. This is also a way of maintaining their culture. • A small number of parents felt it was necessary to speak Swedish with their children when living in Sweden.
Acceptance:	• The general experience of immigrants is that the host country society does not always allow them to become part of it. • However, immigrants sometimes do not allow the society into their own lives either. Some have concerns about exposing their children to the European values: "The main cause for our culture is the fear and what it does to us, it intimidates us, even, we can't do anything. It is the system itself that puts this fear on us, everything around you…This is why I tried to get in contact with our minority groups and culture, to keep away from what is going on" (*Algerian father*). • Sudanese parents suggested a model of mutual acceptance: "When we integrate it will need people also here to adopt, to understand that culture is also good. So, it will, like relationship will be same one. Otherwise we can fear" (*Sudanese parents*). • They feel supported by the Swedish society but not accepted, especially in the employment sector. • While parents want to be supported and accepted, they don't want to be questioned over and over – this can feel threatening, especially to those who traditionally only talk about their private life with people they know well.
Separation from Family and Friends:	• The difficulty of being separated from family and friends was raised often, in some discussions it was mentioned as one of the major challenges for immigrant families. • They mentioned missing family and friends, as well as missing the practical support that these close relationships offer, such as support in childminding.
Conflicts between Parents and Children:	Immigrant families do not always arrive in the host country (Sweden) at the same time. Parents who came on their own and left their children behind explained that they wanted to settle in and learn about the system before bringing their children over and giving them support based on their own adjustment to Sweden. However, they can sometimes feel guilty for leaving their children behind. The

	reunification stage can be difficult because in the meantime the children have continued to develop without their parents' influence. In some cases mothers felt that separation from their children had actually influenced them more than Swedish culture did. They felt their children did not respect them anymore because they thought they were adults now. However, in the time that had elapsed, the children had grown older, so this may simply have been a normal developmental stage for them, not influenced at all by the move. Other challenges brought up by parents included a lack of respect, attitude problems and behavioural problems of children. In most of the parents' countries of origin, young people generally obey their parents and are influenced strongly by their religions. Yet in Europe children are generally taught to think critically and to question things. Some parents suggested that it would be helpful if the schools informed them of this cultural different.
Discipline:	In many of the immigrants' home countries, disciplining children using corporal punishment is common practice. Therefore children's rights which forbid corporal punishment as seen as very negative by most of the parents, who feel that children can do whatever they want in Sweden as a result, with one mother describing her children as "totally out of control". There were some varying viewpoints: one parent felt that in his home country children respected their parents more. Many parents do not usually talk to their children as a disciplinary measure, and find the European culture of raising children without corporal punishment confusing and threatening.
Ease of Integration:	Most parents commented that it is easier for their children to integrate into Swedish society than for themselves, with one parent stating that the children's development was influenced more by the new society than by their parents' culture. Successful integration can be seen as a learning process which the parents and children must go through together: "It is better, all parent and children to involve in the same...because now we are all together. But when we leave that for the children, we are out of that. We are not able to understand. Then when our children is behaving...it will devolve conflict between parent and children." (*Sudanese father*).
Racism:	Many racist experiences were described by the parents, sometimes involving social services, employers, general practitioners, at work, in schools, in the neighbourhood or even in the family. For example some Muslim parents had experienced racism from their neighbours and their own children, who they felt had picked up on the attitudes of their peers in the area. One parent, who is a doctor mentioned experiencing racism in the workplace. This also came up a number of times in the individual interviews: "Racism is everywhere, in every organisation...It's worst in higher organisations." Sudanese mother

	added that she helped herself by studying legislation about bullying in the workplace, as she had no support from her employer: "The good thing about the Western world is – there are rules clearly written in every organisation." A number of Muslim parents said that they felt particularly vulnerable to racism because of their distinctive clothing. One mother commented that most children and parents from her country of origin faced racism because of their skin colour, regardless of whether or not the children were born in Sweden or any other European country: "I mean, even my children who were born in Sweden sometimes face racial abuse...it's just because of the colour" (*British-Pakistani mother*). • It can depend on the environment: A Swedish Zambian mother, who has a half-Lebanese child, said her daughter experienced discrimination from her fellow students in a public rural school, but not in a private secondary school. In keeping with this point, it seems that the experience of racism is different for every individual, but in general those who have poor Swedish (or English) or look visibly different experience more open or verbal discrimination.
Employment:	• Unemployment is a problem for the immigrant parents, and this affects the family, particularly the way children perceive their parents as role models in terms of their own educational goals. Parents who do not work would like to be able to support their own children in finding work. • Some Muslim parents are concerned that they find it more difficult to find work as they are wearing a headscarf, despite having the relevant qualifications.
Cultural Identity and Religion:	Parents seem to fall into different categories when it comes to children maintaining their culture. Some worry about their children losing their own culture and being too influenced by Swedish (or European) culture, others feel that there can be a balance between the two by keeping both separate but choosing the best aspects from each culture. There is a large diversity of experience and opinion in terms of culture. Almost all parents wanted their children to maintain the values and culture of their country of origin, and all parents want their children to keep their own language. Some parents feel their children are experiencing an identity crisis, and are confused in terms of which culture they belong to. Few commented that their children are ashamed of their roots and try to hide their origins: "One of my sons changed his name to Sven. I did not know until his Swedish friend came to ask for him in the house, I was shocked" (*Anonymous father*). Another mother found that her child actively rejected her culture: "I sang to my grandchild in Kurdish, my son and his Swedish girlfriend

	insulted me for this and told never to try it again...Sweden has damaged their cultural values." Some parents felt that children should hide their culture when out, yet embrace it when in the family home. It seemed very important to most of the parents that their children retain their religion; one Algerian father suggested that parents become more religious during the process of integration out of fear of losing this aspect of their culture.
Drugs and Alcohol:	Most parents are concerned about their children taking drugs or drinking alcohol, and want support and education for themselves and their children on the subject. However, in spite of their fears, very few had evidence of their children getting involved in drug or alcohol use.
Sex Education:	Many of the parents were concerned about the nature of sex education in Europe. Almost all parents, with one exception, preferred sex education to take place outside of the family (e.g. in schools) as it is a taboo topic in their home country, especially in African and Muslim countries. Yet they feel that sex education and awareness are very important in the prevention of sexual abuse or teenage pregnancy. One mother, when asked about the inclusion of sex education material in discussions responded: "As long as this topic doesn't go against our religion, I would be delighted to get my daughter to know it. If it is like a scientific book, then it would be ok. But if it was about sexuality, and say it is normal to have a boyfriend and a girlfriend and to involve in kissing, I would not be happy about it" (*Anonymous mother).* Most parents did not want their teenage children to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, since this implies sexual relationships. They don't want their children to know that sex before marriage is an option, but are regularly challenged by media. One participant explained her situation: "And now they are at the age to be talking about girlfriends or boyfriends. But in our religion, we don't have to have a girlfriend or boyfriend outside the marriage. So, you find yourself in such an open country with a lot of clashing between cultures" (*Tunisian mother*).
School System and Education:	Most people consider the Swedish education system to be positive, with one exception who felt it was not as good as the American system. The main differences and difficulties encountered with the school system were age and level of education. Levels of education can differ between the country of origin and Sweden, leading to difficulties for children. One parent commented that his child did not know how to read or write when he started school here, as he had been in a refugee camp up to that point. The difference in school starting age between the country of origin and Sweden can also be a challenge. In contrast, parents from Eastern Europe generally felt that their children were

	educationally ahead of local children as the education level was higher in their country of origin.
The Health System:	Most parents understand the Swedish health system, are informed about how it works and it was generally seen as one of the advantages of living in Sweden. One concern was that they sometimes don't understand the language used around health issues which can lead to them feeling inadequately treated.
Social and Community Life:	Socialising in Sweden and the Baltic States seems quite different to what most immigrants are used to. Parents said that they meet others in work, at people's houses, or at church. Individual interviewees commented that people in Sweden, including youth, stay in their houses more and don't meet neighbours. Language and financial issues can affect the choice of people to socialise with. Some participants felt uncomfortable socialising with Swedish people because of a perceived lack of discipline and respect, as well as an emphasis on drinking and smoking in youth companies. Social life in Africa for example is quite spontaneous, while in Sweden and the Baltic States it often revolves around organised events or activities. Whether or not immigrants socialise depends on the area they live in – they may not have anything in common with their neighbours, or have nowhere to meet. Many immigrants prefer to socialise within their own ethnic community, often to maintain their own culture.

Informal talk in brilliant sun brings healing.

The role of social work in the refugee crisis.

In the camps, refugees need shelter and food; but things get trickier when the moving stops. Many governments have been slow to act, and some hostile towards the "swarm" (David Cameron's words) of humanity. As governments have hesitated, social workers have stepped "into the vacuum. Across Europe, they have managed to take sides, [supporting] migrants and refugees even where public opinion is against them," says V.Ioakimidis from the Durham University. Also R.Stark, President of the [International Federation of Social Workers](), says the profession exists to help people work through changes in their lives – and refugees are experiencing some of the most traumatic changes imaginable. In the countries that refugees are leaving the social work presence is vital.

While the social work in refugee camps is about material survival – shelter, water and food – the picture becomes complex in the countries in which refugees want to stay. Germany has been one of the more welcoming countries towards refugees. "We are the partners of the refugees," says G.Stark-Angermeier, deputy chief executive of the Munich branch of the welfare organisation "Caritas". The social work role in Munich – which had an influx of 12 000 refugees in just one day last year – has included helping refugees access health services, reuniting family members and, vitally, getting volunteers to teach German. This social work is about people settling into new communities and how these communities will adapt.

This knowledge will be vital. As more people settle for the longer term, social work will be crucial in integrating communities and helping people come to terms with what they've been through. "The emotional trauma of change is something that social workers know a huge amount about," says G.Stark. "But I think there's also a huge learning curve for social workers in understanding the massive journeys that people are making and the situation they have come from – the fighting they've seen, the discrimination, the persecution."

> "The refugee crisis has brought into focus the conflict in social work: whether it is a force for social change, or for control? There is a growing debate in the profession about the role of social workers and how others perceive that role. We're asked almost to be immigration officers. Our role is to meet the needs of people in front of us."
>
> G.Stark-Angermeier, President of International Federation of Social Workers.

Best practices for social work with refugees and immigrants.

Social work practice with refugees and immigrants requires specialized knowledge of these populations, and specialized adaptations and applications of mainstream services and interventions. Because they are often confronted with cultural, linguistic, political and socioeconomic barriers, these groups are especially vulnerable to psychological problems. Among these problems are anxiety, depression, alienation, grief, even post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as biological concerns stemming from inadequate or underutilized medical

services. The present Handbook offers quick insight to social work with foreign-born clients that evaluates many different strategies in light of their methodological strengths and weaknesses. The context for empirically based service approaches to such clients by describing the nature of these populations, relevant policies designed to assist them, and service delivery systems. Addressing specific problem areas common to refugees and imigrants, evaluating a variety of assessment and intervention techniques for each area. Maintaining a empirical approach throughout, the Handbook seeks to identify the most practical, "best practices" to meet the various and pressing needs of uprooted peoples.
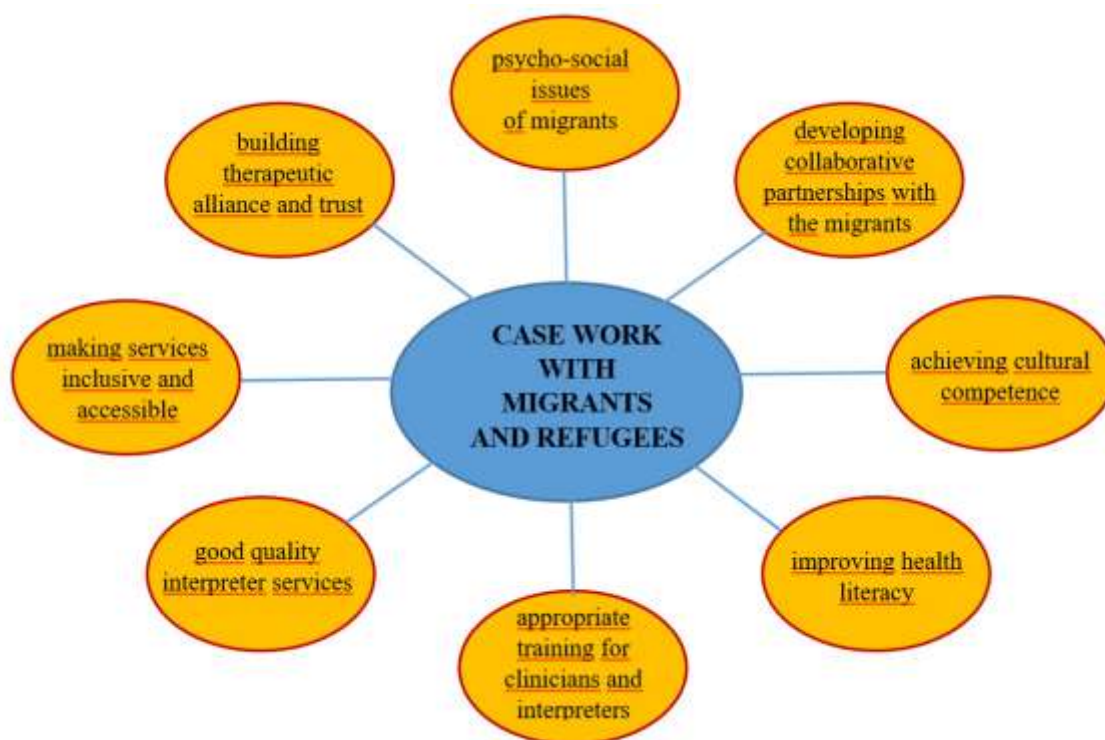
Case work with immigrants in system.

Local politics addressing local needs: governance structures.

In the last two decades, cities around the world have witnessed *movements to democratize local government and increase community and social group involvement in local affairs*. Governance, as distinct from government, has become an influential concept in structuring interactions between local government and civil society groups and organizations.

Some city administrations have deliberately cultivated relationships with minority communities and social groups, including immigrants and refugees, to enhance their involvement in actions and programs that touch their lives. This collaborative effort to develop governance relationships with newcomer communities that have limited experience in local politics and government includes projects that encourage neighborhood economic development, as well as programs that address the needs of school-aged immigrant and second-generation youth and their families.

The role of cities in immigrant integration.

It has long been recognized that urban areas, especially large cities, are places where cultural diversity flourishes. Cities like New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, Sydney, London, Paris and Amsterdam, which receive migrants from all over the world, exemplify the cultural, social, and religious diversity that many believe is a fundamental characteristic of places that will thrive—economically and socially—in an era of global interdependence.

History demonstrates, however, that diversity is not a sufficient condition to bring about the sustained inclusion of the different groups that populate a city. The collapse into inter-ethnic conflict of once relatively harmonious multicultural cities like pre-World War I Vienna, pre-World War II Warsaw, and in more recent decades Beirut, Sarajevo, and Srebrenica, highlights the fragility of cultural diversity. *Learning to live with cultural diversity, managing cultural exchanges among people, organizations and institutions, and dealing directly with inequities and discrimination are challenges that cities must face if they are to be socially inclusive and culturally diverse*.

For most cities, efforts to decrease social polarization and manage diversity rely on the "bedrock" social policies of public education, health care, and income support that are usually the responsibility of national and state, provincial or regional governments. But social inclusion also depends on the *quality of the countless interactions* that occur among the kaleidoscope of individuals, social groups, and institutions that exist in a city. In this respect, city governments also have a responsibility to develop local policies that manage diversity and integrate newcomers and long-established residents into dynamic social, economic, and political environments. They also must take the lead in mitigating practices of exclusion and segregation that are so acutely felt in the places where people live. Social inclusion in urban places *does not just happen organically*.

City governments, agencies, social groups and organizations of civil society are playing more influential roles in shaping social inclusion and integration pathways. In part, this means that *cities may assume responsibilities that traditionally have been associated with more senior-level governments* in order to respond to the needs, challenges, and opportunities posed by new residents, institutions, and economic activities.

It also means that cities must continue to play a role in creating *socially inclusive environments* by strategically pursuing urban management initiatives that are positive in terms of outcomes but are only indirectly related to immigrants and their settlement and integration. Urban transportation, housing, and policing, for example, are not normally thought of as immigrant integration programs, even if they seek to achieve greater social inclusion. They also reflect past decisions about construction and density, land use, transportation, economic development, political processes and representation, and social planning.

Many national and state or provincial governments do not have a specific urban policy agenda, but the "non-urban" social and economic policies they pursue do have a direct influence on social inclusion and managing diversity in cities. *Investment by senior-level governments in expensive urban infrastructure*, especially in older cities, can minimize extreme differences in the quality of public goods and services across neighborhoods. In some countries, national and state governments also have pursued policies aimed at diminishing social isolation and fragmentation by investing in social housing and efficient public transportation systems.

Cities are also ideally suited to address many issues associated with the *inclusion of newcomers*, such as reducing the social and residential exclusion of marginalized and disadvantaged groups, *increasing social and spatial access to public services and employment, and constructing democratic, efficient, and equitable local governance structures*. Established central cities may have depth of experience in working with diverse populations, but immigration is forcing suburban municipalities to catch up on managing diversity.

There are many areas of potential policy *intervention* that cities can pursue to encourage integration between newcomers and native-born residents and foster urban environments in which inclusion rather than exclusion and conflict are the norm:

1. "Governance" relationships between governments, state agencies, non-governmental organizations and social groups,

2. Policies and programs that support fledgling immigrant and minority communities and/or respond to their distinct needs and experiences as they integrate into a new society,

3. Investments in public goods and services ranging from daycares and community centers to water and sewer systems,

4. Urban land-use planning and housing,

5. Police services and outreach to minority communities,

6. Urban transportation and accessibility to employment and services,

7. Economic development initiatives that engage local entrepreneurs and seek to diminish rather than exacerbate marginalization and segregation.

Sometimes cities get lucky and decisions made in response to acute circumstances decades earlier can have unintended benefits for social inclusion in today's *multiethnic cities and suburbs*. E.g., decisions made about suburban development in Montréal (Canada) during the 1950s and 1960s had largely positive implications for diminishing spatial segregation and building community cohesion among some ethnic groups. In response to a crisis in housing availability in Montreal immediately following World War II the decision was made to encourage the construction of medium-density rental housing and single-family owner-occupied housing in neighborhoods on what was then the suburban periphery. Families deliberately search for rental housing in the same neighborhood as their more well-established relatives so as to maintain social networks that are rich in information and support, and furnish links to larger communities, thereby diminishing feelings of isolation. *The relatively close proximity of people from different social classes and ethnocultural backgrounds in these suburban neighborhoods also has allowed newcomers to tap into information, employment, and social networks beyond the orbit of their ethnic group*.

### Public transportation – networking a fragmented city.

The value of public transportation investments in facilitating social inclusion and access to opportunities cannor be overestimated in cities where employment is scattered in nodes throughout the metropolitan area. Even in a small *city transportation is a key factor in integration*. The termination of public bus service immediately following the afternoon rush hour is identified as a major impediment to new refugees and immigrants taking advantage

of evening language training courses. In a similar vein, significant investments in subway and bus systems following World War II have increased significantly the ability of new immigrants to access both employment and public services. Successful *investments that diminish exclusion and marginalization* always must be adapted to urban change lest the situation deteriorate. Augmented by a boom in outer suburban employment districts, there has been a growing spatial mismatch between the housing locations of less-well-off residents, many of whom are newcomers, and the distribution of employment opportunities.

City life supports and creates interaction and inclusion.

Managing diversity and creating conditions for social inclusion can no longer be a concern for old central cities alone. In many cities the majority of immigrants, both new and long-established, settle in the suburbs, not the traditional inner-city enclaves that so dominate our imagined ethnic landscapes. In the past decade *suburban neighborhoods have emerged as new multiethnic immigrant enclaves* in both new and established settlement gateways. Immigrants have a range of needs—from housing to education to language instruction to efficient public transportation for accessing jobs spread over vast metropolitan areas. These needs are far from new, but they pose integration challenges because of where immigrants live within metropolitan areasMost suburban neighborhoods also have little experience in managing cross-cultural communication or encouraging social inclusion among neighbors from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. In low-density suburbs where socio-cultural homogeneity has been an archetypal condition if not a founding principle, the emergence of a plurality of cultures is a radical change. It also poses a challenge to encouraging integration in the sites where different cultures and social groups meet—schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, streets, shopping malls, and soccer fields.
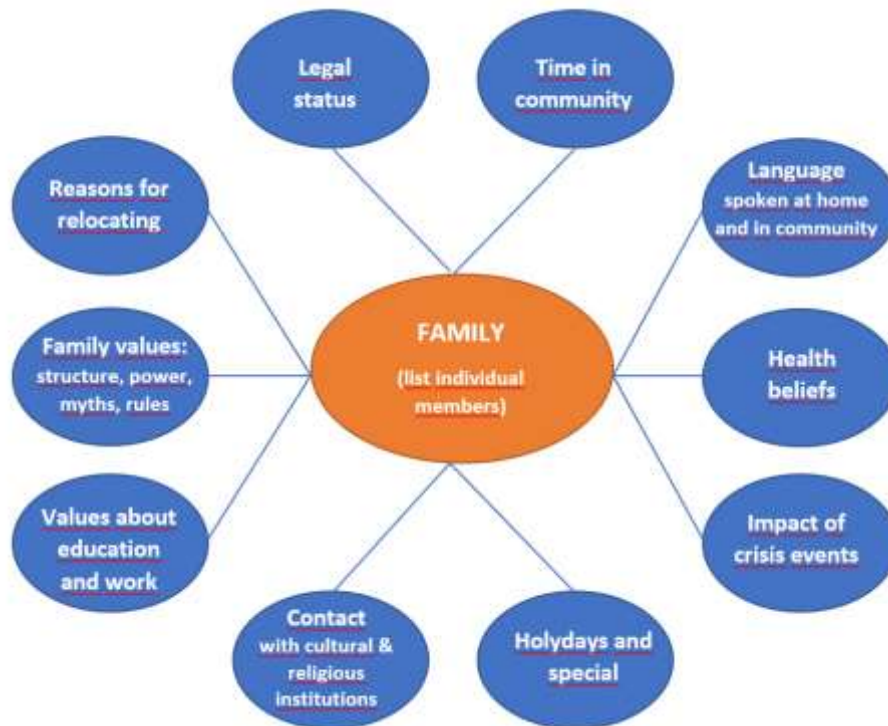
Social work with immigrant family in system.

Provision of induction programmes.

• Integration programmes *provided by immigrant organisations* seem to be very successful, because the immigrant community have best access to the members of that community who have problems. Immigrant youth with problems can be especially *difficult to reach*. In order to fulfil this task properly, the immigrant organisations need full support and shared responsibility of the government and other organisations. Yet immigrant groups can be hesitant in taking on responsibility to provide programmes, often because they are afraid of failing and gaining a bad reputation as a result.

• Immigrant organisations *should not be left alone* to run integration programmes and to try and fix the failure and gaps in the system (education system etc). But they can complement the government by teaching effective implementation of those programmes.

• Therefore, the ideal situation is for immigrant organisations to get the support of the government and of existing groups so that *responsibility for the induction is shared*. Immigrant organisations are vulnerable to blame if the integration process does not succeed, which could have a negative effect on whole imigrant community.

• Intercultural diversity (i.e. *staff with a personal background of immigration*) in general government institutions can be helpful in the implementation of integration programmes.

• Induction programmes seem to be most successful if implemented on a *local level*, not national, level.

• Induction programmes should be implemented b*y all agents who deal with immigrant youths*: authorities, educators and employers.

Foreigners are invited to integration courses in Latvia

The project is co-financed by the European Union. Grant Agreement No. PMIF/9/2016/1/03.

In order to facilitate foreigners living in Latvia, third-country nationals and imigrants are invited for free training and integration courses held in five Latvian cities (Riga, Liepaja, Jelgava, Daugavpils and Rezekne) in the period September 2017 – December 2018. They will be able to learn Latvia's history, political system, knowledge of the social, educational and health systems and the availability of care services in Latvia, to get acquainted with the situation on the labour market, employment, opportunities to work or to build one's own business, as well as to learn Latvian culture and traditions.

Topics discussed:

1. What is the Latvian economy, traditions, values and characteristics compared with other countries in the Europeand world?
2. Where and how you can make friends with the locals?
3. What you need to know to successfully live in Latvia?

The learning process is organised as lectures and practical consultations. Training language – Latvian, Russian or English, if necessary, interpreters of other languages will be invited.

Also training courses for Asylum seekers continue in summer.

Training programme on the social and economic inclusion under the Support Actions for Persons under International Protection project invited 27 persons, who come from Syria (19), India (4), Armenia (2), Russia (1), Turkey (1). Through the entire period of educational activities Kurdish, Arabic, Hindi and Russian language experts ensured quality communication with the participants. From 1 July, 2016, until 14 August, 2017, a total of 385 persons under international protection have participated in the training courses and information events aimed at inclusion of the target group into Latvian society. Since the number of resettled refugees, who arrive in Latvia, has declined, persons, who have arrived in our country from Afghanistan, Belarus, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Turkey, are obtaining knowledge about Latvia.

The training programme on the social and economic inclusion allows its participants to acquire information about Latvia, employment, education, health care, social assistance system and other topics. In the classes participants obtain answers to questions related to their current stay in Latvia. Lecturers indicate that persons under international protection most often require information on the matters of employment and education. One of the main benefits for participants of the training is gaining understanding of possible solutions to their situation as asylum seekers and after the receipt of the status. Activities for children are organised in a separate room during the training to encourage families with children to participate. In addition to the training course various information and educational activities take place.

Under the Support Actions for Persons under International Protection project implemented with the support of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Foundation by society "Shelter *Safe House*" support is planned for 530 persons. The target audience includes adults, children and illiterate asylum seekers.

Development of relations between representatives of different nationalities in Ozolnieki.

Participants (40 people) played games, walked the path of sensations, learned about Chinese culture and traditions, tasted food prepared according to various national culinary traditions and made the tea of friendship. The target audience of the event are people, who have come to Latvia from countries outside the EU, says Project

Coordinator G.Vīksne. "Chinese arrived a bit earlier for the event. Soon the woman from Ukraine joined in. They all study Latvian together. Their meeting was very warm, they hugged each other and inquired after each other`s state of affairs. This gives them a sort of sense of security. You have come from a far away country, but still can meet with friends here. Latvian society is not very open, but such events enable people of different nationalities to learn more about each other, and possibly helps the development of a network of friends later on".

Interpreter S.Langa helps along our conversation with the Chinese Xao-Feng Jou, who lives at Ozolnieki with his wife, their seven year old daughter and four year old son for the last three years. Xao-feng Jou is not employed in Latvia, however, he owns an enterprise in China. He likes that it is so quiet here compared to the large cities. He and his family came to Latvia to slow down the hectic pace of their life and his family appreciates it. He also loves the beautiful scenery and the friendly people. Since children are still small and he devoted a lot of time and effort to furnishing their family home, there has not been enough time to learn Latvian and he has begun it only this year. He does not consider Latvian a difficult language, but he admits that he should set aside more time to master it.

The Ukrainian J.Zborovska, a journalist by education, lives in Jelgava with her family four years: "The most important thing is that it is peaceful here". She studies Latvian and admits that the widespread use of Russian in Latvia hinders greatly the progress of her Latvian. "However we feel at home."

ICI representative G.Berza says that the event presented great opportunity to meet people from other cultures living nearby, and invites everyone to participate in the work of the centre as a volunteer, "to continue the good works aimed at creating a friendly environment in your region and in the country all together". ICI operates as a one one-stop-shop and provides information and support to persons coming to Latvia from countries outside the EU, as well as professional support to service providers in all municipalities in Latvia, coordinates awareness and availability of services to various groups of immigrants. ICI offices are located in Riga and at four Points of Contact – in Kurzeme (Liepaja), in Vidzema (Cesis), in Latgale (Daugavpils), in Zemgale (Jelgava).

Evaluation Report on Provision of Services of the Social Worker and Social Mentor.

1 December 1, 2016 – May 30, 2017, support to 340 target group representatives from 18 countries was provided under the procurement of the Society "Shelter *Safe House*" under the title "Providing Social Worker and Social Mentor Services to Asylum Seekers and Persons Holding Refugee or Alternative Status" (2 social workers and 10 social mentors). Communication was provided via employees and interpreters/language experts.

Majority of the clients, immediately after arriving to Latvia and concurrently were confronted by many situations and issues placing them in the group of vulnerable clients and exposed them to the risk of social exclusion. Meanwhile, social workers and social mentors provided maximum support to 171 clients addressing the identified client issues.

"Mainly, specialists had to serve as mediators between clients and many other institutions and specialists alleviating the clients' negative feelings on getting accommodated in Latvia, reducing the psycho-emotional stress, motivating them to engage in carious activities and events, repeatedly explaining what are and will be the financial opportunities if the person chooses to stay in Latvia", says S.Zalcmane, Head of the Society "Shelter *Safe House*". "The number of refuges in Latvia is low, so the situation of each client gets an individual approach and gets specific solution".

Provision of social worker and social mentor services provided cooperation with institutions mentioned in the Action Plan (Ministry of Interior affairs, Office of

Citizenship and Migration Affairs and the subordinate ACAS "Mucenieki", Provision State Agency, Ministry of Welfare and Society Integration Foundation, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Economics, Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, as well as certain municipalities, including Ropaži Region Orphan`s Court, State Employment Agency, Latvian Language Agency, etc. Separate meetings with the representatives from the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees have also taken place). To provide the best possible assistance to asylum seekers, several non-governmental and religious partner organizations were engaged ("Red Cross" and "Gribu palīdzēt bēgļiem" ("*I want to help refugees*"), Salvation Army, Betania Monastery, etc.), also there was a cooperation with several private entrepreneurs and socially active people.

The report contains thematic information on the service, provides the clients' social portrait analysis, information on the work accomplished by the social workers and social mentors during the past six months.

The procurement "Providing Social Worker and Social Mentor Services to Asylum Seekers and Persons Holding Refugee or Alternative Status" is implemented from 1 December 2016 until 31 May 2018. Society "Shelter "Safe House"" provides the service within the the activity of European Social Fund "Diversity Promotion (Prevention of Discrimination)" (SAM No. 9.1.4.4) implemented by the Society Integration Foundation. 85% of the funding is granted by the European Social Fund, while the remaining 15% are funded by the Latvian government.

Complete evaluation of the service provided is available in the Evaluation prepared by the Society "Shelter "Safe House".

Migration and mental health.

Research to know migration and its connection with mental health of migrants was done as early as in the year of 1932. It was found that the people who migrated (Norwegian emigrants to Minnesota, USA) had genetically predisposed psychosis and later they developed schizophrenia. When people are vulnerable to mental illnesses, they are more prone to develop disorders in subsequent to migration. It shows that migration becomes a precipitating factor for mental illnesses due to the various barriers that people come across in the migration process and in the post migration period.

The children who migrated from developing countries to developed countries, though they had good physical growth and health, became overweight and obese and developed an unhealthy life-style compared with local children. It shows that people will find it difficult to continue their healthy life-style and prone to adopt an unhealthy life-style due to the complex factors that the migration process involves.

More often the migrants of developed countries who migrated from developing and middle income countries are recognized as high risk group for HIV / AIDS syndrome. This indicates the phenomenon may be because of the social exclusion, discrimination, cultural and language barriers in offering and accessing the health and other services at the place of destination. The people who migrate from developing countries to developed countries are hesitating to access the needed services including health services. And more often the services are not inclusive because of which social and health related issues are more prevalent among migrants.

Mental health issues may come up in public places as threat to fellow citizens.

The research studies from different parts of the world reveal that migration is a complex process which affects the people differently. Most often it is associated with stressful events, barriers and challenges because of which the psycho-social issues and other health issues are more prevalent among the migrants compared with the native population. In responding to this, several research studies have tried to draw some approaches and suggested preventive, promotive and curative strategies.

Psychology advances scientific research, educates and trains psychologists and others who work with immigrants. Mental and behavioral health needs of immigrants follow them across the lifespan along with effects of acculturation, prejudice/discrimination, and immigration policy on individuals, families and society.

The three major goals of this subsection of the Handbook are to:

1. raise awareness about this growing (but poorly understood) population,

2. derive evidence-informed recommendations for the provision of mental health services to imigrants,

3. make recommendations to improve education, research, practice and policy affecting immigrants of all ages and backgrounds.

Self-esteem and coping strategies.

Self-esteem is understood as a general attitude toward the worth or value of oneself and it refers to the individual's evaluation of the discrepancy between the self-image and ideal self. A large discrepancy between the self-image and ideal self will result in low self-esteem.

Self-esteem is basically social in nature and develops along with the interaction with the society around. The re-evaluation and modifications happen in self-esteem during the transition periods such as migration. The self-esteem influences the overall functioning of the individual; inevitably the girl children who enrolled at primary school after internal migration found to come across a number of challenges after coming to a new school environment. These hurdles are seen mainly in terms of adjusting to the new system, language barrier, poor socio-economic background, peer relationship, discrimination and bullying from others. These factors found to be having a negative impact directly and indirectly on these children where their academic performance, attendance were very poor compared to local children. Respondents in our discussions (children) reported moments often having self-doubts, thinking that the local counterparts have been right always more prosperous and successful, whereas they remain backward perpetually contributing to feelings of inadequacy and difference and poor self-image. Further they became victims of bullying by the local children and they developed feelings of anxious, helplessness, sometimes suicidal thoughts by self-degrading and self-blame.

The prevalence of mental health issues among the migrant population is shown in the table (*data from:* Virupaksha H.G, Ashok Kumar A., Bergai Parthsarathy Nirmala B.P. Migration and mental health: An interface. / Journal of Natural Science, Biology and Medicine, Vol. 5(2), July-December 2014, pp. 233-239).

Prevalence of mental health problems:

24% of the migrated working women who are staying in cities found to be mentally unhealthy.

The 3,4%, 23,4% and 73% of the migrants were at high, moderate and low risk for mental illness respectively.

After 10-12 years of migration, the admission rates for psychiatric disorders especially for schizprenia were in a peak among migrants.

58% of the migrant respondents had at least one symptom of poor mental health.

The native rural adolescents and young adults were approximately 25% less likely to be diagnosed with acute reaction to stress and approximately 10% less likely to be diagnosed with depression than migrated counterparts.

Psychiatric morbidity was 33,66% among migrants compared to non-migrant local population which was 26%.

The refugee adolescents were found to be coming across of high stressful life events, having low self-esteem and emotional problems.

The migrants had a poor mental health status and a very poor help seeking behavior; the somatic and neurotic symptoms were more prevalent among them.

Treating torture survivors.

It is different from treating survivors of other traumas – fires, car accidents or natural disasters. Torture is done deliberately to break a person's spirit or use them as an example to frighten other people. And then there's a real breakdown in trust. Patients are often suspicious of the process of therapy itself. They're thinking, "Who are you? Why would I tell you my story? Are you from the police and want me deported?"

Group therapy and art therapy – i.e., non-verbal communication tools as pictures, drawing, photography can help rebuild a sense of trust, especially since many patients come from societies that emphasize group relations. In a weekly group session for sub-Saharan African men, for example, participants hear what others have been through and how they've coped (a Swedish share). This "picture method" was used also in this project SURPRISE implementation.

For some, trauma continues even after they've made it to safety. For many of these people, trauma is not post; it's ongoing. Leaving behind friends, family and homes, making a dangerous journey and rebuilding their lives in the face of poverty, hostility and other stressors can be just as traumatic as whatever they've fled. What makes this wrenching work worthwhile is to see patients who have had their lives on hold win asylum and bring their families together at last. " One of those people says. "It's amazing to see families that were torn apart reunited again."

Common responses to trauma.

Each student's experience and reaction to traumatic experience is different. The following list describes some of the ways children and young people may respond to their trauma:

- Repeatedly thinking about experiences of violence,
- Feeling afraid,
- Feeling sad,
- Physical symptoms including lack of energy, lack of appetite,
- heart palpitations, headaches and stomach aches,
- Difficulty in sleeping,
- Lack of concentration and interest,
- Getting angry easily,
- Restlessness,
- Not trusting others,
- Lack of self confidence.

Refugees in classrom (Germany).

Best practices for running schools in refugee camps.

There are some initiatives proposed by the Josoor NGO program (supporting students in Europe, the US, Canada and the Middle East) which deserve penetrating attitude:

1. providing non-formal education to Out of School Syrian children,
2. to familiarise them with the Lebanese curriculum,
3. to learn enough English to be able to be placed in the appropriate grade in Lebanese schools.

Teaching in emergency situations is different from teaching in formal schools. Therefore, the program hires teachers who have had some training or experience in emergency education. The most effective way to reach out to teachers is to spread news among the targeted community.

Jusoor uses trained Syrian teachers, a sequenced language program and child-centred learning methods. Remedial help is provided for children struggling to make up for the years of school they have missed. Jusoor invests in training its teachers so that they are able to provide the best practices in education for the refugee students. News of the training spread throughout the local NGOs that are working on education for Syrian refugees. Here some of the best practices are shortly described for work in refugee camps.

1. Before starting an education program in a refugee camp, a needs analysis is done to gather appropriate information that guides in *identifying age groups* of the children, location, and curriculum for the school. This is carried out through interviews with parents of refugee children, the children themselves, the community, principals and teachers.

2. After analysing the data, a *steering committee* is formed in order to establish goals, purposes, age groups, and curriculum content of the program. The steering committee is usually comprised of a finance specialist, an educationist, a member of the community, a psychologist, a health specialist, and a lawyer. The reason behind the diversity of the steering committee is to cover all aspects of the program that might arise such as legal issues, accreditation, curriculum modification, psychosocial wellbeing, maintenance, communication with local authorities, and fundraising. It is recommended for the steering committee to include an education sub-committee, which will be in charge of the educational program of the school.

3. Once a needs analysis has been conducted, *a plan of action that includes the timeframe, a number of students, a number of teachers, curriculum* to be followed, *goals and values of the schools, roles and responsibilities of staff members, evaluation and student assessments, as well as financial needs is written*. It is important for the location be in an area that hosts a large number of refugee families to enable of easy access of students to schools. The building of the school does not have to be designed as a normal school setting; it could be a house, a tent, a shed, or an old factory. The *number of classrooms* should be in accordance with the number of students, and the size of the classrooms have to be big enough to accommodate no more than 25 students giving enough room for movement and activities. Bathrooms with running water, sufficient lighting for teachers' room and if possible a multi-purpose area that could be used as a library, or for one to one teaching as well as enough boards to display student activities are also necessary.

4. The next step is *hiring personnel for the school*. Before doing this, the educational sub-committee decides on whether they want to run a homeroom teacher based school or a subject-room based school. When making this decision, the targeted age group should be considered. - Each school has a principal and a supervisor. The principal has to be empowered enough to make decisions on the day-to-day running of the school. Another essential person to hire is a counsellor because most refugee children have suffered from trauma and need help to cope with the emotional and psychological well-being.

Topics discussed with parents.

• **Socialising**: Children have a different acculturation process to their parents. This is mainly because they go to school where they are exposed to a number of different cultures, while parents generally socialise with people from their own country of origin. Therefore children are more likely to integrate. Socioeconomic differences need to be taken into account when thinking about socialising, as people from different socio-economic groups tend to socialise differently (e.g. sports clubs vs. local pubs, etc).

• **Participation**: There is a common attitude that immigrants should keep their own cultures in the private sphere and adapt to the main society only when in the public sphere. This is a misconception and needs to be changed: immigrants need to participate fully in the new society, while still maintaining their own identity, in order for successful integration to occur.

• **Democratic Values**: Immigrants from some cultures may find the method of bringing up children in an egalitarian manner to be challenging, as traditionally they expect loyalty and certain family duties from their children.

• **Maintaining Values and Culture**: The mental well-being of immigrants could be in danger if families are too traditional and don't allow their children to integrate into the new society. In this case, role modelling is important, whereby people within the immigrants' own community act as role models for other immigrant parents who may be being "overprotective" of their children.

• **Religion**: Religion needed to be discussed with immigrant youth, in such a way that a dialogue is allowed to develop.

For further reading:

Readings for Bridging Cultures: Teacher Education Module. Ed. by C.Rothstein-Fisch. London, WesEd, 2016.
Trumbill E., Carrie Rothstein-Fisch C. Managing Diverse Classrooms: How to Build on Students' Cultural Strengths. London, WesEd, 2017.

How to welcome immigrant students into the classroom:

- Use images and games,
- Friendly conversation,
- Create mixed-student small groups,
- Identify shared values and differences in the classroom,
- Plan for opportunities where students can voice their personal values and beliefs to create a sense of belonging,
- Make room for storytelling, one of the most powerful ways to create empathy,
- Integrate immigration stories,
- Create opportunities for positive civic engagement and discussion.

HOW TO?...

How teachers can help students from refugee backgrounds:

- Provide a stable, predictable environment with clear rules and consequences,
- Model and encourage relationships that rebuild trust,
- Avoid aggressive confrontations,
- Prepare students for changes to routine,
- Be consistent but considerate,
- Observe students playing and interacting with others,
- Encourage journal writing and writing in first language, tune into themes,
- Ask students about their drawings,
- Focus attention and revise frequently,
- Give plenty of praise and encouragement for small gains,
- Allow breaks to relieve fatigue,
- Communicate with the family.

How schools can help students and their families from refugee backgrounds:

- Use professional interpreters to facilitate accurate and appropriate communication, especially during enrollment and in ongoing contact with students' parents/family,
- Gently enquire about family background,
- Try to find out about the culture,
- Arrange first language buddies and involve the student in peer support,
- Ask the school guidance officer for community services that could assist the family,
- Link parents with other families of similar background in the school,
- Be considerate,
- Be proactive, keep communicating, listen carefully and be supportive,
- Be aware that transition times are critical and increase refugee students' vulnerability.

How to apply tech to refugee education.

Refugee camps often lack teachers and are rarely set up to provide formal curriculum based education. Schools in destination countries can find themselves overcrowded with students and lacking in teachers and supplies. The [Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation](#) has launched a competition for smartphone-based applications for the education of Syrian refugee children: "We can use new methods, new partners, new technologies, new approaches to finance, to be more efficient, and have better outcomes in our collective efforts." Here are three tips *how new technological solutions for refugee education* have a real impact:

1. Know your audience and find out what's in-demand.

Refugees and migrants come from a variety of socio-economic, educational, cultural and linguistic backgrounds and have access to different levels of existing technologies. Refugees, for example, might not have more than their cellphones with them. Understanding what technologies migrants and refugees have access to, and what they know how to use is a good first step in introducing education interventions.

2. Combine gadgets with training and coaching.

Appropriate training for instructors and facilitators is necessary. Technologists and development professionals shouldn't forget that teachers who aren't used to using certain technologies will feel out of place if asked to do so without appropriate training. Appropriate technical training for teachers and facilitators in the classroom improves digital literacy, and gives them the confidence they need to teach and manage children in a classroom — or refugee camp — full of new gadgets.

3. Think of refugee education as a chronic problem.

The average time someone spends living as a refugee is 17 years. That often means 17 years without access to consistent, quality education. And while donors often treat refugee education as an emergency situation that requires quick money instead of sustained funding, there is slowly beginning to emerge a shift in mindset. When developing technology for refugee education, think about how it might be integrated into a long-term education system for people in more permanent situations of transit.

TALKING BOOK.
Literacy Bridge saves lives and improves the livelihoods of impoversihed families through comprehensive programs that provide on-demand access to locally releveant knowledge.
At the heart pof the program is the Talking Book – an innovative low-cost audio computer designed for the learning needs of illiterate populations liveing in poorest areas in the world.
Simple and actionable instructional messages that are repeatable and can be played when needed enable people to learn and adopt new practices to fight poverty and disease.

Interventions at clinical setting.

Migration process has specific stresses in its each phase on migrants; the specific psychological distress is influenced by the nature of the migration experience that the person undergoes. The communication difficulties due to language and cultural differences, adverse experiences before, during and after migration, traditional beliefs, coping patterns, socio-economic status of the family, non-favorable familial dynamics are the major challenges for migrants; hence people may not expect or prepared enough for these unexpected hurdles. When migrants identified with psychological distress or approach for help, the clinicians need to be trained and equipped enough to address these issues – we tried to show it in the diagram in the section "Best practices for social work with refugees and imigrants" above. Clinicians have to inquire systematically the whole process of migration, its social, vocational and family aspects of functioning, cultural background, socio-economic status, comparing pre-migration to post migration status etc.

Community based interventions

Some researchers recommend to respond to the tribulations of the migrants through drawing the interventions at community level: "There is a need for change in delivering services to the migrant population in distress; *the cottage-based-model found to be more effective than traditional health care* delivery to the geriatric long-term care residents during the migration. The consumers, their family members and the staffs have felt that the model is more helpful in improving the health status, social activities of the consumers."

The community based intervention which involves "community mobilization" and "comprehensive voluntary counseling and testing services" has proved a significant improvements in the promotion of voluntary HIV counseling and testing (VCT) acceptance and utilization, knowledge about HIV/AIDS, positive attitude towards HIV positive individuals and condom use compared with the traditional VCT services.

Along with the policies, practices and resettlement opportunities, the existence of ethno-cultural organizations and religious institutions are highly important in supporting the migrants in the process of adaptation in legal, religious and social aspects. These ethnic communities and religious organizations provide the sense of belonging and try to reduce the impact of migration losses, isolation and discrimination as well. Hence it is very important to the local bodies or the administrations to recognize, support and developing networking among the existing communities and religious organizations in order to mobilize the psycho-social support and the necessary resources for the migrant population especially who are in distress.

Group based interventions

The "self-help group" and cognitive behaviour therapy group interventions are partially useful among the migrated women who were diagnosed with recurrent depressive disorder. During the group intervention sessions within this project SURPRISE family affairs and difficulties in pertaining to their husbands and children need for social networks, dealing with loneliness, being unable to meet with the demands of the day to day life, were the main issues discussed. The group interventions found to be useful in increased amount of mutual trust among the members, acquiring problem solving skills and regaining their strengths. Most of the members also expressed their will to continue the group meetings informally during the follow-up. However the respondents were disappointed about the way the therapy was

offered and the results suggest, culture sensitive treatment by ethnic, same-gendered professional on individual based is more useful. Along with SHG and cognitive behavioral therapy the *psychodrama and psychotherapy* have been provided for the migrant populations who are suffering from mental health problems such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and so on and they have proved to be helpful to some extent in reducing the symptoms and improving the functionality.

The project SURPRISE testifies to efficacy of different strategies and suggest the need for formulating a variety of/combination of interventions – administrative, legislative, group and community based intervention in responding successfully to various psycho-social issues of migrants and refugees. The intervention strategies should be formulated at the individual level, local level, community level, policy level and national or international level; the local and international organizations, governments and the individuals, every one's efforts are crucial here. The inclusion of services and mutual respect of cultural aspects is vital as well.

Promoting family resilience.

Most of the refugee work done in the mental health field continues to be individually based, where the person who is suffering the most is referred for treatment that's focused on symptom reduction. However, that individual focus is not enough. For one, trauma and loss affect everyone in a family. The shock waves reverberate throughout the family. But the family also holds the key to healing. Within the framework of this project we focus on the strengths that enable people to endure and overcome trauma and tap into the natural resource for resilience in the family.

> "For Europe to find its place in a rapidly changing world, its citizens will have to learn to tap multiple identities. One can be a proud Swede and a proud European at the same time; one can also be both German and Turkish, and derive strength from that duality. It is not disloyal to see oneself as a citizen of the world. On the contrary, it is honorable."
>
> Carl Bildt, former PM and FM of Sweden.

For further reading:

A Toolkit for ESL Practicioners: Supporting Skilled Immigrants. World Education Services, 2011.

Trickett E.J., Beehler S., Deutsch Ch. et al. Advancing the Science of Community-Level Interventions. / Promoting Public Health Research, Policy, Practice and Education. Vol. 101(8), 2011.

LeBuffe P. Understanding and promoting family resilience. Devereux Center for Resilient Children, 2012.

Marzano R.J., Pickering D.J., Heflebower T. The Highly Engaged Classroom: The Classroom Strategies Series. Generating High Levels of Student Attention and Engagement.

Wyman P.A., Brown C.H. Designs for testing group-based interventions with limited numbers of social units: The dynamic wait-listed and regression point displacement designs. / PMC, October 1, 2015.

CONSLUSIONS

Many countries encounter difficulties when it comes to integration of immigrants, particularly immigrant youth. A lack of integration has been associated with social difficulties such as academic underachievement, early school leaving, unemployment and crime. The following topics emerged during the implementation of the project SURPRISE as areas of challenge for both parents and young people on the one hand and the involved social workers on the other.

Language.

Language is seen as one of the main challenges for all immigrants. Young people generally tend to learn the language more quickly than their parents, through formal learning in school and informal learning via their friendships with native-speaking peers. The language barrier can prevent parents from gaining employment, from socialising outside of their ethnic community, and from interacting with their children's school. In some cases teachers interviewed recommended that formal language classes be made available to parents through their children's schools. In order to address this problem, the experts recommended that Latvian / Lithuanian / Estonian / Swedish language training options be included in the toolkit. In the Baltic States there was another problem – in some cases imigrants and refugees there preferred Russian instead of any of the Baltic languages (for being to limited and difficult to learn).

School System.

Surprisingly many young people felt that the school system in the host country had lower academic standards and less discipline than the schools in their countries of origin, and some commented that they had been placed in the wrong class for their age or academic ability – generally they felt they were academically ahead of the other students. Parents expressed concern that their children were less motivated to work hard in school in Sweden. Regarding parents' interactions with their children's schools in Sweden, some parents got involved in the schools through parents' committees or attending parent-teacher meetings, with varying levels of success. The interviews with educators suggested that there is a contrast between the schools' and the immigrant parents' preferred style of communication with the school: schools tend to prefer formal methods of contact (pre-arranged appointments, parent-teacher meetings) while the parents prefer informal methods such as "dropping in" to see the principal or teachers. They also suggested that the provision of some induction procedures would help young imigrants adapt to school in Sweden, for example translating rule books into the language of the country of origin, providing information handbooks, and providing special assistance from teachers closely involved with immigrant students.

Socialising.

Young people generally appear to socialise with people from outside of their ethnic group more than their parents. Boys tend to avail of organised social activities (e.g. sports clubs) more than girls.

Many young immigrants found easy to make friends with local peers, and found that having a hobby or special talent made this process even easier. In contrast, parents tend to socialise with people from their own ethnic community, and generally met friends in their homes.

Employment.

Unemployment emerged as a key issue for immigrants in host countries. There was concern that parents' unemployment could affect their children, particularly in relation to children perceiving their parents as role models in terms of their own educational goals. Many young people also were concerned about their own employment and sought part time work, but some experienced discrimination when trying to get jobs.

Cultural Values.

Some experts suggested that, in order for successful integration to occur, immigrants need to participate fully in the new society while still maintaining their own identity. However, the mental well-being of immigrants could be in danger if families are too traditional and don't allow their children to integrate into the new society. Parents and children both felt it was important to hold onto the values of their country of origin. They currently appear to maintain their identity through keeping certain aspects of their culture: food, traditions, language etc. The family home was seen by the young people as a place where the culture of the country of origin was maintained. Religion was another way of maintaining culture: most parents were keen that the young people would maintain their religion. Some participants suggested that religion should be discussed with the young people in such a way that an active and open dialogue can develop. Some parents were concerned about the nature of sex education European countries, and the possibility of their children having sexual relationships before marriage.

Racism/Discrimination.

Young immigrants reported experiencing racism from their peers, in the form of both verbal and physical (rarely) abuse. The young people also commented on experiencing racial discrimination when applying for jobs. The topic of racism came up frequently among the parents' focus groups, both in terms of their own experience (particularly in the workplace) and the experiences of their children. The educators highlighted the importance of an attitude of zero tolerance towards racism.