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Refugees, Work and the Introduction Programme

How Gender and Ethnicity have a tendency to be ignored

Master's thesis in Globalisation and Sustainable Development
Supervisor: Nina Gunnerud Berg

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Abstract

This thesis has made an effort to weigh in on the discussion surrounding refugees and the Norwegian introduction programme. The research question was: *To what extent does Gender and Ethnicity affect refugees in their meeting with the Norwegian society, and to what extent are these recognised among the people working with refugees and within the introduction programme?* The data was collected through participant observation and interviews with refugees that are enrolled in the introduction programme as well as interviews with the employees that work with this group. The findings suggest that there is definite reason for questioning whether there is a way to make the programme better by recognising the diversity within this group that arguably the government is trying to homogenise, against the wishes of the refugees. It will be suggested that individuality has to be taken more into account. In addition, it will be argued that Norway and Norwegians as a society has to take on more of the responsibility of integrating these people. It cannot only be up to the government and the people working with refugees. They have to become a more implemented part of the society, whilst at the same time both the refugees and Norwegians have to respect cultural differences. There are things they will have to learn to live with when moving here. At the same time Norwegians have to respect their limits. It is a fine line, but it will be argued that if more time was spent on helping people navigating this line, the better the programme and the better the integration would become.

Preface

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Department of Geography and the Globalisation and sustainable development programme for accepting me into their programme and gave me the opportunity to learn and gain knowledge about such interesting and relevant topics.

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Trondheim, 29th May 2019

Maren Petronelle Nyrud

Table of contents

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION..... 7**

- 2.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK..... 11**

- 2.1 MIGRATION AND REFUGEES 12
- 2.2 GENDER AND ETHNICITY..... 15
- 2.3 THE NORWEGIAN INTRODUCTION PROGRAMME AND INTEGRATION 19

- 3.0 METHODOLOGY 27**

- 3.1 BACKGROUND 27
- 3.2 WHY A QUALITATIVE APPROACH? 28
- 3.3 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION 29
- 3.4 INTERVIEWS..... 30
- 3.5 LIMITATIONS 32
- 3.6 ETHICS..... 33

- 4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION 35**

- 4.1 GENDER 36
- 4.2 ETHNICITY AND CULTURE..... 41
- 4.3 INTEGRATION..... 44
- 4.4 BEING IN A PROGRAMME 47

- 5.0 CONCLUSION..... 53**

- 6.0 REFERENCES..... 61**

- 7.0 APPENDICES 67**

- APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR BOTH EMPLOYEES AND PARTICIPANTS 67
- APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM 70

1.0 Introduction

Migration has been a part of the human history for as long as humans have been present on earth. It is not something new, and it most definitely is not something that will change during the lifespan of those who are alive today. It has usually been seen in relation to having a reason behind it, either some push-factors driving people to migrate or pull-factors drawing the people to new places (Castles et al, 2014). Whether that be for the hunting and gathering societies to move to the places in which they could find food, up until today where people's mobility has sky rocketed over the recent decades. In fact, it has become very rare for people to be born, live their whole lives and die in the same place of origin. Mobility and moving around is the norm and the number of migrants is arguably at its highest in this very moment of time. Additionally, it is important to recognise that there is a difference within migration in terms of how far people move. The longer the move, arguably the more impact it will have on the individual due to the cultural differences, religious differences and differences within law and government as many countries, counties and municipalities usually have different laws. In a similar vein, there is also a big difference between those who are temporarily migrating and those who do so permanently. Examples of temporarily could be to go away for university or during a war. The main interest for this group is for them to be able to go home afterwards.

Luckily much of migration is voluntary with people seeking excitement and experiences. People move to achieve their own goals or to fulfil their own wanderlust. Or to move for work and work opportunities. As stated, some do it for business, some for pleasure – others for both. A globalised world with fast and low-cost transportation has enabled this. On the other end of the scale we find those who do not have an option. Or they might, but that option could be to die trying to escape war and conflicts. These people are refugees and have been forced on the move to find a place where they are safe. There are many reasons as to why people flee and become refugees in host countries. These reasons could be climate changes such as flood, volcano outbreaks or hurricanes destroying the place people are living. Or as we have become more and more aware of due to the help of media, war and/conflicts. War and conflicts are one of the main reasons for migration from the Middle East into Europe, which has been the experience over the last few years.

For many countries including Norway, this has meant a large increase in the numbers of refugees. It was at its highest in 2015/2016/2017 with respectively 9280, 15230 and 7808 refugees being settled. On top of these numbers came 44 696 who during those three years were reunited with their families (Dzmarija, 2018). The country took on a great responsibility when allowing for so many people to be settled down in the societies. This, both in terms of the government being able to help them, but also the people living here in terms of welcoming them and helping them find their place in society.

The government soon realised that these people cannot simply be put in houses and be expected to care for themselves without being taught how the society works. The response to the need for education and help for these refugees, was to make their own version of an introduction programme. A programme designed with a lot of freedom for the municipalities to choose the best way for them to deal with the refugees being settled down there. The frames for the programme will be explained in detail under theoretical frameworks, but the importance of this is that it is a programme in constant change to fit to the group of refugees currently being settled in Norway. Some of the issues that will be mentioned are also issues they are aware of and seem to be willing to change. Others that will be discussed in this thesis are ones that are, even though they might have been discussed, currently not being shown as much attention as they might need in order for the programme to be as good as it could be, and that are putting more strain on the refugees.

The background for this thesis is an internship the researcher undertook as a part of the master programme 'Globalisation and Sustainable Development' at NTNU. It was done at the refugee unit in Trondheim municipality and it was the experiences from this that prompted the desire to join in on the discussion on the introduction programme as well as to shed light on some of the issues these people are facing that might not be recognised enough when the expectations of performance are being set for these people. The reason for this to be important is that there arguably is some lack of willingness from the Norwegian society when it comes to allowing these people to integrate into society. As long as they need help it seems to be fine and the society is more than willing to help. However, this is often misjudged as what they arguably need most is to become part of society in all forms, not just as someone who needs help, but more as an integrated part. Essentially become a regular member of society and not a

charity case, which seems to be the route many are taking. This will be discussed further in chapter four. From observations during the research it was early obvious, that although the employees at the refugee office tried their best to accommodate for the differences in the people they were serving, the challenges lie within the overall system that is the Introduction Programme.

The two factors related to the programme that this thesis will discuss is that of gender and ethnicity. When speaking of gender and ethnicity, two of the social categories that define us, it allows for recognition of a person's identity based on where they are from. This, both in terms of biological differences in skin colour, hair or other features, but also on the cultural and social differences. The term gender is in this thesis based on arguments that gender is a social construct, which is learned behaviour and comes with expectations of how women and men act and interact with others (Macionis and Plummer, 2012). Additionally, it will also be based on arguments that gender and place are interconnected and in constant change, and must be recognised as such (McDowell, 1999). Ethnicity will be explored because not only is it linked closely to gender, but also carries a lot of social and cultural differences based on where one is from. Ethnicity also describes the differences between different groups from different parts of the world (Fenton, 2003). In this thesis ethnicity will be considered in a way that allows for large differences in culture and norms due to the group's origins stemming from such varied places across the world, and how the Norwegian society might try to merge them into Norway's society and culture.

With this in mind the research question that will be discussed is as followed:

To what extent does Gender and Ethnicity affect refugees in their meeting with the Norwegian society, and to what extent are these recognised among the people working with refugees and within the introduction programme?

The aim is to explore in which ways gender and ethnicity affects a person defined as a refugee in Norway, especially seen in relation to the mandatory introduction programme every refugee has to enter upon arrival. In this thesis the focus will be on the refugees within one of the largest cities in the country, Trondheim. Discussing these topics are considered to be highly relevant in our society today due to the increase in refugees as well as the challenges both the refugees and the host society face when refugees are being settled in the country. Norway has had a massive increase in refugees since 2015, and although signs might be that it is slowing down, the people that are already here have a right to the same benefits. And despite much focus being on the economic side, it was found that in order to tackle the economic side, for them to be able to thrive they have to become more integrated into the existing society. Norwegians have to be able to merge cultures and make space for everyone. Norway is already considered to be a multicultural society, and this has to be extended to include those who come here as refugees, not only the ones who migrate here voluntarily.

2.0 Theoretical framework

In order to add to the discussion of refugees and their challenges connected to the Norwegian introduction programme, it is essential to reflect upon existing literature and research within this area. There are several topics that will need to be included and they will be categorised into sections. The first section is focusing migration and refugees, where migration will be considered more in general before venturing into Norwegian immigration. The second part will consider gender and ethnicity. It has been important to fully understand these concepts before discussing them further in the findings from the fieldwork. The last section focuses more on the Norwegian introduction programme and integration. In this section official data and statistics will also be included.

On a more academic level, during the process of searching for existing research on the immigration into Norway as well as the Norwegian introduction programme, it was found that there is a lack of research on the topic that purely academic and not on request from a form of official agency or organisation. As much as possible from both the requested ones as well as the purely academic work will be included in this review. In this sense it became clear that this thesis has the potential to fill in a few gaps when it comes to knowledge on the interconnection between gender, ethnicity and the Norwegian introduction programme.

One of the most contributing institutions when it comes to research on refugees in Norway is NTNU Samfunnsforskning/ NTNU Social Research. They have conducted a number of studies on children, adults and young adults arriving on their own, all refugees. All though all of them have the potential to influence the way in which Norway work with refugees, the most relevant ones related to this topic will be included in this thesis. Even though some of the more relevant ones are being listed it is also important to take into account all the current research being done at the moment on integration and refugees. It is a very popular topic in need of input. Some of this research is being done at NTNU Social Research, but due to there not being any final results, including them in this chapter does not attribute to anything in this case. Therefore, only the research that has been concluded or has published reports or results related to the projects will be included in this chapter.

2.1 Migration and refugees

This section begins with taking a look at migration before it continues on to refugees. This is because it is important to see the similarities as well as differences in migration and despite mobility being higher than ever before and so much being voluntarily, the impacts on those who have to flee involuntarily can be much higher.

There are many reasons as to why people migrate. Some ways are voluntary, others forced by social or physical challenges in the place they come from. Physical challenges include climate change, flooding, earth quakes, volcanos or mudslides. Social challenges could be that of war and conquest. Historically other factors might include search for new territory such as colonisation and/or slave migration and indentured labour. On the other end of that spectrum we find search for fortune such as the European mass migration to the US, South America, South Africa and Australia or New Zealand. Recently increasing populations has also made it on to the list of reasons as it has made it harder to find work and be able to live the lives they wish to.

More contemporary reasons are globalisation, industrialisation, labour migration, free trade areas such as the EU. In a similar vein the expanding networks of trade, alterations in the modes of production as well as improved and developed technology making it possible has made for more migration now than ever before. And if stating this might seem like it has been present forever, the development within technology has made it possible for everyone to know about it. Norway has throughout history always had some form of immigration. Some of the immigrants are refugees, but much of them are voluntary migrants who come to work, for education or to reunite families (Borchmann and Kjeldstadli, 2008). 'Globalisation' is currently one of the most frequently used and most powerful terms in geography and society. At its most extreme, what it describes as view of complete unrestricted mobility with free and open space. This is a very neo-liberal view and does not portray reality with immigration restriction and economic boundaries. Nor does it include any views of cultural differences or challenges (Massey, 2005).

Another part to migration, that is not often discussed because it is taken for granted by the majority, is the period where migrants are settling down. They are no longer on the move, but it is still a very significant part of their migration. The settlement period is a highly symbolic period of time for migrants who are granted the status of refugees and welcomed into their host society. Archambault and Haugen (2016) highlight the importance of identifications in refugee childrens' experience of settlement and sense of belonging. It shows that children's individual and collective identification through their interactions with others, are key elements in achieving a positive experience of belonging. Children are active in exploring strategies to belong. However, the feeling of belonging to Norwegian society requires time and a fair number of good opportunities. Providing refugee children with opportunities that give them new experiences and positive social interactions during the process of settlement can help them figure out how best to negotiate the challenges they could encounter on their journeys in their new country (Archambault and Haugen, 2016). Although this research was done on children, it was found through the fieldwork that this is just as relevant for adults. They experience the same challenges, but whereas children play a more active role in trying to find belonging to a place, it was found that adults are more passive. Children are arguably very resilient, and the question then becomes if they use their resilience to quicker find their place in their new society.

From a more theoretical aspect there are several books and people who should be mentioned when discussing migration. Castles et al. (2014) run through almost everything that has to do with migration in their book *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World, 5th edition*. This include challenges, theories, the picture of migration as it is today, globalisation and most of all how all of this changes the global society, regional societies and local societies. People have never been as mobile as we are today, and it allows for the creation of new cultures and identities. Theories that are discussed are, among others, functionalism, historical theories, migration transition theories and system theories concerning networks. As Castles et al, points out. Migration is not a simple individual action in which a person decides to move in search of better life-chances, pulls up his or her roots in the place of origin and quickly becomes assimilated in a new country. Much more often migration and settlement are long-drawn-out process that will be played out for the rest of the migrant's life and affect subsequent generations too. In addition, migration is often a collective action, arising out of social economic and political change and affecting the whole

society in both sending and receiving areas (Castles et al, 2014). This book is essential for all those who are looking to study migration across the world and everything that comes with it. It is aimed for people interested in the subjects and provides for a great introduction to students on an undergraduate level as well as for graduates further focusing on migration.

In regard to Norwegian migration, one of the more prolific books is *A History of Immigration: The Case of Norway 900-2000* by Brochmann and Kjeldstadli (2008). They offer a short version of the history of immigration into Norwegian society from the idle ages up until the year 2000. They include who came, from where, how they came as well as how they were welcomed. They also discuss how immigrants have contributed to the Norwegian society and culture. Additionally, they discuss assimilation and segregation. Who have chosen to keep to themselves and who have become more integrated into society? The book is meant for all and anyone who is interested in the Norwegian society and how it has evolved over time in terms of migration (Borchmann and Kjeldstadli, 2008). Despite it not being completely up to date when it comes to the refugee situation across the world, the book offers a great insight into the Norwegian history with immigration and how the country has ended up where it is in terms of institutions and systems created to deal with migration and refugees.

Drawing on the above. Bratsberg et al. (2016) was one of the first to address the challenges of such a high rise in refugees and the challenges they might find integrating into the Norwegian labour markets. They examine what can be learned from the experiences of previous refugee cohorts from countries outside Europe. They found that non-European refugees have had difficulties achieving high employment rates, many becoming dependent on health-related social insurance. They conclude that if Norway is to keep the ambition of reaching employment rates comparable to the native-born Norwegians, the only solution is policy change (Bratsberg et al, 2016). The basis for the report mentioned above is a much larger research conducted on behalf of IMDi on how introduction programmes are made and done in different countries. Norway, Sweden and Denmark all have introduction programmes for refugees. Even though they look similar from a European perspective, they differ in terms of legislation, how they are organised, how they are funded and how they are pedagogically taught. The report contains a comparative analysis of the three programmes, the tools they

use, both in relations to the municipalities, but also in terms of the participants from the three Scandinavian countries (Trondstad and Hernes, 2016). This research is interesting, but more than anything highlighted how the different politics in the different countries have the ability to influence an introduction programme so heavily. Where Sweden are seen to have been very liberal before and have a tradition of both short-term and long-term migration to and from the country, they are now tightening the ropes. Denmark are known to have strict borders on their south end towards the rest of Europe, and their immigration policies reflects this.

2.2 Gender and Ethnicity

In order to be able to address the main issues concerned in this thesis – gender and ethnicity it has been important to explore different or similar ways in which these concepts are defined and used within geography. This section will first address the two topics before venturing into further concepts from Cultural and Social Geography that have been necessary to consider in relation to the findings in chapter 4. In terms of gender and ethnicity related to migration, it is important to recognise the significance this can have for the people migrating, the place they leave and how it affects their lives in the arrival country as well as how they are welcomed by said host country. Recognising gender within migration is a fairly new concept. Previously migration has traditionally been analysed from an economic perspective in which gender differentiates was not needed to conclude on research. This has changed and is more often than not an important factor to most research on migration. In the twenty-first century, recognising that migration is gendered reflects many internal and international patterns of migration Halfacree and Boyle (1999).

In this thesis gender and sex are differentiated. Sex is considered to be related to the biological differences and gender being an individual identity. In this lies the implication that gender as a definition has been and is still changeable. Gender can be explored from different disciplines. A more sociological definition comes from Macionis and Plummer (2012) who argue that gender is a socially created concept. In turn this affects how societies perceive

gender roles and how this links to male and female identities. Different cultures attributes different roles to men and women and how they should act and interact within social institutions from the household to the state. This carries consequences for men and women in terms of opportunities and life chances. Gender addressed people at all ages, whether that be that of children, youth, adults or elderly. It affects ambitions, expectations and reality all at the same time (Macionis and Plummer, 2012). Dixon and Jones (2006) argues in a similar way that gender is socially constructed through differences between different groups. They argue that none of these differences are naively given to anyone unmediated; rather they are all framed through categorisations that enable a person to understand them. In such a view; people, objects, experiences or meanings have no basic meaning until their qualities and boundaries have been framed through discourse (Dixon and Jones, 2006).

McDowell (1999) has also weighed in on defining gender through geography. She argues as the above, that gender is a social construct. Furthermore, she argues that in relation to the changing definition of place, it is quite obvious that social practices and ways of understanding place and gender, make them interconnected and mutually constituted. Everyone act in relation to intentions and beliefs, and they are always culturally shaped, as well as historically and spatially positioned. These expectations and beliefs change over time and between place. People and places are gendered and in turn, social and spatial relationships are changing (McDowell, 1999). Further, McDowell and Sharp (1999) argue that gender and ethnicity are closely knitted together as both are categories in which relations between people interact with each other as well as form a sense of inclusion or exclusion (McDowell and Sharp, 1999)

In terms of ethnicity there are also many works and different definitions that needs to be reflected on when answering any questions regarding refugees. Firstly, this thesis has chosen to differentiate between the concepts of 'race' and 'ethnicity'. 'Race' stands alone in that it is associated to a biological idea of differences in humans. It has been discredited sociologically but still remains quite powerful ideologically (Fenton, 2003). It is still a term used around the world; however, it suggests a much larger difference between people than the place in the world they origin from. 'Race' is used in the animal world to differentiate species. Albeit, people arguably also belong in the same world, they are not different species, they simply

stem from different parts of the world. In this sense, ethnicity is often used in terms of a self-defined and chosen culturally identity. It is also viewed as a more positive word (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992)

Ethnic identity as a communal and individual identity express an idea of one's people and their origins. This varies in the intensity to which it is felt and expressed. Social and societal disputes over the protection and advancement of culture are a common way in which ethnicity is mobilised. When arriving people are defined by the majority as both ethnically different and as less entitled, or in some cases not entitled at all, to advancements and necessary resources, they will come back with resistance (Fenton, 2003). Whether the society is open to such change remains different to each society. Some are aware that policies need to be in place in order to help further underrepresented groups and to ensure inclusion of said groups. Other oppose and believe this undermines the hard work most have to put in in order to achieve their goals (Gallagher, 2004).

As highlighted above, to be able to comprehend the differences between 'sex' and 'gender', as well as 'race' and 'ethnicity' has been important for the work on this thesis. This, because they are concepts undergoing constant change as well as being defined differently depending on outlook on the world. Using ethnicity and gender instead of sex and race depicts how the issues raised in this thesis is socially constructed. The Introduction Programme is a social construct, and many of the issues the people are facing are due to social norms, values and traditions. It was therefore important to include theory which discusses the same factors and how they have the ability to influence people.

In the light of gender and ethnicity it has also been valuable to include academic works on Cultural Geography and Social Geography. This to highlight how migration and refugees can be considered in the light of these disciplines. One of the most relevant academic works on Cultural Geography is written by Jon Anderson (2015). In *Understanding cultural geography: places and traces*, he explores how 'othering' occurs on the basis of ethnicity and race. 'Othering' is not a new concept and the history of it has immensely affected the way in which the concept exists today. The questions raised regards that of how much new arrival cultures

can and has the right to affect the existing culture as well as how the existing culture welcome and treat the new arrivals. These questions are highly relevant to that of refugees, who are arriving in a new country and has to make a home in a very different environment to that they are used to. Anderson also addresses that of 'knowing one's place', suggesting that groups take place through the exercise of power, how power can be understood and how it affects both culture and geography. Anderson (2008) also explores the different definitions 'place' can hold in terms of who uses it and in which way the word is used. He argues that it is through geography – taking and making place – that power is exercised, made visible and has effects. Studying place allows for reading power struggles, but also to identify who has the power to change or transform them (Anderson 2015:76)

Social Geography also has to be mentioned in relation to this thesis. Del Casino (2009) writes a great introduction on this topic where he explores the different ways in which the area of social geography draws on many other approaches to research and has made its way into daylight through a need for researching inequality and differences. He holds a global perspective, and although not every part of the book is as relevant, when discussing refugees dealing with challenges mainly concerning their own lives and the situations that they are in, it is important to remember how gender, and ethnicity has the power to affect ones lives and how people live them. Del Casino's main concern is that of inequality, and how there is a great need to do research on these topics and make people aware of the global situations (Del Casino, 2009).

Another issue that needs to be further explored for this thesis is that of the relationships within a society. This especially seen in context to the arguments on majority and minority groups, how they act among themselves and between the groups. For refugees, the contact among groups of their own as well as between the groups has been proven to be essential in the work to achieve integration. Bygnes (2017) shows this in their research on the topic. Through interviews and observations, it was found that material conditions and involvement of local community members plays a key role in whether contact between majority and minority members of the community was developed or not. It was also highlighted how contact between the local community and the refugees is very valuable and can influence them both

in a positive or negative manner (Bygnes, 2017). This further entrenches the need for more and better contact between refugees and their host societies.

2.3 The Norwegian introduction programme and integration

When doing research for this section it became clear that there is not a lot of existing research on the topics discussed in this thesis in conjunction with the Norwegian Introduction Programme and policies. There is a lot of information out there in regard to the Norwegian introduction programme alone, and the same applies to official statistics. In this section some of the more important works are included, as well as some of the data that addresses the refugee system and situation in Norway. The research for this section gave a clear indication of a gap within research providing a more wholesome picture of the introduction programme. Why this is the case is hard to answer, but it could be because they are applied very differently in each municipality and therefore difficult to compare. Hence, most research discovered was focusing on singular municipalities, comparing similar municipalities or focusing on counties. Although this research might not be focusing on the municipality where this research was done, the refugees are facing similar problems across the country. It was then important to include as they depict similar issues to that found during the fieldwork for this thesis.

The number of refugees coming to Norway skyrocketed in 2015, when they along with the rest of Europe, experienced a much higher number of people looking for refuge. The numbers for the last 4 years surpass 30 000 refugees, who all have the right to an introduction programme as well as the right to a contact person following them up over the first two years. In addition, families have the right to be reunited, escalating these numbers with over 44 000 people needing the same type of help and programme (Dzmarija, 2018). The numbers are from 2019 expected to decrease, with some of the larger cities expecting around 500-1000 new refugees per year. It was also found that within the municipality, there were larger groups of refugees coming from the same countries and that even though most at the time of the research were coming from the Middle East, that this will also change over the next years

(INN, 2018). This is important to note, in order to be able to understand why this is such a big topic of discussion in the country. Immigration on such a large scale has not been experienced before where the demands from and towards the society has been so elevated. The solution for this immigration has become to structure the arrival in such a way that refugees are more likely to become self-sufficient. As further research as well as the findings, this is not the case. However, this section will try to include the most important research on the programme and issues surrounding it.

The programme is directed by the government and contains a framework set for the introduction programme. This is decided on by the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi). This framework includes the different rules and goals all municipalities should include and aim for:

- Aim to ensure good qualifications for those who need them in order to start the appropriate form of education or to enter the labour market.
- That the introduction law decided on by the government is to be followed at all times. It is this law that controls the programme.
- The municipalities are responsible for the programme.
- The programme is to include language courses, social sciences and ending with a transfer to further education or into a job. The programme should be a full-time course and aim to follow the same regulations as a normal job would. This entails the same regulations regarding sick leave, pay for being present and in turn negative consequences if they fail to show up.
- The programme should be two years but can in some cases be extended to three years if it is deemed necessary for the individual participant. This only if they are applicable to an extension.

- Everyone should receive their own individual plan from start to finish. This plan should reflect previous experiences and be in accordance to their previous qualifications. Additionally, language practice and work experience should be included. (IMDi, 2011)

There have been several researches conducted on the programme and challenges connected to it. They are important to conclude in this thesis due to much of the findings and discussion is on the challenges within the programme. These are some of them: Mølland et al (2018) did a research focusing on the counties of Agder and Telemark where they evaluated the way in which results are measured in the introduction programme. Their findings were that much of the focus is on income and employment. It was also found that even though Norway has gained much more experience with the introduction programme there is little evidence that this has made for a significance when it comes to employment. For those who have little education and only part-time work when they finish the program as much as 17,6% were without a job after two years. After 5 years this has increased to 30 % (Mølland et al, 2018 in Nyrod, 2018). This is reflected in the statistics from Statistics Norway (SSB), who found that the unemployment is over twice as big for immigrants compared to that of the overall population, 9,9% compared to 4,2%. In this case the numbers reflect that of the entire immigrant population, however it sends the same message. Natives have a much higher percentage of employment than those who are immigrants (SSB, 2018).

One of the largest research projects on the introduction program is done by Østlandsforskning. Østlandsforskning are an independent research agency, but in most cases work on orders from different agencies requiring research on topics they have and experience with. They have analysed three different municipalities when it comes to their efforts on integration. The municipalities they chose are of different sizes. For small municipalities, the focus was found to be on making sure the refugees were seen as an asset instead of a burden. It was also found that cooperation and working closely together is an important aim and factor of success. This goes for the different agencies and/or offices and institutions within the municipality, but also in relation to the volunteer sector and the labour market. They also

found some challenges and unused opportunities. These are important for the places in question, but also in relation to this thesis. These findings are:

- Getting NAV involved early could be important in creating an introduction program focusing further on work and being self-sufficient. All agencies in all municipalities state that this would be valuable for them but for all three it had not been possibility to make it happen or work in a way that gives results.
- The schools and the municipality have made an effort and, in some way succeeded on increasing the collaboration between them in order to create the best programme for their refugees. The same effort has not been done when it comes to NAV. The causes for this seem to be a lack in common understanding of the challenges the refugees are facing. It is suggested that they need to work together to think alternatively in order to find a good balance between education and work.
- An effort needs to be made when it comes to individual plans and mapping out needs. As it is now, bits of different information is gathered at different offices and they cannot or will not share the information with each other. One of the reasons to this are data protection laws prohibiting them from sharing such information. If there was to be any way of making this better, both the mapping, the individual plan and the tools for doing so needs to be improved. This is a challenge where the solution is laying both within and above the municipalities.
- Larger and better social networks and involving the voluntary sector. Changing this is difficult for the municipalities without becoming very involved outside of working hours, especially in small municipalities, where many people meet in different arenas and keeping strict boundaries between work and leisure time is already challenging. However, it is needed for the refugees to become more integrated. Everyone needs their own social network. There is two ways of doing this. One is that this sector

becomes a supplement to the public service. It could become a part of the obligatory programme. Secondly it can also be used as a means for the refugees to gain some work experience and practice the Norwegian language.

- Labour markets have the potential to increase the integration work within each municipality (Bjerck, 2007; Eide and Røhnebæk, 2016).

In addition to all of this, and with ‘integration’ being a hot topic in public discussions, it might be interesting to include some statistics from a survey IMDi had done about integration and immigrants among the Norwegian population. Among many things they found that:

- 18 % think the integration is going well, 48 % disagree.
- The population's opinion on immigration is split in three. Three out of ten want more immigration, three out of ten are impartial, whilst four out of ten want less.
- The support of closed borders is the lowest it has ever been. This despite much right-wing politics happening around the world.
- People have never been more in agreement on the necessity of protecting refugees that need it.
- The population agree on language and work are key aspects of integration.
- The population mostly blame the immigrants for the low integration. And if they do not blame the immigrants, they blame the government.

- Those who are in contact with people from an immigrant background are more positive towards immigration and more optimistic regarding the long-term development. The closer the contact, the less negative they are when it comes to living in areas with many immigrants and are more positive towards children going to school with immigrant children.
- Three out of four think immigrants should adapt fully to the Norwegian society, culture and values. However, just as many believe both immigrants and natives have to learn to adapt to the diversity within the society (IMDi, 2018; also in Nyrud, 2018).

As mentioned at the beginning of this section; one of the more important institutions when regarding immigration and refugees in Norway is NTNU Samfunnsforskning or NTNU Social Research. They have done a lot of research on immigration and more importantly integration. Berit Berg, has taken part in such research for a long time and has been very important to recognise in this thematic work. Following will include some of the work from NTNU Social research as well as some of the work Berit berg has written or co- written. They have been included in this framework because they are very good at depicting some of the challenges faced by refugees.

During Spring 2018, a report was written by Svendsen and Berg (2018) on behalf of the Directorate of education. The aim was to enlighten challenges and possible solutions for a quicker and better settlement for refugees. In addition, to highlight areas in need of further research. This report was made with the intention of furthering the work within settlement and integration of refugees. Additionally, how both the governmental agencies as well as municipalities can use this report in order to make good political changes or base policies on their work. The findings were that even though much has happened during the ten years since the last report was written, there are still gaps that needs to be filled. These include further studies on the relationship between minority and majority, the lack of comparative studies, and the lack of studies focusing on long-term integration. There is also a lack of research on the Norwegian refugee politics. It was also found that in there is still a large focus on short

term research. In terms of recommendations for further studies they highlight a few key areas with potential large gaps within research. These include the perspectives of children, youth and families. Additionally, comes the perspective on highly vulnerable refugees suffering from trauma or chronic health issues. Consequently, they wish for a more whole perspective and the interlocking situations that affect the refugee's settlement and integration. This, such as more research on the introduction programme, municipalities and how they choose to enforce the programme as well as the experiences of the refugees (Svendsen and Berg, 2018).

Drawing on the view that there needs to be a higher focus on young adults, NTNU Social research has been involved in a project titled TOGETHER Youth Integration Project, run by SOS Children's Villages Norway with the aim of creating groups of friends made up from Norwegians and refugees within Norwegian municipalities. When this report was written this has been done in 16 municipalities. They work for youth refugees to find friends in the Norwegians after being settled. This because networks have been proven to have an enormous effect on people, especially those who find themselves in the situation where they are being settled as refugees in a new country. They found that there is an importance of letting youngsters act their own age and for the adults to supervise, but at the same time keep a distance for them to be able to do so (Berg, 2018). The reason as to why this research is included here is to highlight how simple changes or additions can make a large impact of the refugee population. This is a project that does not involve a lot of work for the volunteers as much of it is simply gathering people for some fun. This could be a great starting point for others wishing to do the same.

Berg, along with Svendsen and Valento (2017) has also made a report on Flora municipality where they were hired by the administration to evaluate their work with refugees. Even though this report focuses on a single municipality, the findings can be seen in light of many other municipalities, mostly by those who are of a similar size. Among many things it was found that the longer the refugees had stayed in Norway, the more were employed with a job. Most only in part-time jobs, however the number of working hours per week also correlated to the amount of time in Norway. One of the largest challenges for the municipality is integrating them into the labour market. It was also found that they find it difficult to move.

People who find themselves not very integrated are the people who often feel lonely and are less happy with the lives they live in Flora. It is important to recognise in this study that it is a minority who feel this way. It was also found that the size of the municipality and the structural limitations also have an effect on what is considered to be realistic ambitions in terms of the municipalities' integration and qualification work (Berg et al, 2017).

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Background

The background for this thesis was an internship undertaken at the Qualification centre for refugees in Trondheim Municipality during the autumn term 2018. This internship was a mandatory part of the master programme Globalisation, transnationalism and culture at NTNU. One of the main components of this internship was to write an assignment worth 30 credits which was handed in at the end of the term. This assignment is the basis for this thesis and both assignments share the data collection. However, the focus of the internship assignment was to focus on the employer; Trondheim Municipality and how they have chosen to organise the integration programme in the municipality. The process of collecting the data is therefore the same as for the internship assignment. However, it will be analysed with different questions in mind and with an entirely different focus.

To have gain such a first-hand experience with this group has been essential for gaining knowledge on this group and made it possible to write this thesis. Without it, leaning only on existing literature and presumed knowledge would have made for a very one-sided view on a very diverse group of people. The internship really helped shed light on how different the people are and how they come from such varied backgrounds and have very different expectations from the Norwegian society. Most of all it also enlightened how they have different views on how they wish to live their lives in this country as well as how different their aspirations are regarding work and their everyday lives.

3.2 Why a qualitative approach?

The data was collected during an internship and was concentrating on understanding some of the issues for a relatively small group of refugees, and took place in, seen in a large scale, such a small geographical area. A big part of the internship was also simply to take part in the everyday activities, which made for a great arena to observe how the integration program was ran. This is why a qualitative approach was immediately preferred.

It might have been possible to take on a more quantitative approach, focusing more on statistics, using questionnaires and gathering mass data. However, many of the refugees spoke Norwegian poorly or not at all, meaning that a quantitative approach would have been very difficult without spending a lot of resources getting help translating the material back and forth, first for them to understand and back to Norwegian in order to make it possible to analyse. This carried a big risk of results getting lost in translation and lay beyond the control of the researcher as the work would have had to be done by an interpreter. This is not to say that it would have been impossible or that there is a lack of data that could have been collected on this group. But working with such a diverse group that has gone through so much to get to the place they have come, means that many do not have official papers stating their age and where they come from, and many who do have fake or altered papers. Using a quantitative approach would therefore have been very difficult to undertake considering the timeline for gathering information as well as the resources of the researcher. By choosing a qualitative approach it allows for much more creativity for asking question, which could be done in alternative ways if needed. It could be done in a more unofficial way, where the refugees could help each other with questions if needed. Additionally, gaining as much first-hand experience with this group taught the researcher as to why some of them answered in the manner that they did, which was highly influenced by their culture, experiences and expectations for the future.

There were two components to this research. One was participant observation by taking part in the running of the organisation. The second were interviews with both the refugees and the employees of the refugee unit in Trondheim Municipality.

Doing fieldwork in this way allowed for forming the research as it went along, and help uncover any topics or issues needing to be explored further whilst the access to the same people (Silverman, 2010)

In order for the refugees to be as comfortable and create an atmosphere they recognise, the research was collected in the place in common, the workplace. This in order for them to find themselves in a setting they were comfortable enough to speak freely (Marshall and Rossman, 2006)

3.3 Participant observation

Participant observation is when the researcher gains access to research information through working and/or living within a community or groups. Then the information is collected and afterwards interpreted (Crang and Cook, 2007). In this case, an internship was undertaken at the unit for qualifying refugees in Trondheim Municipality. Doing such an observation with this group is two sided. On one side observing how the employees work amongst themselves as well as how they work with the refugees was very educating. This gave insight into how they all have different ways of working and that even if they had different approaches, none were better than the other. On the other side taking part in the activities they did with the refugees in their everyday work and being able to ask questions when needed made for good sources of information. Explanations were good due to the researcher being fairly new within the field. Both were seen as essential in understanding different viewpoints on the introduction programme and how it might be possible to solve some of the issues they are facing (Silverman, 2006; Nyrud, 2017).

During the entire internship, and whilst doing observations fieldnotes and a detailed account for each day was made. This was to ensure that all information, anything and everything that might be important for the research, was written down and remembered (Crang and Cook,

2007). All of this material was safely stored as not to be accessible to anyone but the researcher.

In order to gain usage of such a method, building good relations to the participants and the employees of the organisation is essential. People arguably speak more freely with people they know and to some extent trust or feel comfortable with. This became especially important among the cultures where it is far from common for a woman to walk around being curious and asking questions. Hence, it was important to gain their respect first as they needed to know why the questions were asked and why. At the beginning of the internship it was therefore important to inform them of everything, as well as to express multiple times that it was voluntary for them to speak, and that it would not be taken in the wrong way if they wished to remain silent. The reason this is brought up is to clarify that cultural differences were challenging at times. Some were very open from the beginning, whilst others were more reserved. Being reserved had to be respected, and it was proven that being respectful and having patience paid off when it came to those who needed more time. Quite many were also reserved due to feeling that they could not speak well enough Norwegian. Levelling with them and doing simple tasks such as helping them with homework helped them be more comfortable.

3.4 Interviews

The second component of this research was to conduct interviews. Conducting interviews is a strong method of gathering information as it allows for gathering a diversity of thoughts, opinions and experiences (Dunn in Hay, 2016). The aim was to interview a varied group of people working within the different parts of the organisation, as well as a varied group of the refugees. This in order to open up for people with varied backgrounds (Nyrud, 2017). The reasoning for doing these interviews was to gain knowledge and understanding of their encounter with the introduction programme and if there were any changes they wished were implemented. The people chosen to take part had diverse backgrounds of different nationalities, educations, age and gender. This was done purposefully as to ensure obtaining as diverse opinions as possible.

The interviews were semi structured and were two part. The first part was a quickfire session where the interviewees were asked to rate different aspects of the programme from 1 to 5, where 1 was the lowest score and 5 the highest. The second part were more in-depth questions, allowing for more thorough answers and aiming to keep it more casual and conversational. This allows for flexibility, and a more natural flow in the conversation (Dunn in Hay, 2016). The reasoning behind this is that as half of the interview objects were of different nationalities, there was more space for ensuring that they understood the questions that were asked. A set of questions were prepared, but the interviews were just as focused on them being able to talk freely about the topic whilst keeping them on track and aligned with the questions.

The interviews were recorded and stored on a computer which was password protected and not connected to the internet. This computer was stored in a safe manner so no one would have access to any sensitive information. The same was done for all the data collected. Afterwards the interviews were transcribed into documents and made ready for analysis. Additionally, everyone taking part in this research had to sign a consent form. Copies of the interview guide and consent forms can be found in appendix 1 and 2 of this thesis.

All the interviews were done at the workspace of the internship. They were held in private rooms. This was seen as the best solution as to create a safe but neutral space for the participants. The workspace was the only place of contact, so it was seen as the most neutral ground where the participants had a relation to the researcher. Making sure it was private enough was also important due to honesty. Cultural differences did sometimes not allow for free speech and was therefore important to gain trust in order for the research to come out in the best way. It was also important to gain trust and levelling with them in order to avoid superiority between the interview subjects and the researcher. Superiority can lead to either a. an interview where the researcher takes on a leading role, or b. the participant fails to keep to the topic (Hay, 2016). It was desired for this to be avoided as much as possible, which was experienced as most difficult with the younger participants.

3.5 Limitations

Doing research within this field is difficult as it is constantly changing. This was the same within the organisation where the internship was undertaken. For employees that were interviewed, contributing in an objective way whilst sharing opinions was difficult due to the structural changes happening within the organisation with nearly half being redundant by the end of 2019. For both the employees and the participants, it is important to remember that they represent only a small part of what is a large sector in Norway. It is therefore important not to generalise the findings with everyone within the sector. They all differ depending on individual situations, backgrounds and experiences. As for the researcher, there was only one singular and it was done over several months during the internship. This could mean that there could be affected by personal experiences. It is not to say that the findings are not legitimate and carry a great value in terms of research on this topic. However, it has to be recognised that they might have been affected by relations built during the internship. In line with it only being one researcher and that the aim was to collect as much objective data, the results might not be as objective as desired or if there would have been several experiences to base the findings on. This because there would have been more experiences and different views to base the analysis on. In other words, the positioning of the researcher and the positions created within the space might have influenced the results of this research.

Furthermore, language barriers could have had an impact on the results. Language barriers applies across the board when discussing refugees and their challenges. In this case we are talking about employees who find it very difficult to know if the conversation has led to the same conclusion for both parties. And this despite involving an interpreter. When the refugees first arrive and, in many cases, for as long as they are in the programme, there is a need for an interpreter when talking to a refugee about things that involve words they are yet to learn though their Norwegian language courses. In many cases this can be because they learn the official languages of each country and can't understand all the different dialects. This is more difficult for those who have little schooling and therefore less to compare the language to, which is what many do. Using an interpreter also runs the risk of becoming a safety blanket if they are less inclined and motivated to learn a new language. If they have an interpreter too much, it could lead to them not having to practice as they will always have someone to cover for them. This was challenging when doing the fieldwork but was solved over time. Most

conversations were on an everyday basis and was easier to carry out than more heavier conversations. The refugees were also good at interpreting for each other when necessary as some have learned more Norwegian than others. As the research was done over time many also improved their language and came back at a later time to answer questions they were unable to answer previously.

Another challenge faced in writing this research was the fact that much of the research done on the Norwegian introduction programme was work done by agencies on behalf of the official channels such as the directorates or the government. In this light it has been difficult to be certain of the objectivities of said research. It is not to dwell on the researchers' knowledge or ability to perform such a research, but more so the important of recognising the challenges with paid research. If the work is paid for, does this affect the product, such as reports? Is there any part trying to please the customer in order to keep them happy and coming back for more? This has been difficult to find within the work but was still kept in mind during the progression of the research.

3.6 Ethics

Doing any type of research requires for the researcher to recognise the importance of ethical challenges. This especially whilst working with vulnerable groups who might not have someone to ensure that they are taken care of in the proper way. Working with refugees is one of these groups and are seen as highly vulnerable. Their safety and anonymity have been one of the more difficult, but all the more important during the field work. This because they come from such diverse backgrounds, many with horrendous experiences. Some have fled from war, some have lived in refugee camps for years, some suffer from PTSD (posttraumatic stress disorder), and some are even living in hiding. All of these cases affect the person in different ways. At the beginning it was important to be present and to let them form relations and become comfortable with there being someone doing research and talking to them and eventually doing interviews. It was also important to recognise their situation, being put into a fairly rigid system with great expectations of them. Keeping calm, even when they express their frustration was important in order to be able to assist them. One of the largest things to respect was the differences between cultures and religion. Recognising that most people there

come from different cultures with different views of the world was important to achieve mutual respect. They have their way of living their lives and their belief systems. Some are very different from that of the average Norwegian citizen. It was experienced that due to the large changes and the culture shock as well as having to adapt to the introduction programme, they had a bigger need and wish to hold on tighter to what they bring with them. This includes their way of identifying themselves through culture and religion. It was also experienced that they have very high regards of what they see as disrespectful and became vary if they suspected that something was done the wrong way. This was tied to the fact that most of them needed help with things most Norwegians do on a regular basis and often help with the same things again and again. Patience was needed from both sides as they try to figure out how the systems work.

In regard to the employees of the organisation there were a few things to consider. The employees at INN come from various different academic backgrounds with some recently graduated while others having worked with refugees for decades. In turn, they choose to work with the refugees in different ways. This was important to respect as neither way was any better than the other. It was therefore a challenge to find a direct path of gathering information. Anonymity also became an issue as neither them or the researcher wishes for anything to be identifiable, however it was found that promising complete anonymity became difficult because they rely on each other to solve their tasks in the best way and it was nearly impossible to ensure complete anonymity without anyone knowing the different cases. This especially with the difficult cases as they were the most common ones to work together on. This was recognised by the organisation and a plan on how to keep it as anonym as possible was made. This plan was that the employees decided what could be included or not. Some were done from the beginning. It was important to keep country of origin and religion out, as well as describing anyone in a way that was recognisable. This, because many come from dangerous backgrounds and are in hiding. It was not common knowledge who this regarded, and it was therefore important not to write anything that could identify individual. Additionally, as the employees are the ones who have the most knowledge on what could be harmful or not, it was also agreed upon that if any challenges were faced where the lines felt unclear, to talk to them. Bringing up issues made them easy to solve and was done in an environment where all employees signs non-disclosure agreements. This way, no one were exposed unnecessarily.

4.0 Findings and discussion

The data was collected over several months and the findings were many. Working with such a diverse group led to many interesting conversations and the different people gathered in one space allowed for a much more varied view on the situations they are in and how they see themselves moving forward. Everyone had their own background, stories and their own view on the world. One of the largest differences was according to gender and ethnicity. Whether they were positive or negative towards being settled in Norway and the programme very much depended on these two social categories. In order to make sense of the findings they will be categorised into several topics. These are gender, ethnicity, integration and issues or challenges with being in a refugee programme.

Firstly, a disclaimer has to be made. The main challenge that was pointed out was that of the language and language barriers. This was seen as the most challenging both for the refugees as well as for the employees in the municipality, which is completely normal and understandable in this scenario. As mentioned in chapter 3 on methodology, this was also challenging for the research. It will not be the focus of this chapter, but this quote put these challenges into perspective.

“It’s not easy to have a conversation with someone who might have no idea about what you are saying, and you have few ways of checking if what you are saying is being understood.”

Employee

4.1 Gender

“... Where I come from, women stay at home and the men work...”

Female, 29

It was found from the interviews and observation that gender is a term both men and women find challenging when being settled in Norway. This poses for many obstacles, both in everyday life at home or at work, but also in family situations with children and their lives at school. It is also challenging in situations where they have to face authorities such as the police, immigration officials, municipality employees or at school. It was found that in the equal society that Norway has become that they found it difficult because of the cultures they come from. Trying to navigate the culture they are faced with amongst everything else that is new is difficult for many.

Norway is a very equal country with equality being one of the larger debating topics in the country. Many believe we have come far; some believe there is still a way to go, whilst others believe it has gone too far. No matter the belief, the fight for equality has been long and for women has become one of the most important topics within what is considered to be the feminism movement in the country. Equality has arguably become to be believed to be a right for Norwegian women. It is therefore something many are sensitive about if they feel like they are treated in the wrong way faced with men or women who treat them differently based on gender. In terms of earnings it has also been a large topic. It is found that women and men now have the right to earn the same amount in the same occupations or positions. However, there is still a gap when it comes to occupations considered to have been or are more common for women compared to occupations more common for men. Because this has been and is still such a large part of the Norwegian culture, when faced with other cultures who does not have the same views, it can be taken in the wrong way and is seen as an opposition to equality. This is not to excuse the way in which migrants might be faced with negativity when they go to meet Norwegians, but it might be an important explanation as to *why* they are faced with this if they have not conformed to Norwegian gender norms.

From observation it was found that men do not always cope with female authority figures, especially if they are given a different answer as opposed to if they agreed. It was also found that they are much more protective of women in situations with male authority figures. This was found to stem from their culture of origins. Especially for those that come from the Middle East. For Africans it was found to be much calmer and more cautious. Is this showing that Norwegians have to become more observant and understanding or for them due understand that this is once more just a thing they have to conform to?

“... Women from Norway act very differently...”

Male, 26

An example of where this could and can be an issue was that of handshaking between men and women. This because it has in the recent year been a popular topic in the media. Men and women from certain cultures and religions believe that they should not shake hand with the opposite sex. The reasons behind this is not important in this discussion, but the consequences are. Norwegian women do not accept this because they take it as discrimination, which as explained above, is frowned upon. Norwegian men care less, but overall it has proven to be a cause of problems, especially in terms of employment. People who refuse to shake hands with the opposite sex has time and time again found themselves unemployable due to this culture and although it might be a small issue in the big picture, it is important to consider. There are different ways in which to solve this quest. One being to accept the gender role differences and move on. The second one is to make migrants conform and in turn allow for othering in situations where they do not wish to do so. Thirdly is to find a balance. Where that balance should lie has to be up to the people it concerns, but the most important thing is that it should be addressed as to avoid further problems in relation to employment.

“... In Norway there is so much to do all the time...”

Female, 32

For the participants in this research it was found that all of them come from very traditional households where the women do the work at home whilst the men work to earn money. It was also found that all interviewed found it more challenging during the introduction programme where both have more or less a full-time job away from home. The consequences of this were many. The women reported that they were constantly tired. The men that they had little free time.

The issues surrounding work and chores at home was found to be one of the more important topics the municipality is working on with the refugees. Teaching them that in order for them to have the best outcome equality on housework is essential. Being tired makes for little progression within education and if the women are to stay at home, there are few opportunities for them to practice and learn more outside school. It was also found that this was a topic that varied a lot from person to person in terms of how long they have been in Norway and how many children they have. Observation showed that the women who were more confident in the Norwegian language found it easier than those who were less confident. This, because the more they could do themselves, the less they need their partner to help outside of the home. On top of this comes hobbies. Most Norwegian children are involved in spare-time activities such as sports, music, drama or volunteering. It is also something parents are expected to follow up. Because many of the refugee families have many (three or more), it was proven to be an issue for them in their everyday lives. Although, the families are encouraged to let their children participate for their own integration, it was found that in many cases it is a matter of time management problem for the families. If the fathers are meant to take the children to their activities and the women have to take care of the others whilst taking care of the house, it became too much for them. Consequently, many children do not participate in many activities and in turn miss out on a great opportunity to become more integrated. It is important on this topic to recognise that for most this is the way of living, but for them it becomes challenging because it yet again is something new that they have to face. Bygnes (2017) confirms this. It was found that contact with the local communities is valuable and can influence the refugees both in a positive or negative way (Bygnes, 2017). The interviews showed that half of the men stated how different people acted, especially women, who in many cases were so free. This is a very western versus non-western view on the differences of gender roles amongst refugees. It was found that many thought it was a good thing, whilst only a few thought the difference in gender roles was a negative thing.

These findings are reflecting previous research. It highlights the fact that migration is gendered and needs to be included in research, which was found by Halfacree and Boyle (1999). It also reiterates how gender is a social construct. It is taught and affects expectations of behaviour, how people act and interaction between genders across different groups (Macionis and Plummer, 2012; Dixon and Jones 2006). Additionally, it also mirrors what McDowell (1999) argued which is that gender is highly interconnected to place as well as being related to space and place. For the refugees in Trondheim it was found to be difficult to adhere to Norwegian expectations of behaviour. They are shaped by the culture they came from and being positioned as a refugee in a completely different countries comes with many challenges (McDowell, 1999).

It could be argued that one of the reasons as to why the differences are experienced as being so large, is due to their wish to hold on to what they know from their home place. This is a group undergoing so many large changes in such a short timespan with everything being completely foreign. Could one of the reasons for them experiencing this so very different is because they are more sensitive to such changes. Yes, western countries do operate with different gender roles. However, these roles are constantly being challenged and changes constantly. It has become a more fluid term as is a social construct and cannot stay the same as long as people migrate. This falls in line with McDowell (1999), as mentioned above. In this way for them to experience the changes as something so challenging as both the interviews and the interviews showed is surprising as their countries are under huge amounts of changes due to the wars going on.

For the employees running the introduction programme one of the largest challenges connected to gender was that of control between genders, in this case for men over women. Examples include that of economic control over bank accounts or not letting women or children be alone in public without male company. This is a part of their culture that is simply not accepted by the Norwegian authorities and is being addressed by everyone working with refugees. All people working with refugees have to explain how this is not allowed and if they wish to be successfully integrated, they have to stop being in control. It is a learnt behaviour and can therefore be un-learned. Employees working with youth are also very concerned about this and it was stated in an interview with an employee that although it might be

impossible to change the minds of adult men, young adults are easier to influence, and on this matter, important to influence if they wish to live the best possible lives in Norway. This draws on Fenton (2003) in relation to that of the ethnic group feels degraded by the majority that they oppose where they can. It can be seen in relation to Fenton because this is reflecting on how they feel degraded. This in relation to gender, however the reason why it happens is due to the different gender expectations from different ethnicities.

“...Norwegians would not be happy in Syria...”

Male, 38

Just like some of the refugees are not happy in Norway, some Norwegians would not be happy with the Syrian culture. Although this comment does come with some flaws due to the critical situation in said country. However, it did put things in to a different perspective. If people from western, industrialised countries were to go there, the challenges would be just as many and just as hard to conquer. And that, even if the migration was voluntary. When Norwegians discuss this version of migration, the mass migration to the US during the 1800s as well as mass migration during the WWII seems to be forgotten. Before that was the Vikings and every other Norwegian adventurer. Norwegians have been migrants as well, and in the case of mass emigration to the US, many refused to learn the language and built their own societies. They held on to their own culture, language and was of living. And they moved voluntarily. Is it then so foreign for refugees to do the same?

4.2 Ethnicity and Culture

“...The cultures are very different...”

Male, 38

Maybe one of the simplest quotes included in this discussion. Despite it being simple it has the capacity to explain a lot of the challenges faced for all refugees, all working with refugees and all host societies welcoming refugees into their societies. The cultures *are* very different. The structures, beliefs, traditions and norms they are built upon are different. Industrialised or not, developed or not, digitalised or not, globalised or not. Everything is different. On top of this comes the family differences, gender differences, and lastly ethnicity. All ethnicities come with their own identities. This is found in all societies and cultures. It has the potential to influence everything a person believes and knows about the world, their societies and themselves. Perception is taught and with different perceptions comes different views and ways of dealing with different situations. (Dixon and Jones, 2006). It was found during interviews that cultural differences were the main source of frustration between refugees and employees. The different views on the world meant that fundamental agreements were difficult. It was also found that refugees believed the Norwegian system to be too rigid. There is little space for lenience as well as few shortcuts, which seemed like a few were used to finding. Whether this is cultural differences or people trying to find better alternatives for themselves, the amount of discussion between refugees or with employees, it was found to be challenging for all.

It is important to have perspective when addressing and discussing cultural differences. This because it is important to remember the relationship between the majority (Norwegian culture) and the minority (refugees). By default, they feel like the ones who are different and do not fit in. This comes with its own negative connotations. And with negative connotations comes sensitivity to what is already perceived as not being good enough. This draws on Fenton (2003) who argues that when people are defined by the majority as different, they will come back with resistance.

“... In Norway there are so many different people in one place...”

Female, 32

Norway has become to be a very diverse society with people from all over the world. This statement was made in a city, a city with a university, making it all the more open for migration. In this city, there are people from all over the world gathered in a relatively small geographical area. It was an interesting statement and the reason for including it was to highlight the differences the refugees found in the society they are currently in. As stated, several times, many of them come from years upon years in refugee camps, where they are surrounded by people at all hours. However, with the exempt of helpers and guards, are many people from the same countries. All though some find more freedom to learn different languages, they are very much in a rigid system where they have to fight for their survival and of their families' survival. There are many horror stories out there, but this research will not delve into any of them as it is way beyond the scope of this thesis. It was interesting to find that this was one of the things noticed about the city. It could also be aiming at all the different countries represented among the refugees, which is potentially more likely. Ethnic identity is formed through history, culture and changes over time, and is based on inclusion and/or exclusion (McDowell and Sharp, 1999; Fenton, 2003). In this sense the findings are in line with previous theory and findings.

Whereas they might have expected to meet only Norwegians they are now meeting a row of cultures, ethnicities and genders where many are international migrants. Additionally, the regional migrants cannot be excluded. Dialects was discussed a lot as the employees have different dialects and accents. The refugees found it both interesting and challenging to talk to people with different dialects. The norm at the office was not uncommonly to talk in a more understandable way, leaning more towards the official language.

“...Because Norwegians are Caucasian, most of us have no idea what these people have faced in terms of othering, exclusion, discrimination or racism... We consider ourselves to be the good guys for wanting to help them ...”

Employee

This comment was made by one of the employees, and highlights what was observed in terms of frustration among the refugees when it came to Norwegians understanding their disdain of culture and norms. Norwegians are very intended on helping the refugees, but at the same time there is little to no way for most to understand exactly what they have experienced before and after arriving. Being part of a Caucasian ethnicity means being part of one of the ethnicities that has been considered to be the “best and most powerful” ethnicity since colonisation started. With it brings certain connotations. In a similar vein, both the people of said ‘race’ and those outside perceive all Caucasians to be part of the ‘race’ who has inflicted immense destruction on the home countries of the refugees. The US have been deployed in the Middle East since 2001, and other forces have joined them. And the people arriving in the Western world has witnessed said destruction. How are they to not carry scepticism towards said people who they relate to these actions?

It is also a concern that there are so many migrants in this country working, yet the expectations of them seem to be arguably a lot less. Norway, as a part of the EEA- agreement are part of the Schengen convention. In turn, are accepting many migrants working here (Aamodt, 2018). Why is it that they are excluded from having to be integrated on such a level that refugees are expected to be? Is it because there is less responsibility over them? Is it because there is less control over who is where? Is it because they offer more? Or is it because it suits people to have them here because the tendency seems to be that they accept less in earnings? No one talks about integration and settlement with them. We know most are in the country on a short-term basis only to earn money and return back home. Yet, many stay and have families here. Why is it that migrants are accepted so widely, but as soon as they are refugees, there are so many expectations and demands from the Norwegian society? The issues surrounding refugees entering the labour market and the demands they are facing was also found by Bratsberg et al. (2016), who argued that if refugees are ever to reach the same employment rates as native-born Norwegians the only solution is policy change made for more inclusion.

4.3 Integration

Integration is one of the most popular concepts within media and politics linked to the refugees nowadays and is very important to the refugees' everyday lives. However, none of the refugees interviewed for this research knew what the word meant and how it applies to their lives. This was despite having someone translate it during the fieldwork. At the same time two out of three employees interviewed says this is something there is no time for within the introduction programme. During the two to three years the refugees get to be in the programme there is so much to fit in, and each advisor only has a certain amount of time during their working day. And as any other cases, some take more time than others due to the individual situations each refugee find themselves in. Their main goal is to qualify them for further education and/or get them a job for them to be able to provide for themselves and their families.

Research shows that the people who will become more and more essential to the process of integration is the voluntary sector. This was shown in chapter 2 on theoretical frameworks with both the TOGETHER project (Berg, 2018) and the findings from Østlandsforskning (Bjerck, 2007; Eide and Rohnebæk, 2016). More and more municipalities are involving their inhabitants in providing the refugees with networks. They are trying to integrate them into the different activities happening in the respective municipalities. Which is a good thing as many of them find a lot of the settlement process very challenging. The same things were also found by Archambault and Haugen (2016), who found that identification through interaction with others is a key element in achieving a positive settlement.

“...There is a system for everything and so much paper for all of them...”

Female, 32

This comment was made during one of the interviews conducted. Several of the interviewees found that there are many people they have to keep in contact with as there is little communication between the different units within the municipality. This means that there are several offices and systems to learn. Additionally, the places they originate from are often

poorer countries and are less developed. In turn, they struggle when they get here. And this could be simply using digital tools such as a computer and online banking. Norway have a high standard on most things, and a system designed to make each service and/or other things the best they can be. This is the so-called bureaucracy. This ensures that everyone is tended to in order after an application has been made. And natives know that this can take time, but there is nothing to do but wait. For people who are used to do everything orally and often solving things on the same day this is a big change, and again, the language barrier makes it rather confusing. It was also pointed out that many have a much more lenient system where they can borrow and owe favours for goods or services, something that is seen as completely foreign in this country. The culture shock between that system and our many, many systems must be frustrating, especially when there is so little understanding of how these systems work. In cases like this it is those with little resources who lose because they might not be able to work through the systems like it is required. Those with more resources are found to be more able to sort out these things themselves.

“We will never be able to get a job here. Employers just say no, no, no!”

– Male, 50

Immigrating or fleeing to a country with such high standards as Norway has been seen to be one of the largest downfalls for the refugee population. Many of them held good jobs, but without being qualified for them through official schooling. Then they come to Norway, where the people who stand close to you recognise your experience, but it is worth absolutely nothing in Norway as long as you do not get an education on high school level minimum. In addition, due to the competition within the labour market and systems for, many also go on to do higher education in order to ensure they get the job they want. And this is where the people’s emotions regarding this topic comes in. We see their experience, but they can’t go on to do the same job as they did before. At the same time, we are saying they either need a new job or to build on existing experience and go back to school. For many this becomes a journey of a falling social status. This causes a lot of frustration among the group. Many are resourceful people who has a lot to contribute to the society, but the journey from being in the introduction program and out on the labour market is demotivating for many. The result is that they need a lot of help, and many never make it back to the occupation they held before

they had to flee from their homes. One thing that will be important for this groups is to get them from the side where they receive help to the side where they can give help. This because many have a lot to offer, they might just not know where to begin. This was also found by Østlandsforskning, who found that there are many things that can be done by the municipalities and the labour markets in order to ensure better integration. Another part is getting the voluntary sector involved as they can help them in terms of social networks and giving them further help when the employees of the municipality cannot (Bjerck, 2007; Eide and Røhnebæk, 2016).

It was clear from this research that Norway has a long way to go when it comes to the mindsets of the inhabitants in terms of refugees. A change has to happen in order for complete integration to be possible. They have to be welcomed into the societies, and it requires a lot of patience for it to be successful. As they are people with complex backgrounds, finding themselves in such different environments, it cannot be expected for them to conform to all Norwegian norms overnight. Nor do they have the economy to take part in everything a “normal” Norwegian do. Where Norwegians have relatively high earnings, refugees are limited to their income from the municipalities during the first two years. This is supported by statistics from SSB who found that the unemployment rates are twice as high for immigrants compared to natives (SSB, 2016).

If Norway is to continue to accept refugees, the main goal has to be for them to be integrated in a way that is sustainable for their foreseeable future, in turn making the efforts from the societies essential. This has been and will continue to be challenging due to the difference in political views on refugees. Norway has come a long way, but in no way can it be argued that discrimination and racism does not exist. The concept of othering has been and will continue to be present for as long as there are differing political and religious views present. This is not to say that integration to a necessary level is impossible. But it has to be recognised that some parts of the population will find it harder than others to participate in said integration.

This reflect Anderson (2015), who argues that othering is part of society and occurs on basis of ethnicity and race. In this thesis it was found that the refugees experience othering in relations to Norwegians. It was also found to occur between the different ethnic groups represented among the refugees. An example observed was when they spoke their own languages. They included those who speak the same as them, but very much excluded those who did not.

The voluntary sector is filled with people wanting to help. At the same time the importance of the refugees not being helpless cannot be forgotten. Yes, it is challenging for them. Yes, there is plenty to learn, and yes, some parts require help. However, so many of them have the full potential to make a great life for themselves here if they are given the rights means to do so. They need the help to help themselves, and not be seen as people needing help for longer than required. Then they could and should be put in situations where they help others. This because they have so much to offer. In many municipalities they are hired as help for other refugees (Bjerck, 2007). This is a great way of helping them over the belief that they are only people who needs help. Which they are not. So many of them are, as stated above, resourceful. Some come from higher classes in their society of origin, some have higher education, and some have a lot of experience. They come from war and conflict, many with trauma. In some ways, it seems like this is the only parts we see. We fail to see the entire person for what they are, which is so much more than a refugee. They are human beings with all the different qualities everyone who is not a refugee also possess. There should be more focus on their experience.

4.4 Being in a programme

Out of all the conversations and all the interviewees the consensus was clear. The refugees were not happy with the programme they were in. The reasons behind it differed from person to person, however there were a few reasons that stood out such as time management, it being boring, not efficient enough as well as their contact persons not being able to help them enough. Even though some of the issues will be highlighted here, it is important to keep in mind that how the programmes differ from municipality to municipality and is heavily based

on the individual employee working with the programme. It was found that the relationships between refugee and employee also played a significance regarding their perception of their programme and individual plans.

“...they say it is individual, but we all do the same things...”

Male, 35

The programme has in its statutes that all refugees have the right to an individual plan in order to find a way from where they are to the place they wish to be. This is decided by IMDi (2011). However, it was found that many of the refugees found that it was not as individual as they wished for. If this was due to a wish for a speedier process, or if they found it too mundane was more difficult to understand. It was also found that this was mostly concerning the men, who already were more concerned with earning money and having a job than the women. For the municipality, making the best programme and individual plans are heavily dependent on the background of the refugee and their qualifications in terms of getting them qualified for a relevant job in Norway. Additionally, they are just as reliant on schools and companies being able to provide work training and experience. If they have qualifications that are easily adaptable into the Norwegian labour market, the refugee might find the programme easier to complete than for those who have rare or specific qualifications that are easily filled by natives. It is about finding a space for them in the labour market everyone is happy with. And more importantly, trying to find a job they can keep as to avoid them keeping it for a while, but ending up needing benefits from NAV. This because they most likely have the same capacity when it comes to helping them furthering themselves. Again, this is reflected in the findings from Østlandsforskning who is behind the largest research done on the programme.

In this light it is also important to consider those who lack qualifications on a higher level or at all. For them going through a programme can be the most difficult thing they have done academically, and in turn be perceived as doing the same thing as everyone else. This because they find themselves on a more basic level where the experience might be that they have the same plan as many others. For them, the focus is to be qualified for continuing their education, not necessarily straight into a job. Something many men found to be frustrating as

they clearly came from a culture where it is common for the man to be the main, if not the *only* provider for their household, which in turn might make them more open to frustration regarding income and opportunities.

It was also found through conversations with the other employees, that the individual municipalities often face challenges when it comes to job opportunities. For this municipality, where there are many immigrants (not just refugees), they find it difficult to provide enough jobs and work experiences for the refugees that are relevant to their background. Additionally, they found that many are very open in the beginning but change their minds later on when talk of permanent positions comes up. For other municipalities where there might be less refugees and work immigration, it can be easier to find them jobs. All of them might not be as relevant, but they at least have steady jobs.

“...I don’t like the city, and I don’t like Norway...”

Female, 29

For all refugees, the most common thing found in interviews were that most did not want to become a refugee. Many have faced great difficulty before they were accepted as refugees in Norway. Some came from refugee camps and were accepted through the UN. Others have come on their own and have had challenging journeys to get here. Many carry a great deal of trauma with them in their everyday lives. Other worries about the families they left behind. Some picture themselves in specific places and are disappointed when they arrive. Others are more than happy to have found a safe place where they can get opportunities. This quote was perhaps the most surprising one when interviews were conducted. This because most Norwegians perhaps take this country for granted and have learned to expect the best at all times. Making them fail to see the challenges people face when they do not have the ability to compete about jobs on the same levels or be able to do what they might like when they want to, which arguably is the only way to live for the average adult in Norway. This is not to say that an average adult is not responsible for ensuring that they have a job and a home, but more that the refugees have most likely faced great challenges before the programme and might

find it more difficult to adapt to all the expectations Norway put upon them. It is not difficult to understand that they wish to keep a tight hold on everything they find familiar and safe.

One thing that became very apparent when talking to the refugee and doing interviews about the introduction programme was the cultural differences and the challenges, they felt in regard to it. In Norway there are many expectations socially. This in regard to having a job, earning money, being happy, finding love, having 1.7 children and furthering one's career whilst having a family life as well. In addition, equality at home and at work has become one of the most important things for women. For the women who come from the complete opposite background with a more traditional home life and working life (or no working life), finding it challenging adapting to the Norwegian norms cannot be perceived as surprising. It was found that where Norwegian women embrace their careers, many refugees were most focused on holding onto their cultures and traditions. If this was the interviewees view, not liking the place she is living is no surprise and has to be respected and understood from her perspective (McDowell, 1999).

“...it is difficult to take the bus everywhere... and it is difficult when the children go to school far away from home...”

Female, 32

This was a common theme between the refugees themselves and was often a topic of discussion in regard to absence from the programme. The municipality where this research was conducted is fairly spaced out in terms of schools and nurseries, and the refugees are housed across it in all the different areas of it. The school for refugees is places on one end whilst the reception school for refugee children is in another area. It might not always be the longest journey from one destination to the next, but the buses might not always run as frequently as they might need in order for the commute to be as easy and smooth as possible. In addition, when they arrive there are many meetings between the parents and the schools or nurseries. Are the parents to go to the other side of the city in order to make it to a meeting in time, they might have to leave fairly early and in turn miss out on a lot of their own schooling in order to be present for their children. If the refugee was relatively new to the

system when stating this, it might be overwhelming trying to figure everything out about public transport and which way they need to go and what buses they need to be on in order to get the easiest commute and in order to be where they need to go on time.

It was found that those who have children, find it more difficult to cope with their situations. It is a lot of information they have to understand when they have multiple children going to school and to nursery, which is mandatory for most children. They have to keep up with timetables and work out where they need to go at all times. This is often very difficult in households where they have the tradition that the woman cooks and cleans. Attending a full-time program, keeping up with the kids and the house on top of that is exhausting for them. And when put into perspective that this is a lot for any woman, there is no wonder it becomes harder when they have to use so much energy on trying to understand a different language. Finding time to interact with the population and find a sense of belonging was difficult, and has been proven to be important in the settlement period (Archambault and Haugen, 2016). It was also found that in these households most fathers also contributed more now than what they did in their home country, which is a positive thing when both are in the introduction program. There are also cases where some couples have 6-7 children, which in turn makes it difficult for them to focus on themselves because they have to be very involved in their children's lives. Most are depending on the eldest children helping out with the smaller in order for them to be able to leave the house on time.

“...It is difficult to find a job when we have a full-time programme. We have so much to do, but we still need money...”

Male, 26

Again, the concern with work and income was highlighted mostly by the men. It was found that in most cases it was offered as a concern about the future. Mostly in relation to obtaining permanent residency where there are strict laws one has to follow and many things to be fulfilled before they can apply. Three of these things are a job with a minimum wage of around 250 000 NOK per year, having a home, and having been a resident for a certain

amount of time. In the cases where the refugees have low qualifications or have exceeded and age where they are wanted in the labour market it is a challenge for many to be able to reach these requirements. Native Norwegians would struggle as well. Being in the introduction programme is a full-time job and requires very much of the participants. With it being during the first two years after arrival, they have to learn how everything works socially, juridically and in terms of organisations. There is a lot to learn in school, everything from language to norms and values of the host society. It does take a lot of energy and focus, and it was there for understandable how they found it to be difficult.

In regard to finances for the refugees, it is difficult in this research to consider other municipalities as everyone chooses how they organise the programme economically for the refugee. This one in particular pay them the minimum but open up for social benefits quite easily. Others choose to pay them more in order to save on resources to manage applications and payments. This varies vastly and will not be discussed in this thesis due to the scope of the research question. It is a very interesting topic, one in need of debate, but will be left open to those who have the qualifications to discuss the issue.

5.0 Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to answer the following question

To what extent does gender and ethnicity affect refugees in their meeting with the Norwegian society, and to what extent are these recognised among the people working with refugees and within the introduction programme?

Through several months of participant observation as well as interviews during an internship, the short answer to this question would be that gender and ethnicity are two of the identifying social categories of a human being and accordingly affect each and every one, including the refugees. Gender and ethnicity are two perspectives in dire need for more recognition within the refugee system. Finding mutual solutions with each individual were both parties are pleased with the effort and results could have the potential to improve a lot of the current results. It was also found that all though most try to acknowledge gender and ethnicity within their work, it is difficult to find a balance where they can be acknowledged to the extent that the employees and the refugees wishes it to. This due to the demands of the programme for it to be as successful as possible. The more detailed answers include a lot more. This is important to address as globalisation is not slowing down and the ‘free’ mobility (Massey, 2005) continues to impact societies across the world.

As shown multiple times in chapter 4, gender and cultural differences is lacking acknowledgement when it comes to the Norwegian introduction programme. With the refugees being such a diverse group, running a general programme does not allow for large differences amongst them (Eide and Røhnebæk, 2016). The wanted effect for those who created and continue to make decisions on the programme for everyone to conform into a mould fit for the Norwegian society and labour market. It does not take into account any sort of challenges, trauma or previous experiences related to that of the individual backgrounds of the refugees. Over and over again, the point made is that they have to adapt to the Norwegian way of living. With Norway already being such a multicultural society, does it not mean that

the population also has to change and adapt to the newcomers? This is something in need of further research and work in order to be able to answer more in detail, however the immediate answer is yes. If we are able to adapt to other immigration, we should be able to adapt to refugees as well.

When it came to gender, it was also found that people who came from a culture with very traditionalist gender roles, found it more difficult to adapting to a new daily routine where both the men and the women were required to spend a significant part of the day away from home. It was also found that for the cultures with the men being the family patriarch, that the men struggled juggling everything they normally would have been fine with at home. With the rules of the programme being quite strict in terms of penalties for attendance, many men were very stressed. They consequently became more frustrated and had shorter patience. The employees were always trying to address these issues, however from observation it seemed like what they needed the most was time to adapt. More time than what they are currently receiving.

Integration. Integration is a nice word but has been proven to be difficult to implement. Both for the refugees as well as for the population. It requires work from both sides. The voluntary sector has become important in this line of work and will continue to be so in order to ensure better integration for the whole family. Although the introduction programme is concerning the adults, children's experiences and settlement is just as, if not more, important as for the adults in the family (Archambault and Haugen, 2016).

With integration comes the recognition of these people as whole human beings not just people in need of help. The main goal has to be, along with everything else, to get them over from the side of receiving help to be the ones giving help. Most of them are resourceful people and resourceful people do have the need to be more than people in need of help. They have and are facing great challenges, but when they have been able to settle down and stabilise their lives, they are so much more. An understanding has to be reached on the fact that as most of these people are resourceful, they do not need to be helped as much as they need to be included into main stream society. This should also become a larger part of the

introduction programme. It has been proven that networks are important to achieve integration. Therefore, focusing more on networks is something all municipalities should be concerned about. This does not only apply to the adults, but just as much for the children. Having friends does prove to be an essential part in becoming part of mainstream society and might therefor be considered to be just as important as much of the rest of the activities the programmes are concerned with. For integration a lot is also being said when none of the refugees knew the meaning of the word.

As seen, many of the refugees are not able to obtain a job for long after finishing the introduction programme. There are many reasons as to why this might happen, and there is no question as to the importance of effort given by the refugee. However, with the numbers of refugees not being able to hold onto a job, a question of what could be done better comes up. If this is due to the lack of effort from the refugees or knowledge of the government and municipalities is not easy to know. It could also be a problem in regard to employers not being willing to hire them. And the responsibility of doing so is important to ensure that the refugees become independent, especially in regard to being able to apply for a permanent citizenship. Whatever the reasons might be, there is one conclusion and that is that there is a problem. A problem that needs to be faced head on. Seeing the statistics and transferring people from the refugee offices to NAV is not one of them. Or it could be, but this only enforces the need for a change. It cannot be a solution for refugees to seek social benefits for what is meant to be the rest of their professional careers. One solution to said problem is being implemented this year. This is the extension of the introduction programme from two to three years, although this is only an option for those where it is seen as needed the most. Is this enough? If people are being moved from the refugee offices to NAV, there is arguably little faith in the results from the programme.

A suggestion is that a potential solution could be to make an estimate of how much resources the refugees who do not work will cost the society and instead of putting all of it into benefits for them, invest them into the years that are most important for the refugees – the two first years after they arrive. If more resources were used, both within an official capacity, but also invested in private businesses in return for them to include refugees, this could arguably massively benefit the society. Less people relying on benefits, but at the same time creating

work spaces to coordinate such an investment and overseeing that it is done the best. It comes down to this question: *do we invest the money now, or do we wait for them to fail and then spend the rest of their lives providing them with benefits?* It is arguably time for the Norwegian society to claim responsibility for the refugees the government and municipalities have politically decided for the country to welcome and including them in the labour market. (IMDi, 2018). Norway as a country is like every other country, continuously changing and evolving. With it comes changes within the labour markets. New fields expand whilst other decrease

During the writing of this thesis some changes have been implemented, such as the extension of the introduction programme from two to three years. This is for those who are considered to need it. These people would include those who arrive without the ability to read or write. For them to go from zero schooling to being able to qualify for further education in two years is not only unrealistic but puts the individuals under immense pressure. Pressure a normal human being without a complex background will have the problem overcoming. Individuals facing health challenges, both mentally and physically can also apply to extend their programme. Additionally, the way in which the programme is being run is further being addressed. The differences between the municipalities and their ability to qualify based on structural differences, opportunities for the refugees as well as economy is finally being taken into account when measuring the progress and the results from the programme. In other words; some changes have already been implemented whilst others are pending within the system.

However, it does also have to be recognised, that this is a programme decided on by the government. In turn, politics and which parties are elected will have an influence on the programme and what it should be. In the recent years, a more right-winged government has had the power, and this shows within the sectors that are concerned with refugees. Their belief in privatisation and individuality does affect the programmes – especially economically and in terms of expectations towards these refugees. The media has been portraying a picture of a government believing that the refugees should be considering themselves lucky. They have also painted a picture allowing for discrimination and racism, highlighting criminality and bad results. Some have even gone as far as stating the wish for further restraint over

movement and the ability to work. This does not allow for further integration. It has the opposite effect; it allows for more othering and creates a larger gap between migrants and Norwegians.

It was earlier suggested to spend more money in the beginning as opposed to so many ending up on social benefits for the rest of their careers. If this is going to be made possible it does require a lot more of the government, the municipalities as well as the rest of the society. It requires for Norway to spend more money in order to gain them later on. If one is to make such an investment, a guaranteed earning is often required. This could be done by having the refugees enrolled in a longer programme, setting up more entry access jobs or simply making sure that wherever they are being settled have work opportunities for them available so that they do not end up unemployed when finishing the programme (Eide and Røhnebæk, 2016).

Over all, the experience was that there is a lot of good things happening within the introduction programme, and that there are a lot of issues that needs to be addressed. The programme vows to include an individual plan based in each refugee's experience (IMDi, 2011). Although this is done, there is still not a lot of space for individuality. Especially not in terms of measuring progression and results. There are many changes needed for there to be a 'perfect' programme. Then again, is there such a thing called a perfect programme? What was found to be most lacking in this research is the need for more individuality within the frameworks made for the programme. This in order to ensure the best possible outcome for the individual as well as for the society in terms of not having to fend for them and their families. There should also be conducted further research including the experiences of the refugees. Their experiences are the best input in order to further the programme and improve it to gain even better results. They were also found to be the ones who have the opportunity to influence and aid newcomers in settlement. Being guided by fellow refugees creates a more levelled platform to learn and easier if they speak the same language.

All the findings reflect existing research. They were also in line with theory on the topics of migration, gender and ethnicity. On gender they reflected arguments by Macionis and

Plummer (2012), Dixon and Jones (2006), as well as McDowell (1999) on how gender is taught and affect people immensely in regard to behaviour and expectations of behaviour. On ethnicity, not only reiterated it how it defines an individual's identity, but also how the relationships between ethnic minorities and majorities can cause friction (Fenton, 2003). Using the research from Østlandsforskning and/or NTNU Social Research actively in working with refugees and the programme could help create policies beneficial to the furthering of both the programme, but also in all work with refugees. And it was found that policy change is the only way to be able to reduce unemployment among refugees (Bratsberg et al, 2016).

This thesis has been an attempt to weigh in on how gender and ethnicity is not being acknowledged enough within the introduction programme. And hopefully it has done so. It has to be stated that this is in no way meant as a direct critique of the people working with refugees, but for the policy makers to be able to learn from and for this to possibly be used in that line of work. Everyone working with refugees are doing their best to aid this group during their settlement period. It is the systematic challenges that are the biggest ones and they should be given more attention and try to be solved so that the refugees entering Norway get the best possible opportunity to become a part of the mainstream society as fully integrated members.

Lastly, if there is to be any recommendations from this thesis they would be:

- More research conducted on the Norwegian introduction programme. This focusing more on individuality and differences among the refugees. Especially in terms of research over time. This was also found by Svendsen and Berg (2018).
- More research on how gender and ethnicity is a large part of settlement and integration. This both for the state to make good decisions for the refugees, but also for volunteers and private businesses to be able to gain further understanding of such a process and how it can be bettered in the future.

- Focus more on the experiences of the refugees. The current system is designed to please Norway and the demands from the society, both socially and financially. It is not designed to ensure the best system for the refugee. This, drawing on the findings from IMDi (2018).
- More consideration as to where refugees are placed in terms of opportunities after completion of the introduction programme. Do the municipalities have the capacity to employ the refugees after they finish the programme?
- More responsibility taken on by the labour market. Include them in job opportunities. Either create jobs suited for their education or be open to teach them further. People need to be employed in order for the Norwegian welfare system to continue to thrive.
- Spend money now. More than likely these people are here to stay for the foreseeable future. Invest in the refugees now instead of handing out benefits for years. Those who need it should receive it, but the aim should be to spend money now in order to get them into a position where they are independent.

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7.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview guide for both employees and participants

Employees

Quickfire:

1= not at all 2= little 3= average 4= a lot 5= very much

On a scale from 1-5 How do you find the workload per now?

INN is undergoing som large changes. To what extent do you think this will affect your worklife?

Hvor stor innvirkning mener du dette vil ha for deltakerne? How big impact do you think this will have on the refugees?

In your opinion, to what extent do you think the program further integration?

How well adapted to each individual do you think the individual plans are?

To what extent do you want the program to change?

Spørsmål:

What made you want to work with refugees?

What are some positive aspects of your job?

Do you face many challenges, if so, what challenges?

Is there anything in the program you wish to change?

You also work a lot with other agencies and organisations in the society. What do you think of the society's attitude towards refugees? Does the integration efforts work?

Could you tell me how you find INN work as an organisation regarding the participants?

What does integration mean to you?

Lastly: If you could come with a few wishes on how the unit should be work with refugees, what would they be?

Introduction program participants

Quickfire

1= not at all 2= little 3= average 4=a lot 5= very much

How much do you like living in Trondheim?

How good do you think the introduction program is?

To what extent do you experience receiving enough help?

How well do you find working with the employees?

You also go to INNsats, how much do you learn there?

On a scale from 1-5, how good do you think INNsats is?

Questions:

What have you found to be the most difficult thing about moving to Norway?

What does integration mean to you?

What do you like best about the program?

Are there any bad things?

Positive and negative things about INNsats?

Is there anything you wish there was more or less of?

Are there any activities you find you learn more from?

Are there any activities you find helps you the most with qualifying you for work or school?

Do you have any wishes regarding how Trondheim Municipality should work with refugees?

Is there anything you wish was different?

Appendix 2: Consent form

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

”Dypdykk inn i organisasjonen INN – Kvalifiseringssenter for innvandrere i Trondheim Kommune”

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke noen av de ulike aspektene ved enheten. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Formålene med denne forskningen er, gjennom et dypdykk inn i organisasjonen INN-Kvalifiseringssenteret for innvandrere i Trondheim, å undersøke forskjellige aspekter av organisasjonen gjennom observasjoner samt intervjuer med ansatte og deltakere. Målet er å undersøke hva Trondheim Kommune har funnet ut at fungerer for deres innvandrere og om det finnes grunnlag for forandring. Eksisterende forskning vil også bli undersøkt for å finne fellesnevnerne. Finnes det noen måte å jobbe med flyktninger som er bedre enn andre?

Dette er et forskningsprosjekt som er en del av et internship på masterprogrammet ”Globalisation, transnationalism and culture” ved NTNU. Dataene som blir samlet inn vil også kunne bli brukt i en masteroppgave etter jul.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

Ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet er Institutt for geografi ved NTNU, men også INN – kvalifiseringssenteret for innvandrere i Trondheim Kommune da det er der internskapet blir gjennomført.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Du får spørsmål om å delta fordi du enten er ansatt ved INN eller er deltaker på introduksjonsprogrammet i Trondheim Kommune. Målet er å nå personer fra de forskjellige sporene og fra forskjellige nivåer i organisasjonen. Det er ca. 10 som får spørsmål om å være med i prosjektet.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Hvis du velger å delta i prosjektet, innebærer det at du blir med på et intervju. Intervjuet handler om din opplevelse av å være med i introduksjonsprogrammet i Norge med fokus på Trondheim Kommune og deres tilbud. Intervjuet vil ta maksimum 30 minutter. Alle intervjuer blir tatt opp på lydopptak.

Intervjuet er delt i to. I første del bes du om å rangere forskjellige ting på en skala fra 1-5. Det kan også komme oppfølgingsspørsmål på denne delen. Del to er åpne spørsmål som gir rom for utdyping.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykke tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle opplysninger om deg vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket..

- Det er kun forsker og ansvarlig veileder ved Institutt for Geografi som vil ha tilgang på forskningsmaterialet.
- Alt forskningsmaterialet vil oppbevares på innelåst data i en passordbeskyttet mappe.
- Alle navn og kontaktopplysninger vil erstattes med en kode som lagres på egen navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data.
- INN vil få tilgang på noen av dataene, men vil ikke ha tilgang på navn og personopplysninger.
- Alt av personopplysninger vil anonymiseres i den ferdige rapporten, men det vil i enkelte tilfeller nok være mulig for en selv å kunne gjenkjenne hva en har sagt. Det skal fortsatt ikke være mulig for andre å vite hvem som har sagt hva. I enkelte tilfeller vil det nok for ansatte være mulig å gjenkjenne hverandre, men i størst mulig grad skal dette unngås.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter

forskningsprosjektet? Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes 15. desember 2018.

Dataene vil bli ivaretatt for å kunne bruke dem i en masteroppgave som skal skrives etter jul. Endelig innlevering av den oppgaven er i mai 2019. Etter dette vil alle opplysninger som ikke er inkludert i oppgaven slettes permanent. Frem til dette vil alt materialet oppbevares innelåst, og det er kun forsker og ansvarlig veileder ved NTNU som vil ha tilgang på materialet.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra NTNU har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

- Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:
- NTNU, Institutt for geografi ved Maren Petronelle Nyrud, på epost marenpn@stud.ntnu.no eller på telefon 45296588 (student) eller Nina Berg, på epost nina.gunnerud.berg@ntnu.no eller telefon 73591796 (veileder)
 - Vårt personvernombud: Thomas Helgesen, epost thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no , telefon 93079038
 - NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, på epost (personverntjenester@nsd.no) eller telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen

Maren Petronelle Nyrud og Nina Gunnerud Berg
Student Prosjektansvarlig

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet ,og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

å delta i intervju

*at opplysninger om meg publiseres slik at jeg kan gjenkjennes. Dette vil i tilfelle kun gjelde for ansatte hvor det kan være mulig å gjenkjenne hverandre. Ingen personopplysninger vil være gjenkjennelig ellers i publiseringen.
at mine personopplysninger lagres etter prosjektslutt, til bruk i masteroppgave.*

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet, ca. 1. juli 2019.

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

